

**A SURVEY AND THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE
SPIRITUAL AND PENTECOSTAL-EVANGELICAL
CHURCHES IN FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE, WITH
SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON
THE INFLUENCES OF THE
INDIGENOUS RELIGIOUS PNEUMATOLOGY
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PART 11

THE SPIRITUAL CHURCHES

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CHAPTER FOUR

THE NIGERIAN ROOTS OF THE ALADURA MOVEMENT AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE SPIRITUAL CHURCHES

In 1947 a band of eight Church of the Lord (Aladura) missionaries led by Adeleke Emmanuel Adejobi and S. O. Oduwole arrived in Freetown. Oduwole only stayed one week before proceeding to Monrovia to establish the church in Liberia. Adejobi headed up the Freetown mission and the church he planted became known as the "Adejobis". The Adejobis became the "mother" of practically all the Spiritual churches in Sierra Leone. The history and liturgy of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) in Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia and Sierra Leone up to 1965 are covered by Turner in *African Independent Church*.¹ Turner's interest in the Adejobis sprung from a chance encounter with the Adejobis on Lumley Beach, Freetown, in 1957, as they were performing their spiritual exercise of "beach rolling". A close relationship with Adejobi subsequently developed. The word *aladura*, (prayer or praying person), entered Yoruba via Hausa and Arabic. In Sierra Leone the Aladura churches are of the revelatory-prophet-healing type common among the Zionists of Southern Africa.² In *Religious Innovation in Africa* Turner presents a working typology of African Independent Churches and their relation to new religious movements world-wide.³ He rejects the suggestion that Aladura churches be classified as Apostolic and Spiritual in order to distinguish two major streams within the Aladura movement, maintaining that "while this would be intelligible in Nigeria it would be confusing elsewhere."⁴ In the Sierra Leone context it is vitally important that these two mainstreams be distinguished, investigated and analysed. While this study concentrates on the post 1965 period in Sierra Leone, a close look at the Nigerian origins of the movement, and the spiritual contribution of the founding fathers, is unavoidable. Origins, in matters ecclesiastical, are in a measure determinative of destiny. This is certainly the case in African independent churches where the founding fathers continue to dictate the

liturgical pattern followed by their spiritual offspring. They being dead still speak. As the style of evangelical Christianity in Freetown evolved outside Sierra Leone, likewise the form and style of their Spiritual churches was forged abroad and a certain foreignness has always been present in the transplanted churches in Sierra Leone.

NIGERIAN INDEPENDENT CHURCHES AND THEIR SIERRA LEONE CONNECTIONS

In *The African Churches among the Yoruba 1888-1922*, Webster observes:

A discussion of Christianity in West Africa must begin with Sierra Leone. Not only was the colony of Sierra Leone the first field of modern missionary enterprise on the West Coast but it also provided numerous black missionaries who fostered the growth of the church in all the coastal cities.⁵

In the early 1840s, Anglican and Methodist missionaries, both Recaptives and British, journeyed from Sierra Leone to Badagry and Abeokuta in response to appeals by Yoruba Egba returnees for help in establishing churches patterned after the Freetown model.⁶ When the Lagos slave markets were closed in 1851, and a British consulate established, most missionaries moved to this more strategic and expanding area of mission. Here the Church grew rapidly and, according to Webster, "The history of Sierra Leone was repeated".⁷ The city was divided into parishes, each with its own church, and educational institutions founded. Professor Idowu complains that Christianity "heavily tinged with Western culture" arrived in Nigeria "dressed up in European garb".⁸ He condemns both missionary ethnocentricity and the naiveté of Nigerians - "the main obstacle in the way of an indigenous Church in Nigeria" - for accepting so completely an alien form of worship:

... if at the beginning, anyone had had enough vision to suggest that while accepting Christianity, Nigerians did not need to throw away what was good and valuable in their own culture, such a person would have been accused of rank "heathenism" by the European religious educators whose set purpose was to exterminate as of the Devil anything that had no meaning for them; such a person would also probably have been stoned by the Nigerians in whom inferiority complex was then finding a soothing compensation in the adoption of what appeared to them to be a fashionable and more acceptable way of life.⁹

As soon as the Lagos churches became self-supporting, following Venn's missionary strategy, they were organised into a native pastorate along the lines of the Native Pastorate Church in Sierra Leone.¹⁰ In 1887, "after a decade of European missionary opposition", the process was completed. No white missionaries held ministerial positions in Lagos except at Christ Church where most Europeans worshipped and which remained outwith the pastorate.¹¹ However, like Freetown, the Anglican Church in Lagos remained under the overall control of a white bishop.

After their successes in Yorubaland, the next major field of CMS expansion was the Niger. In 1857, with the founding of the Niger Mission led by Ajayi Crowther and his Krio assistants, Henry Venn saw a golden opportunity to realise his vision of a completely African mission, led by an African, which would eliminate racial tensions. In 1864 he persuaded the Archbishop to consecrate Crowther as Bishop and set up the Niger Diocese - the second Diocese of the Anglican church in West Africa - under Crowther's charge.

It was an experiment which aroused considerable interest. Its expected success was to be an eloquent answer to those who were disparaging the Negro race. The Niger, with its African staff and leadership, was to prove that educated Africans could carry the gospel successfully to the interior of the continent.¹²

The Niger Mission, manned mainly by Krio agents, advanced further into the West African interior than any previous missionary effort and encountered the advance of Islam from the north. Following Venn's death on 13th January 1873, enthusiasm for his Africanisation policy waned. The rising tide of British imperial racism and the counter-current of African nationalism began to seriously affect missionary and church relations. British missionaries resisted coming under native authority. They were unhappy with the morality of Crowther's Krio agents and Crowther's own gradualist approach to polygyny. Crowther believed the missionaries' radical approach encouraged adultery and brought great distress on abandoned wives and their children. His approach to indigenous practices was cautious and non-confrontationalist.¹³ However, the practice of twin exposure he repeatedly condemned, basing his criticism on Genesis 25:23, "Two nations are in thy womb". The English

missionaries regarded his approach to African custom and culture as weak and compromising. His live and let live policy towards Islam in Nupe also drew criticism from missionaries alarmed at Islam's southward advance.¹⁴ In an 1887 defence of his Islamic strategy:

He pointed to the significant doctrinal problems which faced missionaries in proselytising among Muslims, citing the Christian beliefs in the Incarnation and the Trinity as great stumbling-blocks. He also attempted to explain Islam's success as due to activities which the Christian Church either forbade or discountenanced: the use of the "sword", the approval of polygamy, the sale of charms, etc. Finally, he observed that while Christianity required a long course of study before admission, Islam did not.¹⁵

In the 1880s a new breed of evangelical missionaries, inspired by the Keswick holiness, sanctification, and world evangelism teachings, was arriving on the field. Several were Cambridge educated and radical. They wanted to tear down what they saw as the faulty workmanship of the previous decades resulting from Venn's indigenisation policy. Their reforming zeal focused especially on Bishop Crowther and his Krio agents in the Niger Diocese. They saw ineptitude and immorality, and a work which hindered the Gospel and was preventing its message of salvation reaching multitudes of Africans dying without Christ.

A type of disguised European supervision was gradually introduced in the 1880s. In the latter years of the decade a large number of Europeans were sent to the Niger, and so began the purge of the mission associated with the names of J. A. Robinson and G. W. Brooke. The issue raised in the purge became involved in the issue of Crowther's successor.¹⁶

Brooke's purge climaxed with the Onitsha meeting of the Finance Committee in August 1890. Crowther and the Niger pastors attended. The pastors, including Crowther's son Archdeacon Dandeson Crowther, were suspended without being formally charged or given opportunity to mount a defence. They were accused and condemned by "juniors in age, service and experience, and strangers to the country and people."¹⁷ Brooke, a radical, zealous, twenty-four years old missionary with a very low opinion of Africans, had only arrived on the field in 1889. Bishop Crowther himself was never publicly or privately accused of malpractice or immorality, but was reprimanded by the CMS members on the Finance Committee for his lack of control over the accused assistants. He was criticised for not preaching "Gospel

sermons" - that is evangelical, expository sermons emphasising "new birth" and "complete surrender" - during his evangelistic tours.¹⁸ The trial was a savage blow against Crowther and all that he and the Niger Mission represented. Consequently it was a blow against the rising aspirations of West African Christians to be masters in their own house and rulers of their own Christian destiny. Bishop Crowther resigned from the Committee. Before his death on 31st December 1891, he wrote CMS defending his Niger pastors, pointing out the severe difficulties they had to face and the heavy work-loads they had to bear. Tasié claims Crowther was "much too lenient up to a point of weakness as a superintendent."¹⁹ Crowther himself, in 1884, admitted to the Sierra Leone Native Pastorate Committee his disappointment in Krio agents who brought "discredit on the holy work for which they have been appointed".²⁰ Wherever the faults lay, Sanneh correctly maintains:

The adverse view CMS came to take of the work of Bishop Crowther in the Niger Mission was a significant factor in generating an active reservoir of separatist sentiment from which independency was to gush forth in bursts of quick succession.²¹

Blyden arrived in Lagos on 23rd December 1890 when tensions were at breaking point. On 2nd January 1891, at the St. Paul's Breadfruit school, he called for the formation of an independent West African Church declaring that while foreigners were in control and Christianity continued to be expressed in alien forms the evangelisation of Africa would never be accomplished. He happily prophesied that without foreign funds the present European church structures would collapse. Already in 1888 the Nigerian Baptists in Lagos had set a precedent by breaking away from their missionary domination and organising the independent Native Baptist Church. Of this highly significant event Webster writes:

Without being aware of it, the Native Baptists in 1888 ushered in a new era of Christianity among the Yoruba. A spell had been broken, a door had been opened for Christians of every mission affiliation to find a dignified means of escape from the tyranny of the rule of the societies.²²

The Baptists, however, were the smallest Christian group in Lagos, so Blyden sought to extend and direct this general dissatisfaction with missionary control into a Pan-African religio-political movement. James Johnson, minister of St. Paul's, Breadfruit, the largest and

most influential church in Lagos, drew up a constitution and doctrinal statement for the new church. The West African Church was to be inaugurated in March 1891 upon a signal being given by Johnson for all ministers involved, Anglicans, Methodists and Baptists, to switch pulpits and declare the birth of the new African church. Johnson never gave the signal. He shied away from schism. Without his leadership the programme aborted. In place of the West African Church, the United Native African Church was founded on 14th August 1891 by nine laymen representing discontents from several churches who had lost faith in their leadership. It aimed to purge foreign forms from the Church and evangelise the continent. The founders sought to "design a church where everything was purely Native" and cleansed of Western features.²³ The church never attained its goals and "slipped into becoming another denomination in Lagos rather than an alternative to mission Christianity."²⁴

Urged on by clergy from the Delta, Lagos and Sierra Leone, who resented the intrusion of missionary supervision into the Niger Diocese, Bishop Crowther, in May 1891, drew up plans for a Niger Delta Pastorate. Finance was to be provided by Lagos and Sierra Leone until the Pastorate became self-supporting. James Johnson was elected chairman of the Delta Finance Committee. Before the scheme was officially inaugurated Crowther died.²⁵ CMS were unwilling to consecrate another black bishop. On 29th April 1892, Archdeacon Crowther, using the colour issue to raise illiterate grass-roots support for his frustrated demands that a black bishop to replace his father - he and James Johnson were the leading contenders - led a secession of Delta agents to form the Delta Native Pastorate Church.²⁶ Tasie sees the term "Native" as a "misnomer" since all the agents in the Delta Pastorate, except one, were Krio, and questions how independent the Pastorate was while dominated by Sierra Leoneans.²⁷ He considers the secession as being premature. The Delta revolt ended in April 1898 with Crowther, unable to finance the movement, publicly resigning his position as leader and informing his people to look to the English Bishop Tugwell "as their head in everything".²⁸ Crowther and his clergy signed the Declaration of Loyalty to Bishop Tugwell. Thereupon Crowther was invited to act as Tugwell's commissary and archdeacon and the

demands for a black bishop in the Delta slowly died away. The parallels with the submission of the rebel pastors of the Native Pastorate in Sierra Leone are obvious.

On 13th October 1901, eight hundred parishioners, led by the Egba Saro, J. K. Coker, seceded from the Breadfruit church to found the African Church, the largest and most influential schism to date.²⁹ The seceders built their own church which they named Bethel. They became known as the "Bethelites". Johnson, who had been consecrated Assistant Bishop over the Niger Delta, had just left Lagos. Webster writes:

The second service of the secession was held the following Sunday. At the close of the service a messenger arrived calling, "Come back, come back, Bishop Johnson is weeping". After a brief pause a woman remarked that if Christ had turned back at his mother's tears the salvation of the world would have been lost, and taking up "Onward Christian Soldiers", the secession hardened into schism. Johnson had lost his magic leadership over those whose ideas he had moulded. He now appeared conservative and committed to the established order. The secession left Johnson inside the Anglican Church without a following, and the secessionists embarking on a historic adventure, leaderless.³⁰

The African Church became a denomination which differed slightly from its parent body, but it became a home for Africans who no longer wished to remain in the white controlled mission church. However, "division and strife", particularly over polygamists being admitted to membership and communion, plagued the African Church until 1922 when "an uneasy compromise" was established.³¹

The independency issue came to a head among the Methodists in 1917 when the Rev. C. O. Griffin of Lagos initiated a crack down on polygamy among the church leaders. According to Sanneh, "It was like opening Pandora's Box: the ten original leaders he intended to expel were joined by fifty-five others who admitted at a public meeting that they too were polygamists."³² The polygamists were expelled, but they "regarded themselves as good Methodists" and wishing to continue as such they reorganised themselves into the United African Methodist Church. They were a typical Ethiopian church, retaining most of the Methodist rule and doctrine while maintaining that polygamy was acceptable Christian

behaviour for Africans. The separatists remained a small group numbering around five hundred in 1920.

While the new independent churches were primarily concerned with the issue of foreign domination, they were also aware of the need to indigenise the liturgy and the administrative structures. African versions of Western hymns were introduced into the worship and the drums began to make their presence felt. They struggled with the spiritual and social problems involved in the deep-rooted practice of polygyny, and, while allowing it for the laity, made monogamy the rule for the clergy.³³ They were, however, not prepared to make radical widespread departures from the pattern of church order and style they had inherited, and generally would fit into the category of African churches called "Ethiopian" by Sundkler.³⁴ They produced some dedicated missionaries who went out to the villages and small towns of Yorubaland establishing churches. Their numbers, however, were small compared to the Anglicans and Methodists. English control of the Anglican Church in Nigeria continued until the 1950s when the second black diocesan bishop was consecrated. This significantly obstructed the gradual and natural development of the Anglican Church in Nigeria and hindered the growth of an indigenous Christianity which could satisfy popular aspirations and adequately fill the spiritual vacuum created by the *situation coloniale*. The tensions, pressures and frustrations thus generated surfaced and burst forth in the Garrick Braide and Aladura movements.

THE GARRICK BRAIDE MOVEMENT

In tracing the origins of the Aladura movement the main focus must remain on the Anglicans and the emergence of Kalabari charismatic prophet healer, Garrick Sokari Braide, whom Tasie calls "one of West Africa's great prophetic figures".³⁵ Braide was born and spent his active life in Bakana, the home-town of his Kalabari mother, Abarigania, whose family were

custodians of the *Ogu* divinity cult.³⁶ His father, Idaketima Marian Braide, an Igbo of lower social status, was perhaps of slave background. Garrick Braide was a rower in Chief Marian Braide's canoe. The retiring age was normally about thirty. In the 1890s he attended Sunday School at St. Andrew's, the Niger Delta Pastorate church at Bakana pastored by Rev. Moses Alphonso Kemmer, a Krio. Instruction was in Igbo. Braide was not baptised until 25th January 1910. In 1912 he was confirmed by James Johnson. That same year, while partaking of Holy Communion, he experienced the presence and power of God in a dynamic way and received his call to missionary service.

As I knelt down with others ... the minister pronounced the words as I was about to receive the elements: "the body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee and feed on Him in thy heart with thanks-giving" a thrill came over me: a bright light flashed over my eyes and as the elements entered into my mouth, as it were a still small voice said to me: "Garrick Braide, for you Jesus dies [*sic*] for you He gave his body and shed His most precious blood on the cross to wash away your sins. Have you been washed in his precious blood?" In deep and silent tones I replied: Lord wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. After the communion, I knelt down in my pew and pour [*sic*] out my soul in prayer to God. I could not sleep the whole night; several times I had to get up from my bed and pray; at times I sat down and tears trickled down my eyes as I felt my own unworthiness and God's goodness to me. At about the still hours of the morning I heard a still small voice saying: "Garrick! Are you prepared to be my servant? Are you ready to witness to mankind the saving truths of the Gospel?"... my wife who was awake then watching my movements unobserved by me, asked me at daybreak to whom I was speaking before the dawn of day as she saw no one ... we knelt and prayed together.³⁷

After retiring from the chief's canoe, Braide fished, traded, and became a sidesman and pastor's warden at St. Andrew's Church. In 1914, in addition to his preaching and pastoral work, he held healing prayer meetings. Several healings took place and his predictions concerning the death or recovery of the critically ill were remarkably accurate.³⁸ The local people interpreted his increased powers as a sign that *Ogu* was operating through him. However, Braide publicly accused the indigenous priests and medicine-men of deception, and apparently approved the destruction of traditional religious shrines by his followers.³⁹ As his reputation as a healer grew, the popular adulation he attracted caused Kemmer and the elderly Johnson considerable anxiety. In an acrimonious confrontation in the vestry Braide angrily cursed Kemmer, declaring the doors of heaven closed against him.⁴⁰

By 1915 Braide was leading an outdoors grass-roots revival movement which in less than a year spread throughout southern Owerri province. Although the supreme attraction was healing, he popularised and indigenised the worship by introducing locally composed hymns which illiterates could memorise and sing with understanding and enjoyment. He encouraged clapping and dancing. The Braide movement attracted many who, conscious of the failure of the old religious systems and the native divinities in the face of European colonialism, were seeking new sources of spiritual power while also longing for a return of past glories. This was a time when indigenous religions were in "deep decline" and people were open to adopt new deities into their religious systems.⁴¹ Braide, a Kalabari, introduced Kalabari thought forms and religious style into Kalabari Christian worship. Tasié writes:

Because Braide was part of his society, with virtually the same background and psychological tendencies as his hearers, one can say he had none of the obvious barriers which the alien missionaries had, in knowing how to appeal to the minds of the local people. He spoke their language fluently, knew their idioms and was familiar with their cosmology and fears of the forces of nature. Among a people who naturally are often anxious about the future and believed very strongly in destiny, it was no surprise that Braide easily became the most famous evangelist of his time in the Niger Delta. People flocked wherever they knew he would be preaching and healing.⁴²

Braide crusaded ruthlessly against charms believing that until faith in their power was destroyed people would not become truly Christians.⁴³

His principal demands were that his hearers should destroy any of their traditional objects of worship and charms, and confess their sins and demonstrate in their lives an absolute dependence on God. For anybody who knows the area of Braide's activity, this was certainly much to ask from people whose land is full of traditional religious shrines and charms. He preached abstention from alcoholic drinks and, as far as available evidence goes, this was for the reason that he believed alcohol had effects upon moral behaviour. He strongly encouraged strenuous religious exercises, especially praying (sometimes specifying no less than twenty times a day) and fasting.⁴⁴

However, by emphasising prayer, fasting and healing through the power of God, Braide retained and indeed strengthened three of the fundamental pillars of West African religion. For a brief period he did in the Niger Delta what the meteoric and eccentric Kruman, Prophet Harris, an Episcopalian catechist, had been doing from 1912 in Liberia, the Ivory Coast and the Gold Coast.⁴⁵ He addressed local problems in culturally appropriate ways and touched

deep spiritual and emotional chords in the hearts of the Kalabari people with the Gospel. His devotion to the Bible resembled that of Prophet Harris.⁴⁶ Braide was credited with exaggerated powers and gained a reputation as a rain-maker.⁴⁷ His message, like that of Harris, demanded a trust in God which was demonstrated by abandoning idols, fetish and charms, and any recourse to familiar spirits for spiritual help and power. Braide did not deny the efficacy of these means of tapping supernatural power, but he believed them to be inferior, contrary to the Word of God, and ultimately harmful. He emphasised direct immediate contact with God through prayer and the avoidance of all intermediary sources of spiritual power except Christ alone. The Rev. A. W. Banfield, Secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, reported a Braide gathering being like "an old fashioned revival meeting, where people were to be seen prostrated on the floor calling out for forgiveness, while others were praying and confessing their sins."⁴⁸ In order to sustain his spiritual power he fasted often, regarding this as "an indispensable spiritual exercise".⁴⁹ Braide was a proto-Aladura leading an embryonic Aladura movement within the autonomous Niger Delta Pastorate. Nicknamed "Elijah" by Kemmer, Braide was now called Elijah the Second.

Braide's revival was the first native led Christian mass-movement in the Delta, but some of its ethnocentric aspects which found expression in demands for self-determination, troubled foreigners like the Krio clergy and the British administrators. At a rally at Abonnema on 7th January 1916 Braide declared that the day of the white man was over and that it was up to the natives to determine their own fate. A clash between Johnson, the alien priest upholding the establishment, esoteric ritual, and holy order, and Braide, the native prophet demanding self-determination, indigenous worship and change, was inevitable. At a meeting at Bonny in February 1916 Johnson refused to accept Braide as a prophet of God bringing into existence a genuinely native church in the Niger Delta.⁵⁰ In March, Braide, perceived as a political agitator, was imprisoned on charges of sedition and unauthorised fund-raising. Johnson's rejection of Braide left him unsupported facing the authorities. He was sentenced in November. While in prison his followers organised themselves into a separatist movement

called the Christ Church Army which operated as a rival to the Niger Delta Pastorate Church.⁵¹ Another group of his followers formed the Garrick Braide Church. By 1921 they claimed 7,280 adherents while the Christ Army Church could boast of 21,155.⁵² Shortly after being released from prison, Braide contracted influenza and died on 5th November 1918.

The *Lagos Weekly Record* paid this tribute:

The God of the Negro it would seem has arisen as a strong man from a deep sleep and surveying the wreck and ruin - the physical and moral degradation of the dusky sons of Africa has gathered up his loins together to redress the balance of the old regime and already has begun to raise up instruments of his sweet will. Prodigies like Garrick or William Waddy Harris are neither impostors nor false prophets. They are merely temporary vehicles for some manifestations of the divine will.⁵³

The revival spawned a host of independent evangelists who took their inspiration from the Anglican prophet-healer. Some were over-enthusiastic iconoclasts, others were frauds who looted the local shrines. Others were obviously sincere, but never made as clean and clear a break with the old sources of power as did their master. As Tasié observes:

... although Christianity achieved a very rapid expansion, largely as a result of Braide's activities, in many cases those who claimed to have been Christianized manifested ignorance even of the very basic teachings of Gospel Christianity. For many, Christianity had become tantamount to a cult for healing of diseases by prayer without any medication, foretelling the future, or solving man's many problems. In some cases, even where religious exercises such as prayer and fasting were performed, they were seen more in terms of prescriptions for healing physical ailments or as a prelude to a better material future.⁵⁴

Some of these were to significantly influence the Aladura movement, especially the Church of the Lord (Aladura). Also, Christianity was not the only player on Nigeria's religious field. Various indigenous movements were redefining their spirit cults in terms of Christianity.⁵⁵

THE EMERGENCE OF THE ALADURAS

When the world-wide influenza epidemic struck Nigeria in 1918 many Christians had already become aware that sickness could be cured by prayer and faith in God. Joseph B. Shadare, a goldsmith from Ijebu-Ode and synodsmen of Saint Saviour's Anglican Church, had, as a

member of the Diocesan Board, been involved in investigations into the Braide movement. With the onset of the epidemic, he had a recurring dream of a church divided into two parts, one large and one small. The large part was occupied by prayerless believers sitting in darkness. The small part, occupied by men and women of prayer, blazed with light. Shadare, popularly known as Daddy Ali, understood the message of the dream was to start a prayer group in the church to pray against the effects of the plague. When the Government closed down the churches and the pastor of Saint Saviour's had left the parish, the prayer group continued to meet in Shadare's house. Turner claims that this group "could be regarded historically as the first of the aladura societies".⁵⁶ However, many of the Braide churches operated as Aladura societies. Also, a variety of independent grass-roots evangelists were praying for the sick and ministering as itinerating prophets. Indigenous healers using Christian paraphernalia were also involved in combating the plague.⁵⁷

The Precious Stone Society and Faith Tabernacle

A relative of Shadare, Sophia Odunlami, a teacher at the Anglican school, following a bout of influenza had visions in which God revealed he would send a rain which would cure sickness. However, she was warned against using modern medicines. Healing would come through prayer, faith and consecrated water. Consecrated water in the indigenous ontology was the primary medium for obtaining cultic purity, washing away the pollutions of witchcraft and restoring health. Odunlami travelled about preaching against many features of church life, surreptitious magical practices, smart clothes and Sunday feasts. As a prophetess-healer, she made inspired predictions concerning people's future. She joined Shadare's group at Ijebu-Ode and in July 1920 they took the name Precious Stone Society while still remaining within the Anglican Church as "a semi-autonomous Pentecostal prayer and divine healing group."⁵⁸ Another member of the group was Ogunleye Odubanjo from Ijebu-Ode. Odubanjo, a Muslim, became a Christian while attending school. Shadare had been one of his sponsors when he went to study at Saint Andrew's College, Oyo. In 1917, while a police clerk at Warri, he came across *The Sword of the Spirit*, a publication by Faith Tabernacle,

a Holiness Movement church from Philadelphia, USA.⁵⁹ He was particularly impressed by the article "The Seven Principles of Prevailing Prayer". Faith Tabernacle emphasised healing by the Holy Spirit through prayer. Odubanjo had dreams which encouraged him to pray for healing. He returned to Ijebu-Ode, joined Shadare and the Precious Stones, and introduced them to Faith Tabernacle publications. Later he moved to Lagos and founded a Lagos branch of the Precious Stones. They met in a schoolroom at Saint Andrew's Church, Oke Popo. By 1924 there were over one hundred and fifty in the Lagos congregation.

In May 1920, at the first synod meeting of the newly formed diocese of Lagos, there was a complaint concerning "persons styling themselves 'prophets'" who had preached in one of the Anglican churches and claimed the right to preach in others.⁶⁰ While these prophets could have been Odubanjo and Shadare, there were several other preaching prophets in Lagos at that time. Egunjobi, formerly a powerful juju man, had seen a shining angel while hunting near Ibadan in 1912. The angel commanded him to preach, warning the people of God's anger and approaching calamities. These were later identified with the Great War and the flu epidemic. Egunjobi's apocalyptic preaching made an impact on Lagos. He also emphasised prayer for the sick along with the use of healing herbs mixed with water and the recitation of Psalms. There was some connection between Egunjobi and Moses Orimolade, the prophet-healer founder of the Cherubim and Seraphim society who also preached and ministered widely in Lagos, as the place where the angel appeared to Egunjobi and where it reportedly left its footprint on a rock is a sacred site for the Cherubim and Seraphim.⁶¹

Late in 1921 the English Bishop of Lagos, Melville Jones, met the Precious Stone leaders and was impressed with their Christian life-style, emphasis on prayer, and the signs of revival power among them. This, he believed, was an answer to the prayers of the Lambeth Conference. They all agreed that God revealed his will through dreams and visions, but that these needed to be tested against Scripture. Jones asked the leaders to allow for healing through medicine in conjunction with prayer and also to support the Anglican policy on infant

baptism. Matters came to a head at the 1922 synod meeting when Jones announced that Shadare had refused to baptise his children claiming he had been warned against this in a vision, and as a consequence he had ordered Shadare to resign as synodsmen. The society interpreted this as persecution and broke from the Anglican Church. Shadare and sixty others were re-baptised by total immersion and the society affiliated with Faith Tabernacle. The affiliation provided no money or missionaries, only literature, encouragement, and a new name. In 1928 the affiliation was dropped following an adultery scandal involving Clark and a split in the Philadelphia church.⁶² The Nigerian Faith Tabernacle churches emphasised holiness and high standards of Christian behaviour. Their sermons proclaimed God's power to heal, protect, and bless in the present circumstances. Much time was given to prayer for the sick and needy. A Methodist, converted at the Lagos Faith Tabernacle in 1924, testified:

All this was new to me - that God was still doing this today. I'd never heard this in the Methodist church, nor that God meets our financial needs also, and protects us from all dangers and perils. As Methodists we had relied on juju as our parents had done; we had gone to native doctors, and that meant bowing to idols. We also knew and used seals and charms, and angel-names as in the sixth and seventh books of Moses.⁶³

The religious dualism observed in Krio Christianity also operated in Nigeria.

Faith Tabernacle spread from Ijebu-Ode and Lagos to Ilesha, seventy miles north-east of Ibadan, through a trader and Anglican catechist called Babatope. Around 1920, in his village church outside Ilesha, Babatope experienced an angelic visitation which lasted six hours. The angel appeared in the form of a stranger, had answers for all Babatope's questions. There was nothing in the Bible that he did not know. He instructed Babatope on marriage and the ministry of angels.⁶⁴ In 1922 Babatope came across Faith Tabernacle literature and with a few like-minded friends formed a prayer group in the church. Turner records:

This was the first time they realised that healing could be had through prayer and faith alone, without using "means", that is, "juju" or "medicine". They abandoned the use of means, formed a prayer group in the local church, and somehow established relations with Shadare and Odubanjo and exchanged visits. The local minister warned them that they would be excommunicated if they continued, so they withdrew from the Anglican Church and established a branch of the Faith Tabernacle in nearby Ilesha, with Babatope as leader.⁶⁵

Faith Tabernacle reached Ibadan, then the largest city in tropical Africa, through the young Ijebu, J. Ade Aina. Aina had been a member of the church both in Ijebu-Ode and Lagos, but was transferred to Ibadan in October 1924 by his leather company. He wrote to Faith Tabernacle in Philadelphia asking for the name of anyone in the city who was receiving their literature. On their mailing list was Isaac Babalola Akinyele, a cocoa farmer. Akinyele, born in 1882, belonged to one of the first families in Ibadan to embrace Christianity. In 1912 he was elected leader of his church society at Saint Peter's Anglican Church, Aremo, Ibadan. From 1898 to 1901 he attended a CMS secondary school in Lagos. There he had befriended Shadare. Later both served on the diocesan synod.⁶⁶ Akinyele underwent a conversion experience in 1914 during a revival meeting. He testified, "I found that Jesus by his blood dealt favourably with my yesterday and will be guidance for my tomorrow."⁶⁷ In sermons, he compared his conversion with that of Martin Luther. Akinyele, Aina, and two others, met for prayer and fellowship at Akinyele's house. Akinyele now threw away all his traditional charms and abandoned all medicines, indigenous and Western. The first organised Faith Tabernacle service in Ibadan was held on 18th January 1925. A December 1926 Faith Tabernacle publication contained Akinyele's testimony of having a vision of the Cross and being healed of a "long-standing physical ailment".⁶⁸ Akinyele dropped his Anglican involvements.⁶⁹ Following the 1939 split over the Welsh Apostolic Church connection, he was elected head of the main Faith Tabernacle body which took the name Nigerian Apostolic Church. In 1957 he was made head and "Father" of the Christ Apostolic Church, the largest church in the evangelical wing of the Aladura movement.⁷⁰ When Akinyele died at his birthplace, Oke Alafara, Ibadan, on 26th May 1964, the Christ Apostolic Church had over 100,000 members. In 1970 a branch was established in Freetown.⁷¹

The Cherubim and Seraphim Society

While Odubanjo was establishing Faith Tabernacle, Moses Orimolade Tunolashe, a wandering, illiterate, lame prophet-evangelist, was gaining a reputation as a prayer-healer in Lagos. Orimolade was born at Ikare in the Akoko district in the 1870s. He had been partially

cured of a serious illness following a vision and bathing in a stream, two common features of indigenous healing. Orimolade travelled north into Muslim areas reaching as far as Kano. At Ilorin he built a prayer-house and became known as Alhaadji-n-Yisa (Hajj Jesus). Orimolade belonged to the African Church, but had refused an offer to become a full-time evangelist with them. In Lagos he stayed with J. K. Coker of the African Church, who had him preach in the African churches in the district, and also at the parsonage of the Anglican church, Holy Trinity, at Ebute Ero, where a relative was sexton. Meanwhile, on Corpus Christi Day, 18th June 1925, fifteen year old Christianah Abiodun Akinsowon, daughter of a clergyman of the African Church at Porto Novo and pupil of the Roman Catholic school, saw an angel while attending the Corpus Christi procession in Lagos. The angel followed her back to her uncle's house where she fell into a deep trance. The uncle called the pastor of Saint Paul's Breadfruit - also Archdeacon of Lagos - where Abiodun had been preparing for confirmation. He diagnosed hallucination. The uncle also sent for Orimolade, now living in the congested Olowogbowo quarter with an eminent Muslim named Momo Giwa, who regarded him as a "holy man". Orimolade ordered the people to clap and sing while he prayed. Abiodun came out of her trance claiming she had travelled to a celestial region where she had been shown many mysteries and made to undergo a severe spiritual test. Angels had shown her how to heal using special prayers and water.

Abiodun joined Orimolade at Olowogbowo. They started a prayer and healing group which attracted many. The group fasted and prayed for a name from God. After three days one woman claimed to have seen in vision the letters *SE*. This was interpreted as "Seraphim" after the angels who appeared to Abiodun. On 9th September 1925, the Seraphim Society was consecrated. The members "turned to the East, and called on the great name of Jah Jehovah".⁷² A vision of Holy Michael, the Archangel, led to Michael being chosen as the society's patron or captain. In March 1926, another angel revelation resulted in their name being changed to Cherubim and Seraphim. The group met outwith regular church services times and had several Anglican and Methodist members. Worship was lively with native

drums, percussion instruments, and congregational clapping to maintain rhythm. Revelations and prophesyings were encouraged and those who had visions enjoyed great prestige. The visionaries, *ariran*, were the ultimate authority figures. According to Peel, "All major doctrinal and ritual developments were sanctioned by vision."⁷³ Open air evangelism was a passion of Orimolade. The group processed in white robes and coloured sashes as revealed in visions. The robes were similar to those worn by worshippers of "the great *orisha*", *Orishanla*, regarded as the creator of the world, also called *Obatala*.⁷⁴ The procession spectacle drew crowds of onlookers and added to the membership. Other "revealed" practices which were common to indigenous religion, Old Testament law, and Islam, with which Orimolade had close contact, were, removing shoes before entering places of worship, prohibition on eating pork, denying menstruating women admission into holy places, burning candles and incense, and an annual pilgrimage procession, a Hajj, to a holy hill or high place.⁷⁵

Like Braide and Faith Tabernacle, Cherubim and Seraphim displayed extreme hostility towards the *orisha*, idols, charms and native medicine; the old sources of spiritual power which had proved incapable of resisting white imperialism and European culture. The ***Nigerian Daily Telegraph*** reported the Cherubim and Seraphim singing in the Lagos streets:

We stamp Satan under our feet.... The Sword of Michael, the Sword of God.... Iggunu God cannot harm us.... Sopona God cannot harm us.... The Sword of the Seraphs will destroy them.⁷⁶

Orimolade preached that sin against the Holy Spirit was to profess faith in God and then go secretly to the *babalawo*.⁷⁷ Abiodun exhorted to "renounce idols and juju and rely on prayer for all your needs, for it is truly effective."⁷⁸ The 1929 Constitution of the Praying Band, an elite prayer group selected through visions, included the following prohibition:

Members shall neither keep nor use *Shigidi* (Clay Idols used in sending out bad medicines to kill people); *Sokuro* (Medicine hung up with intention to prevent death); *Tira*, *Igbadi* and *Onde* (Charm and Talisman sewn in leather or parchment put around waist or neck for self protection); *Epe* or *Ase* (Imprecations); *Arimole* (burying of medicines in the ground for self protection); *Apeta* (Power [powder?] used to cause poisonous boils or carbuncles); *Oruka Ere* (Rings soaked in bad medicine for slapping the face or shaking the hands of foes); *Akaraba* (Charms used to hypnotize and to cause mischief); *Agada-godo* (Juju Padlocks used by thieves and robbers to mesmerize or cause to go astray); *Gbenren Sisin* (Skin marks by incision with juju

powder for prevention against witchcraft or snake bite); *Awure* (Medicine or charm trusted upon for luck or prosperity); *Madarikan* (Medicine or charm trusted upon as a means of protection against enemies); *Agbelepotá* (Medicine or charms to kill enemies unaware); *Ibunilése* or *Ilase* (Medicine used to poison one's feet and cause Elephantiasis), etc., etc. Doctor's treatment is not disallowed.⁷⁹

This radical approach to the indigenous religious system had been conspicuously absent at a national level from the mission planted churches both in Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

The Anglican Synod of 1928 complimented the faith and prayer life of this growing movement, which could bring over three thousand white robed members out onto the streets of Lagos on their annual procession day. At the same time it condemned their reliance on dreams and visions as "replacing superstition with superstition", and warned the churches of "weird movements of the Seraphim type".⁸⁰ The Methodist Synod also opposed them and advised that "the Seraphim movement must be regarded as hostile to the spread of Scriptural holiness, and as such is one in which our people ought not to take part".⁸¹ Following the Anglican Synod's condemnation the Cherubim and Seraphim broke their tenuous connections with the Anglican Church. In 1929 the two leaders parted company following a quarrel over an Ilesha girl for whom Orimolade had prayed and afterwards kept at his house. Another accusation levelled against the "Baba Aladura" was that he took money for his prayers. There were complaints that his assistant Bada was overdoing prophesying and praying against people. There have been repeated splits and breakaways in the movement which, due to its emphasis on healings, visions, revelations, miracles and high profile outreaches, has grown. By 1980 the Cherubim and Seraphim had around 1,500 congregations, mainly in Nigeria and Ghana, and over 100,000 members.⁸²

Since the Cherubim and Seraphim has only very recently started a small work in Freetown and did not, according to Turner, play any significant part in the great 1930 revival, the concern with them here is to point out that although they are an Aladura movement, and manifest common Aladura phenomena in their indigenisation of Christianity, they demonstrate certain crucial differences with Faith Tabernacle in the areas of doctrine,

liturgical practice, and approach to Scripture. They do, however, exhibit fundamental and substantial similarities to the Church of the Lord (Aladura), particularly in the area of dependence upon dreams, visions, and especially the revelations of the founders and visionaries. The similarities can be explained as resulting from their reasonably common backgrounds and the direct contact that existed between the two movements at least from the early 1930s. Much of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) liturgy shows Cherubim and Seraphim influence. The main concern of Cherubim and Seraphim was to build up an indigenous Christian society where divine power operating through revelatory-healers could within a Christian context provide solutions to contemporary African problems. Their grasp of Bible teaching and Christian doctrine was weak. Orimolade was illiterate and Akinsowon was very young during the early formative period. Faith Tabernacle, on the other hand, while similarly concerned with power and problem-solving, were also exercised to advance as an evangelical "Holiness" group and submit their pneumatological practices to Biblical teaching and authority.

JOSEPH BABALOLA AND THE 1930 FAITH TABERNACLE REVIVAL

South-east of Ilesha, in October 1928, a twenty-four years old employee of the Public Works Department, Joseph Ayo Babalola, was driving his steam-roller along the Ilesha-Akure road when the roller stopped and a voice called him by name. The voice commanded him to leave his work and preach the Gospel or he would die within a year. Babalola was the son of the CMS *baba egbe* (society head) at Ilofa, a small town just inside the northern Muslim province of Ilorin. He had attended school in Lagos and had left from Standard Four. Babalola was instructed to preach that prayer and *omi iye* (the water of life) would cure all sickness and that all medicines must be destroyed. He was commanded to carry around a bell. He abandoned his work and returned to Ilofa. He entered the town naked and covered with ashes. Apparently suffering from madness or spirit possession, or both, he was lodged

in the local prison for two weeks. Shortly afterwards a smallpox epidemic broke out. Babalola started a prayer-healing meeting at the CMS church. Healings took place and also pneumatic manifestations which members subsequently claimed to have been the Pentecostal baptism in the Holy Spirit.⁸³ Late in 1929, opposition forced Babalola to leave Ilofa. He made his way to Ibadan where he contacted a relative who was a member of Faith Tabernacle and who introduced him to Akinyele. In December he travelled to Lagos. At a meeting, which lasted six and a half hours, he told the congregation of his call and the healings that had taken place. They affirmed that his call was from God and extended the right hand of fellowship. Babalola was baptised by Odubanjo in the sea at Ebute Metta on 9th December.

Early in 1930 the Faith Tabernacle churches, which were at this time operating as an African Holiness Movement church with an emphasis on prayer, healing and spiritual power, began to pray and fast for revival, miracles, and a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Pentecostal power. In Lagos a young Ijebu, Daniel Orekoya, had a vision which revealed that God would answer their prayers on condition they abandoned idolatry, did not despise prophesy, and contributed generously financially. Up to this point the movement was African evangelical revivalist with an American Holiness Movement input, rather than Pentecostal. In 1922 Odubanjo had written to Philadelphia for advice on Pentecostal phenomena. Peel believes Pentecostalism had not yet appeared in Nigeria, but that Odubanjo had become interested through his avid tract reading and Bible study. However, Pentecostal style phenomena springing from the indigenous religious *milieu* were already increasingly intruding into Nigerian Christianity. Odubanjo, in the light of his reading and study, was most likely seeking a Biblical explanation for what was already happening within the growing Aladura movement rather than looking for something new. Clark replied that "the Pentecostal tongues delusion" was "satanic".⁸⁴ When the ties with Faith Tabernacle in Philadelphia were broken, Odubanjo, who was also in correspondence with Faith and Truth Temple of Toronto, established an association with them in 1928. This church was favourably disposed to the Pentecostal

doctrines of baptism in the Holy Spirit and the operation of *charismata* which included speaking in tongues (*glossolalia*) and prophecy, as well as healing. Missionaries from the Toronto church passed through Lagos in 1928 *en route* to Upper Volta. Their exposure to Pentecostal *charismata* seems to have whetted Faith Tabernacle's appetite for more manifestations of the Holy Ghost's power and presence in their own worship.⁸⁵ Odubanjo's correspondence with the Apostolic Church in Wales added more fuel to this desire. When Babalola came to Lagos in December 1929 his testimony inspired the congregation to fully commit themselves in fasting and praying for a mighty revival.

As revival expectancy gripped the Lagos church, a leaders' conference was arranged for July 1930 at Ilesha, in order to build up their most isolated church. The Ilesha congregation had been slipping from the strict Faith Tabernacle standards regarding baptising polygamists and the rejection of all medicines traditional and modern.⁸⁶ Babalola accompanied the leaders to Ilesha. On the third day of the conference, having testified to his call, "Babalola prayed for some women and uttered various revelations about their lives that were recognised to be true, and some sudden and remarkable healings occurred."⁸⁷ Soon hundreds gathered to the hill Oke Oye. Babalola dressed in white shirt and shorts, Bible in one hand and bell in the other, exhorted the swelling crowds several times a day to abandon witchcraft, destroy their idols and charms and have faith in the power of God to provide for all their needs and to heal them. Babalola, influenced by the role of consecrated water in the indigenous ontology as a source of healing and purification from witchcraft, interpreted the *omi iye*, "water of life", of his prophetic call literally. He prayed over the stream that separated Oke Oye from the town, and consecrated the water for divine healing through the power of the Holy Spirit. The revival broke out and spread.

A District Officer who attended a meeting noted its purely religious and inoffensive character; it was not dramatic or exciting, and was most impressive when the people raised the water-vessels on their heads for Babalola to bless them. He took no money and the crowds were orderly; the worst confusion was on the roads leading to Ilesha from Ibe and Ijebu.⁸⁸

In the short term, the consecrated water acted as a bridge for illiterates to cross from indigenous religion into Christianity. However, without Biblical teaching and understanding the end result was to merely relinquish an old indigenous method of healing and protecting from witchcraft for a newer, simpler and cheaper Christianised version. Disagreements over the use of consecrated water for healing were to lead to splits within the movement. Babalola himself agreed to abandon the practice which, where it was still continued, was seen to actually hinder the Christian development of the church.

The revival at Ilesha lasted until the beginning of September when Babalola departed for Ilofa. At Efon, about twenty miles east of Ilesha, he was granted a piece of land by the *oba*, who had become an ardent follower. Babalola chose an area known to be the residence of spirits who had forbidden any building or cultivation to take place there. He consecrated the stream as *omi iye* and ordered the destruction of all idols and charms. A huge pile of carvings and juju was collected. Peel records:

One kind of juju was called *aiyara*, used to kill one's enemies, and at each success the *aiyara* has a nail driven through it - it is said that 40 of these were collected, some with as many as 61 nails! Two tins of kerosene and two of palm oil were burnt; in the conflagration some of the images, it is said, jumped from the flames to reproach their owners! All the shrines in the town except one were destroyed, and Efon, which had been a major centre of wood carving, was almost denuded of its carvings.⁸⁹

The positive spontaneous response of ordinary illiterate Yorubas to Babalola's message indicated that many were glad to change when a demonstrably more powerful religious system was meaningfully presented to them in the familiar terms of the old metaphysic. Babalola, popularly known as *Woli Onise-Iyanu* (miracle-working prophet), made Efon, where the great majority of the population associated with him and the Faith Tabernacle church, the base from which he outreached to the towns of the Ekiti region.

Returning to Lagos, Daniel Orekoya, stopped at Ibadan. A revival broke out at the Faith Tabernacle "healing ground" at Oke Bola, and spread throughout the city through other newly inspired prophet-healers. The recorded healings at Ibadan included, "pregnancy without

giving birth" 202, bellyache 87, miscarriage 49, witchcraft 41, backache 161, blindness 24, women's sickness 24, raised from the dead 22, infertility 11, hunchbacked 15, coughing 22, gonorrhoea 19, rashes and blemishes 11, etc., in all 2,538 cures.⁹⁰ Ogunranti maintains that at Oke Bola Daniel Orekoya restored to life a woman who had been dead four days. The woman, named Abebo, "lived to witness to Christ until 1973."⁹¹ The revival spread beyond the boundaries of Faith Tabernacle's control. New prophets appeared and new groups, some who gained a reputation for extremism and excess, spread throughout Yorubaland. The Government, alarmed at the anti-colonial predictions of some prophets and their witch finding activities, had Babalola arrested early in 1932 on a charge of taking part in a witch-testing ordeal. He was sentenced to six months imprisonment. Critics of the revival maintained the cures were not genuine, that the revival's major concern was breaking witchcraft curses, and that the rush to drink *omi iye* was motivated by people's desire to prove they were not witches, since it was believed that on drinking *omi iye* witches would be forced to confess. However, in order to proclaim a culturally relevant Christ, confronting witchcraft had to play a major part in the revivalists' ministries, and offering deliverance from witchcraft, real or imagined, and witch accusations, had to be for many the main appeal of the revivalists. The issue to be faced here is not the scientific reality of witchcraft, but whether the power used to deal with witchcraft was seen to be from Christ, or merely from a new breed of men of spiritual power using new objects of power, or even some old ones, like holy water, in a more effective and powerful way. The Christian character and evangelical quality of Babalola's revival is succinctly stated by Peel when he writes, "Today the areas of Babalola's greatest influence - Ijesha, Ekifi and Akoko - are among the most heavily Christian in Yorubaland."⁹²

The Welsh Apostolic Church's Contribution to the Revival

In October 1932, at Odubanjo's invitation, D. P. Williams, leader of the Apostolic Church, accompanied by two pastors, visited Lagos, Abeokuta and Ibadan. Shadare in particular was not happy with this increasing foreign involvement. It was being cultivated in order to secure a British connection so that the Government would allow Faith Tabernacle to purchase land

and build churches for their expanding congregations, but it entailed a loss of control over the administration of the church. The controversy reached boiling point in 1933. Conflicting visions and interpretations were forthcoming. Babalola saw an angel bearing an envelope with "Apostolic Church" written on the back. At Ijebu-Ode, Miss Odunlami had a vision of an African holding a European baby. Her interpretation was that compared to Africans Europeans were spiritual babes. Odubanjo's interpretation was that Europeans were innocent like babies and would cause no harm. In the end there were more reasons for accepting the Apostolic Church than for rejecting them. Peel observes:

The biblicism of the Apostolic Church suited the Faith Tabernacle leaders well, and unlike the Faith Tabernacle [American], its own outgoing revivalism fitted well with what Babalola and the prophets had done; the doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Ghost fell on fertile soil, and the Yoruba members found the new church both emotionally and intellectually satisfying.⁹³

However, unease with the presence and control of the Apostolic missionaries continued. They were criticised for not understanding the Nigerian situation and for failing to exercise faith in the power of the Word of God. S. A. Pitan, a relative of Shadare, in a letter to Odubanjo, summed up the general attitude. Despite their failings they were "really good fellows", in contrast to the members of the Church of the Lord (Aladura), "God in his mercy cut them off ... mere spiritualists".⁹⁴

The first split came in 1937 when the Apostolic missionary at Ilesha attempted to persuade the Ekiti members to abandon the use of *omi iye*. Babalola had agreed to discontinue the practice, but the Ekiti churches felt that *omi iye* was vitally important for healing the sick and refused to follow suit. Another controversy broke out in 1938 over divine healing and the use of modern medicines. Odubanjo and Akinyele advocated faith in Christ alone for healing. The missionaries used quinine as a prophylactic against malaria. The dispute led to the formation of the Nigerian Apostolic Church in 1939. A minority continued with the Welsh Apostolic Church missionaries. Akinyele was elected chairman and head of the re-indigenised church. Odubanjo was made vice-president and Babalola General Evangelist.

On the 13th July 1941 the name Christ Apostolic Church was adopted. Since these early days there has been a shift from their extreme stance on Western medicines.⁹⁵

Although the Apostolic missionaries' contribution to the building up of Faith Tabernacle was significant, the ultimate credit for the revival and the dramatic expansion of Christianity in Yorubaland during and following the 1930 period must go to men like Shadare, Odubanjo, Akinyele, Orekoya, Babalola and many others. They sought to indigenise their Christianity and make it meaningful in their own cultural context while still maintaining integrity in regard to Biblical teaching and Apostolic doctrine. They communicated the Gospel in the vernacular using those elements of the indigenous ontology which they regarded as helpful in the transmission of their message. At the same time they vehemently rejected all contradictory opposing powers. Their contribution to the growth and development of today's dynamic Church in Nigeria and other parts of West Africa was immense. Through them the Nigerian Church, for the first time, removed itself completely from under the yoke of Western cultural and religious imperialism, the bondage of foreign forms of worship, and alien Christian agendas. What associations they entered into with overseas groups were of their own choosing and their relationships were continued on a voluntary basis or abandoned. They also removed themselves from the spiritistic bondages of the old religious system through their rejection of the powerful and fear inducing features of the old religious order. Unlike the earlier independent churches whose worship remained basically foreign and elitist, Faith Tabernacle and Christ Apostolic presented a viable expression of Nigerian Christianity, a church of the people and for the people, indigenous and independent. By 1965 the membership of the Christ Apostolic Church had grown to over 100,000 making it the third largest church in the country. With around 110 primary schools, 22 secondary modern schools, 4 grammar schools and a teacher training college, Christ Apostolic Church was heavily involved in the areas of education and national development as well as saving souls.⁹⁶ Sanneh comments on the distinctiveness of the Christ Apostolic Church among the other leading Aladuras:

Whereas in some of the charismatic Churches, such as the Church of the Lord (Aladura), the sense of Christ's unique life and work was only rather vaguely glimpsed behind all the colour and sound of processions and testimonies, in the CAC Christ occupied a central place. He was the rule by which all prayers were commissioned, the authority by which intercession was made, and the assurance that needs would be satisfied when His name was invoked. In fact Christ served an invaluable mediatory role, effectively outflanking the *orisha*, the lesser spirits, by merging the role of intermediary agent with that of source of the divine will.... Unlike the Cherubim and Seraphim, the CAC stressed the Bible as the written authority for its doctrines and of the pastor in expounding it.... The CAC broke ranks with the other Churches in placing less emphasis on visions and dreams, although it did not repudiate these entirely. However it insisted that these spiritual gifts should be brought into conformity with Scriptural teaching.⁹⁷

According to Peel, the Christ Apostolic Church was, "The most dynamic and successful church at meeting the religious needs of urban Yorubas."⁹⁸

OSHITELU AND THE ORIGINS OF THE CHURCH OF THE LORD (ALADURA)

Josiah Ifakoya Oshitelu, an Ijebu from Ogere, a village twenty-three miles west of Ijebu-Ode, was the founder of the Church of the Lord (Aladura). His parents were illiterate farmers, but the father had connections with a ruling house in the district. Earlier children had died young through, it was believed, witchcraft. The *babalawo* consulted his *Ifa* and prophesied that this child would survive. Oshitelu was born on 15th May 1902 and named Ifakoya, "Ifa has avenged my cause". The diviner-priest foretold a future of distinction and leadership over both black men and white. As he grew up these prophecies made Oshitelu aware that he was immune to witch attacks and that a great destiny lay ahead of him. As a child he was reported to have revealed the future, detected witches, read signs in the sky, had unusual dreams and been taught by spirits. If no Christian influences had come his way he would probably have become a renowned *babalawo*. At eleven he started attending the Anglican school at Ogere. He was baptised the following year and given the name Josiah. Later he attended Christ Church elementary school at Porogun, completing the highest class, standard five, in 1919. He was appointed pupil-teacher in Anglican schools at Abeokuta and Asha, and trained as a catechist. In 1922 he was confirmed at Saint Peter's Church, Abeokuta, and

early in 1925 he took up a church appointment as teacher-catechist at Erukute, a farm village near Ogere. Oshitelu was progressing up the Anglican Church ladder. He was earmarked for a place at the prestigious Saint Andrew's College at Oyo in 1926, to be followed in due course by ordination into the Anglican ministry. However:

On the night of 17th May 1925 he had a vision in which he saw a large eye "reflecting as a great orbit of the sun", and, as one of his biographers puts it, "as big as the head of a cow". This symbol, which is not uncommon in West African religious experiences, represents God, but Oshitelu's other accounts of this initial vision suggests that witches were the main figures in the nocturnal visitation. He was so disturbed that he fled to the house of an elder in the village and spent the rest of the night with him. Next day the elders all heard the story and agreed that he should be allowed to return home to Ogere.⁹⁹

Although his parents spent much money counteracting witchcraft, Oshitelu's condition only worsened. In his visions he was tormented by witches. He returned to Erukute, but found no relief. Eventually he requested leave of absence until he could find a cure. Oshitelu sought help from an elder in a neighbouring village, Samuel Shomoye. Shomoye, a follower of an itinerant prophet-healer called Aiyelabola, was reputedly a man of the Spirit.

He laughed at Oshitelu's fears and said these experiences were not bad omens but showed that he was being called by God, and that he would overcome the evil powers haunting him by using certain of the psalms, and through prayer and fasting.... Shomoye also counselled him to discard all native charms and medicines, as the power of God could not be captured in that way, and a bag of such paraphernalia was thrown away. This simple gospel of faith in God alone, with prayer and fasting, became the working basis of the church that Oshitelu subsequently founded, and he has continued to acknowledge Shomoye as his master.¹⁰⁰

Shomoye consecrated water through prayer and Oshitelu bathed in his holy water. From this time he began to hear strange voices calling:

"Oshitelu! Oshitelu! Oshitelu! Thy prayer is heard. I shall make you victorious after many tribulations. Fear not for I am with thee."¹⁰¹

He wrote down these communications in a jotter and eventually they filled a series of volumes. While the symptoms are fairly typical of a diviner's call, they could also indicate the development of schizophrenia.

Oshitelu returned to Erukute where the witch assaults continued. He wrote in his journal that:

... assistance came through a Holy man in my dream, who dealt the witches with heavy blows until they were turned into cows, horses, rats, cats and some deformed

creatures. Despite their chameleonic attitude towards me I gained overwhelming victory over them.¹⁰²

On Shomoye's recommendation Oshitelu began a prolonged fast. After eight days he began to hear voices, "Your prayers are heard. After many afflictions I will uplift you. Be not afraid, I am with you", "I will anoint you as my prophet, even as Elijah anointed Elisha with oil in the olden days, so it shall be unto you", "Gradually the *seals of power* [italics mine] will come to you. Your good time draws on apace", "I will build new Jerusalem in you. You are the one whom Jesus Christ has sent like the last Elijah to repair the Lord's road and make his way straight", "I will give you *the key of power* [italics mine] like Moses, and will bless you like Job... I am the God of Kah... I am the God of Jah". These utterances indicate that Oshitelu was not only familiar with Biblical literature, but also with magic and occult books such as ***The Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses***, a book legally proscribed in Nigeria at this time, but which many maintain has always been used by leaders in the Church of the Lord (Aladura) to procure spiritual power. Oshitelu regarded himself as the last Elijah, in contrast to Garrick Braide, the Second Elijah. He believed the voices were God speaking to him, confirming the destiny of leadership and power revealed by the *babalawo* at birth, but opposed latterly by witches. He claimed that if he called for help from God using holy names such as *Alljrohnan* and *Anomonollahujah*, he would triumph over the witches. Oshitelu's own holy name was revealed as *Arrabablalhubab*, this was interpreted as "first master". Sufferers from schizophrenia often invent new forms of language. Taboos such as not eating pork were revealed. Oshitelu practised fasting, ritual washings and praying using holy names. This led to rebuke by the Abeokuta District Council and suspension. In April 1926, Oshitelu was dismissed from the Anglican Church because of his "erroneous beliefs and teachings".

Oshitelu recorded all his dreams, voice communications and visions, and this enabled his ability to receive and interpret them to develop. In the nine years following his call he recorded about 10,000. He saw and interpreted holy writing in a strange Arabic style script:

Preach ye my gospel. If they repent and turn to you, you shall be giving them the water of Life. But if not, and they reject the word of God, they shall perish.

He recorded that people would not receive him, "Holy Oshitelu", as "their salvator".¹⁰³ He saw seals, hieroglyphic charms, revealed to him as "seals of Power" which would procure victory over devils. Such phenomena were common in the occult literature finding its way into Nigeria at this time. In 1931 Oshitelu's house was searched unsuccessfully by the police looking for *The Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses*. One of the criticisms levelled against him by the Faith Tabernacle was that he was a spiritualist. He was influenced by their literature and in 1948 had an honorary doctorate (Psy D - Doctor of the Psychical) conferred upon him by a group calling themselves the National Union of Spiritualists of Nigeria. However, Oshitelu was no mere spiritualist. His early psychic visionary disposition, which could have made him a great *babalawo*, interacted with his Anglican education and training to produce a synthesis which made him a charismatic visionary prophet. Any use made of spiritualist literature only indicates his wide search for spiritual power and the syncretistic tendencies which were a common feature of Yoruba religion. For two years Oshitelu was trained by Shomoye to develop his visionary and prophetic gifts. On completing the training he embarked on his public ministry in June 1929 with open-air preaching at Ogere, assisted by a fellow trainee Daniel Ajayi Adefola. Although only one among many prophets operating in Yorubaland at that time he soon made a considerable reputation for himself as a visionary revelator. Messages uttered in holy words were interpreted by his assistant. This form of "speaking in tongues" was a common diviner technique which indicated contact with foreign spirits and enhanced prestige. Oshitelu's prophetic proclamations were full of threats of divine judgement upon idolaters and users of native medicines. He offered a new order, the Kingdom of God, to replace the old sterile system. The water of life which he consecrated through prayer could cure all sickness and disease. While Babalola was willing to abandon the use of *omi iyea* when it was seen to hinder Christian growth, for Oshitelu the use of holy water was eventually to become the mainstay of his ministry and the pre-eminent attracting power for his church, surpassing even the prophetic revelations.

THE ALADURA MOVEMENT DIVIDES INTO TWO DISTINCT STREAMS

News of Oshitelu's ministry reached the leaders of Faith Tabernacle and Babalola sought him out. They met on 25th July 1930 at Ogere. Oshitelu exhorted Babalola not to be proud and disclosed a vision he had just seen. In the vision Oshitelu, Ajayi his assistant, and Babalola, stood before a holy man who wrote that Oshitelu was the first in importance, Ajayi the second and Babalola the third. Babalola became downcast, but a voice instructed Oshitelu to tell him he was a follower of the Wonderful King and should not brood over only being in third place among the prophets. Akinyele also visited and was more favourably impressed with the prophet's revelations. He later sent his son to Ogere to become Oshitelu's disciple, and invited him to take part in revival meetings in Ibadan. Oshitelu's apocalyptic preaching and inspiring revelations impressed many. Aware of his great destiny he refused to be baptised by Faith Tabernacle and began to build up a large personal following. He left Ibadan after two weeks with his own team of evangelists and made his way to Abeokuta to begin his own revival. Praying for healing and consecrating holy water become an increasingly prominent feature of his ministry from this point. Oshitelu recorded 607 sick people coming for prayer during his Abeokuta revival which lasted just over two weeks and saw the establishment of a new congregation which regarded him as its founder and leader.

A feature of Oshitelu's ministry, which disturbed the Faith Tabernacle leaders, especially Shadare, was pointing out witches and obtaining confessions. Oshitelu seemed to be operating as a witch-finder. At a meeting convened at Akinyele's house in Ibadan on 23rd January 1931, Shadare argued that nobody had "confessed directly she was a witch", what they had confessed was "malice", and that "shortcomings were what these prophets discovered and termed the spirit of the witch".¹⁰⁴ What caused greater concern, however, was Oshitelu's use of holy names and holy seals. These he claimed were of divine origin and therefore words and writings of great power. The illiterate and theologically uninformed perceived these as verbal and pictorial charms. Shadare testified to have been given a new

name, *Eshinshinade*, by divine revelation, but he saw new holy names for God as something different. The principle of divine revelation through dreams and visions was not in question, the debate was over excessive use and exaggerated claims. Akinyele's son reported that holy names were actively sought by Oshitelu's disciples for their own personal use, and that each morning disciples would testify to receiving holy words such as "*Kadujah*" or "*Tarajah*" in dream revelations. He himself had become discouraged at never having received a holy name, but was shown how to facilitate the process and then received a large number which he wrote down.¹⁰⁵ Akinyele senior disclosed he had asked God for guidance on the matter of holy names, and in a dream had heard a voice saying:

"Incline thine heart to keep this law. These names can bring no forgiveness, salvation, or benefit of any kind to anybody." I therefore conclude that there is no use in calling these names. Christ came and showed us His real name and as we are promised everything in the name of Christ, all other names should be left aside.¹⁰⁶

Babalola told the meeting he had not taken the holy words seriously at first, but later saw the confusion they caused in the churches and he also had had dreams condemning the practice:

I enquired from Mr. Ajayi how they got at these names, and I could gather nothing save that they were in the bush for some years tormenting themselves from whence they emerged with these names; and I could see that if these things were of God they would not need to be laboured for ... they always foment trouble.¹⁰⁷

Later he added:

Pastor Akinyele once wrote me that there were interpretations to these names. Why can't we use these interpretations as God can hear us in our language without bothering ourselves with these strange names which are of, they say, foreign origin.¹⁰⁸

Other complaints and resentments were aired at the meeting. Orekoya claimed some of those healed through his ministry had gone to Oshitelu for prayer and lost their healing as a result. Oshitelu's response was that Orekoya's cures had failed. Sophia Odunlami and a lady from the Lagos church both accused Oshitelu of trying to entice them to become his wives through his prophetic revelations concerning their destiny. Odunlami narrated how the prophet claimed he had been promised the Queen of Sheba and that Odunlami should come to Ogere where three kinds of power would be given her.

I told him that I would be glad to accept the power if they could be despatched to me, as I have not been permitted by God to be in close company with man. As I could see what was on his mind I kept away from him and his followers.¹⁰⁹

Oshitelu was accused of leaving CMS because he had been asked to marry and keep to one wife, but had refused. He claimed that in the early days of his call he had abandoned the girl he had been to marry because she would not go along with his teaching, and as a reward God had promised him three wives. Later the number was raised to seven. In the light of the prestige and honour attached to polygyny, Oshitelu could have seen this as necessary for the fulfilling of his great destiny and no doubt did dream about it.

The controversies eventually boiled down to the question of the source of authority in spiritual matters, was it dreams and visions, the primary indigenous mode of divine revelation, or Holy Scriptures. The Faith Tabernacle leaders maintained that according to Scripture any revelation that did not give pre-eminence to the name of Jesus was suspect. They therefore concluded that Oshitelu's holy names were not from God, but rather from deceiving spirits. Odubanjo saw "the hand of Satan at work". Nobody suggested a cultural and psychological explanation for the phenomenon. Odubanjo expressed the hope that while seeking to fulfil his vision of spreading his church to Gold Coast, London and around the world, Oshitelu:

... would meet people bold enough to withstand him. Men who are well versed and learned in the language to which these strange names are professed to belong, would come along and defeat him and knock these names down.

Oshitelu accused his accusers of perjury and blasphemy against the Holy Spirit who gave him his power. He suggested everybody mind their own business and, aware that his time of association with Faith Tabernacle was now ended, declared, "Nobody can therefore keep me from the use of the Holy Names". Before departing, Oshitelu claimed recognition that he was involved in a work of God and that his embryonic movement was Christian. He declared, "There is but one tree and there are many branches."¹¹⁰

Oshitelu's separation from the revival leaders highlighted basic theological differences between Faith Tabernacle and the Church of the Lord (Aladura). Although both were

similarities between the church's *Holy Litany* and the *Book of Common Prayer* and also the adaptation of the Anglican litany to the African environment.³ Extempore, spontaneous prayer, however plays a much more important part. These prayers deal with pressing problems, the blessing of members, the empowering of ministers and victory over evil spirits, sorcerers and witches. Unanswered prayers are explained as the opposition of powerful spirit forces which must be overcome by increased effort, more fasting and more spiritual "struggling". The prayers of one causing discord and disunity in the congregation will not be answered. "A malicious man will have his prayers crumbling to the ground and will not ascend to the mercy seat."⁴ Prophets reveal the reasons for unanswered prayers. They will expose the culprit and encourage a full confession so that what blocks the flow of the Spirit can be removed. They are the sin-finders of the holy community who ensure that the prayers of the church are answered.

Prophet prayer warriors are eagerly sought after outwith the official services. Members of the mainline denominations come to the prophets privately. What is sought is not intercession *per se*, but the prophets' revelations and predictions. Adrian Hastings criticises West African Independent Churches for their preoccupation in prayer with "immediate temporal benefit" and being "excessively client-centred". "There is a tendency here," he claims, "to privatise prayer in a rather unhealthy way."⁵ The prayer prophet is under great pressure to resort to dubious means, over and above the normal spiritual exercises, for enhancing his predictive powers. Many are accused of using occult means, such as reading *The Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses*, and performing night-time rituals at gravesides, in order to obtain insights and revelations from the spirits.⁶ There is also a great temptation for the prophets to exploit their reputation as successful prayer men for material and immoral reward. Learning to be powerful in prayer is a vital part of the prophets' spiritual training.

Adejobi has described prayer as more important than dancing or shouts and more fundamental than fasting which is useless without it. "If we are tired of praying then we shall

resort to human means of protection."⁷ Human means of protection is the use of charms and medicines. Around 1978, Adejobi described the rigorous prayer discipline followed by Oshitelu and the early leaders:

As was revealed unto the Founding Father of the Church of the Lord "Aladura", the late Dr. J. S. Oshitelu, 5.30 a.m., 9 a.m., 12 noon, 3 p.m., 6 p.m. are to be observed as daily hours of prayer, and 9 p.m., 12 midnight and 3 a.m., as watches of the night. The Founder adhered and observed every hour to the letter and Spirit. Indeed, this singled him out as a Man of Prayer (1930-1966).

The immediate lieutenants tried to follow this principle, but there have been noticeable lapses among the new comers to the Church's Ministry.

In view of the fact that a Missionary, Church and Spiritual worker depends on constant prayer and fellowship with God for strength, guidance and stamina, there can be no better way than for every Church and Spiritual worker to keep to the letter and Spirit, and the systematic observation of the daily hourly prayers and night watches.⁸

According to Turner:

Over the whole Church prayer oscillates rather uneasily between Christian and magical interpretations, for the very prayer that has replaced the more physical magical media may in turn become a new form of spiritual magic in a superficially Christian setting.⁹

Much of the powerful praying that goes on in the Spiritual churches, despite some radical alterations, remains in its essence and mechanics, discernibly indigenous. Here note is taken of the God exalting quality of prayer in indigenous worship as shown by Mbiti in *The Prayers of African Religion*.¹⁰ Much of the praying in the Spiritual churches demonstrates the same God honouring qualities. While in some Aladura churches such as Faith Tabernacle and Christ Apostolic, the Gospel penetration has resulted in a transformation of basic concepts concerning prayer and salvation, in the Church of the Lord (Aladura) and the Spiritual churches of Freetown the evidence suggests that the Gospel penetration has not as yet reached the same level. Prayer is conducted on the understanding that through the proper performance of praying rituals salvation blessing will result and supernatural help will be forthcoming. This help will be forthcoming in the form of spiritual revelations through dreams, visions, hearing voices or having supernatural wisdom and insight. The ritual actions are called "spiritual exercises". Trainee prophets are taught how to pray using the holy names of power and the particular Psalms that should be recited in particular

Adejobi, accompanied by Oduwole, who was responding to an invitation to come and start a Church of the Lord (Aladura) church in Monrovia, along with six other helpers, sailed to Freetown. Sailing with the missionaries were Mr. and Mrs. Nathaniel Bell, a Krio couple working with the Post and Telegraph Department who attended the Elegbata church and were going home on leave. The Bells had offered the missionaries accommodation at their home at 8 Queen Street. They arrived in Freetown on 21st March 1947.

¹ Harold W. Turner, *History of an African Independent Church: 1 The Church of the Lord (Aladura)*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967); *African Independent Church: 2 The Life and Faith of the Church of the Lord (Aladura)*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967).

To put the Adejobis and the whole Aladura movement into the wider context of the African Independent Church Movement see, Bengt Sundkler, *Bantu Prophets in South Africa*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961, second edition, first edition published by Lutterworth Press in 1948); *The Christian Ministry in Africa*, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1960); *Zulu Zion and Some Swazi Zionists*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976); "Worship and Spirituality" in *Christianity in Independent Africa*, eds. Fashole-Luke, *et al*, (London: Rex Collings, 1978), pp.545-53; Ephraim Andersson, *Messianic Movements in the Lower Congo*, (Uppsala and London: Almqvist & Wiksells Bocktrycker, 1958); G. C. Oosthuizen, *Post-Christianity in Africa: a Theological and Anthropological Study*, (Stellenbosch: T. Wever, 1968); Marthinus L. Daneel, *Old and New in Southern Shona Independent Churches: Volume 1: Background and Rise of the Major Movements*, (The Hague: Moulton & Co., 1971); *Old and New in Southern Shona Independent Churches: Volume 2: Church Growth - Causative Factors and Recruitment Techniques*, (The Hague: Moulton & Co., 1974); Hubert Bucher, *Spirits and Power: an Analysis of Shona Cosmology*, (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1980); Martin West, *Bishops and Prophets in a Black City: African Independent Churches in Soweto Johannesburg*, (Cape Town: David Philip, 1975).

For the Nigerian Aladura from the perspective of their socio-religious significance in Yoruba society see, J. D. Y. Peel, *Aladura: a Religious Movement among the Yoruba*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968). Peel's treatment of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) is included in his wider study of the Aladura movement in Nigeria which concentrates more on the Faith Tabernacle, Christ Apostolic and Cherubim and Seraphim churches.

² For the history of the Zionist movement in Southern Africa refer to the works of Sundkler and Daneel, also Oosthuizen, (1968), pp.32-39. In *Zulu Zion and Some Swazi Zionists*, Sundkler traces the origins of the Zionist movement to the work of Dutch Reformed missionaries Petrus Louis Le Roux and his wife Andrina at Wakkerstroom. Petrus Le Roux had received his initial understandings on the Spirit and healing from Andrew Murray, his professor and teacher, and became preoccupied with the subject of healing through the power of the Holy Spirit. There is a tendency for Zionist leaders to trace the origins of the movement to the ministry of John Alexander Dowie of Zion City, Illinois, USA, and his missionaries who came with his message to Africa, but Sundkler gives convincing proof that the small Wakkerstroom revival of 1893 at Zions Kerk, so named because of their using a Dutch hymn book of Moravian origins called *Zions Liedere*, takes historical precedence over the outreach from Zion City. Later Le Roux was to learn of Dowie, an enigmatic personality of mixed Scottish and Australian descent, and his teaching on faith healing. He also obtained copies of *Leaves of Healing*, the paper produced by Dowie's church, the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church, which he founded in 1896. In April 1904 Daniel and Emma Bryant arrived in South Africa as the first missionaries from Zion City. They were met in Durban by Le Roux who had joined Zion in March and was informed of their coming. After only two week in the country the Bryants travelled to Wakkerstroom where they received a great welcome. In the first united Zion baptism service one hundred and forty-one were baptised. From this point on the influence of Zion City dominates the Zionist movement until black South African leaders take over and establish their own movements within the overall Zionist movement. In its later development much of the movement deviated from its original evangelical moorings, and its evangelical Pentecostalism introduced in 1908 by John Lake and his two colleagues Tom Hezmalhalch and A. Lehman. According to Oosthuizen the movement which indigenised and Africanised Christianity among the black population became theologically:

a new syncretistic African movement, concentrating on divine healing, triune immersion, purification rites, ritual prohibition, speaking with tongues, and witch finding, and its indigenous approach to religious activities gives the right emotional atmosphere, e.g. in hymns and rhythmic movements.

The prophets who have "direct telephonic communication with the Holy Spirit" interpretate Scripture in the light of their revelations and their authority in spiritual matters is final. Oosthuizen, *ibid.*, p.35.

Sundkler, in *Zulu Zion and Some Swazi Zionists*, takes a much more open and liberal approach and no longer sees the movement as basically a "bridge back to paganism". Sundkler recognises that the movement itself has undergone and is undergoing transformation. Sundkler has recognised that there are varieties galore of Christian and non-Christian expression in so dynamic, volatile and fluid a movement, and that each movement must be assessed individually and in context.

³ Harold W. Turner, *Religious Innovation in Africa: Collected Essays on New Religious Movements*, (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1979). Turner's typology is worked out in Chapter 7, "A Typology for African Religious Movements", pp.79-108. Much of this appeared earlier in "A Methodology for Modern African Religious Movements" in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 8(3), April 1966, pp.281-94, and also in "A Typology for African Religious Movements" in *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 1(1), 1967, pp.1-34.

⁴ Turner, (1979), p.102.

⁵ James B. Webster, *The African Churches among the Yoruba 1888-1922*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), p.1.

⁶ J. F. A. Ajayi & Michael Crowder, *Christian Missions in Nigeria. The Making of a New Elite, 1841-1891*, (London: Longmans, 1965), and Webster, *ibid.*, cover the histories of Christian missions to Nigeria and the early Yoruba churches from 1841 to 1922.

⁷ Webster, *ibid.*, p.3.

⁸ Idowu, (1965), p.4-5.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.6, 5-6.

¹⁰ Venn's missionary strategy was that as soon as congregations were established, catechists should be appointed to preach in other wards of the city or in outlying villages. Promising catechists should be trained and educated at an institution such as Fourah Bay College, ordained, and then work under a British missionary. When there were enough ordained Africans with congregations large enough to support them, a native pastorate would be established and Venn's "euthanasia" of foreign mission would take place. Webster notes that in Nigeria:

Africans felt the pace was depressingly slow; Europeans thought it alarmingly fast. Europeans who had, over a lifetime, built a church congregation desired to remain as pastors of the flock they had gathered, and begrudged moving to the frontier in the later years of their lives. Shortage of funds often aggravated this feeling, as the mission society was unable to provide expensive European accommodation in new areas. Sometimes Europeans were left for years in old-established churches, supervising larger and larger areas worked by Africans. African ministers, although they had freedom of action, due to the inability of Europeans to supervise so large an area, did not receive the authority and power which they felt was commensurate with their work. This, coupled with the reluctance of the Society to go the last step and consecrate African bishops, caused friction between mission and church, and had a depressing influence on the Christian work. Webster, *ibid.*, pp.4-5.

¹¹ Webster, *ibid.*, p.3.

¹² *Ibid.*, p.5.

¹³ Crowther's approach is summed up by Loiello in *Bishop in Two Worlds*:

On the subject of traditional religion, Crowther presented many faces. In his correspondence with Evangelical friends and superiors, he could be condemnatory, seeing it as "Satan's tool". In practice, he cautioned patience and toleration. His descriptions of traditional rites and ceremonies were, most frequently detailed and remarkably straightforward. They generally lacked, for example, the derogatory comments which some of his European colleagues in the Yoruba Mission permitted in their reports. His tendency towards caution and respect for the feelings of others illustrates the duality of his experience. He understood, for example, the necessity for local rulers, even Christian ones like the Pepples of Bonny, to perform traditional rites

which were associated with their positions. He did not discourage his missionaries when they attended such ceremonies as guests, even when animal offerings were made. In 1884 when some converts at Nembe, in Brass country, were involved in acts of murder and cannibalism, Crowther reported on the events to an angered Parent Committee. While he decried the acts which had been committed, he went on to make a remarkable statement on the importance of African traditional law and custom, highlighting the special perspective which he and his African agents had in advising moderation in dealing with supposed abuses:

It requires a knowledge of the laws and customs of the Natives before one can pass correct judgement on the acts of an individual, right or wrong; whether he be a Christian or a heathen; because it is in the power of the authorities to punish the offenders ... however cruel or revolting such acts may be to the feelings of others. John Loiello, "Bishop in Two Worlds: Samuel Ajayi Crowther (c.1806-1891)" in *Varieties of Christian Experience in Nigeria*, ed. Elizabeth Isichei, (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1982), pp.47-48. For Crowther's dilemma in remaining loyal to CMS and advancing the cause of Africanisation in the mission church of the Niger Diocese see, *ibid.*, pp.34-61.

¹⁴ Crowther explained Islamic success in Nupe as being due to the fact that "no better religion" had been introduced earlier. *ibid.*, p.50, quoting from Bishop Crowther's October 1874 Niger Mission Report to CMS.

¹⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁶ Webster, *ibid.*, p.7.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, p.19.

¹⁸ Godwin O. M. Tasié, *Christian Missionary Enterprise in the Niger Delta 1864-1919*, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1978), p.110.

¹⁹ Tasié, *ibid.*, p.87.

²⁰ *ibid.*, p.86.

²¹ Sanneh, *ibid.*, p.169. For Sanneh's treatment of the Crowther controversy see *ibid.*, pp.168-73.

²² Webster, *ibid.*, p.61. For a detailed account of the formation of the Native Baptist Church see *ibid.*, pp.49-62.

²³ *ibid.*, p.68.

²⁴ *ibid.*, p.69.

²⁵ Tasié notes that early as 1882 Archdeacon Crowther, in line with Venn's policy, had been planning and preparing for an independent church in the lower Niger. Tasié, *ibid.*, p.97.

²⁶ For the history of the Niger Delta Native Pastorate Church see Tasié, chapter 4, "Niger Delta Church Surrender", *ibid.*, pp.136-65; also Edward W. Fashole-Luke, "Archdeacon Dandeson Coates Crowther on the Niger Delta Pastorate Church: 1892-1897" in *SLBR*, (2), November 1981, pp.3-32.

The Hamilton-Allan Report of March 1892 recommended an English bishop, assisted by an African, succeed Crowther. A majority on the CMS Committee, led by Wigram and Lang, considered Crowther's episcopate a failure. A minority, led by Whiting and Cust, were convinced it had been a success and the indigenisation process accelerated. Whiting and Cust were defeated and resigned. The Committee nominated Joseph Sydney Hill as Crowther's successor. Hill arrived on 5th October 1892 as bishop-designate of the Niger Diocese. He was consecrated Bishop of the renamed Diocese of Western Equatorial Africa on 29th June 1893. James Johnson and Archdeacon Crowther were overlooked for the two Assistant Bishop appointments created for Africans. Johnson was by-passed because of his nationalistic tendencies and Crowther for his rebelliousness. The pro-mission and more controllable Isaac Oluwole and Charles Phillips were consecrated in their place. Oluwole and Phillips were seen as CMS impositions and not the popular choice. Hill died on 5th January 1894. His English replacement, Herbert Tugwell, was consecrated bishop on 4th March 1894.

²⁷ Tasié, *ibid.*, p.119.

²⁸ *ibid.*, p.159.

²⁹ The Saro are Nigerians with a Sierra Leonean Recaptive connection. For the history of the Saro and their contribution to the development of modern Nigerian society, see J. H. Kopytoff, *A Preface to Modern Nigeria. The Sierra Leoneans in Yoruba 1830-1890*, (Madison: 1965).

³⁰ Webster, *ibid.*, p.78.

³¹ *ibid.*, p.83. For a detailed treatment of how the United Native African Church and the African Church tackled the polygamy problem see J. B. Webster, "Attitudes and Policies of the Yoruba African Churches towards Polygamy" in *Christianity in Tropical Africa*, ed. Baeta, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968), pp.224-46.

³² Sanneh, *ibid.*, p.179.

³³ Sanneh's criticism of the inconsistency of allowing a defective institution for one group and proscribing it for another fails to recognise that the African Church came up with a New Testament solution to the problem.

³⁴ Sundkler, (1976), pp.15-16.

³⁵ Godwin O. M. Tasié, "The Prophetic Calling: Garrick Sokari Braide of Bakana (d.1918)" in *Varieties of Christian Experience in Nigeria*, ed. Elizabeth Isichei, (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1982), p.99. For treatments of Braide and the significance of the Braide Movement, see *ibid.*, pp.99-115; Godwin O. M. Tasié, *Christian Missionary Enterprise in the Niger Delta 1864-1919*, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1978), pp.166-201; "Christian Awakening in West Africa, 1914-1918: A Study In The Significance of Native Agency" in *West African Religion*, 16(2), 1975, pp.32-42; also included in *The History of Christianity in West Africa*, ed. O. U. Kalu, (London: Longman Group Ltd., 1980), pp.293-308: Turner, (1979), pp.133-45; Sanneh, *ibid.*, pp.180-4

³⁶ For an account of Kalabari indigenous religion see, Robin Horton, "The Kalabari World-view: an Outline and Interpretation" in *Africa*, 32, July 1962, pp.197-219.

³⁷ Tasié, (1982), p.105. The quotation, attributed as the words of Garrick Braide, is taken from A. C. Braide, *The Life of Prophet Garrick Braide of Bakana (alias Elijah II)*, (Lagos: no date).

³⁸ Tasié, (1978), pp.175-6.

³⁹ Christian opposition to indigenous practices was not a new phenomenon in the Delta region as the history of the Bonny martyrs testify. See, Elizabeth Isichei, "Christians and Martyrs in Bonny, Ora and Lokoja (c.1874-c.1902)" in *Varieties of Christian Experience in Nigeria*, ed. Isichei, (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1982), pp.62-68.

⁴⁰ Tasié, (1982), p.103. The breach in their relationship had serious repercussions as Kemmer sent adverse reports on Braide to James Johnson and Divisional Officer, P. A. Talbot, at Degema.

⁴¹ Peel, *ibid.*, p.29.

⁴² Tasié, *ibid.*, p.107.

⁴³ *ibid.*, p.106-7.

⁴⁴ *ibid.*, p.107.

⁴⁵ For the life and ministry of Prophet Harris and the mass movements he inspired in the Ivory Coast and the Gold Coast between 1913 and 1915 see Haliburton, (1971); D. A. Shank, *William Wade Harris: a Prophet of Modern Times*, (PhD dissertation, University of Aberdeen, 1980).

The prophets of Israel were often regarded as mad, as were diviners, ref. Hosea 9:7. The word *nabih* (prophet or prophesy) has its roots in the ecstatic cult of the divine messenger of *Nabu*, the spirit of wisdom in the Babylonian pantheon. The equivalent divinity in the Yoruba pantheon is *Orisanla*, and his parallel figure *Orunmila*, the creator and depute of *Olodumare* and the spirit of divination. In the ANE and in traditional African society mad or lunatic people were regarded as inspired. Harris was neither mad or lunatic, but was possessed of strong psychic and hypnotic powers as well as being open to inspiration by God's Holy Spirit. It would be unfair to Harris to equate him with the diviner Balaam in Numbers, or a traditional diviner such as the Yoruba *babalawo*. His eccentric behaviour is rather that of a polygamous African John the Baptist, possessed of great strengths and obvious weaknesses, yet

preparing the way for the Lord and crying out to the people to turn to God and cleanse themselves from idolatry.

⁴⁶ Harris lived, according to French missionary Pierre Benoit:

... in a supernatural world in which the people, the ideas, the affirmations, the cosmogony and the eschatology of the Bible are more real than those which he sees and hears materially. He can adapt wonderfully some situations or some attitude of his adversary to a text and find an analogy in the Scriptures. Haliburton, *ibid.*, p.35.

⁴⁷ One story narrates Braide bringing a rain-storm over the land in order to convince those who were defying his ruling to keep the Sabbath. Another tells of Braide causing a rainstorm which lasted for five days after a club had organised a dance and a local rainmaker had promised five days with no rain. Tasié, (1978), p.176.

⁴⁸ Tasié, *ibid.*, p.180.

⁴⁹ *ibid.*, p.182.

⁵⁰ Tasié, (1982), pp.109-10.

⁵¹ Tasié, (1978), p.201.

⁵² Peter Falk, *The Growth of the Church in Africa*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1979), p.350. Falk comments that after 1921 the Christ Army Church, without Braide's spiritual leadership, divided into various small groupings several of which adopted "non-Christian ideas and practices". *ibid.*

⁵³ Sanneh, *ibid.*, p.183, quoting from the *Lagos Weekly Record*, 18th November, 1916.

⁵⁴ Tasié, (1982), p.109.

⁵⁵ Simon Barrington-Ward, "'The centre cannot hold ... ' Spirit Possession as Redefinition" in *Christianity in Independent Africa*, (London: Rex Collings, 1978), pp.455-70.

⁵⁶ Turner, (1967a), p.9. Turner is probably influenced by a claim made by Shadare's son in a publication entitled *Precious Stone Church, A Vindication*, in which he gives 5th July 1920 as the foundation date of the church at Ijebu-Ode and calls it "the original of all Divine Healing Churches". For the early history of Faith Tabernacle see Turner, *ibid.*, pp.8-17; Peel, *ibid.*, pp.61-71.

⁵⁷ Barrington-Ward, *ibid.*, pp.462-4.

⁵⁸ Turner, *ibid.*, p.10.

⁵⁹ Low cost and free literature in English was increasingly being sent to Nigeria by groups in America and Britain and was eagerly devoured by the new literates. Faith Tabernacle was a Holiness Movement church led by Pastor A. Clark.

⁶⁰ Turner, *ibid.*

⁶¹ Peel, *ibid.*, pp.58-59.

⁶² Odubanjo in his wide correspondence had made contact with a Toronto church, Faith and Truth Temple, which held basically similar beliefs to the Philadelphia church. In 1928 seven missionaries from the Canadian church came to Lagos *en route* to mission in French territory. Five died in Lagos. The leader, C. R. Myers, with his wife and two Faith Tabernacle assistants made an abortive attempt to start a mission in Upper Volta. Back in Lagos Mrs. Myers died in child-labour. The Nigerian assistants complained of bad treatment by Myers. Meantime Myers also fell foul with his home church. The Toronto connection fizzled out. A more viable foreign connection was made with the Welsh Pentecostal Apostolic Church, a group of which arrived in Lagos on 23rd September 1931 to establish a mission foothold in Africa through their Faith Tabernacle connection. The drive for a foreign connection was in part aimed at obtaining Government recognition as a church and the right to lease land for a church building.

⁶³ Turner, *ibid.*, p.12.

⁶⁴ For more details of Babatope's angelic visitation see Peel, *ibid.*, pp.67-68.

⁶⁵ Turner, *ibid.*

⁶⁶ For more biographical information on Akinyele and his contribution to the evangelical wing of the Aladura movement see the essay, "The Late Sir Isaac Akinyele, Olubadan of Ibadan" in Turner, (1979), pp.129-32. The essay was published as an obituary for this outstanding Christian statesman and first appeared in *West African Religion*, 4, July 1965, pp.1-4. Also see, Ayokunnu Ogunranti, "Pastor and Politician: Isaac Akinyele, Olubadan of

Ibadan (1862-1955)" in *Varieties of Christian Experience in Nigeria*, ed. Elizabeth Isichei, (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1982), pp.131-40.

⁶⁷ Ogunranti, *ibid.*, p.132.

⁶⁸ Turner, (1967a), *ibid.*, p.13. Akinyele's testimony appeared in *First Century Gospel*, 1(11), December 1926, p.6. Since that healing until his death Akinyele never used medicine of any kind.

⁶⁹ Akinyele's brother Alexander remained in the Anglican Church and became Bishop of Ibadan.

⁷⁰ In 1953, through his outstanding political service, Akinyele became the *olubadan* (king) of Ibadan and was awarded a knighthood for outstanding public service.

⁷¹ Other branches of the Christ Apostolic Church have been established in Ghana, Ivory Coast and Liberia.

⁷² Peel, *ibid.*, p.72.

⁷³ *ibid.*, p.73.

⁷⁴ The primary sources of spiritual power in Yoruba religion were the *orisha*, the lineage ancestors who were the collective ancestors of the living. There were 401 *orisha* each with its own idol and masquerader who manifested its coming out among the people. While the ancestor cult was important, unlike Sierra Leone, it was these remote ancestors rather than the immediate ones who were the main focus of Yoruba religion. Peel accounts for this phenomenon as being due to the development of urbanisation among the Yoruba and the growth of cult associations with their "generalised ghosts of the dead", the *egungun*, who appear appropriately masked during their festivals. Peel, *ibid.*, p.35. The Yoruba Recaptives in Sierra Leone, dislocated from their traditional religious heritage, while still retaining some of their *egungun* traditions, tended to make the immediate ancestors their primary mediators of divine provision, protection and power, as was the case with the indigenous tribes. For Peel's treatment of "Yoruba paganism" see, *ibid.*, pp.28-36. For fuller treatment see, Idowu, (1962; 1973); Parrinder, (1950; 1953; 1961); Sawyerr, (1970).

⁷⁵ For a study of the church's concept of sacred space see Onyeka Nwanunobi, "Space and the Allocation in the House of Prayer" in *West African Religion*, 19(1/2), 1980, pp.3-12.

⁷⁶ Peel, *ibid.*, p.74, quoting from the *Nigerian Daily Telegraph* of 12th November 1927.

⁷⁷ The *babalawo* is a specialist in *ogun*, that is medicine, which includes herbal treatments and charms. The professional necessity to diagnose illness and discern the cause of problems makes skills in divination a prerequisite. The *ifa* divination system of the Yoruba is elaborate and requires a prolonged period of training to become expert in it. Sacrifices, casting lots and the application of verses from the *Odu*, an anthology of sixteen sets of verses, to the problem being dealt with are the main operational techniques of the system. *Ifa* is the highest spiritual and religious authority among the Yoruba.

⁷⁸ *ibid.*, p.78, quoting from interviews with Apostle Kuforiji of Abeokuta and Elder B. S. Ogun, both relatives of Abiodun.

⁷⁹ *ibid.*

⁸⁰ Turner, (1979), p.124, quoting from a diocese of Lagos synod report dated May 1928. For a full coverage of the history of the Cherubim and Seraphim see Peel, *ibid.*, pp.71-82: Akinyele Omoyajowo, *Cherubim and Seraphim: the History of an African Independent Church*, (New York: Nok Publishers International, 1982).

⁸¹ John Ferguson, "Yoruba Religion" in *Aspects of African Religion. Open University, Course 25*, (Milton Keynes: The Open University Press, 1977, reprinted 1984), p.46.

⁸² Turner, *ibid.*, pp.289-90. For details of the many splits and the continuing history of the movement see Peel, *ibid.*, pp.76-82; Sanneh, *ibid.*, pp.190-4.

⁸³ Peel suspects this Pentecostal Holy Spirit baptism interpretation may be a later superimposition after Apostolic developments. Peel, *ibid.*, p.70.

⁸⁴ *ibid.*, p.65, quoting from correspondence from Clark to Odubanjo dated 11th December 1922 and 1st October 1923.

⁸⁵ All the Toronto missionaries in the Upper Volta venture died, except the leader Pastor C. R. Myers and his wife. She died in childbearing after returning to Lagos in 1929.

86 The American Faith Tabernacle separated completely divine and "worldly" healing. Healing was sought through prayer alone with no recourse to medicine. Indeed to them the matter was of such an individual and God alone nature that Pastor Clark criticised Daniel Orokoya for running a "faith home" as its methods were considered by him to be worldly and not operating on the basis of individual faith alone.

87 Turner, (1967a), p.17.

88 Peel, *ibid.*, p.92, extracting from an official communication dated 1st August 1930.

89 *ibid.*, p.95.

90 J. A. Ademakinwa, *Iwe Itan Ijo Wa (History of Our Church)*, (1945), p.74. "Raised from the dead" probably means for the most part meaning awakened from trance although there have been recorded and verified cases of people who were regarded as clinically dead being resuscitated during periods of revival as for example during the Timor, Indonesia revival in the 1960s

91 Ogunranti, *ibid.*, p.134.

92 Peel, *ibid.*, p.101.

93 *ibid.*, p.107.

94 *ibid.*, p.110, quoting from a correspondance between Pitan and Odubanjo dated 18th September 1937.

95 Recorded conversation held with Bishop Jenkins of the Christ Apostolic Church in Sierra Leone at 3 Ferguson Lane, Freetown, on 6/7/92.

96 Peel, *ibid.*, p.113; Sanneh, *ibid.*, p.196.

97 Sanneh, *ibid.*, pp.195-6. For Sanneh's survey of the Christ Apostolic Church see *ibid.*, pp.194-7.

98 J. D. Y. Peel, "The Christianization of African Society" in *Christianity in Independent Africa*, eds. E. W. Fashole-Luke, *et al.*, (London: Rex Collings, 1978), p.448.

99 Turner, *ibid.*, p.38.

100 *ibid.*, p.39.

101 Sarrah J. Turray, *A Case Study of the Church of the Lord (Aladura), Williams Street*, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1883, p.5.

102 Turner, *ibid.*

103 *ibid.*, p.43.

104 *ibid.*, p.22, quoting from the minutes of the meeting which were recorded in full by Shadare's son, Pastor T. A. A. Shadare.

105 Turner observes, "This won him the praises of Oshitelu, but when he repeated another dream which seemed to pronounce judgement on his master he was told it was from the devil." *ibid.*, p.23.

106 *ibid.*

107 *ibid.*

108 *ibid.*, pp.23-24.

109 *ibid.*, p.48.

110 *ibid.*, p.52. The quotations coming from the minutes of the Ibadan meeting are recorded in, *ibid.*, pp.22-25.

111 Bishop Jenkins, recorded conversation, 6/7/92.

112 Turner, *ibid.*, p.62.

113 *ibid.*, p.64. For the early history of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) in the Lagos area see, *ibid.*, pp.61-66.

114 This was one reason why the Christ Ecumenical Church at Ebutemetta, founded by Adejobi, separated in 1954, and also why A. A. Banjo founded the Regeneration Church of Christ in Ibadan in 1955.

CHAPTER FIVE

A SPIRITUAL CHURCH PLANTED IN FREETOWN, KRIO REACTIONS, AND SCHISMS

Going about Freetown ringing a bell and calling, "Come and hear the Word of God!", Adejobi and his little band of Church of the Lord (Aladura) missionaries caused a stir reminiscent of the Prophet Harris visit in 1917. Inquirers were invited to join them for prayers at Queen Street. They attended the Jane Bloomer Church on Fort Street and shared in the services.

MARTHA DAVIES AND THE JANE BLOOMER CHURCH

The Jane Bloomer Church was founded in February 1910 as a revival fellowship along Nova Scotian lines by Martha Davies, a widow living by herself. Christ appeared in a dream vision and commanded her to gather Christian women who would work sacrificially for the growth of the church in Freetown and practice charity towards the sick and destitute.¹ They met at Mrs. Davies' home in Upper Brook Street on Mondays and Thursdays at 4 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. The meetings consisted of "praying with special emphasis on praying for the sick and troubled, singing, Scripture reading, exhortation and giving of testimonies."² Not wishing to antagonise the established churches they did not meet at normal service times or use the name "church"; they called themselves the Martha Davies Confidential Benevolent Association. Two men, Daddy Williams and T. B. Cole, were invited to join the group. A building was constructed on a plot belonging to Mrs. Davies at 43 Fort Street. She died in 1917 before it was completed. At that time the membership was around 100. Most members were also members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AMEC), the body which had taken over the Countess of Huntingdon Connection Zion Church in 1887, and with its Black American input had helped keep alive a lingering flame of Nova Scotian revivalism.

Jane Bloomer, one of the ten founding members, took over as leader. According to Filomina Steady, she was "a religious leader with enough inspiration to induce a state of spirit possession (*fen spirit* - finding the spirit)".³ She upheld the Nova Scotian tradition of experiential salvation, of "finding the Lord" and "finding peace". She would fall down while under the Spirit's power. The group now met at Daddy Cole's house on Circular Road. In 1921 they moved to Jane Bloomer's house on Regent Road. The £1,500 needed for the Fort Street building was raised locally and the church dedicated in December 1922. The fellowship became popularly known as the Jane Bloomer Church. Jane Bloomer had a gift for composing praise hymns in Krio and rearranging the church hymns into chorus type songs called Shouts. She composed hundreds, many coming to her during dream vision inspiration. Isaac Ndanema testifies that the shouts:

... touch the deepest religious feelings of the average Sierra Leonean more than any other form of Christian hymn-singing, regardless of whether the person is Krio or not. They are easily memorised and easily translated into the vernaculars of the country and the illiterate can understand them as fully as the lettered.⁴

Adejobi and his assistants were well received by Jane Bloomer. He recorded, "Our spiritual activities were so much inspiring that the lady was moved to promise to affiliate this association to the Church of the Lord."⁵ However, on reading their church constitution, Jane Bloomer decided against this. Adejobi commented, "She found it too drastic to satisfy the conditions and felt it also a difficulty for her adherents to bow under the ruling of the Church of the Lord."⁶ Turner interprets her rejection as:

An enlightening example of the way in which Freetown Creoles have retained an ultimate loyalty to their existing Christian churches, and have failed to produce their own versions of the indigenous independent church.⁷

Yet, that the Martha Davies Confidential Benevolent Association had from the beginning operated as an independent Krio church was observed by Turner in Ndanema's 1961 article:

It seems clear that the Association has some of the forms as also of the substance of a Christian church, in its worship, preaching, mission, service, and discipline.... Even though many of the members ... retain a loose membership in their original churches, it is an independent and self-contained church.⁸

For their own reasons they encouraged dual membership. By holding Sunday afternoon services members maintained their traditional church connections. Affiliation with the Adejobis would have meant a loss of independence and compromised the church's evangelical doctrinal base, particularly their constitutional insistence on monogamy for both leaders and members. In 1948, the Jane Bloomer Church opened a mission branch on Wellington Street for Mende people.⁹ They invited the AMEC to share in the venture. Jane Bloomer was ordained by the bishop in charge of the Sierra Leone Conference of the AMEC and officially recognised as the pastor of the mission church. Despite this recognition by the AMEC, they unquestionably operated as an independent African church. "Mami" Bloomer died on 1st May 1958. She was succeeded by Adela Jones. Salome Jones and Dolly Wright, two foundational members, were appointed assistants. In 1961 they had 150 full members and about 70 on trial. Since 1975 the church has suffered very serious decline. In 1991 it was being run by the Rev. Mother Valva Fewry and Rev. Mariam Cole, Jane Bloomer's grand-daughter. The membership consisted of the two Reverends and eight other ladies whose ages ranged from sixty-five to eighty-eight. The building urgently needed maintenance. The inside, with its old wooden benches and furniture and a seating capacity of around one hundred and fifty, was faithfully maintained by the devoted elderly ladies who had for decades kept the Nova Scotian spiritual inheritance alive among the Krio.

While the Jane Bloomer Church may justifiably claim to be Freetown's first independent African church since the demise of the independent Nova Scotian chapels, several similar ladies' revival fellowships, smaller and not organised to function as a church, existed among the Krio prior to Adejobi's arrival. Members of these revival fellowship had some contact with Pentecostalism through the Kru Pentecostals and the AOG missionaries in the city. The Mami Pinkney Band at Dworzark Farm, headed by the wife of the Anglican minister, was the best known of these Krio fellowships. The 1980s revival of this group will be discussed later. In 1945 the semi-autonomous Pentecostal-evangelical God is Our Light Church was founded by two Sierra Leoneans, James Ngebuva Kajue and Robert Sesay. While serving in the

British Navy at Takoradi in Ghana, they had experienced the Pentecostal baptism in the Holy Spirit in the God is our Light church there. It was a Pentecostal breakaway from the Methodists. In 1947 the new church, mostly Mende, met in a "pan-bodi" at 37 Macdonald Street. Adejobi visited the group and prayed with them. Some attended Adejobi's services and two elders joined him permanently. However, although both churches regarded themselves as Pentecostal and Spiritual, there was no real coming together. As with Faith Tabernacle and the Jane Bloomer Church, doctrinal incompatibility kept them apart.¹⁰

ADEJOBİ'S FREETOWN MISSION AND RELATIONS WITH THE KRIO

That some Krio could find the Spiritual churches attractive despite their "aboriginal" ways was seen by the high percentage of Krio women among the forty who attended the inaugural service at Queen Street on Easter Sunday 6th April. The respectable Mrs. Laura Dove Savage asked Adejobi to drive away the evil spirit from a young domestic suffering from epilepsy. If Adejobi could effect a cure she would provide him with free accommodation and a large room for his meetings in her Dove Cot residence. Oduwole had by now departed for Monrovia.¹¹ Adejobi moved to Dove Cot and on his first night there the man took a fit. The prophet bathed him in consecrated holy water and prayed. The man recovered. On 14th April, a child, Aina Thomas, who suffered from typhoid and had been declared incurable by doctors, was healed after being anointed with "holy oil". In adulthood she became a woman elder in the Church of the Lord (Aladura). Adejobi's reputation as a healer spread. Before the end of April crowds of up to six hundred were gathering for his healing and revelatory ministry, now being conducted on the Savage's tennis court. Open-air services were held in Victoria Park and other strategic locations. Revelations and testimonies to healing were given forth. The emphasis on spiritual power, revelations and healings drew many Krio, particularly women, to the services. The Krio constituted the majority group in the congregations and were the foundational members of Adejobi's new church. One foundational member testified

that the pull on women seemed "almost magnetic" and that several deserted their families to join the Adejobis.¹² Many Krio were dissatisfied with the powerless state of the mainline churches. They had a saying that formerly God wore short trousers, but for these days he had put on long trousers. In other words he used to act instantly, like a schoolboy, but now he is elderly and takes a long time to act.¹³ Seeing Adejobi's cures many felt the "God of the short trousers" had come back and their prayers were again being answered quickly. While the Jane Bloomer Church offered ecstatic inspirational worship, it lacked the revelatory predictions and dramatic healings which attracted many Krio to the Adejobis. Some Jane Bloomer members defected taking their Shouts along with them. These became very popular in the new movement.¹⁴ The Jane Bloomer ladies proved themselves "resolute in their duties" and, in 1953, became the first Freetown women anointed as Cross-bearers and thus empowered to preach the Gospel.

The Hon. Dr. G. C. E. Reffell, an elderly Krio with Bassa ancestry, enthusiastically embraced this Africanised form of Christianity. Reffell had served on the Legislative Council and was a staunch supporter of the West African Youth League. Dr. W. A. Brandon of the Youth League, and Marcus C. Grant of the Labour Union movement also joined. In an era of resurgent Pan-Africanism, some political radicals found the unashamedly African style of this independent church extremely attractive. Reffell offered Adejobi a free site for a church at Wilkinson Road.¹⁵ As this seemed too far from the city centre a plot of ground at Oke Muri, just off O'Neil Street and behind Albert Academy, was bought for £60 with a view to future building. Meantime, as Dove Cot was unable to cope with all the activities and the crowds now attending services, Reffell offered his premises at 37 Williams Street. Here a "Faith Home" for the residential treatment of sick members was organised. The reaction of neighbours was hostile and accusations of immorality were made. Several female members who had settled in the Faith Home were forcibly removed by their families.¹⁶ The house was not able to accommodate all who were coming to the services. On 28th June, the Adejobis processed to the unoccupied Albert Academy boarding house at 162 Circular Road, led,

according to the *Sierra Leone Weekly News*, by "this phenomenal gentleman", and singing "Ride on, ride on in majesty".¹⁷ The reporter significantly observed that the group were mostly women and children and "aboriginal indigenes", indicating that despite the input of some reputable Krio males, as a group, Krio men remained aloof from the movement or were mockingly hostile. While Krio women were the first to be attracted to Adejobi, female "aboriginal indigenes", that is the non-Krio women of Freetown, soon constituted the majority of his followers. The average attendance at the daily 6 p.m. services was 300. On 1st August the ground for the new building at O'Neil Street was consecrated with "ceremonies incorporating African and biblical rites".¹⁸ On holy ground like Oke Muri, the site of an indigenous shrine, libations would normally be poured out and sacrifices offered.

The first Mount Tabborarr festival in Freetown was held from the 10th to the 22nd of August. For thirteen days the ministers fasted on a sacred "high place" - a hill on Dr. Reffell's farm at Wilberforce - seeking spiritual power and revelations concerning members' problems and their future and also the future of the church. On the final evening, members, who had been fasting at home, processed to the mountain to join the leadership. Adejobi described the evening climax of the festival:

Not less than 500 members ... men women and children, assembled at Williams St. ... for prayers at 6 p.m. prompt. At 7 p.m. they began to board several motor lorries which were to convey them to the foot of the Mountain. By 7:45 p.m. God rained down showers of blessing in the form of violent storms and heavy down-pour of rain which thrashed and drove away the mockers who had gathered to exhibit their blindness and twenty minutes later, when the rain abated, there was a great calm (not a single mocker was about) the lorries moved on to the foot of the mountain ... in a procession ... they proceeded with lighted candles and palms of victory in their hands, singing ... "Onward Christian Soldiers" and interrupted by no mocker - climbed to the mountain top and arrived at the Holy Spot.¹⁹

During the service disciples were awarded wooden crosses and became "Cross Bearers".

Adejobi has described the opposition he encountered in Freetown as "battles". The first was the "battle of the witches". Spiritually strong following his spiritual exercises in Nigeria, he overcame the Freetown witches. The "battle of the press" followed. The *Daily Guardian*

described his prophecies as "mumbo-jumbo" and his followers as "idiots, men and women without heads". Not all the publicity was hostile. The *Evening Despatch* considered him a new John the Baptist sent to Freetown to purge the Church of foreign elements and remove hypocrisies. The *Sierra Leone Weekly News*, Freetown's main paper, described Adejobi as a Nigerian gentleman claiming divine inspiration and the power to tell the past, present and future of any individual. It reported that many, mostly women, testified that this was true.²⁰ Persecution also came from the general Krio populace. Adejobi called this the "battle of public mockery". He was accused of having mercenary intentions. Many Krio regarded beating drums and clapping and dancing in church as a desecration of Christianity. Songs were composed deriding the Nigerian prophet. A parody of Psalm 23 went:

**Adejobi's my shepherd, I shall not want.
He makes me to lie down on prayer mats.**

Another composition went:

**Adejobi go wok O, go wok na Loko.
Adejobi go wok O, go wok na Loko.²¹**

The implication being that Adejobi was an idler who should find employment at the railway station. Occasionally the ridicule degenerated to physical violence.

The Freetown Creoles, says Adejobi, laughed at him and advised him to be content with a packing-case church when he talked about building a decent church, and warned him of how the Salvation Army years before had been attacked and driven out. There were some attacks on members of the Church of the Lord in the streets, and on one occasion, when a woman who had taken refuge from domestic troubles in the faith-home died there after delivering her child, an angry crowd stoned the building. Some threatened to have Adejobi deported as an undesirable immigrant.²²

Adejobi claims there was also a "battle of the denominations". This amounted to little more than a couple of churches ringing their church bells on one or two Wednesday evenings while the Adejobis were holding their services. By and large the Krio clergy considered them more a nuisance than a real threat, and saw little prospect of them ever becoming an established church. Another persecution claimed by Adejobi was the "battles of the police courts", but this was more the result of the Adejobis violating local custom than police harassment. One summons was for disturbing the residents in the Brookfields area with their music and singing during the first Mount Tabborarr festival. The second was for holding a street procession on

a Sunday without obtaining prior permission from the Commissioner of Police. Even the Hunting societies needed this. Adejobi appeared before magistrate Emile Luke on 1st September, pleaded guilty, and was fined £3-15/-.²³ The most serious threat to the Adejobis was to surface during its second year in Freetown. Adejobi called this the "inward battles". In December 1947, before the "inward battles" got underway, a great harvest thanksgiving service was held at Oke Muri which lasted eight hours. Oduwole travelled from Monrovia and preached to a crowd of over one thousand. Despite Krio disdain and derision, the church had secured a firm foothold in Freetown. On 10th March 1948 Adejobi felt able to leave acting-prophet Felix Akanbi in charge and travel to Nigeria. When he returned four months later, accompanied by his new wife who was to become the "Spiritual Mother" of the church, he set about organising the congregation and putting the church on a sound administrative basis. Open-air preaching points were started at Lumley and Kissy and a training programme for prophets, prophetesses and future ministers was initiated. While numbers attending the December 1948 harvest thanksgiving service dropped from the previous year to around seven hundred, there were more committed members and fewer casual onlookers.

Krio members, however, were becoming increasingly uncomfortable with some of the Yoruba practices. Matters came to a head after the thanksgiving service when a mass resignation of Krios was threatened. The Krio elders drew up a list of complaints and suggested ways of adapting the worship to suit Krio culture and custom. They requested shorter meetings with set times and to be excused from conducting the early 5:30 a.m. services. They were uncomfortable with having to preach impromptu and give inspired dream and vision interpretations. They found the spirit possession manifestations of non-Krio female members "distasteful".²⁴ They asked for a greater say in running the church and demanded the practice of sending financial contributions to HQ in Nigeria should cease unless these were properly accounted for and replaced by Nigerian contributions towards the O'Neil Street building project. A great difficulty for the Krio was Adejobi's refusal to "church" deceased members; corpses were considered unclean and would pollute the sacred Temple.



Churching the corpse was a time-honoured Krio custom and those who are not churched before burial were mockingly said to have taken "direct boat". The Krio also wanted a church bell to be rung. Wearing the white robes of the Adejobis in public - popularly perceived as witch protection garments - was socially embarrassing. Both male and female Krios found it very difficult to submit to ordinances such as removing shoes before entering church, and kneeling down and kissing the hands of senior ministers. Wearing shoes was a sign of being civilised, and while kneeling before senior ministers was culturally acceptable to Provincials, the Krio regarded it as degrading. They tended to adopt a superior attitude to the Nigerian leadership - much to their annoyance - and resented giving grovelling submission to those they considered their social, cultural, and intellectual inferiors. Adejobi publicly called for the Krio to put away their attitude of superiority.²⁵

On the 28th of January 1949 five elders resigned. Later they withdrew their resignations and a reconciliation service was held on 10th March. However, no substantial changes were made either to the constitution or the practices of the church, and in June four of the elders "retreated". Adejobi declared, "We refuse to bow our heads to their request, or for us to change the constitution of the Church of the Lord to suit local conditions."²⁶ Turner comments, "It is not only Western missions which may be described as refusing to accommodate to the ways of Africa."²⁷ The church was strong enough to survive this Krio controversy, a battle which Adejobi saw in terms of Joshua and the Israelites fighting the Canaanites and the stars in their courses having fought against Sisera. Adejobi, no longer dependent on the Krio for survival, refused to alter his church's practice to accommodate Krio culture, and so the Church of the Lord (Aladura) never became a Krio church or attracted Krio in significant numbers. A foundation member who continued with the Adejobis admitted he felt ridiculous when chanting the Holy Names and merely mimed along.²⁸ However, the Adejobis continued to consolidate their position in Freetown with a membership mainly of women, twice or three times as many as the men, and mostly non-Krio; Kru,

Mende, Limba, Temne, and Yoruba immigrants. Turner contrasts the commitment of the Kru with that of the Krio:

The Kru seem to have been outstandingly faithful, for 90 per cent were in the habit of attending early morning prayers ... as against "very few Creoles", and they figured prominently in "spiritual struggles" and in open air services and visiting.²⁹

In 1949 Adejobi received an honorary Diploma from the National Union of Spiritualists in Nigeria who had earlier awarded Oshitelu an honorary Doctorate. Fund raising and church building continued and eventually, helped by generous contributions from Dr. Reffell and a few wealthy Krio, the Oke Muri "Temple" was dedicated on 24th October 1952. Primate Oshitelu travelled from Nigeria and two thousand attended the dedication service. The celebrations went on for ten days.

The Failure of the Adejobis to Significantly Penetrate Krio Society

While some Krio women made the Church of the Lord (Aladura) their spiritual home and remained loyal supporters, and many visited for holy water when sick, and revelations when in crisis, nevertheless, no mass movement of Krio to the Adejobis took place. Turner comments on the impact of Freetown's first Spiritual church on the Krio:

By and large it is clear that there has been no widespread transference of allegiance from the traditional churches of the Creole Christian community, and that the leader of the new movement has been disappointed in both the extent and quality of the Creole response.³⁰

Many Krio consulted traditional diviners and healers and lived in a dual spiritual world maintaining traditional practices, like the ancestor cult, in parallel with their Christianity. They could have accommodated Adejobi as a man of spiritual power, a Christian diviner-healer, whom they could visit when the need arose. However, as Adejobi's vision was to establish a Christian church, he did not encourage this sort of relationship, although it did exist and continues right up to the present time. The Adejobis made rigorous demands on the loyalty and devotion of its members and although a certain amount of dual membership and association was permitted for practical purposes, their demands for total commitment to this form of Spiritual worship could not be met by the vast majority of the Krio for whom

transferring to the Spiritual church involved a tremendous inner struggle. The Krio had long Islamic and Christian histories and their own well established religious institutions. In the end the cultural and social norms of Creole society proved too formidable a barrier for any significant drift to the Adejobis to take place. The Nigerian church's uncompromising stance on Masonic Lodges, which they described as "dens of iniquity" and "where Satan's seat is", certainly undermined any attempts to win over the influential male Krio elite. Thus the Spiritual churches in Freetown, including the Church of the Lord (Aladura), had to draw their membership mainly from the non-Krio and less educated sections of Freetown society.

MISSION INTO THE HINTERLAND AND DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN PLANTING THE CHURCH OF THE LORD (ALADURA) IN THE PROVINCES

In 1950 a mission was begun at Bonthe. The difficulties and lack of real interest among the locals who accepted the predictions of the prophets and their holy water, but refused to commit themselves to the church, led to the mission being abandoned before the end of the year. Further attempts were made to establish churches in the provinces, particularly in Mendeland, by sending out disciples-in-training as part of their course, and junior ministers who were told that "further promotion depended on having founded two new churches"³¹ With their meagre funding and living-off-the-land policy the evangelists were dependent on local charity and finance generated by their revelatory-healing ministries. Adejobi made many missionary journeys throughout the Provinces. Despite strenuous efforts there was little response to their "African" form of Christianity. However, a start was made in Bo in 1951 with a few members meeting in a home. It was not until the early 1960s that a permanent site was procured at 17 Sewa Road. Adejobi blamed the Catholics and poverty for the lack of success:

The Roman Catholic Churches seduced the hearts of ... villagers and people by giving their children free schooling and education.... The interested converts in most places were so poor that they looked to receive from Ministers posted to them [rather] than

giving to them. Apart from Freetown, all other fields or towns in Sierra Leone appear very hard soil for the propagation of the Church of the Lord's Dogma, Doctrine, and Teachings.... I have definitely found out and experimented on the propagation of the Church of the Lord into the hinterland of Sierra Leone to be "an anathema" for at least the present time.... Because not the Seeds or Sower that matters but the land or Soil on which they are sown.³²

The conservative nature of Mende society, the firm control of *Poro* and *Sande* societies, and the increasing strength of Islam were more important factors in Mendeland generally. Later Adejobi came to realise that the strength and opposition of the secret societies, an institution with which he would not compromise, had been one of the major reasons for his church's poor reception in the Provinces. Turner observes:

It would seem that this, the first mission of an African independent church into the Sierra Leone hinterland, has met with an experience similar to that of most Western missions in the previous century and a half.³³

The foreignness of the missionaries - the leader was Nigerian and two-thirds of the prophet-evangelists were from Ghana and Nigeria - was another major cause for the Adejobis not rooting in the Provinces at this time. The other evangelists were mostly Krio, a fairly unpopular group with the Mende who called them "Westerners" and "White people". The distinctly Yoruba style and character of the church also contributed to the slow progress. From 1953 onwards much of Adejobi's energies were taken up with establishing the church in Ghana and dealing with the controversies that arose over him and Oduwole conducting missions there at the same time.³⁴ However, as the Church of the Lord (Aladura) has developed, more nationals have been promoted to leadership positions. Despite the infertility of the soil, missions to the Protectorate continued and their perseverance was rewarded. By 1960 the church had seven centres, including Bo, each with a full-time leader. They had one stick and mud church, and a new stone church was under construction at Njaiama where Paramount Chief William Quee had become a supporter. It was not much, but good foundations were being laid for future expansion when native Sierra Leonean prophets were able to take advantage of the administrative structures then being put in place by the Yoruba leadership.

The ploughing and sowing of the 1950s began to produce a harvest in the 60s in the new communities of the mining areas with their migrant workers, traders and entrepreneurs, many of whom were from Ghana and Nigeria. In 1960 a branch was established at Koidu, in the Kono District, a diamond mining boom area where a female Krio trader welcomed a disciple and gave him a building to use as a church. At Marampa, the iron-ore mining complex near Lunsar, another branch was organised and run by a West Indian clerk working for the Sierra Leone Development Corporation.³⁵ From 1966 onwards regular revival meetings were held at Tongo Field, Lunsar and Port Loko. The distinctly African form of worship, the singing, drumming, dancing and giving revelations, attracted large numbers of the new proletariat of dislocated males who were looking for entertainment and solutions to their problems. However, the missionary effort was hindered by a crippling lack of finance. Many evangelists "retreated" when assigned to remote and difficult areas. The better educated Krio ministers tended to retreat into the better remunerated ministry of the mainline denominations. A Provincial Administration Office was created in 1965 to "improve the standard of Church Administration, co-ordinate local committee and district reports, keep better records and implement the five-year development plan on Education and Administration".³⁶ Each geographical district was put under a District Head who came from the senior ranks of prophet or archdeacon. The Provincial Head, a bishop, resided in Freetown. In 1968 the Provincial Administration Office, entered the education field, by allocating the primary school, originally planned for the Oke Muri site, to Bo. As with the evangelical missions, mission through education bore fruit. There are at present six Church of the Lord branches in Bo.

Of special interest is the penetration of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) into the Muslim north where two hundred years of missionary effort had made little impact. In 1972, Julius Davies, a Krio junior minister, organised a branch at Magburaka. Within six months he had attracted sixty full members and seventy-five children.³⁷ Many of these were Muslims, practising and lapsed, attracted by certain similarities between the church's worship and Islam in northern Sierra Leone, as for example, removing shoes, prostration in prayer, pork

and alcohol taboos, their attitude to polygamy and the place given to healing, revelations, and interpreting visions and dreams. In this latter ministry they were the equivalent of their own *alpha and omega*. Davies left the Church of the Lord (Aladura) in 1975 to become a circuit minister in the Ebenezer Methodist Church at Circular Road and later the superintendent of the Segbwema district.³⁸ He left the Methodists for the Countess of Huntingdon Connection, and is the present head of that church. The Spiritual churches have been a rigorous training ground for several ministers of the mainline denominations as well as a half-way house for many Muslims on their spiritual pilgrimage towards becoming "born again" evangelicals.

As the expansion in the Provinces continued and national leadership developed, discontent over the administration of finances grew. A major cause of resentment was the payment of "assessments" to the Freetown HQ. The Freetown office calculated how much each branch could afford and this, along with the tithes, offerings, and money collected at the annual anniversary celebrations and the Mount Tabor festival, went into the Common Fund. Out of this fund stipends and other expenses were paid. These expenses included visits of church dignitaries from Lagos and donations to the Nigerian HQ. Because the average stipend of Sierra Leonean ministers was so inadequate, this drain on meagre resources caused much resentment and put severe strain on submission to Nigerian rule. Another bone of contention has been that whereas Ghana and Liberia had been granted indigenous Apostles to be Provincial Head, Sierra Leone, the oldest non-Nigerian See of the church, had to be content with the rank of Bishop only. It was not until 1964, seventeen years after the establishment of the church in Freetown, that a Sierra Leonean, S. A. Floode, was appointed to the rank of Senior Prophet. He was promoted to Bishop and Provincial Head in 1969. In Ghana, the church hierarchy was national by 1968, and in 1970 the Liberians refused to accept a Nigerian bishop. After six months of non-co-operation the Nigerian was removed and a Liberian Apostle put in his place. Resentment that Sierra Leoneans were being unfairly treated by the Nigerian leadership grew. There was, however, the feeling that the Nigerians had access to greater sources of spiritual power than Sierra Leoneans, and this greatly

enhanced their prestige in a movement where charisma and visionary gifts are the evidence of spiritual authority. The first four Sierra Leoneans to train at the Spiritual and Bible Training Institute in Nigeria underwent a six months course from January to August 1968. The senior ranks of the Sierra Leonean ministry are now trained in Lagos and this helps maintain indirect Nigerian control of the Sierra Leone field. The Church of the Lord (Aladura), unlike the other Spiritual churches, has yet to become fully indigenised and completely independent of Nigerian control, and this foreign element is proving an obstacle to progress.

ADEJOBI'S EVANGELICAL CONTRIBUTION

In September 1961, with help from his Freetown congregation and some personal funds, Adejobi left Freetown to begin a two year course at BTI (Bible Training Institute) in Glasgow. He became the first Spiritual church leader to train in a Western evangelical institution. Before returning to West Africa Adejobi conducted revival meetings for the small West African Aladura prayer group in London. As a result the London branch of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) was organised and Oshitelu's vision of his church reaching London was fulfilled. While in Britain Adejobi expanded his ecumenical as well as his evangelical horizons and contacts. He obtained a two hours interview with the Archbishop of Canterbury at Lambeth and went to Geneva to talk to Dr. Visser't Hooft, the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, who six years previously had come to Freetown preached at the O'Neil Street church. In May 1964 Adejobi returned to West Africa and a warm welcome from his Freetown congregation. He travelled on to Nigeria where a special thanksgiving service was held in his honour at the Ogere headquarters on 12th July. The festivities ended with "spiritual exercises". Adejobi joining in joyfully, prostrating, rolling on the floor, clapping and shouting the characteristic "Hallelujahs". Turner comments, "It seems clear that the new evangelical understanding from Glasgow is well able to consort with the distinctive liturgical practices of the Nigerian church."³⁹

The Church of the Lord (Aladura) under Adejobi claims to be Biblical in pattern, Pentecostal in power, evangelical in ministry and ecumenical in outlook. Adejobi referred to his church as, "The National Church of the United States of Africa, and one ... with the ecumenical-evangelical Church of the World".⁴⁰ His main task on returning to Nigeria was to set up the church's Spiritual and Bible Training Institute, where he hoped the best of African spirituality and British evangelicalism would combine to make the Church of the Lord (Aladura) an African and a Catholic church, recognised by the historic churches world-wide. After an application to join the United Christian Council (UCC) of Sierra Leone in 1964 was ignored, a 1969 application was successful and they became associate members.⁴¹ Their participation in UCC has been minimal. They seem content with their recognition and wary of UCC interference in their affairs and form of worship.⁴² In 1970 the Church of the Lord (Aladura) was received into associate membership by the World Council of Churches (WCC).⁴³ On 28th November 1975 it was granted full member status. Writing around 1978 Adejobi acknowledged the debt his movement owed to the friendship of Dr. and Mrs. Turner. Having castigated the "spite, 'holier than thou art' attitude, superiority complex, academic arrogance" and "lack of true Spiritual maturity" of those who had refused to "stretch forth their hands of Christian fellowship, to embrace us as brethren or brothers and sisters in the Lord", he goes on to state:

God provided a truly, Godly couple, Dr. Harold William Turner, M.A., D.D., and Mrs. Maude Turner, both from New Zealand, who acted as a bridge to link our small, God-revealed Church with the older Western Churches. Ever since then, The Church of the Lord "Aladura" has feathered out and has been embraced by many Christian Churches and Institutions.⁴⁴

Following Oshitelu's death at Ogere on 12th July 1966 at the age of sixty-four, Adejobi was chosen to succeed him as Primate. Although no longer resident in Freetown, Primate Adejobi continued to rule the Sierra Leone field with "iron fisted authority".⁴⁵ His training in Britain had, as Turner point out, immediate benefits for the church in the areas of Biblical knowledge and Christian doctrine:

His own thought had matured in a biblical direction, and he set himself to revise *The Bible Speaks on the Church of the Lord*, which he had first published in 1945. The new version had a significant change of emphasis: *The Observances and Practices of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) in the Light of Old and New Testament*; most of the distinctive features of the church now received a more sophisticated treatment and more biblical support, all interpretations of Church practice that savoured of "magic, superstition, or barbarisms" were strongly repudiated, a few new points were dealt with, and occasionally there was an important change of conviction such as the recognition given to the scientific treatment of sickness. In addition his further education was bearing fruit in a short book on *Basic Christian Doctrines*, and in plans for another on the comparison of religions.⁴⁶

Adejobi's new evangelical input was significant and at the official level the church was able to formulate statements of faith and doctrine very much in the form and language of the traditional credal statements of the historic churches while still retaining the African flavour. Helped by his friendship with Dr. Visser't Hooft whose theology, according to Leslie Newbigin, was "Christo-centric universalism" and whose favourite image of Christ was that of "the Good Shepherd who gathers all humanity together", the Church of the Lord (Aladura) obtained WCC membership.⁴⁷ The establishment of the Spiritual and Bible Training Institute has resulted in a new generations of ministers who are very much better grounded in Bible teaching and Christian doctrine than the early leaders. Furthermore Adejobi set an example for ministers in other Spiritual churches to follow. In Freetown at present several students at Theological Hall, the Anglican and Methodist seminary, come from the Spiritual churches. The effect of this move towards the historic denominations is far reaching and is resulting in the Spiritual churches being challenged to temper their pneumatic enthusiasm with Biblical teaching and Christian doctrine. On the other hand these churches, although part of a new religious movement, have their own inherent conservatism, and while there is a hunger for more Biblical knowledge and a desire for ecumenical contacts, many are not prepared to relinquish their own control and questionable ways of obtaining and operating spiritual power.

Turner's Assessment of the Church of the Lord (Aladura)

Turner concludes his survey of Adejobi's achievements up to 1962 by maintaining that despite his personal limitations, the church he founded in Sierra Leone, as indeed the whole Church of the Lord (Aladura) movement, "may properly be regarded as a Christian church".⁴⁸

The level of Christian maturity in doctrine and practice, the quality of its Christian witness, the Christian perceptions of the ordinary church members, and the opinions of other evangelical churches in the city, are not, unfortunately, investigated in depth. As noted by Peel, Turner bases his analysis "largely on the published literature of that church".⁴⁹ The church's explanation that the criticisms of the historic denominations and others are mere expressions of jealousy over the drift in membership towards their church is simply accepted. Turner takes the leadership's statements of faith concerning their questionable practices very much at face value. He does not investigate how the ordinary members, the successful prophets, ex-members, and indeed the general Freetown populace, view these practices, and whether, despite being Christianised and given Christian interpretations by the more enlightened leaders, they are no still being basically perceived and practised by the vast majority in terms of the old indigenous ontology. A former disciple, now working for Scripture Union, suggested that Turner writes as a friend of the Adejobis wanting to paint a positive picture. He observes that Turner "throws a better light into the obscure thinking many people have about the Aladura movement", but he faults him for not dealing with the "in house things which will provide a platform for constructive evaluation".⁵⁰ The "in house things" are the spiritual exercises and psychic techniques involved in the prophets' search for and manipulation of spiritual power while they operate under great pressure to trying to find quick solutions for people's problems. The Spiritual church prophets operate at two levels, the public church level and the private clinic level. The latter is where the real Spiritual dynamism of the movement is found and at the special healing and delivering meetings where clinic level operations are extended into the church. According to Claudius Davies:

They are not purely a Christian church in the orthodox sense of the word, but purely a movement which is seeking to appeal to the African style and consequently has been able to attract many Africans to their group with their emphasis on spiritual healing and these sort of things which seem very familiar with what we find with the fetish people.⁵¹

It is precisely in these "in house things", which involve clairvoyant, clairaudience and revelatory powers, and the prophets' ability to prescribe rituals that will cure the sick, prevent

disaster, protect from witchcraft and overcome evil, that the real power of the Spiritual churches in Freetown and their popular appeal lies.

BREAKAWAYS FROM THE CHURCH OF THE LORD (ALADURA)

The Holy Temple of Faith

Following the "inward battles" another Krio controversy arose through the activities of Rev. E. R. Taylor. Taylor had been a Methodist, Anglican, and Huntingdonian minister. He was received into the Adejobis after entering a personal covenant with Adejobi and performing certain rituals. In 1953 he organised the Temple of Faith at Savage Street as an independent venture and in November 1957 he affiliated his group with the Church of the Lord (Aladura). The Temple of Faith, however, was developing along lines with which the Krio were comfortable, and this began to cause tensions with the non-Krio section of the church. Matters came to a head at the December 1958 conference, where the Temple of Faith delegate, according to Adejobi, "... rose to speak in glaring tone that they have their own way of conducting services which is different to the parent church!"⁵² Shortly after this, the affiliation was ended. Once again the Adejobis were not going to adjust to Krio preferences. Taylor's Temple of Faith became the first major breakaway from the Church of the Lord (Aladura) in Freetown.⁵³ The church has continued at 16A Savage Street and is now under the leadership of Bishop H. J. O. Forde and is called The Holy Temple of Faith. It has a regular attendance of around 100; about 50 females, 30 males, and 20 children.⁵⁴

The Lord's Church of Holiness

In 1959 a popular Ghanaian prophet, gifted in spiritual healing, L. S. Oswald, along with several dissatisfied members broke away from the Adejobis and started a prayer-healing group at Cole Street. Numbers increased from 30 to around 90 and the group moved to the upper flat of a large wooden house at 58 Victoria Street. In 1963 the group, numbering 125

members and associates, rented a piece of land at 56 Victoria Street and erected a small corrugated iron "pan bodi" church. The name "The Lord's Church of Holiness" was received in vision. In 1973 the "pan bodi" was pulled down and a larger church built. At that time the church registered 288 members of various types including children and "visiting members". Up to the present the church has not been able to secure a lease or purchase the site. Oswell built up a reputation for accurate predictions and clear revelations. He made national predictions and is reported to have foretold the devastating 1975 cyclone. His revelations and spiritual healings constituted the main appeal of the church. The registered membership rose to 350. Oswell died in 1979. The leadership passed to Prophet George Nathaniel Williams, a Krio and former pupil at the CMS Grammar School, then an employee of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Services (SLBS). Primate Williams is now in his late seventies.

Growth did not continue after Oswell died. Conflicts arose and dissatisfied members "retreated". Financial difficulties became acute during the economic collapse of the 1980s. The present registered membership stands at 150 in addition to 50 well-wishers who attend occasionally.⁵⁵ The 1990 Youth with a Mission (YWAM) and Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone (EFSL) Greater Freetown Church Survey gave the normal Sunday morning attendance as 150; 20 males, 45 females and 60 children. The church, while claiming to be Pentecostal, continue most of Spiritual church practices such as dressing in white robes, drinking and bathing in holy water, fasting, burning candles, mercy ground rolling and animal sacrifices. Women cover their heads with a brightly coloured head tie or cap and shoes must be removed before entering the building. The language used is Krio. Although there are some Mende members this is now basically a Krio Spiritual church. Because of the Krio factor the members regard themselves as a "conservative Aladura church". Singing and dancing to the accompaniment of a variety of musical instruments, drums, *shigureh*, guitars, inspire worshippers actively to seek an experience of spirit possession. Worshippers collapse, go into trance, and speak messages in tongues during this period. The Primate and senior ministers interpret the tongues utterances while placing their hands on the speaker's

head. The church keep its own Mount Tabborarr festival and during Lent the Primate and senior ministers fast, pray and struggle on the beach for seven days. Members were encouraged by the healing of a three years old girl in June 1990. The parents took the sick child to Dr. Davies at the Bonner General Hospital on Rawdon Street. The patient did not respond to treatment. Through contact with a church member the parents brought the child to the church for prayers. The Primate and his assistants prayed, fasted, offered animal sacrifices and anointed the child with consecrated holy oil for one month. The girl made a complete recovery. The Church of the Lord's Holiness is again growing, but slowly. However, despite an occasional healing success story, a crisis situation is developing as the membership is being challenged to change its Spiritual practices through the pressure of Krio social attitudes, contact with evangelical Christians, and the influence of the present Pentecostal-evangelical revival on the younger members.

In 1968 Prophet James Ikomi "retreated" and began his own church at 20 Naimbana Street, naming it Saint James' Healing Temple. The membership is officially given as 200, but on the morning of the EFSL/YWAM survey visit only 66 were present; 11 males, 17 females and 28 children. Prophet Mends broke away to found the Sierra Leone Apostolic Church, A. T. S. Williams founded the Church of Spiritual Inspiration, and Captain Berry the Church of Redemption in Kissy. These Spiritual churches had limited success and were short lived. In 1970 the late Phebean Walters, who had a powerful revelatory and healing ministry at the Church of the Lord (Aladura), was involved in a serious car accident. Angry because none of the church leaders visited her, she left the church and associated for a time with Primate Oswell and the Lord's Church of Holiness. At the same time she led her own prayer and healing group at her home on Circular Road. This developed into Saint Peter's Healing Temple, now the most dynamic Spiritual church in Freetown. Saint Peter's Healing Temple will be considered in detail shortly. In 1977 the Mount Zion Church of the Lord was started by Prophet Ilori. On being transferred to the Wellington branch, Ilori became dissatisfied with the accommodation provided and left to found his own church at 41 Water Street, Congo

Town. While claiming a membership of 305, on the day of the EFSL/YWAM survey the divine service congregation numbered only 64; 21 males, 26 females and 17 children.

The Bishop Floode Controversy

In the 1970s discontent over Nigerian control of the administration and finances, and also the church's sluggish progress towards indigenisation, continued to fester, despite the selection of Bishop Floode as Provincial Head in 1969. In 1974 Marcus Grant, one of the Krio foundation members, was investigated at an International Conference of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) at Kumasi on charges of insubordination and of wearing a black cassock.⁵⁶ Grant, a prominent Labour Union leader, had led the workers in the 1955 General Strike. He had been personally assigned to important lay ministry positions within the church by Adejobi. In August 1958 he became the first Sierra Leonean to receive the "rod of office", the iron wand that symbolised power and authority in the church. This was six years before the first Sierra Leonean Spiritual minister was to attain such authority in the church. Grant was made General Warden and for twenty years was National Deacon. In May 1962 he was elected to Parliament as a Sierra Leone Peoples' Party (SLPP) member. After Adejobi's departure tensions between the Krio foundation members and the Nigerian ministers who resented their "superiority airs" increased. The 1974 case of the black cassock was one of many clashes taking place. Grant was acquitted. However, matters came to a head in 1975 when Bishop Floode was accused of immorality with a female member. A committee made up of Sierra Leoneans declared him innocent and the matter closed. This was unacceptable to the Nigerians and a former Provincial Head, Apostle Festus Olaonipekun, travelled from Lagos to investigate. Floode was ordered to Lagos at his own expense to face twelve charges before a Disciplinary Committee consisting of three Provincial Heads and chaired by Primate Adejobi. He was found guilty and for penance was ordered to bush-farm in Nigeria for one year. Floode abandoned his bush-farming before the end of the 1975 and returned to Freetown claiming to be sick and also needing to visit his sick mother. Adejobi commanded the Sierra Leone church to treat Floode as a "turn coat".⁵⁷ Marcus Grant and other

foundation members urged the church to disregard the sentence. Encouraged by their support, Floode refused to vacate his official residence at O'Neil Street. Counter accusations of immorality were made against the Nigerian leaders in Freetown.

With the situation drastically deteriorating, Olaonipekun, accompanied by Apostles Nathan and Soniki, travelled to Freetown in June 1977 to reassert Nigerian authority. Their arrival was commented on by the *Daily Mail* and *We Yone* of 18th June. The *We Yone* with the headline "Scandal at Aladura", concentrated on several cases of immorality in the church. Marcus Grant presented Olaonipekun with the sleeve of a Nigerian minister's cassock which had been torn off in a tussle with a wronged husband.⁵⁸ The controversy dragged on generating much unfavourable publicity for the church. In June 1978 the *Djoliba* had a front page headline "Adejobi v Floode" and made accusations, later denied by both Adejobi and Floode, of funds being embezzled. The Nigerian dominance of the Sierra Leone church was also highlighted. Bishop Adeyemi, a Nigerian with experience in Nigeria, Togo and Ghana, was called to take up the position of Provincial Head and sort out the situation. At the Mount Tabborror "Anointment Service" on 17th September 1978, Adeyemi confirmed Floode's compulsory retirement and declared Marcus Grant's position as General Warden "redundant".⁵⁹ Grant issued a press release in January 1979 in the form of an open letter to Primate Adejobi. The divisions within the church and the rivalries existing between the Nigerian and national officials were publicly exposed. Prophet R. A. Oswald, disenchanted with the Nigerian domination of the Sierra Leone branch, broke away with some disgruntled members. They adopted the name Church of Miracles. Primate Oswald retained the Spiritual style and structures of the parent body, but his emphasis on miracles was, according to Awoonor-Gordon, "an attempt to cash in on a credibility factor".⁶⁰ The breakaway has continued to the present, having normal congregation of about eighty, including men, women and children, for divine service.⁶¹

With Primate Adejobi's decease on 17th May 1991, the Sierra Leone field, loosed from his authoritarian paternalism, must seriously face the question of becoming an autonomous Spiritual church completely free from Nigerian control. Adejobi was, according to the Venerable Archdeacon Macarthy, "A very hot man who could shout like a leopard, yet at the end would be very friendly".⁶² It was significant that the memorial service held at the O'Neil Street "Cathedral" to commemorate the first anniversary of Adejobi's death, although a national event in the church's programme, was poorly very attended. The congregation numbered only one hundred. The week before the church attendance had been 174. The registered membership of the O'Neil Street Cathedral is 500. On the day of the EFSL/YWAM survey the attendance was 219; 45 males, 81 females and 93 children. The O'Neil church has seen better days, however, it is worth noting that there are branches at Dunkley Street, Kissy, Cabala Town, Wellington, Congo Town and Kissy Mes Mes as well as those in the Provinces. Also some of the breakaways are developing branches and growing.

DIVINE SERVICE AT THE CHURCH OF THE LORD (ALADURA)

The positive contribution of the Spiritual churches has been in the areas of indigenised worship, pastoral care and healing. They introduced spontaneity, inspiration and enthusiasm, and levels of congregational involvement and participation which were absent from the mainline churches since the cooling down of Nova Scotian revival fervour. Members often testify that it was the African style of worship with its singing and dance that first attracted them to the church. For the migrant into the city there was no great cultural leap to make, village worship was to a certain extent being reproduced in the city. The poor could attend wearing simple dress and the illiterate were not embarrassed as the concentration was on awareness of spiritual power not the intellectual content. The church holds morning and evening services daily. Prayer meetings of one sort or another are held every three hours throughout the day. Sunday morning divine service is the main public act of worship

although not necessarily the most dynamic. Adejobi noted that during divine service no drumming or dancing was allowed until Evangelist J. Ade. Onanuga introduced it into the 1936 Harvest festival at Ijebu-Ode; "since then, there have been drumming, dancing and singing at Divine Services as enjoined by the Psalmist in No. 150."⁶³ The drumming may be "cool" or "hot". Cool drumming aims at keeping the rhythm while hot drumming seeks to "induce the Spirit" and to "stir up the Spirit within them".⁶⁴

At the O'Neil Street Temple men and women segregate, men sit on the right and women on the left. Shoes are left outside, and menstruating women and nursing mothers who have not yet completed their purification period, are banned from the Temple. They sit on benches on the veranda. Before the service begins, the candles on the altar are lit and *churai* (aromatic gum) is placed on top of the burning charcoal in the thurible. During the service an assistant, swinging the thurible, censes the evil spirits out of every corner of the Temple with dense sweet-smelling smoke. Individual ministers, male and female, enter the altar area, jump seven times and prostrate in prayer. A bell is rung, a processional hymn is called, and the conducting minister enters impressively robed. He rings his bell for the Introit. The congregation sings seated, kneeling or prostrating. He then leads the recitation of Psalm 51, a psalm which emphasises confession of sin, washing and cleansing, and divine forgiveness. Confession and prayers for forgiveness are offered. The congregation humbles itself by prostration in traditional and Islamic fashion, or else kneels. The Trinity is addressed with the holy words, "*Ajuba, Sajuba, Kajuba*", a formula repeated three times with the head bowing at the mention of each name. After confession and prayers comes a cleansing ritual where:

The congregation is sprinkled in a rite of cleansing: the minister kneels in prayer, with several basins of water before him on the altar, and then consecrates each by dipping his iron rod; after sprinkling himself he passes the basins to assistants, who proceed to cleanse the members, each of whom kneels when his turn comes to be sprinkled.⁶⁵

Confession of sins and cleansing through ritual ablution, as in indigenous religion and Islam, are indispensable preliminaries in the Spiritual churches' approach to God. Sprinkling with holy water connects with Old Testament purification rites as well as traditionally washing

away witchcraft pollutions. The Church of the Lord (Aladura) somewhat ambiguously identifies the water with Christ. To the Catechism question, "What does the Water of life do for you?" the answer is, "Jesus Christ is the water of life, and with it He heals me."⁶⁶ Women members wearing white gowns and heads covered, and the men wearing white cassocks now go up to the altar separately for "special prayers". On the table are candle-sticks with white candles burning, a Bible and a Hymnal. The children follow singing "I am a child of God." Visions and dreams are related and interpreted by a visioner or prophet. Next comes "thanksgiving for victory" where a Psalm is recited and formal prayers and intercessions made. The Old Testament lesson is read, a hymn sung and the New Testament lesson read. Up to this point the service is basically Anglican in form and style, reasonably lively and with one or two African adaptations.

Then comes a time of open worship when popular shouts and hymns such as "Blessed Assurance" and "Arise my Soul Arise" are called for and sung. Inspired by energetic drumming, bell ringing and the rhythmic music, the congregation begins to sing, clap, sway and dance. The hymns and choruses now become what Sundkler termed "sacred rhythm" rather than doctrinal statements in verse.⁶⁷ A simple chorus or shout may be sung repeatedly for up to five minutes, the effect being somewhat hypnotic. As the tempo of the drumming increases, the clapping, which may have begun as keeping time with the music, develops into a form of worship with its own pattern of rhythm and personal style. The congregation physically demonstrates its enjoyment of corporate worship. For some, as Turner observes, "dancing readily becomes a social act, with people hailing and admiring one another and forgetting the worship of God", for others it is "dancing away their sorrows".⁶⁸ For the more spiritually zealous the dance becomes a means of "perspiring their sins away" and invoking spirit possession.⁶⁹ As the atmosphere hots up the attention increasingly focuses on being filled, possessed by, or "coming under the power" of the Holy Spirit. Some members kneel or prostrate on the floor. Others, mainly women, slip into trance or shake and convulse as if retching, with pained expressions on their faces. These

convulsing fits may last over ten minutes after which the pained look is replaced by a more relaxed, contented appearance. Any speaking in tongues is usually laboured and incoherent, but these utterances are taken to be divine messages. Some ladies jump about, others shake crying out, "Ooooooh! Ooooooh!" Some slip to the floor and roll back and forth. There are always caring prophetesses who protect those "under the power" from injury and keep their gowns modestly in place while they roll on the floor. The more frantic are ushered outside where they can either calm down, roll on the mercy ground, or be exorcised if a witch-spirit is discerned. The ecstasy session is brought to an end with the minister calling out "Halleloooo!" As if by magic calm descends, order is restored, and the worship gets back onto its Anglican tracks. The sermon follows, often an impromptu, "inspirational", working over of well worn themes like prayer, spiritual warfare, the need for vigilance, proper care of the Cross by Crossbearers, healing, fasting and tithing. Frequently it is emphasised that the Spiritual way of worship is God's way for Africans and must be spread throughout Africa. The world must accept that this is the African way. There is much reference to God and faith in his power, but little concentration on Christ. One student observer commented critically:

The preaching in the Temple service appears to be very long. At times the sermon contains no theme ... the preacher going back and forth with stories and shouting Hallelujah after almost every sentence.... The reason why most worshippers are not bothered is that they are interested only in the predictions which come after the sermon. The messages and interpretations of visions seem to be to worshippers the key feature of the church's service.⁷⁰

After the sermon more hymns and choruses are sung. The earlier period of ecstatic worship was a warming up session. Turner describes this shorter but more intense period:

About this point there may be extended singing of choruses and the whole atmosphere will reach a new intensity, with strenuous clapping and dancing. One of the men may advance towards the front as he dances, hands held high and clapping with astonishing speed in complicated rhythm; he may commence a solo recitative to which there is a choral response, and others may join him with movements that answer his own; some seem to be making small intense movements of every part of the body, and the sweat runs down and soaks the white gowns; the minister may be sitting impassive up to this point, but then he too advances with twisting of arm and rolling of hips and spins in their midst with his vestments whirling from him; one man goes into a trance-like state, with small jumping and jiggling movements. Suddenly the minister shouts 'Hallelloo!' The drums cease, the apparently uncontrollable mass

of dancers becomes an orderly but exhausted congregation, fanning and mopping themselves, and one of the drummers falls asleep.⁷¹

This session is not allowed to go on too long because the next stage is the actual climax. The minister, or any inspired prophet, now stands up at the altar and gives out revelations and predictions. He foretells successes, provided certain steps are taken as for example special prayers and spiritual exercises, and warns of dangers. The means by which to avoid them are explained. In the Church of Salvation and Saint Peter's Healing Temple, if the danger is life-threatening an "exchange-of-life" animal sacrifice is demanded. Slaughtering takes place at the Wednesday or Friday services, after which the Children of Salvation feasted. These sacrifices, not being official policy, are conducted privately by the Church of the Lord (Aladura). Prophet may also wander through the congregation producing revelations for certain individuals. These revelations are received in a kneeling position. There is silence and intense concentration during this period. The "fortune telling" session is followed by collections and contributions, usually in song, from the various church "bands". Each contribution receiving an appreciation offering.⁷² Church business and coming events are announced and the service ends with the whole congregation bowing down seven times, jumping seven times, shouting "Hossanah!", "Hallelu!" and "Horrah!" seven times, and then laughing heartily. One observer commented:

The service was devised by the founder, Primate Oshitelu, who must have been an amateur psychologist of some skill. The laughter brings a real feeling of serenity after the acrobatic gyrations.⁷³

Pails and containers of holy water consecrated by the minister-in-charge are collected. The prophets continue to minister to individuals in counselling and prayer and further revelations are sought and given.

THE CHURCH OF SALVATION

The most significant breakaways from the Church of the Lord (Aladura) are Church of Salvation and Saint Peter's Healing Temple. Like the Church of the Lord (Aladura) these are

revelatory-prophet-healing churches. The Church of Salvation is keen to present itself as a purely indigenous Sierra Leonean expression of Christianity, tap-rooted into Sierra Leone soil and different from the Nigerian Church of the Lord (Aladura). They play down Fofana's early connections with the Church of the Lord, but in the light of the evidence and the liturgical similarities this propaganda cannot be sustained. According to Bishop Adeyemi, who became Provincial Head in 1978, "Brother Fofana ... was once a disciple of Apostle Adejobi in the 1950s."⁷⁴

Edward James Fofana was born in Moyamba in 1909, the son of a paramount chief. Young Fofana was instructed by the family *alpha* and brought up a strict Muslim. However, he also attended mission school in Moyamba and reached Standard Three. A sign of his youthful spirituality was his practice of rising up early to gaze at the rising sun "as if it had some significance for him".⁷⁵ At the start of World War Two, Fofana was conscripted into the British Army and posted to India to serve as a medical orderly. He returned to Sierra Leone in 1946, was demobilised and found employment in Freetown as a warder at Pademba Road prison. For allegedly allowing a prisoner to escape, he was sacked and given a six months jail sentence. On being released he met up with a "brother", Robert Sesay, one of the founders of the Pentecostal-evangelical God is Our Light Church at Macdonald Street. Although they placed great importance on dreams, visions and revelations, and had some similar practices such as the removal of shoes before entering the church, they did not use holy water, invoke holy names, burn candles or perform animal sacrifice. Sesay invited Fofana to join them at worship and prayers. He turned down the invitations claiming that he was a devout Muslim, the son of a devout Muslim chief, and had been a student of the Koran since childhood. Eventually, he relented and began to attend the prayer group. Towards the end of his first month a dream revelation intimated that God would raise up a prophet from among them who would be their leader and receive messages and guidance. A seven days fast was called. Fofana, who often fasted as a Muslim, decided to join in although the church had restricted the fast to those baptised in the Holy Spirit. In 1990 Primate Fofana testified:

An inward feeling urged and prompted me to fast unknown to them. During that fasting, which I considered good and soul refreshing, I felt an extra joy within myself which I couldn't express, throughout the day. When eventually I went to worship with them on that Friday evening in 1946 I was filled with the Holy Ghost.⁷⁶

In this ecstatic experience he spoke in tongues and interpreted the utterances himself. He predicted the future and fortune of members and pointed out witches within the group.

As the church began to grow and people came for prayer and revelations, believing he was the prophet God was raising up, Fofana, who had found employment as a Health Inspector, resigned his job in order to devote himself full time to ministry. According to Fofana, the leaders of God is Our Light became jealous of his inspiration and spiritual power and drove him out.⁷⁷ They, however, claimed the rupture came about because Fofana insisted the congregation stand when he entered. Kajue objected saying Fofana was equating himself with God. They also rejected his proposal to conduct animal sacrifices.⁷⁸ Disappointed, Fofana left for Bo. He worked there as a driver's apprentice. After Adejobi opened the Bo branch of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) in 1951, Fofana became actively involved and was made an elder. In 1953 he returned to Freetown and work with the Prison Service. While visiting the Provinces in 1954, he received a revelation that he would found a church which would become the mother of many churches. The name of his church was to be "Church of Salvation". During the years that followed no fulfilment of the vision took place. In 1958 he moved back to Bo to work for the Electricity Department. Much to the annoyance of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) group in Bo he started a small prayer group in a hut at 56 Sewa Road and began to bring into reality the 1954 vision. A "religious cold war ensued" between the two Spiritual churches which was aggravated in the early sixties by the Church of the Lord (Aladura) purchasing land at 17 Sewa Street and constructing their Bo Temple there.⁷⁹ Fofana, despite his lack of material resources, prospered in building up a congregation among his fellow Mende. His early followers included G. T. Panda, the Income Tax Inspector at Bo, Peter Dimoh, Joe Amara Bengali and Prophet Sawyerr, a Krio who had defected from the Church of the Lord (Aladura). The new Spiritual church, because of

Fofana's standing in Mende society, his chiefly and Muslim background, attracted the Bo middle class and intelligentsia as well as the illiterate.

In 1963, following a period of praying and fasting, Fofana, who had just been promoted to the position of Superintendent in the Electricity Department, received a revelation that he should resign his new post and become once again a full-time minister. His friends Panda and Dimoh tried to dissuade him, but he justified his decision by claiming that he knew of no prophet of God in secular employment. Membership at this time stood at twenty-four, several of them having "retreated" from the nearby Church of the Lord (Aladura). As the membership increased the hut could not contain them and land was purchased at 39 Sawa Road. A Faith Home was built consisting of three rooms and a parlour. One of the rooms was used for services. The growing Spiritual church was popularly known as "Fofana's Church". In February 1968 on spare ground next to the Faith Home the foundation was laid for the Church of Salvation's "Temple of God". On 8th May the Temple was consecrated for holy worship. "Fofana's Church" continued to expand, attracting prominent businessmen and important women from the Bo area, and also Krio civil servants working in Bo. The Church of Salvation was recognised by the Sierra Leone Government and registered, thus obtaining the right to perform, weddings, funerals and all Christian services. As in all the Spiritual churches, adult baptism by total immersion was practised. Members of other churches were re-baptised. Baptism usually takes place at the Bo HQ. A naming service is held three months after a child is born and the Christian name is obtained by divine enquiry. Wedding services are held after divine enquiry concerning the couple's suitability and their future. If a deceased member retained dual membership, the funeral service is left to the other church. For full members a simple service is held, but the corpse is not allowed to pollute the Temple. In 1970 the Church of Salvation was accepted as an associate member of UCC.

The church does not involve itself in the turbulent party politics of Sierra Leone. It is not interested in politics in the abstract or involved at the policy making level. Like all the

Spiritual churches, however, it seeks to satisfy politicians' concerns regarding the outcome of their ventures and reveal the spiritual conditions necessary for success. Brigadier Bangura, who led the 1971 coup d'état, was an active Church of Salvation member. He was allegedly involved in the October 1970 army mutiny over the forced retirement of his two best friends, Majors Kargbo and Sesay. Anxious about his future and harbouring political ambitions, he asked Fofana for special prayers during a three days church fast. At the end of the fast the Primate revealed he had seen Bangura lying dead in bed, and instructed Bangura to exercise caution in whatever plans he had in mind.⁸⁰ On March 26th 1971 the Brigadier was arrested and detained at Pademba Road prison. He sent a message to Fofana, via his Afro-Lebanese wife, asking the Primate to come and pray for him at the prison. Bangura wanted prayer for a fair trial and wished to know the outcome. When he arrived at the prison the Primate was arrested on suspicion of being involved in a plot. He was questioned by the CID, but explained that after the vision he had warned Bangura to take care and disclaimed any knowledge of Bangura's plans.⁸¹

Fofana initiated a ministers training programme similar to that of the Church of the Lord (Aladura). On completing their courses, trainees were sent out to start prayer groups in the Kenema and Kono districts. Groups were started in Koidu, Yengema, Njaiama Nimikoro, Njaiama Sewafe, Kenema, Panguma and Tongo Field. Most of the Koidu group were on the staff of the National Diamond Mining Company (NDMC). Daily meetings were held in the house of Peter Quee, a senior staff member of the diamond company. As numbers increased a house was rented in Yengema town. When this house proved too small Primate Fofana applied to the NDMC for land on which to build a church. His request was granted. The Yengema members conducted evangelism in Njaiama Nimikoro and a group began to meet in the court barrie, mostly pupils from the secondary school. Work on a sizeable mud-brick building was begun with help from the chiefdom elders on a plot donated by the chiefdom council. In February 1976 the Yengema Temple was dedicated. The Njaiama Nimikoro Temple was dedicated later that year. The membership of both branches is mainly

Mende and Kono. In 1978 the section chief at Njaiama Sewafe built a church and presented it to the Primate. These churches in the Kono District attracted NDMC workers and staff, including Kono, Mende and Krio. While both Roman Catholics and UMC operated in the area, "opposition has not been heavy".⁸²

In Kenema, capital of the diamond industry and the third largest town in Sierra Leone, the Church of Salvation was started by Captain Beatrice Kai Samba, a social welfare worker who had been transferred from Freetown to Kenema. She organised a prayer group and invited the Primate to come and bless them. Fofana prayed with them and prophesied success. As numbers increased, they rented a house on Yorpoi Street for services and a residence for a minister-in-charge. As the membership continued to grow, land was bought and a church built. The Kenema Temple was dedicated in 1980. The Anglican bishop of the Bo diocese, Bishop Keili, preached the sermon. In Bo the church founded the Bo Commercial Secondary School, and the Maternity Centre which was run initially by the Primate's wife. At Pondoru a Temple was dedicated on 22nd January 1989. Temples, at varying stages of construction, are being built at Panguma, Baiama, Koidu, and Tongo Field, although due to rebel activity in the Eastern Provinces since 1989 the building programme has been slowed down and even halted. In the north, Temples are under construction in Lunsar and Makeni. In April 1992 the walls of the Makeni Temple were up to roof level and funds were being sought for the roof. The Church of Salvation has also spread over into Liberia with a Temple in Monrovia and branch churches at Congo Town, Bomi Hills and Bong Mines. In 1987 the first Bishop of the Liberian Diocese, Bishop Bundu, broke with Fofana, and "claimed the church as his own private property".⁸³ In the dispute which followed only eight members sided with Bundu. Under the new bishop, Thomas Browne, a Sierra Leonean in his mid-thirties, the Temple was modernised, a two storied faith home was built and the membership tripled.⁸⁴ However, in the areas outside Monrovia, controlled by Charles Taylor and various war lords, civil war and anarchy has hindered development. The Church of Salvation's indigenised form of Christianity attracts Sierra Leoneans, and Liberians, with an indigenous and Islamic

background. Healings and fortune-telling, both accompanied by animal sacrifices as a means of appeasing destroying spirits and ensuring success, account for the church's popular appeal. Primate Fofana intelligently and successfully targeted the mining areas with their fluid and mixed populations as the base for his church expansion programme. However, these areas are now in turmoil due to wide-spread and intensified rebel activity.

The Freetown Branch of the Church of Salvation

In Freetown in the early sixties, Patricia Smith, a school teacher at the Fourah Bay College Elementary School, began, with some relatives who were staying with her, a Church of Salvation prayer group at her home in Ross Road. The group grew and included various disgruntled evangelists of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) who had been assigned to the provinces, but without adequate finance. Under the leadership of Prophet Prince Moore, they moved in 1967 to Pademba Road and met in the home of Mr. Hoyte, a policeman.⁸⁵ Members included G. T. Panda, T. K. Davies, E. Tucker, A. J. Sanday, David Thompson and the Hoytes. Theophilus (Tommy) Kpundeh Davies was born at Gbapp Nongobabullon in Bonthe District on 27th April 1935. His father was a Mende businessman in Bonthe and his mother was Lucia Tucker, a Sherbro, also of Gbapp Nongobabullon. He attended the UMC school in Bonthe, and during this period of schooling he was brought up by the Rev. J. B. Rogers. In 1951, having completed standard seven, he went up to Albert Academy in Freetown. From 1956 to 1958 he studied at FBC, but left without completing his B.Sc. degree. After teaching for a year at the Methodist Boys' High School he joined the Mobil Oil Company. In 1962, while working with Mobil Oil in Bo, Davies attended the Church of Salvation. He was hard pressed by "some difficulty" and had heard from a friend that, unlike the Methodist churches, people were prayed for in "Fofana's Church" and were helped to overcome their problems through the power of God. According to Davies, "I didn't know that a minister would be ready to pray for somebody who had a problem."⁸⁶ As soon as he entered the Temple Primate Fofana declared:

Ah, here is somebody the Lord has been calling. The Lord has told him to come. He has been hearing the voice. He had visions long ago and he still hears the Holy Spirit.⁸⁷

Davies who had from childhood been hearing an inner voice without ever fully understanding what or who it was that was speaking to him, was greatly impressed. He immediately joined the church, became actively involved and "studied the Bible and bought spiritual books."⁸⁸

In 1964 Davies was sent on a Government scholarship to the Sorbonne in Paris. He studied Economics, Maths and Law in the Faculty of Arts. From 1966 to 1967 he took a post-graduate course for the Diploma of Industrial Planning at the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague and passed with distinction. Davies wanted to specialise in some aspect of Government administration and since there was a political crisis in Sierra Leone at the time, he remained an extra year in The Hague to complete a Masters degree in Social Sciences with special emphasis on Economics and Development Planning. In March 1968 Davies returned to Sierra Leone to take up the post of Director of Research at the Bank of Sierra Leone. He immediately joined the Church of Salvation group, now meeting at Hoyte's home on Pademba Road, and soon began to make his presence felt. In 1969 the group moved to 70 Roberts Street, owned by Brother Elkunnah Coker. Davies "became a tower of strength in the group" and rose quickly through the ranks of Captain and Prophet to become Senior Prophet in 1972.⁸⁹ His inner voice instructed him to be content with his Bank salary and "not to take a single cent from the church".⁹⁰ "I ministered because of what was in me."⁹¹

In these early days, the Freetown leaders regularly travelled to Bo for "first Sunday" services and to offer sacrifices. This was an expensive, time consuming exercise, so Brother Coker, who owned land at 13 Edward Lane, gifted the plot to the Church of Salvation. In 1972, construction on the Freetown Temple began although the church had only 47 cents in its bank account. It was a faith venture financed by friends and well-wishers. In 1974 while travelling from Bo, Brothers Coker, Scott and Charles were killed in a car accident on the new Waterloo road. The tragedy spurred the members on to complete the building. The

dedication, conducted by His Grace Primate Fofana, took place on 11th October 1974, although the construction work was not completed; the ceiling had not been installed and the Temple had not been painted. The church grew and Davies became Acting Bishop and Minister-in-Charge, although he still retained his position at the Bank of Sierra Leone. C. R. Strasser-King was made Senior Prophet and Enid Kuyateh, Prophetess. Strenuous efforts were made to raise funds and in 1978 work on the Temple was completed and a re-dedication service held. Ministers from the various denominations in the city were invited. Contacts with the major denominations had been made through Davies's participation in the Freetown United Prayer Group. Also, Harry Sawyerr and Primate Fofana were good friends. Sawyerr had instructed Fofana on the style of vestments for his church. Most Freetown churches declined to participate officially in the re-dedication service, but at the request of Anglican Bishop, M. N. C. O. Scott, Canon E. W. Fashole-Luke attended and preached the sermon. The contact with Fashole-Luke led to Bishop Davies being invited to participate in the Fourah Bay Annual Clergy and Ministers' Easter Vacation Course the following year, 1979. Davies presented a paper entitled "The Church of Salvation".⁹² A paper was also presented by Pastor Ade Jones of Bethel Temple, also AOG General Superintendent, on the topic "African Indigenous and Pentecostal Churches in Sierra Leone: Challenge or Problem". Pastor Jones alluded to the "Church of Satan" in America and commented:

We wonder how many so called churches in Sierra Leone, though not going under the name "church of Satan" have similar practices and doctrines. A pertinent question here is whether these churches should be included in our present exercise. In my view these cannot be as I imagine we are thinking of Christian churches which are Christ-centred ... since they go under the name "church" they are a source of confusion and merely bring shame and reproach on the cause of Christ.

Obviously, although the Theology Department at FBC was prepared to extend the right hand of fellowship to the Spiritual churches, the Pentecostal-evangelicals in the city were not.

Led by Davies and his assistant Strasser-King, the church at Edward Lane grew. Strasser-King attributed their success to their emphasis on pastoral visiting, which included visits to hospitals, and person to person evangelism.⁹³ Open air services were abandoned and this

made the Church of Salvation more attractive to Krio and the higher social groupings. The majority of communicant members were former Anglicans, Methodists and Roman Catholics, with some Muslim converts. Davies, a director at the Bank of Sierra Leone, ran the church as Acting Bishop, the Substantive Bishop, Prince Moore, having departed for the United States. Early in 1983, to widen the appeal of the church and attract the intelligentsia of Freetown and the Western Area, mainly Krio, certain proposals were put to the Primate. These were interpreted by the Bo headquarters, worried by Davies's popularity and progressive thinking, as an attempt at self-elevation with intentions of secession. Davies had previously irritated the Bo leadership by seeking a demarcation of his diocese and improving the administrative organisation of the church. The strained relationships reached breaking point when Davies, because of discussions in Freetown with bankers from the IMF, was unable to attend a Ministerial Seminar held at Yengema on 13th April 1983. The full-time ministers petitioned the Primate that part-timers should not hold senior positions in the spiritual ministry and have authority over full-timers. Part-timers should relinquish their secular posts. They had salary advantages over the full-timers and would not accept uncongenial transfers. Considering this unfair, they recommended that the Primate instruct Bishop Davies to resign from the bank. They quoted the examples of Peter leaving his nets and Matthew his table of custom. They felt that Davies "looked low" on the Primate, and had previously refused to go to the Bo HQ for training under an "uneducated man".⁹⁴

Davies and the part-timers wrote back expressing their shock at the behaviour of the full-timers, pointing out that they received no salary from the church and served voluntarily. The matter was serious and Primate Fofana undertook spiritual enquiries. After receiving a revelation he wrote to all Church of Salvation branches abolishing the part-time ministry. His letter was read out in the Edward Lane church on the 29th of May. Davies felt the other ministers envied his material prosperity and that the Primate himself was jealous of his success as an evangelist and church leader. The Freetown branch was popularly known as the "T. K. Davies' Church". The choice was between the full-time ministry and the Bank:

How could I leave the Bank? I had my loan from the Bank, my salary. The church hadn't given me a cent. How on earth could I continue on a salary of 200 Leones?⁹⁵

Davies also had the responsibility of meeting his children's school fees. He remembered that in 1973 "the voice" had instructed him, "You have to leave this place. In the fullness of time. Not yet!"⁹⁶ The voice was silent now on this issue, although he continued to receive "voice" instructions on Bank and private matters. After two weeks, the inner voice, which he unquestioningly took to be the voice of God, commanded, "Launch out into the deep and do your own fishing."⁹⁷ Davies resigned as bishop, and with thirty-three others, including Patricia Smith, he seceded from the Church of Salvation to start his own church in his home.

In 1985 Paul S. E. Lahai, aged 34, became minister-in-charge at Edward Lane. Lahai had joined Church of Salvation in 1982 after serving with World-wide Mission in Liberia. On 1st October 1989 he was ordained as Venerable Archdeacon. He had a reputation for being a successful counsellor with highly developed visionary and revelatory powers. Bishop Browne was transferred from Monrovia to head the Freetown diocese. He exercises a powerful revelatory and healing ministry at Edward Lane. Browne's charismatic ministry shows the influence of Black American preaching, a style picked up during his time in Liberia.

The Liturgy of the Church of Salvation

Like the Church of the Lord (Aladura), the Church of Salvation starts its daily routines with prayers at 5:30 a.m. Prayers are held at three hourly intervals throughout the day, ending with bedtime prayers at 9 p.m. The prayers are for the health, protection and deliverance of the members, for the empowering of the Holy Spirit, and for the ministries of the church. The most dynamic service is the Wednesday evening vigil when revelations are given, spiritual exercises are conducted, and "the Spirit is given free reign in the church".⁹⁸ Friday services, both morning and evening, focus on healing. At the Wednesday and Friday morning services animal sacrifices are offered. At the Edward Lane branch, between ten and twenty rams, goats and sheep are sacrificed each week. The first Sunday of the month is observed

as a cleansing day and the 9:30 service is "Divine Cleansing and Holy Communion". Psalm 51 is recited, cleansing hymns are sung during which water is sprinkled on members' heads as a sign of ritual cleansing, and palm leaves, a sign of victory, are given out. Afterwards a cleansing prayer is made, a victory hymn is sung and a victory prayer is offered. The Lord's Supper is administered after the sermon and towards the end of the service. The number of communicant members, 180, is small compared with the total membership of approximately 1,000. However, over three hundred members are under fifteen, and over two hundred under five. The Holy Communion is similar to that of the Anglican and Methodist churches. The segregation of the sexes is not maintained at the communion rail. Divine service on the remaining Sundays omit the cleansing hymns, ritual and prayer, as well as the Holy Communion. These services are less formal and have much more chorus singing, clapping, drumming and dancing. More time is given for inspirational prayers. The highlight of the service is the revelations and dream and vision interpretations time. Animal sacrifices may be offered and the members feasted afterwards. The service climaxes with the consecration of the holy water by the Bishop. Special midnight vigil services are held during Lent, at times of crisis, or whenever they are called for by divine revelation. Other special services, each with its own divinely revealed order of service, include Christmas Vigil, New Year Vigil, Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Harvest and Children's Day, Ordination Service, Naming Service, Wedding Service, Funeral Service, Receiving Service, Men's Day and Women's Day. The church has its own Church of Salvation Hymn Book, a collection of spiritual songs and well known popular hymns, "Compiled and Printed under the Direction of His Grace the Most Rev. Prophet E. J. Fofana" in April 1989.⁹⁹

The Temple comprises the first floor of a two storied building. There are four windows and a door on each side, and two windows and a door at the back. Above the altar area on the front wall are three windows and a ledge with green plants. The windows have crosses made with red panes. Other panes are green, blue and gold. The coloured glass filters the light and generates, with the smoke of the *churai*, a calm and mystical atmosphere. To the

preacher's right is a painting of Jesus with a shepherd's staff and a lamb in his arms. To the left is a painting of Moses and the Law tablets. On the right-hand wall is a painting of the Primate which, significantly, is larger than the others. There are six ceiling fans which rarely work because of the poor electricity supply. The altar table is ornately decorated with crosses, flowers, candles and a bell. To the left is the brazen-eagle lectern. At the right corner is a curtained cupboard where the holy oils are kept and in front of this stand the containers with water for consecration. To the back is the balcony and this is where the drummers play. On the front wall is the text, "THE LORD IS IN HIS HOLY TEMPLE". Beside the vestry is a bathroom where members needing purification are bathed. Before ascending to the Temple, worshippers wash their feet with consecrated water from buckets at the foot of the stairs.

The service begins in a subdued and reverential atmosphere. The members dress in white robes with pink, green, pale blue and red sashes. The ladies wear white head squares and must keep their heads covered while in the Temple. Congregations for divine service average around 120 with females being only slightly more numerous than males. On entering the Temple one should bow before the burning candles and offer a short prayer before sitting. Before the service proper begins the ministers process, juniors leading, while the worshippers stand. When the most senior minister sounds three strokes on the bell, members kneel or prostrate. On seven strokes, members take their seats and the introit and adoration prayers follow. Archdeacon Lahai dresses in elegant blue robes. Bishop Browne wears a white robe with a green embroidered collar, a red cap, and a gold chain necklace with a large cross. After the introit, Psalm 51 is recited with periodic responses of "Amen!" Lady officers guard the doors during the periods of ministry by crossing them with a pole. This keeps out evil spirits and people who would disturb the proceedings. As the service progresses the drumming becomes more loud and rhythmic and the atmosphere livens up. The Anglican form of liturgy retreats before the joyous worship and several ladies show signs of "coming under the power". During the popular chorus, "My hands are blessed with the

blessings of the Lord", the congregation moves around happily laying their hands on each other. The ladies demonstrate their liberty in the Spirit by going over to the men's side to shake hands and "lay on hands" in blessing. Bishop Brown leads the praise worship in very dynamic style calling out "Holy Jesus!" and "Lovely Jesus!" in Black American Pentecostal style. Bishop Browne's preaching has a focus on Christ which is unusual in the Spiritual churches:

Why are your prayers not answered? You are not looking to Jesus. We are in the Last Days and the coming of the Lord is drawing nigh. Jesus might come and you are not there. If you don't come to the service Jesus may come with the answer to your problem and you are not there. Let us sing "Because he lives I can face tomorrow. Because he lives all fear is gone." [The chorus is sung with great feeling, and the sermon continues.] God is moving among his people. Jesus is what you are coming here for not the Bishop. "Come unto me all you who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." If you have a problem with your work, health, wife, come to the service and Jesus will be present.

After the sermon, as in the Church of the Lord (Aladura), come the divine messages. A man who is going abroad to work with the UN asks for prayer. He jumps three times and claps three times before Archdeacon Lahai prays for him and prophesies. A prophetess exhorts the female members to dress in holy fashion, to have clean legs and not to defile the Temple or incur the expense of candles for Temple re-consecration. During this time three ladies come under possession, one being highly agitated and noisy. The service ends with the consecration of the water and the oils. Bishop Browne declares that Jesus was not a magician, or a herbalist, or a witch-doctor, but he had the power of the Holy Spirit. Browne prays with great fervency for the Holy Spirit to enter the water and the oils, so that when they are taken healing will result. He prays "the power and the virtues of Christ" into the water. The prayer is offered "In Jesus Name!" and the chorus "Jehovah Rapha, I am the Lord who healeth thee", made popular by the Reinhard Bonnke Crusade of December 1991, is sung enthusiastically. Although the service is officially over an after service healing clinic is held where holy water is drunk, divine enquiries are made, and revelations and spiritual instructions are given to individuals. Lahai and Browne counsel several who are troubled by witchcraft, which is, according to the Bishop, their major counselling involvement.

Wednesday and Friday morning services are the ones where the clearest revelations and the most detailed spiritual instructions are given. These are the services when, according to divine revelation given to the founder, animal sacrifices are to be made. Here are some dream interpretations and revelations recorded during a visit.¹⁰⁰ The Bishop, dressed in purple robes, and the Archdeacon, dressed in red, prophesy and interpret dreams from the altar area. One lady has had a vision of a neighbour's child with someone's hands upon it.

The Bishop's interpretation is:

The practices you saw was witchcraft. This is going on and has already seized hold of the child. I will give you my advice spiritually. Don't get involved with this case, direct the person to this church. Be moved by the Spirit of the Lord. This is a complicated case, don't venture into it. Then all will be well.

Another lady narrates a dream where she saw an old woman lying dead.

Certain spiritual exercises must be done. Prepare yourself for a day of bodily consecration and let the ministers be prayerful to keep you from an evil sickness put on you by your enemies. It is now over your head. Obey the instructions which you will receive. Your life will be saved and you shall live.

A young man dreamed he was in a wheel-chair and there was no one to help him.

The dream signifies temptation. There are enemies around you. If you don't pray the temptation will overtake you. Let Psalm 27 be your staff of protection. This is an intense temptation which is beyond your courage and strength to overcome. You must pray so that the Lord will give you victory over your secret enemy. I will see you afterwards.

Archdeacon Lahai brings forth revelation for a male member:

Offer strong prayers for two days with fasting. A serious situation is ahead of you, a serious matter. Undertake candle prayers for three weeks with holy consecration. At the end of this bring an expiation sacrifice. The sickness has already started and will be an everlasting sickness unless dealt with. A slim dark woman is going all out to secure your downfall.

Another revelation is given to a young member:

There will be confusions in your affairs. Many forces of evil have entered your life. You will be a progressive young man if you avoid your home area when the problems start. Otherwise there will be disaster! You will get advice from friends, but don't listen. You will dream of a great ocean. This is a sign that the solution to your problems is arriving. I see men under you. You are tempted to go to another church. Resist them! Take seven days of bodily consecrations and read Psalms 36, 25, 91 and 24 to get rid of evil spirits.

Other fairly typical revelations are given out by the Archdeacon:

I see you step on a bridge. As soon as you step on it, it shakes and breaks. Offer sacrifices every second month for a year and you will see changes in your life. You will have a child after five years. Read Psalms 91 and 34.

I see a fire in your car.

Black ashes surround you and you cannot perform your three days consecration.

Finally Bishop Browne prophesies concerning the writer:

The voice of God reveals that it is advisable that before the end of this month you endeavour to call on this church and let the element of pure clear water, dedicated with Psalm 38, verses 1 to 8 only, be used for bodily consecration. After this endeavour to drink the water abundantly. Make that water to be a daily food in your life. Your gift of the Spirit is the power of dreams. You don't appreciate your gift, but you need to use this gift. Someone has tested you, to cause you sickness even at your house, but it didn't work. But this person is preparing a second test. Unless you drink the water abdominal pains and severe pains in other places will result. I will talk to you in private. The sickness is purely unnatural and a work of evil to test you. You must pray and sacrifice. The rest I will tell you when alone.

About noon, the time for the animals to be sacrificed, a lady member brings a goat for a sin offering to the back door. Kneeling and laying her hands on the goat she cries, "My sins I confess! Don't let the sickness come on my child!" Bishop Browne calls out three times, "She has confessed her sins! Lord have mercy!" As the lady leads the goat up the centre aisle to the altar the congregation sings Hymn 199, "Depth of Mercy". While she kneels before the priest, holding the goat by her side, Bishop Browne reads Psalm 51 which she repeats after him. He then prays while the congregation shouts "Amen!" after each sentence:

God who delights in sacrifice, here is this woman before the altar. Here is the sacrifice. "To obey is better than to sacrifice". This doesn't deny sacrifice, but it exhorts obedience. Let the virtue of the animal pass to the woman and the sin of the woman pass to the animal. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. The animal's blood is needed. This is not to be spiritualised. I beg you, my King, through this sacrifice to remove this lady's sin. I am begging you! From now on prosper her ways. Whatever she does will prosper.

A white robed assistant leads the goat out the side door and downstairs to be slaughtered.

Another lady brings a goat for a sin offering. Sheep and goats can be heard bleating outside.

Kneeling by the goat she confesses, "Through divine revelation I do present this sacrifice that the Lord may have mercy on me and lay not to my charge the sins and transgressions of my parents." The Bishop calls out three times, "May the Lord have mercy upon you and forgive all your sins." While the lady leads the goat up to the priest at the altar, Hymn 181, "Just as I

am without one plea, but that thy blood was shed for me", is sung. Psalm 51 is again read by the Bishop while the lady, kneeling and holding the animal, repeats line by line. The Bishop prays the priestly prayer accompanied by the congregation's shouts of "Amen!":

"By his stripes you are healed". She has come with her sacrifice. You to her are a God who hears and sees. She is like Hagar. You know the sins in her life that have become a setback in her life. The Passover blood was shed in Egypt. Let the blood of this animal atone for the sins of this woman in your sight as in Leviticus. She has confessed. Let the sins be transferred onto this animal.

Next an exchange-of-life sacrifice is offered. This time a sheep is brought straight up to the altar through the side door by an assistant while one verse of Hymn 108, "My times are in Thy hands", is sung. A lady comes and kneels by the sheep. Bishop Browne reads Psalm 88 and the lady repeats each line:

**O Lord God of my salvation,
I have cried day and night before Thee:
Let my prayer come before Thee:
Incline Thine ear unto my cry.
For my soul is full of troubles:
And my life draweth nigh unto the grave.**

**I am counted with them that go down into the pit:
I am as a man that hath no strength:
Set apart among the dead,
Like the slain that lie in the grave,
Whom Thou rememberest no more,
Who are cut off from Thy hand.**

**Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit,
In darkness, in the deeps.
Thy wrath lieth hard upon me,
And Thou hast afflicted me with all Thy waves.**

.....

The Bishop prays:

God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob! You introduced the exchange of life sacrifice to Abraham. There was a lamb caught in the thicket and you exchanged it in place of Isaac. Here is the young woman. The grave cannot praise you. Save the life of this woman from untimely death. Accept this animal. Lord have mercy! When she offers the blood of this sacrificial animal let Death move away from her.

Then came a peace sacrifice. While the congregation sang the hymn "When peace like a river", the assistant brought a ram up to the altar and a lady came and knelt beside it. The Bishop reads Psalm 112 which the lady repeats after him:

**Praise ye the Lord. Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord,
That delighteth greatly in his commands.
His seed shall be mighty upon earth:
The generation of the upright shall be blessed.
Wealth and riches shall be in his house:
And his righteousness endureth for ever.
Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness:**

.....
**He shall not be afraid of evil tidings:
His heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.
His heart is established, he shall not be afraid,
Until he see his desire upon his enemies.**

.....
**The wicked shall see it, and be grieved;
He shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away:
The desire of the wicked shall perish.**

The priestly prayer follows:

Jesus is the Prince of Peace. He alone gives peace. From him and him alone comes peace. Here is a ram brought by this lady for a peace sacrifice. There are three parts to this sacrifice, life, peace and stability. She offers this animal to God as he has demanded for her good. Reconcile this woman back to yourself. Give her peace in all her activities and ventures through this sacrifice. Prosper her ways, her doings and the works of her hands.

The service ends with a "divine message". The church in Kenema was in a dangerous situation as a result of the recent military coup. The Edward Lane church was to fast and pray and perform exchange-of-life sacrifices for the brothers and sisters in Kenema.

The Edward Lane church, while unquestionably Spiritual in doctrine and practice, is now, under Bishop Browne's ministry, opening up to the influences of Black American Pentecostalism and the Charismatic Movement. Browne, who always carries his Bible around with him is an enthusiastic Bible student and constantly quoting from it and refers to it. Through this type of ministry a progression from perceiving Christianity in basically indigenous and Old Covenant terms to perceiving it in New Covenant terms is underway. Under the present leadership at Edward Lane, and particularly through the charismatic, Jesus focusing and Bible quoting ministry of Bishop Browne, the church gives the impression of being a maturing Spiritual church which is, at least on the surface, moving gradually towards Christian orthodoxy. Concerning Browne, Rev. Sidney Davies of EFSL commented :

Browne is coming away and he is pointing people now to a new way of life. He is pointing to Christ rather than putting premium and emphasis on Old Testament sacrifices. He is coming out of it. One should give credit to God for his life when you think of the time he has spent in that old way. He is pointing some people to that which is new as John the Baptist did to Christ. As far as I can see it there is a future for him.¹⁰¹

However, the authority of the founder remains strong in the Church of Salvation and his divine revelations continue basically unchallenged. Browne appears to unquestioningly accept Fofana's spiritual and ecclesiastical authority. It remains to be seen whether this trend towards Christocentrism will continue and if the old wineskin be able to contain the new wine. Or will there be, as T. K. Davies predicts, an eventual splitting up of the church, as the young progressives experience conservative resistance and opposition, and break away to form their own Spiritual and perhaps Pentecostal-evangelical churches?

THE CHRIST PENTECOSTAL CHURCH

The Christ Pentecostal Church is an example of a breakaway from the Church of Salvation which seems to be moving away from the Spiritual into the Pentecostal-evangelical camp. Following the 1983 secession the T. K. Davies group met at Davies home, but this proved inadequate. His brother, Dr. Frank Davies, who was also UMC minister at Bishop Baughman Memorial Church, offered the top floor of his clinic at 29 Rawdon Street as a temporary base. Fifty attended the first meeting on Wednesday 1st June. The first Divine Cleansing and Holy Communion service was held on 5th June. As they constituted themselves into a church they sought God for a name. Everyone was asked to offer a name. Fifty-nine different names were presented, including Davies' own suggestion, "Christ Our Shepherd Church". Three days of fasting were called. During the fast the voice spoke to Davies, "This church shall be called the Christ Pentecostal Church". "The name was announced to the church and all agreed."¹⁰² Along with the name came the usual revelation that the church would grow and spread throughout the country.

In his early days in the Spiritual church T. K. Davies harboured certain reservations, arising from his UMC background, concerning some of their practices:

I was not in total agreement with some of these practices. A host of them! But my only source of information or source of doctrine was from this voice that bothered me, the thing that motivated me, the thing that moved me. The voice of the Holy Spirit as I would call it. When you are in any group or any society you have to at times yield yourself to some of their excesses. I had no Aladura background. I never worshipped in any of this Spiritual churches. I was purely EUB, UMC.¹⁰³

His misgivings were pacified by the problem-solving successes of the Church of Salvation and the correspondence between their understanding of the operations of the Spirit and his own. "So I listened to some of their teaching. I even practised some of their doctrines."¹⁰⁴ What guided him was the inner voice. "Again and again this voice bothered me. It would say, 'This person needs a sacrifice. Do it!'"¹⁰⁵ So Davies would give forth the revelation that God desired an animal sacrifice. He would make candle prayers, but never with black candles, only with white. Black candles, "Are for those who are doing spiritualism, they want to talk with the dead."¹⁰⁶ The most important fact was that the practices worked. Davies gives an example of a woman with incurable stomach ulcers who had unsuccessfully sought medical help in Russia and Britain:

The voice said, "This woman is travelling with a dead body. Offer a ram sacrifice as an exchange of life according to the Levitical laws." We did this ram sacrifice. The lady jumped over the blood and washed with consecrated water. After a period of time she was completely cured.¹⁰⁷

The voice also commanded an animal sacrifice to be performed for a man who had had an operation and a large part of his stomach removed. He was not recovering, could not eat and was wasting away.

We offered the ram sacrifice. He jumped over the blood. He drank a gallon of olive oil for three months and then another gallon. After nine months this man was well and could eat anything. He was X-rayed by the doctors. They were very surprised.¹⁰⁸

In 1990 Bishop W. N. Dickson, a Kru from Monrovia, and leader of a church also called the Christ Pentecostal Church, came to Freetown as agent for an American Pentecostal aid organisation Feed My People International which was helping Liberian refugees in Sierra Leone. Davies had previously met Bishop Dickson in Liberia. In October 1990 the American

director, John Zernaits, visited Freetown and met Davies. This led to an aid consignment being sent to the church which included 45 boxes of cooking oil, two crates of crutches, 20 wheel-chairs, 104 bales of second-hand clothing. These items were distributed among the needy members. A second consignment arrived in March 1991 and included medical supplies, agricultural equipment and fertilisers. Brother John B. Ganda, a Mende member, was made Sierra Leone director of Feed My People International and set up in an office on Liverpool Street to oversee the distribution of aid and organise a child feeding programme. Having renewed his acquaintance with Bishop Dickson, Bishop Davies decided to affiliate his church with the Christ Pentecostal Church and to drop, gradually, all the Spiritual practices which were incompatible with the Pentecostal-evangelicalism of the Monrovia church and their overseas supporters. To a great extent this has been achieved in the Sunday services, but the standard Spiritual church practices continue, and these still provide the main attraction for members and prospective members. When interviewed in March 1992, with a sacrificial lamb tethered near the church door bleating incessantly, Bishop Davies stated:

Up to last year I was technically Aladura. We didn't wear shoes in church. Women didn't come to service if they were "behind the tent". We used holy water and went to the beach. Jesus went to the beach! We kept Mount Tabborarr. Jesus withdrew himself for a time! Animal sacrifices is Scriptural. I didn't depart from them until very recently when I heard the voice saying, "The time is come".¹⁰⁹

Obviously the time had not yet fully come. However, new rules and bye laws are being formulated in which animal sacrifices are discouraged as also the consecration of Florida water and perfumed oils. Several of the original members did not approve of these changes and departed. Only water, oil, bread, wine and white candles are now consecrated. Consecration of members by washing in holy water is performed on divine revelation and although the prayers are offered in the Temple the washing is carried out in a washroom set apart for this purpose. House and vehicle consecrations are also conducted on divine revelation, or at members' requests if Davies approves. The suppliants supply the water, oil, candles and incense for the consecration, as well as transport for the minister and his party. Beach consecration, "seaside bathing", is also performed on divine revelation. While members and visitors are now allowed to wear shoes in church, menstruating women, who

are "behind the tent", are still prevented from entering the consecrated area of the temple. All female members must have their heads covered. Mothers are not allowed into the temple until the purification period is completed, 33 days for a male child and 66 for a female. After that a "Receiving of Mothers" celebration day of thanksgiving is held when God and the church is thanked for a safe passage through the perils of pregnancy, labour and childbirth.

At divine service Bishop Davies, wearing a white robe with a red cord band and a purple sash, stands commandingly on the platform or sits on his bishop's chair. An elder, with touching reverence, prays for the Bishop:

Anoint our Bishop. He has been anointed from his mother's womb. He has his own weaknesses, but you are his friend. If you leave him he will fall apart. Give victory over all his enemies. Let us bow the head to him. Protect the members, hide not your face from them. Broken bones, heal. Problems in home and office, solve. You have established this church. You are in control. Bring in more devoted members. Provide for us. Touch the hearts of donors so they will provide. Whatever we have done, forgive us. Let your will be done. Let us go from strength to strength.¹¹⁰

Deaconesses wear plain white gowns with golden-yellow belts for ordinary services. For first Sunday and special services they wear white gowns with a golden-yellow trim on the neck and sleeves, and crosses attached to their belts. The Crossbearers order has been discontinued and the wooden crosses of junior ministers replaced by a certificate of anointment. Lively music which encourages singing and dancing is provided by drums, shegurehs and tambourines. Sometimes an accordion is included. The church hymn book, ***Collection of Hymns for Evangelism***, was compiled by T. K. Davies in 1983. The 1987 second edition contains 341 hymns. At the Divine Cleansing service, after the cleansing prayer and Psalm 51 reading, consecrated holy water is sprinkled on the heads of members and victory palm leaves are distributed. The palm leaves represent Jesus' Triumphal Entry, but many also believe there is power in the palm leaves to conquer illness, demons, human enemies and witchcraft. As in the Spiritual churches, "coming under the power" during the worship is proof of the presence of the Holy Spirit. Worship during divine service exhibits a somewhat uncomfortable mixing of styles, as for example Davies begins the benediction in dignified High Church fashion and ends with a three-fold "Hallelloo!" and Spiritual jumping.

At the Wednesday and Friday services dreams and visions are interpreted and messages given out. Davies always brings forth the last vision or revelation. In his ministry of healing during these services much use is made of the Psalms. The church fasts during times of crisis when there is a need to increase spiritual power, and whenever divine revelations demand it. As in the Church of Salvation three types of fasting are practised, ordinary, fruit, and dry. Ordinary fasting commences at midnight and continues till 6 p.m. when consecrated water is drunk and normal food is eaten. The fast then resumes at midnight and continues for the revealed number of days. Fruit fasting is similar except that fruit replaces cooked food. Dry fasting does not allow for any food or water to be taken throughout the whole period of the fast. There are three prayer bands in the church, the Pioneers who are mostly women and who especially seek to foster church growth and raise finances, the Daniel's Band who are a senior and mixed praying group, and the David's Band who are a junior group. On secret societies Bishop Davies states, "They are not bad except at the top levels. I joined the *Poro* when I was six. It is no big deal."¹¹¹

Helped by donations from friends abroad, especially Feed My People International and also Miracle Ministries International, another contact through Liberian refugee relief work in Sierra Leone, T. K. Davies has embarked on the construction of an impressive cathedral-like church building at 2 Henneson Street, New England Ville. Nearby stands a small clinic and medical centre which is presently used to store some expensive medical equipment from abroad. Although in March 1992 the church was far from completed, the ground floor area was being used for services. The church's application for membership of CCSL has been granted. This opens up a wider area of international contacts for the far-sighted Davies, who seeks to extend the influence of his church by becoming involved in aid distribution, medical care and education. He intends to open a primary school when the church building is completed. The membership of Christ Pentecostal Church at Henneson Street in January 1992 was officially given as 150, but at divine service on 8th March 1992 the total congregation, adults and children, only numbered around forty. Dual membership is common and, as with the

Spiritual churches generally, people attend when difficulties arise and problems need solving. Wednesday and Friday services for revelations and healings, and also the Bishop's Saturday morning healing clinic, are the most popular services. In his healing ministry Davies intends to use both spiritual and scientific means to effect cures. The membership is growing steadily. Branches have been started at Bonthe, Lumley, and King Tom. A group meet in a classroom of the Municipal School at Kissy Dockyard. The church exists in the grey area between the Spiritual churches, the Pentecostal-evangelicals and the Methodists. It appeals mainly to the middle classes who are attracted by Bishop Davies's revelatory and healing gifts and who favour his middle-of-the-road course and gradualist approach to moving slowly and pragmatically away from the more controversial practices of the Spiritual churches.

SAINT PETER'S HEALING TEMPLE

Her Grace, the most Reverend Prophetess Phebean Deborah Walters, founder of Saint Peter's Healing Temple was born of Mende parents in 1934 in Tikonko Chiefdom, Bo District. She was named Debma Jengo and was the only child of her mother, but second among forty-two of her father. In 1950 she was sent to Freetown for schooling. She stayed with an aunt on Soldier Street and was enrolled at the Cathedral Primary School although she was too old to sit in class with the pupils. On completing standard five her aunt removed her from the school and arranged private lessons in home management. She became engaged to a Krio train driver, Emile Gascoigne Walters, and in 1956 they were married at the Bishop Crowther Memorial Church in Cline Town. They had three children, Maud, Vidal and James. In 1968 "Febi" Walters was partially paralysed through a stroke. She did not improve under medical treatment. A friend suggested she attend the Church of the Lord (Aladura) at Williams Street for prayers. Healing resulted and Phebean Walters joined the Spiritual church. She entered the spiritual training programme for ministers, having carefully observed all that was involved in her own healing. She gained a reputation as a woman of prayer and healing power. When

the leadership of the Daniel band became vacant she was anointed Captain. Later, she was promoted to the rank of Spiritual Mother and became known as "Mami Febi".¹¹²

In March 1970 the Freetown branch of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) hosted the church's International Conference. The Daniel Band was asked to provide six single mattresses. Mami Febi organised several fund-raising open-air services, winding up with a youth rally. During the rally Mami Febi was involved in a car accident. Expecting to be treated by the church, and hoping for a quick recovery so as to take part in the conference, she refused to go to hospital. To her dismay she was completely ignored, no member of the ministry visited her. Possibly they were preoccupied with the conference arrangements, but Mami Febi interpreted the slight as tribalism and discrimination. She was a woman and a Mende in a church in which the upper leadership was mainly Yoruba and Krio. On 20th March she rallied her supporters in the Daniel Band and declared her intention to break with the church and start her own private prayer meeting at her home at 69 Circular Road. Most of the Band joined her for prayers. She no longer attended meetings at Williams Street or O'Neil Street, but visited the Lord's Church of Holiness at Victoria Street, a 1959 breakaway run by Primate Oswell. The church made no attempt at reconciliation. On 26th September 1970 she officially broke with the Church of the Lord (Aladura) and dedicated herself full-time to the prayer group. They reconstituted themselves as the United Church of the Lord (Aladura).

By undertaking open air evangelism the new church soon had over fifty members and moved to a more spacious house at 13 Circular Road. This house also proved too small to contain the growing numbers. Gascoigne Walters owned land at 63 Circular Road at the junction of Circular Road and Mary Street, popularly known as "Fire Force Junction". The land was cleared and a tent church constructed with sticks and mats. Building materials were bought and a permanent structure was erected on the plot. As reports of Mami Febi's revelatory and healing powers spread, numbers continued to grow. The name of the church was changed by revelation to Saint Peter's Healing Temple because Peter was a great healer and the main

emphasis of the church and its founder was to be healing. The church's motto was "Bear ye one another's burdens", (Gal. 6:2). In an impressive service in January 1972, conducted by several Bishops from other Spiritual churches, Mami Febi was anointed Spiritual Head and Founder of Saint Peter's Healing Temple. At first she ran the church as the Reverend Mother with the help of two assistants, but in 1975, as the membership grew to over two hundred, four bands each headed by a Captain and responsible for an administrative area were formed. These were Ladies Prayer Union Group 1, Ladies Prayer Union Group 2, the Martha Band and the Deborah Band. While church membership was mostly female, there was a core of male assistants; Senior Prophet Bright, Assistant Senior Prophet Maligie, Senior Minister Murana, Senior Disciples Pondema and Foday, and Disciple Samuel A. J. Mayers. Her husband, "Papa Gas" at this time demonstrated antagonism to his wife's spiritual activities. During services, which he refused to attend, he would play his radio and music at high volume.¹¹³ Later on he was given the position of Archdeacon and this secured his co-operation. The majority of church members and ministers were of Mende background, but Krio, Temne, Limba and Susu also joined. Disciple Mayers, a Mende working for SLBS and the youngest minister, also a relative, caught the eye of the Spiritual Head, and after a divine revelation she anointed him Bishop and Deputy Spiritual Head. According to a former deacon:

The Spiritual Mother was very despotic and suppressed freedom of speech and personal opinions. This led to disunity because her own family members and friends enjoyed undue privileges which led to nepotism, gossip, malice and uncontrolled quarrelling. Many members left the church, but new members came in. The numerical growth fluctuated and the integrity of the church was questioned. Since there were many negative happenings leading to quarrels, the timing of the services was unregulated. Services may start late and yet end very early. Paradoxically, however, members' problems were solved and there were many testimonies all around Freetown.¹¹⁴

Despite festering discontent, healings were taking place through spiritual struggling, holy water bathing and drinking, and the fasting and praying powers of the founder. There were many revelations and inspiring messages based on visions and dream interpretations. Many testified to experiencing the presence of the Spirit in the meetings and being baptised in the Holy Spirit and filled with the Spirit. Sankoh-Cole testifies:

I became a visioner. My visions maintained decorum and invited many great people to the church and no one ever disproved my releases. I rose through the ranks and I entered the Sierra Leone Theological Hall and Church Training Centre. I came out with flying colours and went on to become the Anglican priest I am today. My sermons still have an impact on society and they are described as evangelical. All these things and many more I owe to this church.¹¹⁵

The main counselling involvements were over the selection of marriage partners, infidelity in marriage, child-bearing anxieties, unemployment, drunkenness and quarrelling in the home.

In 1977 Mami Febi was diagnosed as having cancer. All efforts at procuring a healing through prayer and spiritual exercises failed. On 27th December 1977, at the age of forty-four, after she had gone missing for several days, Phebean Walters' body was discovered on Lumley Beach. Freetown was shocked at the news of the death of this powerful Spiritual Mother. While all recognised that she had been a great healer rumours circulated that she had been a witch and that before her death had made a confession.¹¹⁶ Her funeral service was held on 2nd January 1978 at Grace Brethren Church, Campbell Street, and she was buried at King Tom cemetery.

Samuel Mayers took over the leadership of the church. For the first time a church bank account was opened. The healthy financial state of the church enabled Bishop Mayers to travel to Nigeria on study leave. Despite his absence membership continued to grow, many were Mende from the Kissy area. To overcome transport problems and overcrowding at Circular Road, a Kissy branch was organised under the leadership of Brother Jossie. Construction of a church at Blackhall Road, Kissy, was begun in September 1979 on land donated by a member at the 1979 annual general conference. Work was completed the following year. Bishop Mayers returned to Freetown in June 1980 and in September he left for Canada, financed by a Canadian Pentecostal church connection. On his return in October 1982 he held his first anointment service. C. B. Amadu-Taylor was promoted to Assistant Bishop, Vidal Walters became Senior Minister - a rank lower than Prophet - and Chairman of the Building Committee, Dudley Fitzjohn was made Minister-in-Charge at Circular Road. A new ministerial council was inaugurated and at its first meeting the issue of

church property came up for discussion. As the church was situated on private land it was proposed that the church lease Government land at Tower Hill. The Bishop wrote applying for a plot, but received no reply. Vidal Walters, as Chairman of the Building Committee, was asked to pursue the matter. Time went by and there were no developments. In June 1984 Bishop Mayers travelled to the United States. He returned in December and held his second anointment service. Vidal Walters was promoted to Senior Prophet and Dudley Fitzjohn was made Prophet-in-Charge. The church extended into Mendeland. A branch was inaugurated at Njala, Moyamba District, under the supervision of Brother Justin, and another at Moriba Town under Brother Margai. A fourth branch was opened in Bo and headed by Sister Yeima.

Bishop Mayers again took up the issue of the land lease and the transfer of the church to Tower Hill. His perseverance brought success, the lease was granted and in November 1985 a foundation service was held on the site and construction of the new church began. Administrative difficulties were encountered and in the process a power struggle developed. Vidal Walters and other leaders expressed reluctance at leaving the Circular Road site which belonged to the Walters family. It was where the founder had established the church and for Vidal it was a place of great spiritual power. Here he could communicate with his mother's spirit which appears to him in dreams giving instructions on what spiritual exercises to use in treating particular cases and how long he should persevere in fighting the spiritual battles. In dreams he would be told, "Don't relax. Keep on fighting."¹¹⁷ Vidal did not want to leave what he perceived as the source of his spiritual power. However, some members complained their money being spent to develop "somebody's private property". By November 1986 the building on Tower Hill was ready for services. A "No Church" notice was displayed at Circular Road and members were redirected to Tower Hill. On 13th December Vidal Walters and Assistant Bishop Amadu-Taylor led a revolt against Bishop Mayers. According to Rev. Sankoh-Cole who was a deacon at the time:

They started by merely boycotting services and meetings of the ministers. On 7th January there was thuggery. Senior Minister Vidal sent in his loyal boys to vandalise the Tower Hill church. They physically and bodily molested the disciples found in the

church and seized church property like benches, tables, lectern, Bibles, and so on, and returned them to 63 Circular Road. Many people followed the victors and returned to the old church leaving the new church virtually empty.¹¹⁸

Bishop Mayers' Saint Peter's Healing Church

Bishop Mayers continued with a remnant on Tower Hill. They adopted the name Saint Peter's Healing Church. The Mende branches in Njala, Moriba Town and Bo remained loyal to Bishop Mayers. However, as the Circular Road church seized the church bank account there was no longer money to maintain the outreach satellites. Njala and Bo decided to become autonomous, independent, self-supporting churches while Moriba Town remained a branch of Saint Peter's Healing Church. The Kissy branch remained loyal to Bishop Amadu-Taylor and Vidal Walters. The Tower Hill church continued all the practices of the mother church, producing problem-solving revelations, consecrating water for healing and protection, giving out wooden crosses and iron rods, dressing in white, removing shoes and performing ablutions before entering the church, praying with candles, fasting and spiritual struggling with mercy ground and beach rolling. Mayers, because of his Pentecostal connections in Canada and the United States and their influence on his theology, is not as enthusiastic about animal sacrifices as Vidal Walters and the church at Circular Road. He is presently torn between the old core who wish to continue the practice and the new younger members who want to abandon it. His solution to the problem, as with Church of the Lord (Aladura), is to privatise the matter and not himself personally perform the priestly role. When asked whether his church was Spiritual or Pentecostal he replied, "Truly I personally see no difference between Spiritual and Pentecostal churches, but to answer your question our church is Pentecostal".¹¹⁹ His understanding of the Atonement is universalistic, "In my church it is understood that Christ died for all and is the Saviour of the world. I can't tell what other churches think about that." Stimulated by loud drumming and shegureh shaking, spirit possession is deliberately sought during the lively worship sessions. Inspired revelations and prophetic utterances given out while "under the power" are immediately acted on by the church. However, on healing Bishop Mayers declared:

As the name implies, my church emphasises healing and indeed people are healed in the name of Jesus. A couple of years ago a dozen or so mentally retarded people were healed. My friend, healing is number one.¹²⁰

In February 1992, Bishop Mayers suffered a stroke. His recovery has been helped by the church's prayers. While the younger members are keen to move in a Pentecostal-evangelical direction the old guard are more cautious. The level and pace of change depends on how Bishop Mayers harmonises these conflicting pressures.

Lack of finance is the besetting problem of the church. The young ministers in training receive no official salary and depend on gifts and church members paying their monthly subscriptions. They often feel inadequately compensated and complain that they are sent out in evangelism as, "collectors of money rather than 'good news bringers' or church pastors".¹²¹ However, according to Bishop Mayers:

Membership is now very impressive. The Freetown members are predominantly from the Krio ethnic group. Krio is the medium of communication. However, there are other ethnic groups, for example Mende, Temne and Limba. The majority of new converts are Muslim although there are a few who I would say hitherto belonged to no other religion.¹²²

The church has started to grow recently. Between 50 and 80 attend divine service on Sunday. They lay claim to the 500 membership of the original church, but on the day of the 1990 Freetown Survey the attendance was only 50; 10 males, 30 females and 10 children.

Saint Philip's Healing and Evangelistic Mission

Following the split, Amadu-Taylor officially took charge of Saint Peter's Healing Temple at Circular Road. However, the real power was increasingly operating through the charismatic Vidal Walters, whose gifts, especially his revelatory powers, apparently exceeded even those of his mother. When Amadu-Taylor died in 1988 Vidal Walters was made Apostle and Spiritual Head. Under his leadership the church has expanded greatly and branches have been established at Lungi, Waterloo and Holy Mount, New England. All the plots belonged to building contractor Crispin Jack-During who ran these branches as District Head. In January 1992, Vidal Walters founded a branch in London. While some maintain that this overseas

expansion is evidence of the missionary and evangelistic zeal of the church, others sceptically regard it as an attempt to tap in on foreign finance and funding. At their 1991 annual church convention a dispute arose over finance and accountability. This led to Crispin Jack-During breaking with Saint Peter's Healing Temple the following year. He took with him the three branches he headed and which were on his land. These he organised into Saint Philip's Healing and Evangelistic Mission with headquarters at Savage Street and himself as the Lord Bishop and Head. Bishop Jack-During seems to be moving in a Pentecostal-evangelical direction. According to Sankoh-Cole, the mercy ground struggling continues, as do candle prayers, fortune-telling and dream interpretations; "They are really Spiritual in dynamic."¹²³ By such breakaways small, independent, autonomous, Sierra Leonean Spiritual churches are now steadily proliferating. This may be accounted for as being due in great measure to the extremely loose charismatic structures of the Sierra Leonean Spiritual churches, in contrast to the strong administrative structure of the Yoruba founded Church of the Lord (Aladura).

Worship at Freetown's Most Powerful Spiritual Church

From its inception Saint Peter's Healing Temple has attracted many who, like Femi Anthony mentioned above, were spiritually dissatisfied in their traditional churches.¹²⁴ In a country suffering severe economic hardship where family life is under the most severe pressures the Spiritual form of worship allows liberty of emotional expression and release from tensions and frustrations. The sense of belonging to a caring and spiritually powerful community which has the power to heal, solve problems and overcome enemies, draws many who are struggling financially and are socially marginalised in the city. A student researcher wrote:

People after failing to gain much from prayer requests made in their various churches or from visits to medicine men, as a last resort turn to this church for the fulfilment of their desires, and when this is granted them many decide to stay on. The Spiritual Head of the church proclaims that as the name of the church implies, it is a healing church that heals all those who have true faith in the Lord's power. As such from day to day, more and more adherents are attracted to the church.¹²⁵

Membership is open to all who "vow to forever have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and abide by the laws laid down in the constitution of the church".¹²⁶ However, the general understanding is that membership is open to all followers of God, Muslim and Christian, who are earnest about following the Spiritual way of worship and are willing to submit to the rules and regulations of the church.¹²⁷ All members must join a "band" and pay the weekly or monthly contributions as directed by the Holy Spirit. Those who keep up their contributions obtain "priority for any form of spiritual attendance".¹²⁸ The present membership continues mainly Mende, it is a Mende Spiritual church. Krio and Temne also attend. Membership, which includes occasional visitors, is given as 500. Attendance at divine service is around 150 on average. The 1990 Freetown Survey recorded an unusually low attendance of only 100; 35 males; 35 females; 30 children. The survey gave the total attendance that day at Circular Road and all its branches as 350; 75 males; 200 females; 75 children. All members are expected to take part in home visitations and open air evangelism and support the church morally and financially. Apostle Walters declares that while leaders of the established churches condemn smoking and drinking, he would only preach against excessive indulgence.¹²⁹ Members are prohibited, officially at least, from visiting traditional healers and diviners, and warned against being members of the Hunting Societies. However, there is no obvious crusade against membership of *Poro* and *Sande*.

In principle society membership is not acceptable, but in practice once in a society always in a society. However, members do not publicly practice or demonstrate their society affiliations.¹³⁰

The Spiritual Head makes no secret of his being a Freemason; neither did the late Assistant Bishop Amadu-Taylor. Only those who wholeheartedly submit to the laws and demands of the church are accepted into full membership and received into the inner circle of the life of the church. They alone can vote and be eligible for ministerial appointment. Those who cannot fully subscribe to all the church's beliefs and practices may become associate members, but they cannot vote or hold office. Members of other churches may become visiting members. These attend when faced with difficulties and once their problems are solved they return to their original churches.

Various services are held throughout the day. Unlike the mainline churches, Saint Peter's Healing Temple and the other Spiritual churches offer their members an almost continuous religious environment. The day commences with 6 a.m. prayers and spiritual exercises. All disciples and ministers are expected to attend. Sessions are devoted to mercy ground rolling, prayers with candles, spiritual enquiries and Bible classes. At the Wednesday and Friday morning services, which last from 9 a.m. till noon, animals sacrifices are offered. Special evening services are held on Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Friday is healing day and at the evening healing service the sick are anointed with consecrated holy oil. Open air services may be held at any time, provided a revelation has been received. Sunday morning divine service starts at 9:30 a.m. and lasts from three to four hours. Saint Peter's Healing Temple differs from the Church of the Lord (Aladura) in that Holy Communion is celebrated every "first Sunday" of the month. Phebean Walters, although a Mende, was a staunch Anglican before joining the Adejobis. Vidal Walters, whose father was a Krio, considers himself more a Krio than a Mende. Thus the Krio influence is seen in this Spiritual church by the importance given to the Eucharist. Only members who require special prayers and dedications to God partake. Ministers who do not take Holy Communion on Maundy Thursday and Easter Sunday are disqualified from holding office the following year. Those participating in the Sacrament approach the altar and have their feet washed by the officiating ministers. They are fed the wafer by the Spiritual Head and made to drink from the one cup as in the Anglican order. Anglican and Krio influence are again apparent in their Lenten activities. Being a period of mourning they refrain from playing musical instruments. Monday evening candle-light processions and Wednesday evening church services are held throughout the Lenten period. Services are held throughout Holy Week, and Good Friday and Easter Sunday services are highlight events in their church year.

As in all the "white garment" churches women members wear white gowns and men white robes. White is the colour of purity and holiness, and Christ and the angels dress in white robes. It is also a colour of clothing that protects from witchcraft. The usual prohibitions on

women entering the Temple during menstruation and having their heads uncovered are upheld. If the head-cover slips off severe headaches will result. Hands and feet should be washed in holy consecrated water and shoes must be left outside. The church claims the Lord commanded that nothing dead or unclean should be brought before Him, and since most shoes are made of leather taken from the hide of dead cows they must not be taken into the temple. Supporting this argument is God's instruction to Moses at the Burning Bush, "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." Candles are lit before entering the Temple. This symbolises the light of God and protects from the evil spirits which are always present when Jesus' name is proclaimed. Evil spirits are driven from the temple by burning *churai* before and during services. Divine service commence at 9:30.

The Temple has a long narrow extension section making a right angle with the main area, thus the segregation for seating is children at the front, women in the middle and men towards the back. There are three altar areas, the holy of holies may be occupied only by the Spiritual Head, the middle holy area belongs to the Crossbearers, and the outer holy space is open to all anointed men. In order to maintain this order the gates to the altar area are kept closed until the service starts. A section next to the altar is reserved for the drummers and the choir. The ministers process in order into the church and the service proceeds in Anglican style, but with exuberance and joy. Whenever the Spiritual Head prays, preaches or prophesies, a pole is held across the doors to prevent evil spirits entering. When the holy names are invoked and the congregation respond, "Holy!", after each one. Confession and victory psalms are recited to the accompaniment of loud "Amen!" During the praise worship each band chooses a popular shout which may be in English, Krio or Mende. The young ladies dance energetically and rhythmically during the worship, while the young men behind them clap enthusiastically. Music is provided by an electric organ, a modern drum set, a trumpet, various versions of the triangle, a bell with the clapper used by hand, a large single string home made bass, and sometimes a harmonium. In the power charged atmosphere

where expectation of spiritual encounter runs high, several ladies, stimulated by the hot drumming and swaying, "get the Spirit" and collapse to the floor "under the power".

Here they may suddenly throw themselves on the floor as if they had an attack of fits and start struggling to speak in tongues. While this is going on, members of the congregation continue singing while some pray until the one who got the Spirit comes back to reality. The person will then give any vision or message received from the Lord to the congregation. If interpretation is needed this is done by the Spiritual Head or a minister. More prayers are said and the service continues. At times they become so involved in their prayers and so earnest that they start shouting and making expressive gestures with their hands and bodies and start moving about or kneeling, or even cry out so that their prayers become incoherent.¹³¹

The preaching is generally a defence, using texts from both Old and New Testaments, of the church's spiritual practices. The inspiration frequently comes as a result of defectors joining the "born again" churches in the city. Jesus did not come to destroy the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfil them. He fulfilled them by performing them. Thus he put the divine seal on praying at midnight, 3 a.m. and 6 a.m., on fasting, on struggling and rolling, on washing in the stream as at the Jordan, and on animal sacrifices since he himself went to the Temple, kept the Passover and commanded the leper to offer an animal sacrifice as a testimony to his healing. Spiritual church preaching tends to mix stern legalism and homely humour. There are constant ejaculations of "Praise the Lord!", often in inappropriate places such as, "You eat damnation to yourself - Praise the Lord!" Wives are incessantly exhorted to be submissive to their husbands, and Cross-bearers reprimanded for not always bringing their crosses with them to the services, but leaving them lying carelessly around. Members must always attend appropriately robed. Examples from the healing ministry of Jesus abound and angels are described as messengers from God who are sent with information concerning our problems. The Cross is "The conqueror of conquerors!" The church is an African church to which people come for visions and dreams. The Anglicans, Methodists and the Roman Catholics are frequently castigated for not meeting the popular demand for revelations. After the sermon, members come forward to be blessed by the Spiritual Head and be touched with his iron rod. By a touch of the rod he also consecrates the offering and various objects presented to him. Three Hallelujahs are shouted, followed by seven jumps of

victory over evil spirits and witchcraft. After the service, the prophets continue to minister, pray, interpret dreams and give out revelations to those who wait behind.

The church strongly emphasises faith healing, which basically means faith in the healing power of God operating through the prophets, particularly the Spiritual Head, and the holy water which he consecrates through prayer and the touch of his iron rod. Obtaining spiritual power for consecrating healing water constitutes a major aspect of ministerial training.¹³²

That people are healed through the therapeutic ministry accounts for the popularity of the church. Members are strongly discouraged from using Western medicines, consulting doctors, or even going to hospital for treatment. A student researcher records:

I was in fact present at the church when a child who had been suffering from a raging fever throughout the night was brought to the Primate. The Primate after delivering a short prayer refused to spiritually treat the child because the child had already been treated with European medicines. He said that through his spiritual insight the child was suffering from a bout with some evil force and since this had been combated with European medicines before his spiritual prayers, they, that is the child's relatives, had allowed the evil spirit to overcome the child and so nothing much could be done. In the end the child died and he censured the child's parents for not having enough faith in the faith healing of the church.¹³³

Like the other Spiritual churches Saint Peter's Healing Temple frowns on the practice of infant baptism. Through baptism by total immersion one becomes a member of the church. However, they celebrate the birth of a child in a ceremony of dedication similar to the indigenous presentation and protection ritual, and the Krio *Kommojade* or *Pul nar Doh*. When deprived of spiritism, the ceremony, which is claimed to be modelled after the eighth day presentation of baby Jesus in the Temple, demonstrates a positive and attractive blending of African culture and Christianity. Prayers of thanksgiving are offered and pleas for the future well-being of the child are made on the eighth day after the birth of a male child and on the ninth day for a female. At this time the child is named and taken outside to be shown the roads to the church, the market, the school and other important locations. Alligator pepper chewed by an elderly female relative is put into the child's mouth. This is known as *cut in tongue* and ensures that the child speaks properly and powerfully in

adulthood. The parents and friends then take the child to the church compound where the prophet pronounces the child's Christian name and an exchange-of-life animal sacrifice is made. This is followed by feasting and celebrating. The mother and child are not yet permitted to enter the Temple as they are still considered ritually unclean. The purification ceremony is performed later.

Marriages are rarely celebrated at the Temple since most members have some links with the historic denominations, and the prestige of a big church wedding is still highly valued in Freetown society for those who can afford it. Funeral services are regarded as a great taboo in the church. Primate Walters contends that the Old Testament forbids anything unclean or dead being brought before the Lord and so the dead corpse must not be brought into the Temple or prayed for within its precincts.¹³⁴ Much stress is laid on Jesus' remark, "Let the dead bury their dead". The corpse should be taken to the denominational church or buried in a traditional manner. As a result of Krio influence and pressure, the taboo was broken when Bishop Amadu-Taylor died in 1988. Although the corpse was not churched overnight the actual burial service was held at the Circular Road Temple. Afterwards a series of ritual cleansings were performed to purify the church and compound. Members must be buried in white robes both to signify the purity of heaven and a life free from witchcraft stains.

Saint Peter's Healing Temple perform all the basic Spiritual church practices. Fasting is superior spiritual exercise for the prophets who use fasting as a means of accessing the Holy Spirit and receiving revelations from the Holy Spirit and angels. "Rolling" or "struggling" is another important spiritual exercise and is performed at the "mercy ground", a small building with sand-covered floor and a wooden cross standing in the centre. It is a means of dealing with sin and obtaining solutions for problems. It demonstrates confession and contrition, and deflects attacks from evil spirits. Prior to rolling, candles are stuck into the sand and lit. The severity of the problem dictates the number of candles used. Holy consecrated water is an essential element in the healing ministry of the church. Members are expected always to

have some in their possession and to drink some every day. Apostle Walters maintains that the consecrated holy water is the "living water" discussed by Jesus in his conversation with the woman at the well of Samaria.¹³⁵ Consecrated olive oil is also used for healing. The healing ministry includes "smoking" with *churai*. The patient sits on a chair totally covered with a white cloth while the smoking *churai* drives away evil spirits. Evil spirits may also be driven away by bathing with lime for a certain number of days; the number of baths depends on the seriousness of the disease. When faced with life-threatening situations the church sacrifices white or red hens, sheep and goats as "exchange-of-life" sacrifices.

The administrative structure is dominated by the Spiritual Head. All appointments must be approved and confirmed by him through dreams and visions which disclose the mind of God. The person receiving this divine seal of approval is anointed to minister as "the chosen one of God".¹³⁶ The Spiritual Head has the power to "suspend or dismiss any member of the ministry or the church as a whole" if their attitude proves detrimental to the foundational principles of the church.¹³⁷ His authority is almost absolute as his duties are not clearly defined and his mandate is to run the church effectively both spiritually and administratively as a holy trust handed on by the founder. Having the most direct access to God and being closest to the deceased founder, he has the final say in all matters and is the ultimate authority in the church. The Spiritual Head must be a member of the founder's family or appointed by that family. Even when out of the country his deputy must be a member of the family or appointed by them. Ministerial training is also under the control and supervision of the Spiritual Head. Members with zeal for spiritual power and possessing visionary gifts are invited by the eldership to enter the discipleship training programme after revelation is received by the Spiritual Head. All candidates must prove themselves submissive and loyal and perform their duties without complaining. In the church compound they are only permitted to converse with their ministerial seniors if kneeling or bowing. Some candidates are now being sent to Theological Hall for the academic part of their training and are fully sponsored by the church despite the fact that the Spiritual Head fears he would lose his

spiritual power by taking theological studies.¹³⁸ Senior prophets must be seers and skilled in interpreting dreams and other revelations. The Deputy Head must be competent to stand in for the Spiritual Head and be able to discern and exorcise witch-spirits and promote healing through spiritual means. The Spiritual Mother is either the wife of the Spiritual Head or an elderly lady member. With the passing of the founder and the increasing male dominance of the leadership, her role as liaison officer between the male dominated leadership and the female members is of crucial importance. "Her main duty is to foster healthy relationships and mutual understanding between members and their respective overlords."¹³⁹ As Spiritual Mother she provides pastoral care, comfort and advice for young female members. Her most important task, like the matriarchs at the *awujoh*, is to supervise the "love feasts" which follow the animal sacrifices, and organise entertainments during church celebrations.

Saint Peter's Healing Temple, although a church of the poor, is not a poor church as far as the senior ministry ranks are concerned. There have been complaints that fund raising activities raise funds for the maintenance of the leaders. The Spiritual Mother and founder depended solely on church funds for her family up-keep. Some members donated articles like buckets, brushes and candles, rather than money. According to ex-deacon Sankoh-Cole:

These items were monopolised for private use. For example buckets that were donated to the church for "spiritual bathing" were kept in private rooms for private use, thus creating artificial scarcities for every need of the church's life. This was a hindrance to the performance of "spiritual exercises", which in turn interfered with the regulation of the members' schedules. Many people would have to queue for the few buckets, thus making the process very slow and boring.¹⁴⁰

The church's main source of revenue is through the collections made at the various services. The first Sunday of the month is "Leone Sunday" when donations are made towards the maintenance and fabric of the church. Members are exhorted to pay their tithes and make band contributions. Gifts are received from those who have benefited from the healing and revelatory ministries of the church. Sankoh-Cole maintains:

The church is economically strong. Members give freely as God blesses them, especially those who like fame. They support the church with heavy amounts and their names are read in the public services.¹⁴¹

The leadership has a constant and plentiful supply of meat through the church's frequent exchange-of-life animal sacrifices. This also helps feed the poor and destitute who hang about the compound doing odd jobs until they find regular employment. Special celebration services, concerts, moonlight picnics and jumble sales are fund raising occasions. The church is self-sufficient and independent of foreign finance, however, with increasing overseas contacts and the new branch opened in London, the inflow of funds from abroad should increase.¹⁴² Saint Peter's Healing Temple, despite the breakaways, is the fastest growing, most dynamic and popular Spiritual church in Freetown at the present time. The church attracts Krio and non-Krio, particularly Mende. Many testify to how powerfully present the Spirit of God is, both in public worship and the private prophetic and healing ministries. While questions are raised concerning the morality of the leadership and happenings at the Faith Home, people attend with a pragmatic approach to religion and spirituality:

Power, that is what people are after, problem-solving power. Morality is not so much a problem if there is power to solve your problem. Results not integrity is what people flock to the church for. Vidal is very powerful and charismatic and he solves people's problems.¹⁴³

The Way of the Truth Church

Contrasting with T. K. Davies's gradualist shift from Spiritual to Pentecostal-evangelical is the dramatic transition of Mrs. Annie Senesie. Mrs. Senesie, a Mende in her late forties, was a dental technician at the Connaught Hospital for twenty years. Suffering from pain in the spine she went to Saint Peter's Healing looking for a cure. She obtained some relief and joined the church. Although she began to progress in the revelatory and healing ministry, she was unable to continue there "because of the adultery and fornication".¹⁴⁴ In 1980 she moved to the semi-autonomous Kissy branch at Blackhall Road, the Church of Redemption and Healing Temple. She was made Reverend Mother, but suffered increasingly from her spine disease. In 1987 she was sent by the Sierra Leone Government to Nigeria for an operation although there was only a slim chance of success. During the operation, while under anaesthetic, she felt herself moving out of her body and could see the doctors and

nurses frantically working on her body on the operating-table. Her spirit took her to Freetown and there she saw a crowd of people who asked her if she knew the way of the truth. She then saw two white film-stars. A voice said, "Come and see." She saw their house which was so rich with Persian carpets and expensive furniture. The voice said, "Come and see the end." She saw a large red car which had just crashed. Suddenly she became aware of the tragedy of dying without Jesus. The voice then asked, "Are you on the way of the truth? If you don't have Jesus you are lost." In the distance she saw Jesus who appeared to be working so very hard and started to cry out, "Jesus! Jesus! Jesus!" She felt her soul return into her body with a thump and her intestines springing back into place. She felt warmth inside. Shouting, "Jesus! Jesus! Jesus!" she came out from under the anaesthetic.¹⁴⁵

On her return to Freetown Annie Senesie continued to lead the church in Kissy, but finding travelling difficult she started holding meetings at her home at Congo Cross. One of the group was Rexina Rex-Johnson, the Assistant Commissioner of Police, whose husband was paralysed. Although an Anglican and a member of Christ Church, she attended the group for prayer. Unfortunately, no healing took place and her husband died. In 1988 Mrs. Senesie invited members of Evangel AOG Church in Murray Town to give some Bible teaching. During the teaching both she and Mrs. Rex-Johnson consecrated themselves to the Lordship of Christ. They decided they were going to go only by what was in the Word of God. They told the group to dress in ordinary clothes from now on. There was no need for candles any more as all that was needed was the Word of God and what was in it. The meeting was turbulent and practically all the group left. The secretary was in tears. Mrs. Senesie asked her, "Are you crying because the people are going astray?" Mr. Senesie, who was also a member of the Church of Redemption and Healing Temple, was furious. However, almost all returned later. Candle burning and animal sacrifices were now completely abandoned. New members joined the group, now called The Way of the Truth Evangelical Church, which moved from Congo Town the Senesie's other house at 30 Pratt Street, New England Ville. In 1989 Annie Senesie and Rexina Rex-Johnson enrolled at the AOG Evangel Bible College;

both graduated in May 1992. By this time the membership had grown to 80 and plans were well underway for a large church to be built at King Tom, beside the 7-Up factory. Thieves stole much of the materials they had in store, but they are persevering to fulfil their vision.

In The Way of the Truth Evangelical Church, Spiritual power is still sought through prayer and fasting, but without spiritual exercises like holy rolling, or burning candles, or invoking holy names. The Saturday evening service concentrates on healing. Water and oils are not consecrated and stream bathing is not conducted. Healing is simply through prayer and the invoking of the name of Jesus. Exorcisms from evil spirits are also performed, also simply through prayer and the name of Jesus; holy ground rolling and *churai* smoking being no longer practised. Prophetic messages are still sought after and produced, but these are given as exhortations and utterances of wisdom and knowledge along the lines of Pentecostal-evangelical and New Testament *charismata*, and are qualitatively different from the fear-provoking visions, dream interpretations, and fortune-telling predictions of the Spiritual church prophets. Annie Senesie testifies:

The Spiritualists are trying, but not according to the way of the truth. I go back to preach, but I can't feel at home there anymore. I feel bad during the dancing as it means immorality for so many. But they need to hear the Word. They don't know the Word. The leadership has to change. They are leading the flock astray.¹⁴⁶

THREE IMPORTANT MINOR SPIRITUAL CHURCHES

The three most significant minor Spiritual churches, all started by missionaries from abroad, are the Church of Assurance, the Calvary Redemption Temple Church and the Celestial Church of Christ. While not in the major league of Freetown's Spiritual churches, each has a spiritual dynamism and distinctiveness of its own, a particular contribution to make to the varied Spiritual church scene in the city, and each displays to varying degrees, the trends, tensions and challenges presently existing in the Spiritual churches movement in Freetown.

The Church of Assurance

Melvin Oladipoh Jones, founder of the Freetown branch of the Church of Assurance, was born in 1940 in Northern Nigeria.¹⁴⁷ At the age of four his father died and his mother took him to Lagos where he was brought up by an uncle. He studied economics at the University College of Lagos. In 1964 he joined Nigerian Airways and was quickly promoted to the post of Chief Accountant. On the staff were several members of the Church of Assurance, a Spiritual church founded by Prophet Adeyemi in Lagos in December 1950. Adeyemi was also on the staff. In response to testimonies and invitations Jones visited the church as Adeyemi's special guest. Special prayers were offered for him. He experienced the power of the Spirit, became a keen member and was baptised. After serving in the church for several years he was given charge of the western Lagos branch. Under his leadership the membership almost doubled that of the parent church.

In 1972 Nigerian Airways transferred Jones to Sierra Leone as Principal Accountant. He joined the small independent Faith in Christ Church at Goderich, headed by former Church of the Lord (Aladura) prophet Salami Shangarie. Jones became discouraged at the declining membership of the church and Shangarie's dictatorial leadership. Shangarie insisted the congregation stand up when he entered the church, and alienated the membership by demanding a monthly payment of four hundred Leones. He also failed to provide any funds for the welfare of poor and sick members. Jones decided to found a branch of the Church of Assurance in Freetown. He rented a two storied house at 40 Main Road, Congo Town. The Sierra Leone branch of the Church of Assurance was officially opened on 10th December 1980 - the fortieth anniversary of Adeyemi's founding of the church - with Prophet Jones and five members present. A sociology student described the church in 1991:

From the time of its establishment, membership growth has been rapid and encouraging. The reason for this rapid growth is the church always caters for the members welfare. The church provides grants to enable the children of poorer members to attend elementary school. It also provides medical care for its members. Thus many without the means of providing both medical and educational facilities joined the church. Membership at the moment is 700 people. This includes both adults and children. There is no ethnic group that dominates the church. They have

all tribes such as Mende, Temne, Kroo, Limba, Lokko, Kono, Krios. Foreigners also attend the church. These include Nigerians, Ghanaians and Gambians.¹⁴⁸

The membership figure of 700 includes all types of members and includes the branches established in Bo and Kenema. As with most Spiritual churches, the membership figure can be misleading unless one is aware that it includes "well-wishers" and "supporters", "visiting members" and "clinic members" who come for problem-solving prayers. The 1990 Freetown Survey gave the Congo Town church an approximate membership of 200, and an attendance on the day visited of 90; 10 males, 30 females and 50 children.

Although the Church of Assurance is a Spiritual church and upholds all the main doctrines and practices, it is not altogether of the "white garment" variety. Church members may dress in ordinary clothes. However, they are encouraged to wear white dresses and robes for Wednesday vigils when dreams and visions are interpreted and divine messages given out, and also for divine service on Sunday. Everybody entering the temple must wash their feet. Consecrated water, holy objects such as crosses and iron rods, and animal sacrifices, are regarded as unailing points of contact with God's supernatural power. Through their mediation healing, protection, deliverance, success and security are obtained. Ram sacrifices are offered, as directed by divine revelation, for exchange-of-life, stability, and peace offerings. Goats are sacrificed for sin offerings. The prophets are regarded as watchmen who warn the people of impending dangers and mediums of divine instruction for averting the danger. A observer at Divine Cleansing service at the Kenema branch in January 1992 - in attendance were 70 adults, 55 females and 15 males - commented on the revelatory and predicting powers of the prophets:

Religion is basically there to solve the problems of everyday life. Some people go to different churches because one particular church never solved their problems. More women attend the church than men. The church tells the past, present and future of attenders through the Holy Spirit. When I visited a young man of about thirty was told that his wife had passed away accidentally just a month ago. He was undertaking a venture in which he will definitely be successful and he will never marry a dark complexioned woman. As I interviewed the man afterwards he told me the preacher was right in revealing the accidental death of his wife and that dark complexioned women were not his "stars". However, other predictions were made which led me to conclude that they lead to a disintegration of the marital home. For instance a certain woman was told that her husband was in love with another woman

and that in a weeks time or so, the husband would bring the new lady home. The lady became downcast and couldn't allow any peace to exist in the home. Most women go to the church out of frustration, widows and abandoned women. They go so that the minister in charge prays for them to either get their husbands back or get a more loving husband. Others go to this church in order to have their future predicted and to know their enemies. Others go to be healed. A cousin of mine told me she was affected by malaria. When she visited the church the minister prayed for her and offered something and she was healed.¹⁴⁹

The church claims to believe in the verbal inspiration of the Bible and its status as God's true revelation to man, however, in practical terms this only means that the founder and prophets' interpretations of Scriptures are taken to be the direct commands of God. The Bible is mainly used as a source of texts which can justify the church's faith and practice.

Calvary Redemption Temple Church

Calvary Redemption Temple Church was founded in August 1984 by Rev. Dolly John who, like T. K. Davies, comes from a Methodist and Spiritual church background. Dolly John was born in Liberia in 1935 of Krio parents. After her husband's death she was left to bring up the family alone. This caused stress and anxiety. During this time she became aware of a lack of spiritual power and practical care in the Methodist church. On being invited to the Church of the Lord (Aladura) in Monrovia she found that through prayer and fasting, the power of God became available to her for overcoming her difficulties in obtaining provision for her children and their education. She gave up all connection with the Methodists and became fully involved with the Spiritual church. She gained promotion through her own successful ministry of prayer and healing. In February 1984 Prophetess John, now nearing fifty, moved to Freetown. She took up residence at Dworzark Farm and attached herself to the Mami Pinkney Band which still met at old Mrs. Pinkney's house. Prophetess John was well received and introduced her prayer, fasting and healing methods to the small and mainly elderly revival prayer group. Callers came to her home for prayer. As numbers increased she decided to raise funds for her own church specialising in healing and praying for the needy and suffering. In August, with ten supporters, she moved from Dworzark Farm to a house at 123 Pademba Road. She received a revelation that the church was to be called The Prayer Garden. The new church grew so quickly that some rooms and the parlour were

demolished and reconstructed. Following a power struggle within the church in 1985 there was a split. The Spiritual Mother and the new committee decided to rename the church the Calvary Redemption Temple Church. They wanted now to be fully recognised as a church rather than a prayer group. Calvary signified problems and Redemption deliverance.

The Spiritual Mother has a reputation as a powerful healer, and there is an emphasis on practical helps for the poor and needy. Many prefer to become associate or visiting members rather than full members and attend only when they need help. Bringing a corpse into the Temple is a great taboo and to desecrate the holy place is to provoke God and invite disaster. Members are prohibited from visiting medicine-men or using charms, and are discouraged, though not strongly, from being members of secret societies or lodges. Membership is open to all who "vow forever to have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ". Despite being called Calvary Redemption Temple, there is little focus on Christ's role as Redeemer.

People join the church for diverse reasons. Some join because they want to be redeemed from their problems, while others come for prayers for promotions in their employments. Some come for healings from various sicknesses and some because they want peace. The aim of the Temple is to gain members so that they will follow the true God "Kenkella" or Jehovah. The Membership is made up of different ethnic groups with the Krio dominating. Some people don't join on a permanent basis. They come with their problems and attend for a while. When they are out of their problems they quit. Membership has increased tremendously over the years. Now the church can boast of over five hundred members, older people, youths and children. The middle and lower classes make up the majority.

Like the founder, many join the church because of their dissatisfaction with the powerlessness of the mainline churches. Others seek protection from witchcraft. Women attend to overcome or avoid the stigma and trauma of barrenness. The church follows all the basic Church of the Lord (Aladura) practices. No pollution is allowed near the Temple which is purified and exorcised by burning *churai* before and during services. Women must always keep their heads covered in the Temple, otherwise severe headaches will result. A holy silence should be maintained in the Temple at all times except when singing and praying. The altar area is the Holy Place and only anointed ministers are allowed entry unless directed by the minister-in-charge. The Most Holy Place is the chair occupied by the Spiritual Head.

The church processes in white robes to Holy Mount at New England every August 22nd at the conclusion of their thirteen day Mount Tabborarr Festival.

Church services start with a bell being tinkled for five minutes as a sign of readiness. In this Krio Spiritual church members have no particular seating order. The church has a choir, and a band which includes drums and guitars. During worship each ethnic group is encouraged to present songs in their different dialects. Inspired by the drumming and singing, the congregation claps, sways, dances and "gets the Spirit".

They suddenly throw themselves on the ground as if they have an attack of fits and start struggling and speaking in tongues.... members of the congregation continue singing, others start praying until the "spirit attacked" member comes back to reality. Such persons will then give the vision or message received from God to the congregation. Prayers will then be said and the service will continue.¹⁵⁰

The sermon is usually long and "inspirational" with a lot of congregational interaction. The preacher frequently abandons the pulpit and walks about the church while preaching "in the Spirit". After the sermon more prayers of thanksgiving are offered and members testify to the blessings and deliverances they have received. On "First Sundays", Holy Communion is administered to communicant members who require special prayers or who are making a special consecration. Before being given the elements they have their feet washed at the altar just as the disciples had at the Last Supper. The most important part of the three to four hour services comes at the end when dreams and visions are interpreted and revelations given. When the Spiritual Head, or a prophet, predict danger, either from a dream, vision or revelation, they instruct the threatened person to read certain Psalms, fast, perform spiritual exercises, and, if life is threatened, offer an exchange-of-life animal sacrifice.

Fasting is a vital spiritual practice on which the church's spiritual power depends. All members, with the exception of women during menstruation, pregnant women and nursing mothers are expected to fast every Wednesday and Friday, also throughout the Lenten and Mount Tabborarr festival periods, and whenever directed by a divine revelation which can be given to any individual at any time. The fasts carried out by this church are ordinary fast,

fruit fast, and water fast where water is drunk at three hourly periods throughout the fast. The water fast is particularly used for healing. In a church where healing is so emphasised bathing in and drinking consecrated holy water is of great importance. Members are exhorted to be in possession of consecrated water at all times and to constantly drink it so as to obtain health and continue healthy. The church has great faith in the curative powers of *churai*. When the Spiritual Mother or a minister discerns a serious spiritual problem or illness "smoking" is prescribed. The treatment can go on for several days. When the problems are more serious, white and red fowl sacrifices are offered; when life threatening, goats and rams are slaughtered. At such times, as in the Church of the Lord (Aladura), the food is cooked and a "love feast" is held.

To increase the membership, periodic crusades are organised in various public halls and sometimes at the Siaka Stevens Stadium. In this way many have been attracted to the church. Open air services in the usual Spiritual church style of singing and giving out revelations used to be their main evangelistic outreach, but the Spiritual Mother has recently stopped the practice as some members were found to be holding open airs on their own initiative and using the funds raised for private purposes.¹⁵¹ Despite setbacks the church aims to provide a caring and protecting Christian community for all its members. Mindful of the difficulties experienced by the Spiritual Mother after the death of her husband, the church provides financial and material assistance for the poor and gives grants to pay the school fees of needy children. The feeling of belonging to a praying, providing, protecting and healing community encourages members remain with the church.

The Calvary Redemption Temple Church, like all the Spiritual churches, upholds the standard Christian doctrines. They believe the Bible to be inspired by God, and interpret it literally without any difficulty. The interpretations of the leadership are uncritically accepted. Typically, the Old Testament is taken as being of direct contemporary application to the present, and is therefore used as a source of proof texts to justify the incorporated indigenous

practices which have Old Testament parallels or references. As in all the Spiritual churches salvation is primarily concerned with obtaining blessings in this life and avoiding the curses of enemies, although the eternal dimension is not altogether neglected in this mainly Krio Spiritual church. The church is slowly beginning to turn in a Pentecostal-evangelical direction.¹⁵² The Calvary Redemption Temple Church is a modifying Spiritual church, exhibiting most of the tensions and challenges presently facing the Spiritual churches in Freetown, but with the additional pressures that come from its Krio cultural background.

The Celestial Church of Christ

In response to a divine revelation to found branches of the Celestial Church of Christ in three West African countries, Evangelist Abimbola Kukoyi came to Freetown in 1987. Presenting a high public profile he gathered a group around him at his residence near Ferguson Lane. Land was obtained at Ferguson Lane for a building. The church was dedicated in 1990 while the building was still under construction. In the same year Kukoyi met I. O. Lapite, a Nigerian electronics engineer working for Rent-a-Colour Television. Lapite caught Kukoyi's vision and committed himself to establishing the Celestial Church of Christ in Freetown. In 1991 he took over as "Shepherd", so releasing Kukoyi to continue his church-planting mission. According to Lapite the church is experiencing financial hardships as no funds are being sent from Nigeria and they are totally dependent on local support. The 1990 Survey recorded a 250 membership with 150 attending Sunday service; 60 females, 40 males and 50 children.

The founder of the Celestial Church of Christ, Samuel Bileou Oschoffa, died in Lagos on 10th September 1985 after being involved in a car accident on the Lagos-Ibadan expressway.¹⁵³ He was born in 1909 in Dahomey. Oschoffa's prophetic call, like that of Oshitelu, shows parallels with the call of indigenous healers and diviners as well as signs of schizophrenia. It came on 23rd May 1947 while he was travelling by canoe to a village to buy planks:

On the way daylight turned to night, and suddenly a peacock, a snake and another bird appeared to me. When all these happened the canoe's owner, with whom I was travelling, ran away, leaving me alone in a place with which I was not familiar. I spent

three months in the bush without seeing anybody, eating only the leftovers of birds and pawpaw and drinking only water. My only companions were snakes, crocodiles and birds. That was where my transformation took place I constantly heard a voice which said, "Grace to God," After this there was a tide which carried the canoe to a village called Agunge. On the way, I had to use my bare hands to ward off snakes that constantly climbed into the canoe from the river. At Agunge, I resurrected a dead child by the mere touch of my hand.¹⁵⁴

On 19th September Oschoffa had another visionary experience.

I was praying at home, I saw a very brilliant light like that of a car's headlights and further in the light I saw an angel with two bright shining crystal eyes. The angel called me and said, "The son of man, we want to send you into the world because so many believers are worshipping gods and Mammon and because of this are we sending you into the world to warn them to worship only Christ. And I am giving you powers to wake the dead, and perform all types of miracles in the name of God."¹⁵⁵

Oschoffa gathered a group around him in Porto Novo. His earliest followers were Roman Catholics. Visions revealed the name of the group as Holy Assembly of Heaven. Their doctrines and practices were also revealed through visions. The early ministry concentrated on revelations and healing and emphasised the miracle power of the founder. A 1954 request for government recognition indicated a change of name and their intended aim:

Religious society of the UNION ON THE HOLY TRINITY called CHURCH OF CELESTIAL CHRISTIANITY, founded at Porto-Novo in 1947, with the aim of praying or preaching morality according to CHRISTIAN doctrine for the good of the whole world.¹⁵⁶

The movement spread to Lagos in 1950 through Celestial fishermen who started a prayer group at the lagoon at Makoko.

Around 1952 an elder in the Porto-Novo church saw a vision that "the Lord had granted a sizeable fellowship for him in Lagos." The pastor-founder ... himself received further revelation at this same time, in the form of a voice saying to him, "Go out, the work to which you are assigned is for the whole world, not for one particular place." Thereafter he moved to Lagos in March 1952. Largely through the acclaimed miracles and healing powers of the prophet, the Celestial Church quickly spread to the rest of Western Nigeria, where churches were built to accommodate the growing movement.¹⁵⁷

The church, now called the Celestial Church of Christ, represented a new Spiritual church revival at the grass-roots level. It expanded rapidly during this period of resurgent African nationalism, political uncertainty and social upheaval. By 1980, the Makoko Celestial Church of Christ had a fine building and an average Sunday congregation numbering around 3,000.

Plans for a cathedral to hold 10,000 have been drawn up and the land acquired.¹⁵⁸ The Celestial Church of Christ, shows no enthusiasm for ecumenism. It rejects the mission-founded mainline churches as not having the Spirit, and regards the older Spiritual churches as spiritual powers on the wane, "mere voices crying in the wilderness, preparing the way for the Celestial Church."¹⁵⁹ Although one of the second generation of Spiritual churches, the Celestials claim their church to be the earthly manifestation of the heavenly Celestial Church which existed from the time of creation.¹⁶⁰ Following Oschoffa's death, Supreme Evangelist A. A. Bada took over the leadership of the church. Oschoffa's influence, however, remains strong. Pilgrims visit his grave seeking spiritual power. Legendary accounts of "inexplicable meteorological phenomena and healing miracles" at the burial of the founder have "served to reinforce the charisma of Oschoffa - and ultimately, the spiritual power of the church itself."¹⁶¹

In Freetown the church emphasises healing and deliverance from witchcraft and demonic spirits, and has continued to build on the church and founder's reputation for effecting miraculous cures. The church occupies an area of sacred space in a world inhabited by evil spirits and the "evil eyes" of witches. In this sacred space the Holy Spirit is present and the saved community worships. It attracts mainly the poor from all ethnic groups; these include traditionalists, Muslim and disenchanting Christians from the main-line denominations. The healings and deliverances, according to Lapite, are evidence that this church is experiencing the last days outpouring of the Holy Spirit. They worship with revivalistic fervour and zeal for Spiritual church practices. While Hackett and Olupona make no mention of animal sacrifice, according to Bishop Jenkins of the Christ Apostolic Church, who resides on Ferguson Lane, "Their outstanding feature is animal sacrifice. That is why people join them."¹⁶² They maintain a rigorous ethical standard according to traditional values and the taboo system of the church. This attracts the poor and marginalised who are looking for security in the old realities. According to Hackett, the aim of their liturgy is:

... to produce an oasis of salvation, a "pocket of purity" in the midst of a corrupting, sinful world. Many of the ritual activities and objects are means of purifying and protecting the worshipper, as well as the place of worship.¹⁶³

Members carry small wooden crosses for protection. Crosses of palm fronds hung on the front doors are used for house protection. The Celestial Church of Christ perceives itself as:

"the truest form of worship" and therefore the "most effective path to salvation" (Salvation being understood in a this-worldly sense as the liberation from the fears and ills of an earthly existence).¹⁶⁴

Members wear white robes, "the cloth of the spirit", which indicates a state of purity and witch spirit protection. They must always walk barefooted when robed. Smoking, drinking and any activity which causes pollution and opens up the community to witchcraft, are taboo. Bathing in consecrated water is essential for maintaining both bodily and spiritual purity.

The church's attitude to women is ultra conservative. Women are not allowed near the altar area and are segregated both within and without the Temple. Even outside the Temple women must keep their heads covered. As blood is regarded as polluting and dangerous, women are forbidden to enter the church or wear their white robes during the week of their menstrual bleeding, or after childbirth. These are not just Levitical proscriptions, they are major taboos in indigenous religions and Islam; priests and diviners forbid their wives to come near their shrines, medicines, and charms during these bleeding and portentous periods. Before they can re-enter the holy community, women perform a purification ritual by lighting a candle and bathing from a pail of consecrated water. Polygamy is accepted as the African way and restriction on the number of wives lies in the ability to feed and care for them. Members are encouraged to marry wives from within the Celestial community. Women are barred from leadership positions, but this has seemingly not affected the church's appeal to women in societies where, as pointed out by Hackett:

Taboos represent an attempt to organise and control women's spirituality, since it is recognised ... as more powerful and hence more feared, in the same way as the mysterious and unpredictable female reproductive powers. Both types of power contain the seeds for the potential disruption of the established male-dominated order.¹⁶⁵

Despite being anchored in the traditions of the past, the church incorporates modern elements into its liturgy and practice, and this blending of the old and the new produces a synthesis which has resulted in the church becoming the fastest growing Spiritual church in West Africa.¹⁶⁶ Its pragmatic approach to healing, where modern medicine is tolerated and given a role in dealing with clinical, non-spiritual cases, distinguishes the Celestial Church of Christ from the early Spiritual churches which almost totally rejected Western medicine. Traditional and Western musical styles and instruments have been brought together to extend the appeal of the church to the younger, educated, and less conservative generation. While these modernising adaptations have helped, in Sierra Leone the primary appeal of the Celestial Church of Christ lies in its revivalist approach to Spiritual worship and its maintaining strong links with the indigenous religious heritage. Thus, as a revival movement within the larger Spiritual church movement the Celestial Church of Christ presently acts as a counterpoise to the challenges of the Pentecostal-evangelicals by calling the Spiritual churches back to their spiritual and African roots.

THE PRESENT STATE OF THE SPIRITUAL CHURCHES IN FREETOWN

During the 1980s there has been a proliferation of various types of Spiritual churches in Freetown. While the older independent indigenous Spiritual churches were breakaways from the Church of the Lord (Aladura) led by disgruntled Nigerian and Ghanaian prophets, recently the fissiparous tendencies common to the movement generally, have been seen to operate more among the indigenous Spiritual churches. Several of the new Spiritual churches in the city, such as the Celestial Church of Christ, and the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star which started a Freetown branch in 1989, have been planted by foreign missionaries.¹⁶⁷ Most of the recently founded Spiritual churches are small prayer-healing house-fellowships led by a prophet or prophetess, and composed of family members and friends. Spiritual congregations tend to be small; only a few can regularly attract over a hundred worshippers

to their services. However, in the present climate of economic collapse, political stagnation, and social upheaval, these churches offer help, protection and security to a growing and increasingly impoverished and anxious urban proletariat. They offer the sick poor, who cannot afford medical treatment or expensive medicines, a caring, supporting, healing community of spiritual power, discernibly operating within the parameters of the indigenous religious ontology. People who are anxious about the future seek their fortune-telling predictions, although these are rarely unmitigated blessings. The rituals prescribed to avert disasters, at least afford opportunities for one taking some action in matters affecting one's destiny. In the threatening environment of the overcrowded city, their protections and cleansings from witchcraft are increasingly sought after.

The Spiritual churches of Freetown do not constitute one uniform, homogeneous group, yet all affirm the distinctive doctrines and practices of the Spiritual church movement which constitute their *raison d'être*. There is considerable variety in the style of worship, forms of organisation, ethnic composition, and historical background. Despite Adejobi's refusal to accommodate Krio cultural preferences, the Spiritual churches of Freetown have indigenised and adapted to the local socio-religious environment. Some of these churches clearly demonstrate their Nigerian origins, others are unmistakably Sierra Leonean adaptations. Among the latter are a small group of distinctively Krio Spiritual churches which have made, and are continuing to make, adjustments to fit in with the Krio cultural and religious heritage. While the Spiritual churches have grown considerably since 1947, and to a certain extent indigenised, they have never developed into a mass movement. They suffer the loss of a steady stream of dissenters; people serious about seeking and serving God, who for one reason or another cannot make these churches their spiritual home. They are still growing in certain areas, as for example among the illiterate, the poor, and the migrants into the city. Their problem-solving power is sought after for health, witchcraft protection, finance and prosperity at home and at work. However, the movement seems now to be losing momentum and no significant new advances are to be expected unless some economic or

political crisis gives the stimulus. According to Abraham Sesay, who in 1985 became the first Sierra Leonean to be General Secretary of Scripture Union Sierra Leone:

I find they have reached a certain level. Their influence is not so great as before. They may be growing in their own small groups, in their own quarters, but they are not posing a threat to the evangelicals and the general Christian Church, as they used to do.¹⁶⁸

The view of Donald Osman, President of EFSL and the West Africa Area Director of Youth for Christ, was that they were continuing to grow, but in an unorganised and sporadic fashion:

They get to a certain stage and plateau, then they taper off and come back again in resurgence. Each time a new group is formed you see that same pattern taking place. Then there is a split as somebody goes off to start his or her own group. The people rush there, but after a period the growth usually fizzles out. Their growth is not consistent, in contrast to what you find in churches like Deeper Life and New Testament Church.¹⁶⁹

In Sierra Leone, unlike South Africa, the protest movement against white racism does not exist to widen their popular appeal. Numerically they have always lagged behind the Pentecostal-evangelicals, and following the latter's expansion in the 70s and 80s, and the impact of the present Pentecostal-evangelical revival in the city and country, this movement has significantly outstripped them. Both movements demonstrate striking pneumatological similarities, yet their fundamental doctrinal differences have resulted in a total absence of Christian *koinonia* and ecumenical contact between them. Before surveying the burgeoning Pentecostal-evangelical movement, however, it is necessary to take a closer look at the beliefs and practices of the Spiritual churches.

¹ Isaac M. Ndanema, "The Martha Davies Confidential Benevolent Association" in *Sierra Leone Bulletin of Religion*, 3(2), December, 1961, p.65. For a short history see pp.64-67.

² *Ibid.*

³ Steady, *ibid.*, p.158.

⁴ Ndanema, *ibid.*, p.66.

⁵ Turner, (1967-a), p.114.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*: Ndanema, *ibid.*, p.67, fn. 4.

⁸ Ndanema, *ibid.*, p.67, fn.4.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p.67.

¹⁰ In 1953 at Sekondi, Ghana, when the Church of the Lord (Aladura) missionaries, Sonekan and two others, arrived and sought help from the God is Our Light congregation there, they were interrogated at length about their beliefs and practices. Afterwards the God is Our Light leaders refused to offer them the right hand of fellowship. Turner, *ibid.*, p.194.

¹¹ Oduwole had been commissioned by Oshitelu to go to Liberia after the Hon. Mr. Justice and Mrs. Anthony Barclay, who had gone to Nigeria to procure some powerful medicine for which Nigeria was famous, visited Ogere. The Barclays were an elite Americo-Liberian family. Mr. Barclay was elderly and had served as associate judge of the Liberian Court and taught law at the University of Liberia. The Barclays were impressed by the Church of the Lord services at Ogere, the use of holy healing water and Oshitelu's prophetic revelations about their own lives. They told Oshitelu that such a powerful church would be welcomed in Liberia. Back in Monrovia their enthusiasm cooled and they wrote suggesting that the time was not yet ripe, but that perhaps a brief survey visit could be made. Oshitelu dispatched Oduwole whom the Barclays had met in Ogere. After spending only nine days in Freetown Oduwole sailed for Monrovia arriving there on Maundy Thursday 3rd April 1947 much to the Barclays' surprise, and with such luggage as to suggest a long stay. At first they were not willing to welcome him, but eventually relented to his entreaties and took him in. Mrs. Barclay's brother-in-law was seriously ill. She took Oduwole to see him. He prayed, lighted candles and consecrated water for him to drink. The man recovered and Oduwole's position was now secure in the Barclay household and the prophet-healer was given a downstairs parlour for his meetings.

The church was inaugurated on 20th April and on the 30th they experienced what Oduwole described as the pouring down of the Holy Ghost in great abundance with about fourteen people rolling on the floor, shouting, singing, prophesying and speaking in tongues. This was seen as the church's Pentecost and baptism in the Holy Spirit, but the question arises whether it was a case of the Holy Spirit coming down or the congregation being stirred up in a traditional manner and exhibiting phenomena, including glossolalia and prophesyings, such as was common in traditional ceremonies. The issue at stake is whether these charismatic gifts were essentially from above or had their source within the human psyche and were released under intense psychological, emotional and physical pressures engineered by the prophet using well known traditional techniques.

Confessions of being possessed by witch spirits were made and the Barclays surrendered two large baskets full of charms and medicines which were buried in the cesspool. The church was established in Monrovia and its future secure. Tragedy struck in 1965 when on 7th April a mental patient with whom Oduwole was praying stabbed him to death. President Tubman declared a national day of mourning and attended the funeral service. Adejobi preached the sermon.

For the history of the Liberian branch of the Church of the Lord (Aladura), its growth and development, see Turner, *ibid.*, pp.133-57.

¹² Oluwaseyi R. Awoonor-Gordon, *The Church of the Lord Aladura in the Western Area 1947-1978*, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Modern History, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts (Hons.), 1979, pp.43-44.

¹³ Conversation held with Claudius Davies, Communications Director of SU Sierra Leone, at K22, FBC, on 16/5/90.

¹⁴ Awoonor-Gordon, *ibid.*, pp.20-21.

¹⁵ The Wilkinson Road property has been a source of much bitter dispute between the Church of the Lord (Aladura) and the Reffell family following the death of Dr. Reffell. The family started a civil case to regain the property, charging Adejobi with hypnotising the doctor and using underhand methods. There have been disputes within the church itself due to Adejobi claiming the property was a personal gift to himself by Dr. Reffell. This has exacerbated the tensions that exist between the Sierra Leone membership and the predominantly Nigerian top leadership. The property was eventually sold by Prophet Fajaibe amid much rancour.

¹⁶ Awoonor-Gordon, *ibid.*, p.22.

¹⁷ Turner, *ibid.*, p.116, quoting from the *Sierra Leone Weekly News* of 5/7/47.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, p.117.

¹⁹ *ibid.*

²⁰ *ibid.*, p.115, quoting from the *Sierra Leone Weekly News* of 26/4/47.

²¹ Cornelius Mereweather-Thompson, *The Church of the Lord (Aladura) in Freetown, 1948-1978*, a dissertation submitted to the Theology Department, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1982, p.5.

²² Turner, *ibid.*, p.118.

²³ *Daily Mail*, 3rd September 1947.

²⁴ Awoonor-Gordon, *ibid.*, p.25.

²⁵ *ibid.*, p.26, quoting from an interview with a Nigerian trader, Mrs. C. Adedowyn, 12 Campbell Street, Freetown.

²⁶ Turner, *ibid.*, p.121.

²⁷ *ibid.*

²⁸ Awoonor-Gordon, *ibid.*, pp.25-26.

²⁹ Turner, *ibid.*, p.130.

³⁰ *ibid.*, p.132.

³¹ *ibid.*, pp.124-5.

³² *ibid.*, p.125.

³³ *ibid.*

³⁴ A mission to Ghana, begun in 1953, was much more fruitful. Here, following the ministries of William Harris and Sampson Oppong, the rise of independent indigenous Ghanaian churches such as the Musama Disco Christo (Army of the Cross of Christ) Church founded in 1922, and the introduction of Nigerian mission churches such as Christ Apostolic Church and Cherubim and Seraphim, independent African churches were not a new phenomenon and opposition to a new indigenous African church starting was minimal. In Ghana, although the leadership was mostly Yoruba, the evangelism was mainly conducted by Ghanaians and nothing like the Krio negative factor was operating. Also the Yoruba religious background was closer to that of the Akan than it was to that of the Sierra Leonean ethnic groups. The Ghanaian congregations soon outnumbered those of Sierra Leone and also Liberia, where Oduwole was made some progress in establishing churches in the interior and along the coast. Ghana became the largest Church of the Lord (Aladura) field outside of Nigeria. For coverage of the planting of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) in Ghana, the growth of the church there and the factionalism that arose between the churches initiated by Adefobi and those by Oduwole see, Turner, *ibid.*, pp.126-7, 158-96.

For the Musama Disco Christo Church founded by Methodist catechist Joseph Appiah see, Kofi A. Opoku, "Changes within Christianity: the Case of the Musama Disco Christo Church" in *Christianity in Independent Africa*, eds. E. W. Fashole-Luke, *et al.*, (London: Rex Collings, 1978), pp.111-21; C. G. Baeta, *Prophetism in Ghana*, (London: SCM Press, 1962).

³⁵ DELCO terminated mining operations at Marampa in October 1975 because it was no longer profitable.

³⁶ Awoonor-Gordon, *ibid.*, p.32.

³⁷ *ibid.*

³⁸ Other Church of the Lord (Aladura) ministers who left to join the Methodists about this time are Rev. Arnold Temple who left in 1974 to become a circuit minister at Wesley Church, Rev. Norman Martin who left in 1976 to become resident minister in charge at Songo, Waterloo and Ribbi, and John March who became a catechist in the Wellington circuit. See Mereweather-Thompson, *ibid.*, pp.85-86.

³⁹ Turner, *ibid.*, p.201.

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, p.207.

⁴¹ The UCC (Sierra Leone), founded in 1924 as a fellowship of 8 churches, is a body affiliated to the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) and the World Council of Churches (WCC). Some members are also affiliated with the Association of Evangelicals in Africa and Madagascar (AEAM), but many of the evangelical churches are uncomfortable with the liberal stance of the WCC and what they see as their doctrinal slackness. In 1980 there were 12 member churches one of which was the Christ Apostolic Church, and 13 affiliated bodies one of which was the Church of the Lord (Aladura). The member churches were African Methodist Episcopal Church, Bo Missionary Diocese, Christ Apostolic Church, Countess of Huntingdon Connection, Freetown Anglican Diocese, Methodist Church, Missionary Church of Africa (MCA), Nigerian Baptist Convention, Sierra Leone Baptist Convention (SLBC), United Brethren in Christ (UBC), United Methodist Church (UMC), Wesleyan Church of Sierra Leone (WCSL), and West African Methodist Church. In May 1988 a Commission of Inquiry was set up to investigate complaints of mismanagement and misappropriation of funds. This resulted in the dismissal of the General Secretary and his being ordered to refund approximately 2,000,000 Leones, (c.£80,000) which had been removed from the School Feeding Programme. There were conflicting accusations of "a cover up" and "a dagger job by Provincials against a Creole". The body has been reorganised and renamed the Christian Council of Sierra Leone (CCSL).

⁴² Recorded conversation held with Rev. Prince Larty-Baker at the Aqua Sports Club, Aberdeen, Freetown, on 5/3/90.

⁴³ In 1969 the WCC had admitted into membership the Church of Jesus Christ through the Prophet Simon Kimbangu in Zaire. Turner notes that the admission of the Kimbanguists was more due to the impression made by the dynamic worship and the African style and flavour of the liturgy, than any examination of doctrinal orthodoxy.

⁴⁴ Emmanuel Adeleke Adejobi, *The Authentic Traditions Customs and Early Practices of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) as Compared with the Present*, (Mushin, Nigeria: Olufayo Industrial Enterprises, no date given - estimated c. 1978), p.23.

⁴⁵ Awoonor-Gordon, *ibid.*, p.39. The accusation was made particularly with reference to his handling of the Bishop Floode issue which rocked the church in the 1975-1978 period.

⁴⁶ Turner, *ibid.*, p.198.

⁴⁷ Leslie Newbigin's comments on Dr. Visser't Hooft and WCC theology were made at the Rutherford House Lectures held at Saint Catherine Argyle Church, Edinburgh, on 31/8/93.

⁴⁸ Turner, *ibid.*, p.205.

⁴⁹ Peel, *ibid.*, p.147.

⁵⁰ Claudius Davies, recorded conversation, 16/5/90. Mr. Davies was a trainee prophet during 1978-79.

⁵¹ *ibid.*

⁵² Turner, *ibid.*, p.129.

⁵³ *ibid.*, pp.128-9 for more information on Taylor and the Temple of Faith.

⁵⁴ EFSL/YWAM 1990 Greater Freetown Church Survey.

⁵⁵ Membership statistics and general information were obtained from student researcher Lawrence Konneh of the Sociology Department, FBC, Freetown, who carried out research on the Lord's Church of Holiness in 1985.

⁵⁶ Grant had spearheaded the General Strike as General Secretary of the 7,600 strong Artisans and Allied Workers' Council. The crisis was brought on by high unemployment, rising prices and resentment at the Government's cost of living index. He testified that he had prayed and fasted before taking the decision to call the strike which unfortunately

deteriorated into anti-European and anti-Lebanese rioting and looting which resulted in eighteen deaths.

The Labour Unions were protesting at the exploitation of workers and low wages. They disagreed with the cost of living index issued by the Government to handle rising inflation and demanded wage increases. Arbitration broke down because of the intransigence of the employers who were assured of Government support in the dispute. The Governor, Sir Robert de Zouche Hall, left Freetown to avoid meeting the union leaders. On 5th February 1955 the workers went on strike. On the 11th rioting broke out in Freetown. A state of emergency was declared as the rioting took on anti-European and anti-Lebanese aspects and shops were burned and looted. The toll of casualties from the disturbances was one policeman and seventeen civilians killed, sixty-one policemen and sixty civilians injured. See Cyril P. Foray, *A Historical Dictionary of Sierra Leone*, (New Jersey: Scarecrow Press Inc., 1977), pp.82f.

Several fellow church members were among those arrested during the strike despite the general policy of the church to keep aloof from party politics. The political involvement of the church has been in inspiring African self-consciousness, giving prophetic forecasts, and praying and fortune-telling for politicians in private. Unlike Nigeria where, according to Peel, the Church of the Lord (Aladura) frequently became entangled in various thorny political issues, in Sierra Leone the church has kept aloof from party politics.

⁵⁷ Awoonor-Gordon, *ibid.*, p.38. Most of the information on the Floode case came from Marcus Grant. Awoonor-Gordon claims there was a "deafening silence on this matter from most Church sources", *ibid.*, p.41, fn.18.

⁵⁸ *ibid.*, p.44.

⁵⁹ *ibid.*, p.39.

⁶⁰ *ibid.*, p.54.

⁶¹ P. Larty-Baker, recorded conversation, 5/3/90.

⁶² Comments made by the Venerable Archdeacon S. O. D. Macarthy at the service held at the O'Neil Street church on 17th MaY 1992, commemorating the first anniversary of the death of Primate E. O. A. Adejobi.

⁶³ Adejobi, *ibid.*, p.11.

⁶⁴ Turner, (1967b), p.112.

⁶⁵ *ibid.*, p.116.

⁶⁶ The question is number 18 in *The Catechism of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) Throughout the World*.

⁶⁷ Sundkler, (1961), p.196.

⁶⁸ Turner, *ibid.*, pp.111-2.

⁶⁹ *ibid.*, p.111.

⁷⁰ Mereweather-Thompson, *ibid.*, pp.44-45. Sundkler observing the Zionists notes that often demonstrable animation substitutes for intellectual effort and a lack of sermon preparation "is compensated for by a deep and deafening volume of sound which is supposed to show the presence of the Holy Spirit". (Sundkler, *ibid.*, p.191.)

⁷¹ Turner, *ibid.*, pp.117-8.

⁷² "Bands" are prayer and social groups which are organised on sex and ethnic grounds and whose rivalries encourage zeal and commitment within the church. Popular titles are the Daniel Band, the Dorcas Band, the Esther Band etc. In the Saint Peter's Healing Church there is a Phebean Band named after the founder Phebean Walters.

⁷³ Awoonor-Gordon, *ibid.*, p.61.

⁷⁴ L. E. Adeyemi, "African Indigenous and Pentecostal Churches in Sierra Leone: Challenge or Problem? - The Church of the Lord (Aladura)" in *SLBR*, 1, December 1980, p.56.

⁷⁵ Christian R. Strasser-King, *A History of the Church of Salvation*, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Theology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1984, p.4. Strasser-King was for fourteen years a member and minister of the Church of Salvation.

⁷⁶ Priscilla H. Fofana, *The Role of Religion in Nation Building and a Survey of Spiritual Churches*, a dissertation submitted to the Department of History, the University of Sierra

Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1991, p.1.
Miss Fofana is a daughter of Primate Fofana.

77 *Ibid.*, p.2.

78 Stephen Kandeh, *God is Our Light*, a dissertation submitted to the Department of History, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1991.

79 Fofana, *ibid.*

80 Elizabeth B. Abane, *A Sociological and Comparative Analysis of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) and the Church of Salvation in Sierra Leone*, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1988, p.39.

81 *Ibid.*, p.40. Miss Abane recorded this information as having been received by N'doeke in personal communication with Primate Fofana.

82 Strasser-King, *ibid.*, p.16.

83 Fofana, *ibid.*, p.3.

84 *Ibid.*, p.4.

85 Abane, *ibid.*, p.13.

86 Recorded conversation held with Bishop T. K. Davies at Christ Pentecostal Church, Henneson Street, New England, Freetown on 17/3/92.

87 *Ibid.*

88 *Ibid.*

89 Strasser-King, *ibid.*, p.13.

90 Bishop T. K. Davies, recorded conversation, 17/3/92.

91 *Ibid.*

92 Theophilus K. Davies, "The Church of Salvation" in *SLBR*, 2, November 1981, p.84.

93 Strasser-King, *ibid.*, p.14.

94 Conversation held with Bishop Browne at 13 Edward Lane, Freetown, on 8/4/92.

95 Bishop T. K. Davies, recorded conversation, 17/3/92.

96 *Ibid.*

97 *Ibid.*

98 Strasser-King, *ibid.*, pp.9-10.

99 The arrangement of the Hymn Book is: Morning Hymns or Introit (1-40), Vesper Hymns and Closing Hymns (41-79), Hymns for Several Occasions (80-114), Victory Hymns (115-37), The Gospel Hymns (138-46), Christmas Hymns (147-64), Lent Hymns (165-214), Easter Hymns (215-25), Ascension and Whitsuntide (226-39), Harvest Hymns (240-55), Hymns for the Sick (256-59), Hymns for Burial (260-3), The Lord's Supper (264-75), Baptism Hymns (276-302).

100 Visit took place on 6/5/92.

101 Conversation held with Rev. Sidney Davies, Director of Evangelism, Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone, at their office on Circular Road, Freetown, on 13/3/92.

102 Bishop T. K. Davies, recorded conversation, 17/3/92.

103 *Ibid.*

104 *Ibid.*

105 *Ibid.*

106 *Ibid.*

107 *Ibid.*

108 *Ibid.*

109 *Ibid.*

110 Recorded during visit on 8/3/92.

111 Bishop T. K. Davies, recorded conversation, 17/3/92.

112 Much information was obtained from the Rev. Ibrahim Sankoh-Cole, a former prophet of Saint Peter's Healing Temple, while he attended FBC during the 1991-92 session. He is presently the Anglican minister at Bathurst and Charlotte.

113 *Ibid.*

114 *Ibid.*

- 115 *Ibid.*
- 116 Alhaji Bangura, ***A Study of Saint Peter's Healing Church, Tower Hill, Freetown***, an essay submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1991, p.3. The student researcher claimed the information was passed on to him by sources close to the head of the church.
- 117 Sankoh-Cole, *ibid.*
- 118 *Ibid.*
- 119 Isaac Massaquoi, Intermediate Arts research student, FBC, conducted an interview with Bishop Mayers at the Tower Hill church on 27/2/92.
- 120 *Ibid.*
- 121 Alhaji Bangura, *ibid.*, p.5.
- 122 Isaac Massaquoi, *ibid.*
- 123 Sankoh-Cole, *ibid.*
- 124 Ref. pp.166-7 above.
- 125 Veronica Paul, ***A Case Study of the Saint Peter's Healing Church***, a dissertation submitted to the Department of History, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts (Hons.), 1991, p.24. The correct name for this church is Saint Peter's Healing Temple. Saint Peter's Healing Church is the breakaway led by Bishop Myers and has its building on Tower Hill.
- 126 *Ibid.*
- 127 Hannah S. Bull, ***A Case Study of Saint Peter's Healing Church Freetown***, an essay submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1983, p.4. The correct name for this church is Saint Peter's Healing Temple.
- 128 *Ibid.*, p.5.
- 129 Paul, *ibid.*, pp.24-25.
- 130 Sankoh-Cole, *ibid.*
- 131 Paul, *ibid.*, pp.38-39.
- 132 Sankoh-Cole, *ibid.*
- 133 Paul, *ibid.*, p.25.
- 134 *Ibid.*, p.42.
- 135 *Ibid.*, p.44.
- 136 *Ibid.*, p.31.
- 137 *Ibid.*, p.27.
- 138 Sankoh-Cole, *ibid.*
- 139 Paul, *ibid.*, p.30.
- 140 Sankoh-Cole, *ibid.*
- 141 *Ibid.*
- 142 While Vidal Walters was in London in January 1992 establishing the new branch, "Papa Gas" passed away.
- 143 Sankoh-Cole, *ibid.*
- 144 Conversation held with Mrs. Annie Senesie at her residence at 30 Pratt Street, New England Ville, on 2/7/92.
- 145 *Ibid.*
- 146 *Ibid.*
- 147 Most of the background information on Prophet Jones and the Church of Assurance is taken from Charles A. Morrison, ***The Church of Assurance***, an essay submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1991.
- 148 *Ibid.*, pp.8-9.
- 149 Martin P. Moriwai, ***The Church of Assurance, Kenema Branch***, an essay submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1992, p.15.

¹⁵⁰ Miatta Maria Samba, *A Case Study of the Calvary Redemption Temple Church*, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Theology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1992, p.21.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p.25.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p.26.

¹⁵³ For articles covering the history and Nigerian development of the Celestial Church of Christ see, Rosalind I. J. Hackett, "Thirty Years of Growth and Change in a West African Independent Church: a Sociological Perspective" *New Religious Movements in Nigeria*, ed. Hackett, (Lewiston, New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1987), pp.161-78, (an earlier version appeared in *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 11(3), 1980, pp.212-31); Jacob Kehinde Olupona, "The Celestial Church of Christ in Ondo: a Phenomenological Perspective" in *New Religious Movements in Nigeria*, ed. Hackett, (Lewiston, New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1987), pp.45-73.

¹⁵⁴ Olupona, *ibid.*, pp.46-47, quoting from an interview granted to Funmilola Olorunisola of Nigerian Television and published in *Drum Magazine*, January 1980, p.6.

¹⁵⁵ Olupona, *ibid.*, p.47.

¹⁵⁶ Hackett, *ibid.*, p.163.

¹⁵⁷ Olupona, *ibid.*, p.48.

¹⁵⁸ Hackett, *ibid.*, pp.164-5.

A London branch has been established among Yoruba expatriates. It is a member of the Lewisham Federation of Churches.

¹⁵⁹ Olupona, *ibid.*, p.53.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p.59.

¹⁶¹ Hackett, *ibid.*, p.177.

¹⁶² Bishop Jenkins, recorded conversation, 6/7/92.

¹⁶³ Hackett, *ibid.*, p.170.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p.174.

¹⁶⁵ Rosalind I. J. Hackett, "Women as Leaders and Participants in the Spiritual Churches" in *New Religious Movements in Nigeria*, ed. Hackett, (Lewiston, New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1987), p.202. For the role and status of women in indigenous societies see, Marion Kilson, "Women in African Traditional Religions" in *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 8(2), 1976, pp.131-43.

¹⁶⁶ Akin Omoyajowo, "The Aladura Churches in Nigeria since Independence" in *Christianity in Independent Africa*, eds. Fashole-Luke, *et al.*, (London: Rex Collings, 1978), pp.96-97.

¹⁶⁷ For background information on the Brotherhood of the Cross and the Star which was founded in Cross River State, Nigeria, in 1956 by Olumba Olumba Obu, see Friday M. Mbon, "Public Responses to New Religious Movements in Contemporary Nigeria" in *New Religious Movements in Nigeria*, ed. Hackett, (Lewiston, New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1987), pp.209-35.

The 1990 YWAM/EFSL Greater Freetown Survey gives the Sunday attendance figure as 80 (25 males; 35 females; 20 children).

¹⁶⁸ Recorded interview held with Abraham Sesay, General Secretary of Scripture Union Sierra Leone, at the Aqua Sports Club, Aberdeen, Freetown, on 16/5/90.

¹⁶⁹ Recorded interview held with Donald Osman, President of EFSL and West Africa Area Director of Youth for Christ, at the Aqua Sports Club, Aberdeen, Freetown, on 26/6/90.

CHAPTER SIX

AN ANALYSIS AND THEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE PRACTICES AND BELIEFS OF THE SPIRITUAL CHURCHES IN FREETOWN

The Spiritual churches call themselves Spiritual because they believe the Holy Spirit is present among them in power and that the methods they use for dealing with their problems are spiritual. Calling these churches Pentecostal is misleading and should be discontinued. The Church of the Lord (Aladura) was the first Spiritual church to establish itself in Freetown and so became the mother of most other Spiritual churches. The breakaways all followed the basic pattern set by the "Adejobis".¹ The word *aladura* (prayer or praying person) entered the Yoruba language, via Hausa, from the Arabic *al du'a*, meaning supererogatory prayer.² The felt-need for prayer in the Nigerian churches in the face of the influenza epidemic of 1918 is generally taken as the prime motivation for the rise of the Aladura churches, although the roots of the movement go further back into the hunger of ordinary people for a spiritual dynamism which could deliver God's *force vitale*. To many Yoruba, the formal prayers of the mission churches were alien, irrelevant and ineffectual. The weakness of this type of Christian prayer was painfully exposed during the influenza epidemic. As mission churches were closed down, the early Aladuras, in their desperate need, turned to prayer for healing. The two main streams within the Aladura movement, represented by the Christ Apostolic Church and the Church of the Lord (Aladura) respectively, have already been observed.

THE ROLE OF PRAYER AND FASTING IN THE SPIRITUAL CHURCHES

The Church of the Lord (Aladura) views prayer as basic to the Spiritual life. Much of the liturgical praying during divine service is routine and formal. Turner has pointed out the

similarities between the church's *Holy Litany* and the *Book of Common Prayer* and also the adaptation of the Anglican litany to the African environment.³ Extempore, spontaneous prayer, however plays a much more important part. These prayers deal with pressing problems, the blessing of members, the empowering of ministers and victory over evil spirits, sorcerers and witches. Unanswered prayers are explained as the opposition of powerful spirit forces which must be overcome by increased effort, more fasting and more spiritual "struggling". The prayers of one causing discord and disunity in the congregation will not be answered. "A malicious man will have his prayers crumbling to the ground and will not ascend to the mercy seat."⁴ Prophets reveal the reasons for unanswered prayers. They will expose the culprit and encourage a full confession so that what blocks the flow of the Spirit can be removed. They are the sin-finders of the holy community who ensure that the prayers of the church are answered.

Prophet prayer warriors are eagerly sought after outwith the official services. Members of the mainline denominations come to the prophets privately. What is sought is not intercession *per se*, but the prophets' revelations and predictions. Adrian Hastings criticises West African Independent Churches for their preoccupation in prayer with "immediate temporal benefit" and being "excessively client-centred". "There is a tendency here," he claims, "to privatise prayer in a rather unhealthy way."⁵ The prayer prophet is under great pressure to resort to dubious means, over and above the normal spiritual exercises, for enhancing his predictive powers. Many are accused of using occult means, such as reading *The Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses*, and performing night-time rituals at gravesides, in order to obtain insights and revelations from the spirits.⁶ There is also a great temptation for the prophets to exploit their reputation as successful prayer men for material and immoral reward. Learning to be powerful in prayer is a vital part of the prophets' spiritual training.

Adejobi has described prayer as more important than dancing or shouts and more fundamental than fasting which is useless without it. "If we are tired of praying then we shall

resort to human means of protection."⁷ Human means of protection is the use of charms and medicines. Around 1978, Adejobi described the rigorous prayer discipline followed by Oshitelu and the early leaders:

As was revealed unto the Founding Father of the Church of the Lord "Aladura", the late Dr. J. S. Oshitelu, 5.30 a.m., 9 a.m., 12 noon, 3 p.m., 6 p.m. are to be observed as daily hours of prayer, and 9 p.m., 12 midnight and 3 a.m., as watches of the night. The Founder adhered and observed every hour to the letter and Spirit. Indeed, this singled him out as a Man of Prayer (1930-1966).

The immediate lieutenants tried to follow this principle, but there have been noticeable lapses among the new comers to the Church's Ministry.

In view of the fact that a Missionary, Church and Spiritual worker depends on constant prayer and fellowship with God for strength, guidance and stamina, there can be no better way than for every Church and Spiritual worker to keep to the letter and Spirit, and the systematic observation of the daily hourly prayers and night watches.⁸

According to Turner:

Over the whole Church prayer oscillates rather uneasily between Christian and magical interpretations, for the very prayer that has replaced the more physical magical media may in turn become a new form of spiritual magic in a superficially Christian setting.⁹

Much of the powerful praying that goes on in the Spiritual churches, despite some radical alterations, remains in its essence and mechanics, discernibly indigenous. Here note is taken of the God exalting quality of prayer in indigenous worship as shown by Mbiti in *The Prayers of African Religion*.¹⁰ Much of the praying in the Spiritual churches demonstrates the same God honouring qualities. While in some Aladura churches such as Faith Tabernacle and Christ Apostolic, the Gospel penetration has resulted in a transformation of basic concepts concerning prayer and salvation, in the Church of the Lord (Aladura) and the Spiritual churches of Freetown the evidence suggests that the Gospel penetration has not as yet reached the same level. Prayer is conducted on the understanding that through the proper performance of praying rituals salvation blessing will result and supernatural help will be forthcoming. This help will be forthcoming in the form of spiritual revelations through dreams, visions, hearing voices or having supernatural wisdom and insight. The ritual actions are called "spiritual exercises". Trainee prophets are taught how to pray using the holy names of power and the particular Psalms that should be recited in particular

circumstances. They practice fasting and rolling so as to enhance their power in prayer. These "spiritual exercises" or "struggles" both induce God to act and are conditions to be met before revelations are received. Thus the ritualistic approach of the Spiritual churches to prayer demonstrates that the basic indigenous religious ontology remains firmly in place.

The Use of the Psalms in Prayer

A vital part of the prophets' training is learning the secrets of effective prayer through "divine enquiry". In this way revelations and power from God, angels and spirits are obtained. Here the Psalms become a most efficacious tool. Helped by the prominence of the Psalms in the Anglican liturgy, and the recommendations of *The Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses* which has a section entitled "*Sepher Schimmisch Tehillim*" (Use of the Psalms for the Physical Welfare of Man), Oshitelu and other leaders have constructed prayers which are supposedly powerful and effective and which are a synthesis of Old Testament prayers, West African magic, and Western and Asian occultism. In *The Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses* the uses to which each Psalm can be put and the rituals to accompany each one are given. Some Psalms are to be recited a certain number of times while standing naked, surrounded by candles and facing east. Midnight is the prime time for obtaining revelations and great spiritual power. Various spirits may be invoked to help. It is obvious that Oshitelu in his publication *The Book of Prayer with Uses and Power of Psalms* has had access to material from *The Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses*, although he denied this saying, "Some will say this is Moses' book, therefore its bad".¹¹

Turner notes the occult elements in *The Book of Prayer with Uses and Power of Psalms*:

For example, there is the rubric for Psalm vii: "If enemies rise against thee, recite this Psalm, standing facing the East in midnight with the Holy Name - *Ell Ellijoni*. You will be naked. And the enemy will be defeated at will." This is pure occult magic, although accompanied by the following prayer, more Christian than some of the psalms:

***Ell Ellijoni* - Most Great, Powerful, and Gracious God, change the hearts of my foes. Let them seek my good instead of evil they wish, as Thou didst unto Abraham in the past when he called Thee by this name. Amen.**

Again for Psalm xv:

For the cure of lunatic, get water into a new pot, read this into the water 7 times with the Holy Name - *Jah Jahieujah* (Most Victorious King), bath the lunatic with the water, and he will be cured.¹²

Psalm 10 may be used to drive away evil spirits, all illness and especially smallpox. The Psalm should be recited three times at midnight while the sufferer stands in a new water pot and then bathes in the water invoking holy names.¹³ Oshitelu's syncretistic tendencies are clearly demonstrated in this combination of Scripture with occult and indigenous techniques for producing powerful verbal charms. Turner suggests that, "No doubt the faith of all concerned may sometimes produce positive results."¹⁴ In the 1972 pamphlet ***God is Our Only Help***, published while Adejobi was Primate, the formula for defeating enemies and overcoming witches is similar to Oshitelu's rubric for Psalm 7 quoted above. Here, when the enemies rise up against one, Psalm 23 is to be recited while facing east at midnight, naked and invoking the holy name *Ell Ellijoni*.¹⁵ God is claimed to be the "only help", but magical means are used to secure his aid.

Before prophet or client make a prayer of intercession an appropriate Psalm must be read or recited aloud, although not necessarily very loud. The Psalm must be recited three, seven or up to twenty-one times according to the revelation of the prophet or the teaching of the church. The most popular and commonly used Psalms are; 51, which focuses on confession, cleansing through ritual washing, and forgiveness; 35, 59, and 109, which highlight fighting against one's enemies; 16, 46 and 91, which plead for God's protection; 6, 30, 31 and 41, which are prayers for healing; and Psalm 20 which celebrates victory. The Psalms with their subjective emphasis and openness to private interpretation, their imprecatory outbursts and the prominence given to delivering the oppressed and defeating the wicked enemies who plot against the righteous, are highly meaningful for the Spiritual churches which live in an atmosphere of fear of sorcerers, witchcraft, migratory spirits, poison and destructive charms. Dealing with poison cases is a major ministry of Saint Peter's Healing Temple.¹⁶ The psalms are used to "swear" enemies, opponents and rivals. This is known as "spiritual suppression".

By reading what is called an "evil Psalm" against an enemy or rival their overthrow or destruction is virtually assured.

Psalms 35, 58, 59 and 109 are considered evil psalms and are therefore not used in public worship, but people use them against others. This sort of evil practice is almost legalised because tyrannical members of these churches use them publicly and go unchecked.¹⁷

When the sick are instructed to spend the night in the church praying, they are to counteract the evil spirits, which come out at night and attack believers, by reciting Psalm 91, verses 3, 5, and 6, at short intervals throughout the night.¹⁸

**Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence.
Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day;
Nor for the pestilence that walks in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday.**

While prayer which makes use of the Psalms in this way contains much that is comforting to the Christian, according to Turner these aspects are "insufficient in themselves to prevent the corruption of the Psalter into a new spiritual magic, with a return to views of prayer that are pagan and selfish."¹⁹

One sign of this is the belief that there must be secret forms or words of prayer with special power, and this is encouraged by the traditional African view that a man can secure blessing by the inherent power of the word spoken in prayer. This attitude has invaded the use of the Psalter in West Africa and must be held accountable, to some extent, for the extraordinary popularity of the psalms among the aladura, and the perverted use to which they may be put.... psalms with their lack of historical reference are too easily turned into a new set of powerful Christian words whose very utterance can secure victory for the user.²⁰

The Spiritual churches, being as Rosalind Hackett observed in Nigeria, "renowned for their this-worldly, instrumentalist approach to life", can easily slip in practice into Bryan Wilson's category of "manipulationist" cults and movements which use supernatural or mystical means to achieve self-advancement and this-worldly goals.²¹

Invocations Using Holy Names

During Oshitelu's traumatic call experience special holy names for God, such as *Alljrohnan* and *Anomonomollahujah*, came to him in dreams and visions. He received these as words

of power, verbal charms which he could use to repulse witch attacks. His own holy name was revealed as *Arrabablalhubab*, which he interpreted as "the first master". Adejobi's holy name was *Ajjiewwellawwew*, interpreted as "the early son of the father". Many of the holy names are names of angels, powerful spirits that speed to one's aid when their secret names are invoked. Special mystery words of spiritual power were part and parcel of the diviner's defensive armoury, verbal missiles for hurling against enemies. They were also used in secret incantations and are common in occultic and magical practice generally. In many cults and secret societies initiates learn cryptic languages of power. The use of esoteric praise-names for divinities and chiefs, as Idowu points out, was popular among the Yoruba and common throughout Africa:

The Yorubas are especially fond of appellations.... kings and nobles have people whose main duty is to sing their praises; the nobler and more heroic a person's ancestry, the longer the list of his praise-names and appellations.... What happens on the human level happens also when the Yoruba communicate with their objects of worship.²²

In the religious context these names are not praise-names merely, but are words of spiritual potency used to invoke supernatural power and ward off evil spirits. Sanneh notes the Islamic influence on Oshitelu's words of power:

In the use of the peculiar Holy Names, the resemblance with Islam is at times remarkable. "Allah", the Islamic name for God, occurs in the complex form used by Oshitelu, "Jehovah Joffellah".... Arabic words like *allahumma*, "O my God"; *al-rabb*, "Lord" and *majubah*, "answer, response", find more than echoes in the Holy Names of the Church of the Lord (Aladura).²³

The 1931 rift between Oshitelu and Faith TabernacleIt resulted mainly from his use of Holy Names for God and the holy "seals" which he also received by divine revelation. The "seals of power" developed out of an Arabic style script revealed during 1926. In April of that year he saw a "book open, written in strange Arabic language". Arabic was a language of power. Arabic writings empowered the *sebe* charms and the *lasmami* holy water. Sanneh writes:

On the basis of these visions which occurred through the year, he produced the "holy script" in which he clearly tried to emulate the Arabic script, writing from right to left in a style reminiscent of the square Kufic writing, with elements of Greek style. His use of the "sacred script" as seals of power is also reminiscent of Muslim amulets.²⁴

In 1942 Oshitelu introduced holy names, "Divine Words of Adoration" into the first part of the Adoration Prayer, the opening prayer of divine service. He used *Ajubbab Sajubbab Mejubbab* while the other ministers used *Ajubbab Sajubbab Kajubbab*. They both meant "We adore Thee, God the Father. We adore Thee, God the Son, We adore Thee, God the Holy Spirit", and were uttered with "heads bowed low, touching the ground".²⁵ When the Faith Home doors were shut at night, after 9 p.m. prayers, the evil "forces of darkness" were kept out by invoking the holy names "*Ottekkummottekkummottadd Taddihhu Alleggararrahujjah Bissawwu Parrawwujah Bissawwu etc.*"²⁶ Around 1978 Adejobi was complaining, "At the moment many in the Ministry do not know this, and the few who know seldom practice it. I counsel that this good tradition continues."²⁷ Disciples are encouraged to seek after their own holy words of power.

The Church of the Lord (Aladura) has special "holy words" prayers. Their interpretations are given in Adejobi's 1978 booklet:

A prayer for little children: "*Ajabburrar Payyimmollal Kabburrar Attottat Jubbillal Payyimmoppayyimmokattabburrakkattaddullal.*" "Thou Who art the great loving Keeper, keep these Thy children under Thy merciful wings of protection, that death and satan, wizards and witches, may not snatch them under Thy wings of protection. Preserve the lives of these young ones that they may grow under Thy marvelous [sic.] grace; and as they grow in years, grant that they may also grow in wisdom, in love, in patience and in faith. Let them be useful unto Thee in this world and in the world to come, and grant them life everlasting, Amen."

A prayer for pregnant women: "*Kallebburrar Jubbittat Kallebburrar Jubbillal Kallebburrar Donddollal Gossabbi Jubbuillal Jawwullal Ahhollal.*" "Lord God Almighty, grant unto all pregnant women in this Thy Church, Thy abundant grace unto the end of their pregnancy, that they may not beget children of the devil. Chase away the spirit of satan and all evil spirits, and the spirits in the air, far away from all pregnant women of this Thy Church. *Allehhujjah Bissawwu Allehhujjah Bissawwu Allehhujjah Bissawwu Ahhullal.*"

Prayers for barren women: "*Ollabbab Ollabbab Ollabbab.*" "The Ruler of Heaven and Earth, grant unto these Thy children, that desire children from Thee, special favour from Thee, O Lord, and have mercy on them." "*Eil Hujjaj Eil Hujjaj Eil Hujjaj.*" "Most Powerful God, show forth Thy power and glory over them and grant to them the gift of children desired of Thee." "*Hammah Hammah Hammah.*" "Thou Most merciful God, Thou Whose eyes beholdeth the whole universe, gaze upon them with Thy look of compassion and mercy, and give to them sure pregnancy." "*Ayyunbillal Ayyunbillal Ayyunbillal Gorrar.*" "Thou Who art the Giver of sure pregnancy, answer them by Thy power - Trinity Divine, by Thy seal, now and forever more. Amen."

A prayer for victory over death and Satan: "*Alleggorrar Jubburar Worrakkak Saddullal Karrakkarajjinnon Ossaddinon.*" "Thou Who art the Vanquisher of Death

and Satan, destroy the power of death and satan for us, and seal the path of death and satan for us. Grant us victory over death and satan, and all evil spirits, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen."²⁸

Whenever there is an association with childbearing or childbirth the name *Jehovah Abbilal* is invoked. When churching a mother and child, God is referred to as *Jehovah Gorrabbuttallah*. A firstborn male child may be consecrated to the ministry with the holy words *Ossibborrottat Borrottat Ollahhamhhamhegag Gollamm* repeated thrice. Christ is referred to as *Emmanuel Melchisedecburrar* and *Jimjimkkattossua*.²⁹ During the Lord's Supper celebration, an infrequently held and poorly attended institution, the power and presence of God are invoked using holy words. Sins are pronounced absolved with the incantation *Sawieemiollahieullal Jieubieittat Jawieullal Amieorieorieolla Hullal*. The bread and the wine are consecrated with the prayer, *Jehovah Yaawaanniel Yaawaarraa Yahieujah Yahieomieotabbeulal Yahjilla Labieussas Lawieobba Kabieullal Yabieusa Labbieussa Kabieulla Messiah Christabieullal Mielkieeisseddekkbieurlear Eullal Abieissaslleem Jieubieetta Jawieullal*.³⁰ The intrusion of the Arabic, *Allah*, is obvious, as also the Hebrew divine names *Ja*, *Yah* and *EI*, and the name Melchizedek. In pronouncing the holy words the diphthong "ie" is silent and functions spiritually to increase the power of the word. As in Yoruba, doubling of consonants increases the intensity and power of a word. It is sometimes claimed that the Church of the Lord (Aladura) do not speak in tongues as in the New Testament *charisma*, but instead they repeat their holy names and words of power.³¹

Turner comments on the use of holy words in the Communion service:

In this context they express the presence and power of God, and might almost be regarded as equivalent to a credal confession of faith, though without anchorage in historical revelatory events.³²

He is correct in that they do represent to the congregation the presence and power of God, but the difficulty of incorporating them into Christian worship lies precisely in their lack of "anchorage in historical revelatory events". Later, Turner admits:

There is no doubt that many in the Church of the Lord use these holy names in an occult and magical way. As one member put it, "These make you feel more powerful".

Even when there is a conscious reference to God it may still be with the belief common in the history of religions that the god or spirit must come when this name is correctly pronounced in an invocation, and must serve the petitioner's request.³³

Turner defends the practice, warning Western Christians not to doubt that such words "bring home the mystery and majesty of God's presence and the power of his succour".³⁴ The church itself claims the words are either heavenly, such as the "unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter" which Paul heard, or the language of the ancient world which was lost at the destruction of the Tower of Babel. By improvising with words and sounds in this way, whether it was the operation of a New Testament *charisma* or a deliberate attempt to enhance his own power base within his own cultural milieu, an aura of mystery was created which declared Oshitelu to be in possession of secret esoteric knowledge and having direct access to spiritual power both for himself and his movement. In the prayers of the healing prophets these holy names for God and holy words are used unashamedly as words of power and understood by their clients as operating along the same lines as the words of power used in indigenous prayers and healing rituals. They release spiritual dynamism and vitality and oblige God to answer the request of the suppliant.

Angels as Intercessors

The perception that angels are swifter intermediaries and more effective intercessors than Jesus is common among the Spiritual churches and derives from the ancestral cult which makes the family spirits the first contact with the spirit world and the power of God. Angels take on the role of the more powerful ancestral spirits although the ancestral cult itself continues to operate.³⁵ Most members have their personal guardian angels; breaking the church's taboos will drive them away.³⁶ One frequently invoked angel whose swift intercession is particularly sought is "Mighty Kenkella".³⁷ Kenkella is closely associated with Jehovah as in the following popular "shout", although he is not Jehovah:

**Mighty Kenkella, mighty is he,
Destroy them all.
Mighty Kenkella, Great Jehovah,
Destroy them all.**

This mighty angel is always ready to fight for the believer. He hears and runs with God's messages ahead of all others including Jesus. The indigenous philosophy maintains that if one is clever in dealing with bush spirits, one can outsmart them and use evil to overcome evil. Similarly, a Faustian agreement can be struck with mighty Kenkella. One must be careful not to default on the deal, otherwise a costly sacrifice must be offered. Mighty Kenkella appears in the form of a masked society devil. At Saint Peter's Healing Temple he is particularly honoured and invoked for his power, efficacy and mercurial speed.³⁸

The Church of the Lord (Aladura) condemn smoking because it brings tears to the eyes and drives away good angels. In this way the good angels are seen in the same terms as the ancestor spirits who dislike pepper in their food. One reason for keeping the House of God clean, tidy, and pleasantly decorated, is that it attracts good angels, and visiting angels will be happy to remain in the place for a time. Similarly, visiting ancestral spirits become irate if they find a house or compound untidy and unswept. Other mighty angels are *Aderrobbor*, *Ojjikorojjiko*, "God of Thunder", and "God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob". El Shaddai is perceived as a mighty angel who is always present at animal sacrifices. Others are the Angel of Aversion of Accidents, the Angel of Love, the Angel of Peace and the Angel of Good-tidings. When invoking these mighty angels the congregation responds with "Holy!" after each mention of their name. There seems to exist in the Spiritual churches a situation somewhat similar to that being addressed in the early chapters of Hebrews, where the Jewish congregation, influenced by popular angelology, was according higher status to angels than to Jesus Christ God's Son.³⁹ There exists also a destroying and avenging angel, the Angel of Death. The character of this mighty angel, the equivalent of Mot in Canaanite religion and mythology, will be examined in connection with exchange-of-life animal sacrifices.

The Use of Candles when Praying

"Candle praying" is an important spiritual exercise. Lighted candle attract guardian angel intermediaries like Mighty Kenkella, as fires, lamps and torches attract bush spirits at night.

An old Temne habit, now practically obsolete, was to keep a fire burning at the graveside. Banton notes that in Sierra Leone, "a lighted candle obliges the spirit to listen to the suppliant's request".⁴⁰ Many believe that without candles burning their prayers are ineffective. If sin is involved the seriousness of the sin determines the number of candles used. Burning candles provide a holy space which the surrounding hostile spirits cannot enter. Witch and evil spirits are unable to penetrate the defensive ring of light. The burning candles are interpreted as God's boundary line and protective hedge. A more Biblical approach maintains that as Gideon used lighted torches to rout the Midianite horde, so lighted candles are a means of utilising spiritual power to banish "horrible dreams, demons, and some spirit chasing you".⁴¹ Candles are usually white, and three, seven, and anything up to twenty-one may be used. Coloured candles have special significance - green procures wealth, blue peace, red overcomes witchcraft, black is associated with death. Nowadays there is some stigma attached to the use of coloured candles because of their association with the occultic practices of *The Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses*. According to Bishop T. K. Davies those who use coloured candles are spiritualists who want to communicate with the dead:

I have never up to this moment used coloured candles, only white. Adejobi said Aaronic colours are holy, but these coloured candles are in *The Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses*. Candles are mediums, they are used to communicate with spirits.⁴²

The white candles are called the light of *Arrojah*. White candles are used in victory prayer. The candles must be consecrated before being lit and may be held by the patient during the praying, put in a candle-holder, or made into a circle around the prophet and client. The feeling of security within the circle of light and the sense of God's willingness to help enhances the patients' faith and increases the chances of psychosomatic illnesses being cured. Candle prayers for a certain number of days are often included in the spiritual exercises the healing prophets proscribe for sick clients. This can be a costly outlay for the poor. Bishop Davies points out that there is a danger of people focusing too much attention on the candles:

God is light and candles give light, but if you have to represent God with light all the time, then, if you don't have the candles you think your prayers are in vain. I did not completely remove the use of candles, they are on the altar, but I want the focus of attention to be on Jesus, not on the candles. People think that without the candles, even in their homes, they will not pray effectively. It is not the candle we look up to. It is weak to lay emphasis on candles.⁴³

Turner notes that, "Some individuals have developed an elaborate private candle-cult associated with a hierarchy of angels, and keep a candle burning continuously."⁴⁴

There are reports of prophets, particularly provincials, going to graveyards at midnight, surrounding themselves with a protective hedge of lighted candles and communicating with spirits. Safe within the circle of light, but in mortal danger if they step outside, they consult bush and ancestral spirits for information concerning the condition of their patients and the treatments to proscribe. Claudius Davies narrated the case of a teenage friend who went to the graveyard at midnight with his brother, a Church of the Lord (Aladura) prophet. The prophet made a circle of candles and lit them. He proceeded to make incantations invoking a spirit. The brother began to hear horrible sounds and became afraid. He was about to run from the place when the prophet grabbed his arm and warned him that if he left "our source of protection", he was "finished". He not only heard weird sounds, but he began to see weird half-human figures. Terrified, he lay down with his face to the ground. He heard the prophet speaking to the spirits, asking the procedures he should follow in treating the sicknesses and the problems of church members whom he mentioned by name.⁴⁵ Behind this involvement lies the philosophy that although bush spirits are dangerous they can be bargained with and even outsmarted. The Krio Hunting Societies light a protective hedge when they make pacts with bush spirits. Thus although the symbolism is Scriptural and the "more sophisticated members may look upon candles as a mere aid to the faith of the simple, and unnecessary in prayer", for many, with the pragmatic and syncretistic approach characteristic of the Spiritual churches, the use of candles is essentially a magical technique for accessing spiritual power.⁴⁶ Candles are, according to Turner, the "most common cultic object" in the Church of the Lord (Aladura), and this also holds true for all the other Spiritual churches.⁴⁷

Fasting as a Means of Obtaining Spiritual Power

Fasting is not so much a searching after the knowledge of the will of God and demonstrating contrition of heart over sin, as a technique for attaining visionary and revelatory powers. Fasting enables the prophets to hear "the voice" - increasingly identified as the Holy Spirit - speaking. In March 1979, before a major reshuffle of the ministry, Bishop Adeyemi the Provincial Head of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) undertook a twelve day period of fasting on the holy mount behind the Oke Muri Temple for guidance from "the voice".⁴⁸ Prophets use fasting as a means of inducing ecstatic possession, profound psychological release and dissociation. In this state utterances come forth which are able to reveal the spiritual forces operating in certain situations.⁴⁹ All members of the Spiritual churches are obliged to fast. Five types are practised. Ordinary fasting limits eating to one evening meal for the duration of the fast. For the poor this is their normal diet. White fasting restricts this single meal to fruits, vegetables and plain starch foods. These may be seasoned with salt and pepper and this is what gives the name "white" to this fast. Meat and fish must not be eaten and drinks with sugar are banned. A white fast is kept by the church during the thirteen days of the Mount Tabborarr festival and is intended to increase spiritual power and the capacity to receive revelations. Fruit fasting restricts eating to fruits. Water fasting prohibits any eating at all during the period of the fast. Water is drunk every two hours. Finally, there is dry fasting. Here one fasts alone and indoors. This is a very severe fast where nothing is eaten or drunk until the fast ends. This is claimed to be the most effective fast and when sustained for at least three days can avert almost anything.⁵⁰ Mereweather-Thompson writes:

Both clergy and laity fast in order to be able to gain spiritual power and vision. This gained power is what is used in detecting illnesses which reveal themselves in prophecy, dreams, speaking in strange tongues etc. Also the power is what is used in divine healing.⁵¹

Fasting is a popular sermon topic and its virtues are extolled. All members are exhorted to fast on Wednesdays and Fridays weekly, during Lent, and the thirteen days of the Mount Tabborarr festival.⁵² Turner was impressed by the seven days of dry fasting the Church of

the Lord (Aladura) disciples undertake each year while living in shelters at Lumley beach.⁵³ He records a prophet saying that fasting was not for gaining forgiveness, but "only for 'spiritual attainment' and getting what we want".⁵⁴ Bishop Orebajo saw fasting as a means of obtaining the intercession of one's guardian angel and having prayers answered quickly:

Fastings help us to be more clean, in the state of which our guardian angel will be able to come nearer to us. The more we take to hard, harder and the hardest fasting, the nearer our Angel will come to us, to take our prayer to the Lord with speed.⁵⁵

Fasting where the deprivation is not food but comfort, is practised in the form of mercy-ground rolling. The person seeking divine help rolls seven times in one direction and then seven times in the other. This process is repeated a certain number of times, sometimes to the point of bodily bruising and bleeding. The rolling shows God and the angels such submission, zeal and willingness to suffer, that they will be put under sympathetic obligation and grant what is sought after. Fasting is the most powerful weapon in the prayer warrior's spiritual armoury and is engaged for the spiritual battles with opponents within the church and rival prophets.⁵⁶ The revelatory power of the prophets is closely, almost directly, related to their ability to fast. As with prayer, fasting in the Spiritual churches operates very much according to the principles of indigenous fasting. Turner acknowledges that praying and fasting in the Spiritual churches may become "new forms of magic" and that "inevitable distortion" has taken place, yet he interprets their mode of praying and fasting as testimony to a "widespread spirituality among ordinary members."⁵⁷

HEALING AND HOLY WATER

Freetown's swelling poor population, having no access to adequate health services, flock to the Spiritual churches in their search of healing. There they find welcoming and caring communities of healing power. One member, typical of many, declared that when he could no longer meet the rising cost of drugs for his stomach-ache he decided to depend instead on the Spiritual church's consecrated holy water. Healing involves washing with and drinking

consecrated holy water, spiritual bathing, smoke bathing, anointing with holy oil, drinking the oil, praying with candles, invoking holy names and reciting powerful healing psalms. Most illness is perceived to result from personal sin. Sin is breaking the taboos and neglecting rituals of the church. This results in openness to witch-spirit attack, spiritual defilement and consequent sickness. Consecrated holy water must be used to cleanse and purify. Some healings require exorcism. Trainee prophets learn to discern particular spirits by name, as for example "Fiery Spirit of Flame" which sends fiery darts into people's hearts causing burning, and the dreaded "swear" avenger, the Angel of Death. While laying hands on the tormented person's head the prophets loudly command the spirits to depart. This is followed by special prayers where a "seal", a power-charged holy name for God, *Awoosamum*, "The Supreme Doctor", is invoked.⁵⁸ The patient then bathes in and drinks holy water.⁵⁹

Spiritual healing for the early Aladura churches demanded the abandonment of medicines, both native and Western. The 1938 constitution of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) limited healing to the divine activity acting through prayer and holy water:

It is forbidden to go to doctors or to use medicine of any kind ... be it native or any.... We trust in heavenly healing in this Church.... The power of herbs has been ended, the power of medicine reduced to vanity, the power of incantation exterminated. The Lord laid down the spiritual water for everyone, and Christ is the rock of the water. 1 Cor. 10:14.

In 1962 Oshitelu signalled a shift in position:

This church is a universal church and so we deal with all people according to their faith. We have no absolute law against going to doctors and hospitals.⁶⁰

Sundkler has observed a similar pragmatism developing among the South African Zionists. Some Spiritual church leaders like Prophet Samuel Wobo of the Spiritual Healing Church of the Lord, who was trained by Oshitelu at Ogere for five years, are prepared to face the possibility that some sickness may even be temporarily in the will of God.⁶¹ Wobo with impeccable theology testifies, "We who suffer know some spiritual things that others don't know, and God uses it for good; yet Jesus never fails, and God will heal me when the time is right."⁶² As the early fervour of the Aladura revival cooled, a new realism became

increasingly evident. The Celestial Church of Christ takes a dualistic approach. All forms of native medicines, because of their indigenous spirit and magical associations, are condemned, but the use of Western medicine is actively encouraged for cases outwith the church's spiritual healing ambit. The healing mandate of the church runs in the areas where the prophets discern evil spirits and witchcraft as the cause of disease, mental illness, epilepsy, blindness, smallpox, barrenness and childbearing complications. In these areas healing is effected through prayer, exorcism and washing with holy water. Recently Briama N'doeke, an elder in the Church of Salvation and a prominent businessman, stated:

Plans are underway to construct dispensaries and maternity clinics for accidents and illnesses and births which need immediate scientific attention even before prayers are offered for the healing of stitched wounds.⁶³

Holy Water

Holy water consists of ordinary water with some olive oil, Florida water and garlic. It is the Spiritual churches' equivalent of secret society *sawe*, a water and herbs concoction. Although holy consecrated oils compounded with garlic are considered more powerful healing mediums, they are much more expensive. Low-income women flock to the consecrating area of the churches at the end of services to fill their containers with water which the minister has consecrated through prayer and the touch of his iron rod. There is great confidence in the water's therapeutic power. Pregnant women must drink the water daily and some members drink holy water at every opportunity. The strength of the healing power depends on the spiritual power of the prophet who consecrates the water. Some prophets charge for blessing the water. Normally there is no direct charge, but appeals for covering expenses are made.⁶⁴ Angels with a ministry of healing in specific areas are invoked to energise the water for healing.⁶⁵ Where "black man hand" is discerned, that is fetish power or witchcraft, the person is immediately sprinkled with the holy water.

Garrick Braide and Joseph Babalola used holy water, *omi iye*, "water of life", as a bridge for faith and the benefits and dangers involved in contextualising so deep-rooted an indigenous

practice have been noted.⁶⁶ Parrinder noted that a pot of water called "water of life" was kept in Shango temples for the sick to wash with or drink.⁶⁷ Muslim healers, *alpha*, make *lasmani* by writing Koranic texts with chalk on a slate and washing the chalk into a jar.⁶⁸ The potion is then drunk. Oshitelu employed the "water of life" as his main method of healing the sick and established it as a permanent institution within his church. Church of the Lord (Aladura) catechism question 16 - following on from the previous question of whether the Devil and all his works, including "trust in medicines and herbs and in men in whom there is no help", have been renounced - asks, "If thou renounce all these things, on what then stands thy faith?" The answer is, "My faith stands on Christ the Rock, the Blood and righteousness of Jesus and the power of the Water of life for all things." Depending on how one interprets "water of life" there is the possibility of slipping, like the Colosse church, into a heretical position where salvation is perceived as Christ plus something else. Question 18 asks, "What does the Water of life do for you?" The answer, "Jesus Christ is the Water of life and with it He heals me", is sufficiently ambiguous to cause confusion. The possibility of over-closely identifying Christ with Holy Water is apparent. Question 20, according to Professor Fashole-Luke, "does not appear in the Anglican Prayer Book and represents a syncretistic tendency which ought to be rejected"⁶⁹ It asks, "To whom was handed the key of the water of life?" The answer is, "It was handed to Ollunowo, the last Elijah, with the injunction: 'If they turn unto thee thou shalt give unto them the Water of life, but if they repent not, they shall perish.'" Question 32 asks, "Through whom were the Commandments given?" The answer is, "Through Moses." The obvious implication of all this is that as the Law was mediated through Moses to Israel likewise the "water of life" is mediated to Africans through Oshitelu and the church he founded. In Hymn 90, one of the early songs composed for the church, Ogere, Oshitelu's birthplace and the headquarters of his movement, is described as "Origin of Waters of life, From where the living rivers spring." From Adejobi's *The Bible Speaks on the Church of the Lord*, Turner observes that "water of life" or "holy water" can be equated with "redemption itself, as when the holy water is 'likened to the Ark among the

children of Israel ... provided for ... their redemption'.⁷⁰ In the baptismal rite the candidate is asked:

Wilt thou walk uprightly and steadfastly in, and abide by the Rules and Regulations of the Church of the Lord, and wilt thou trust in the Lord alone through prayer, in times of sickness and infirmity, in times of various temptations and tribulations, in times of need, and wilt thou remain steadfast and firm, through thy life, in the use on the Holy Water (water of life) which was given to the Holy Oshitelu, unto everyone that turns unto Him [in the original context of Oshitelu's commission the *him* was not Christ, but Oshitelu]; and dost thou believe that God has truly sent this His servant as His Harbinger, yea as the last Elijah, to prepare the way of the Lord?⁷¹

Professor Fashole-Luke, discerning "theological syncretism" in the answer to Question 20, comments:

On the surface this article seems to emphasise the image of Christ as the water of life, "an image with deep appeal in Africa, and with ritual expressions in the Church of the Lord," but it probably masks an equation of Oshitelu and Christ, which is not theologically sound. It gives the impression that Christ is the last Elijah, but to the members of the Church of the Lord, it is Oshitelu who is the central figure and not Christ.⁷²

Adejobi maintains that when holy water is sprinkled on congregations it is a "visible sign of sanctification" like when Moses sprinkled the children of Israel with water".⁷³ While this is the official doctrinal statement, on the practical level sprinkling holy water is to protect the congregation from witchcraft and evil spirits.⁷⁴ As observed by Turner:

Water is also used in other rituals outside the church: it is poured on charms or medicine to destroy the evil spirits before burning the objects, it is sprinkled round the foundations of a new church to protect it from evil, it is given as a drink in exorcising, and of course it is important in baptism by immersion. In less formal domestic use it may be sprinkled round the house for protection, rubbed on the body to repel witches ... or rubbed on or drunk for healing purposes, especially by barren women.⁷⁵

In indigenous aqua-cures, healing power of ancestors (cf. the OT *raphaim*) is mediated through the fetish, charms and herbs in the water. Through rituals, sacrifices, and incanting holy power-inducing words, the spirits are awakened and energised to perform their healing task, and the medicine or charm is activated. In the Spiritual churches, the Holy Spirit and angels are invoked and entreated to enter the water. Entry is facilitated by dipping the prophet's iron rod or wooden cross into the water to act as a conduit.⁷⁶ Despite Turner's claim that the use of water is "an innocuous practice" and the church's attempt to produce a

new sacrament of healing based on water is an innovative attempt at contextualisation, so persistent and deep-rooted is faith in the dynamic healing powers of holy water that the focus in the healing process remains firmly fixed on the water and not on Christ.⁷⁷ The Holy Spirit is believed to automatically enter the water in response to the prophet's consecratory prayer and the touch of his rod of power. The healing is in the water.

Stream and Spiritual Bathing

Stream bathing, or "Jordan bathing" bathing, finds its justification in the story of Naaman in 2 Kings 5:1-15, the ministry of John the Baptist, and Jesus' baptism in the Jordan. River pools are the baths of rural societies, ritual bathing is common practice in healing, exorcism and witchcraft cleansing rites. Male and female initiation rites include stream bathings. In "spiritual bathing" the bath takes place at home using consecrated tap water. In both baths, the water is consecrated by the prophet, and also the "sapoh", a brush used to rub dirt from the skin, and a special "black soap" or "country soap" made with burnt ash from palm kernels which is purchased from Nigerian market-women in Freetown. It is a highly medicated and expensive soap and would ordinarily be used to treat skin rashes. Similar "black soap" prepared by a herbalist is used in the Hunting Societies to wash hands before entering the room containing the *Eri* devil's clothing. Stream and spiritual bathing have raised immorality accusations as some prophets insist on personally bathing both men and women.⁷⁸ After bathing, a mixture of olive oil, Florida water and other concoctions is consecrated and used to anoint the body. The emphasis on cleanliness and skin toning is obviously therapeutic.

Claudius Davies narrated a fairly typical stream bathing case in which he was involved during his training as a prophet in the Church of the Lord (Aladura).⁷⁹ The wife of one of Freetown's leading figures came to his prophet-teacher's prayer and healing clinic at the junction of Soldier Street and Circular Road. While the prophet prayed he brought forth a vision. "Black man hand" was behind her attack. She must perform candle prayers for seven days and then undergo stream bathing. For stream bathing she had to bring *sapoh*, black soap, and *takti*, "a

red cloth directly associated with the same the fetish priest uses". The *takti* was used in the candle praying. In up-country villages it is common to encounter men, women and children dressed in rough gowns made of parallel stripes of cloth, red (*takti*), white (*shatin*), and "black", while undergoing healing rituals with the healer-diviner or "fetish-man". Prophet and disciple took the lady to a pool upstream from the new Congo Cross bridge. Prayers were made while touching the water with the iron rod and invoking holy names. The *sapoh* and the black soap were also consecrated by prayer and the prophet's rod. The lady then undressed completely and bathed, the stream carrying away her impurity and contamination. When the bathing was completed she was instructed to throw the *sapoh* and the black soap away backwards. The *takti* was cast into the stream and allowed to float downstream indicating that the evil attacking her as well as her impurity was being washed away. There is no doubt that the ritual is tremendously therapeutic for a person brought up in a traditional spiritual healing environment. God is perceived to be the source of healing, but not directly. The indigenous principle of intermediary procession operates. The procession is from God, through the Holy Spirit, through intermediary angels, through the intermediary prophet, and through the medium of objects of power. The difference between the stream bathing healing ritual performed by the Spiritual prophet and that of the indigenous healer is the greater emphasis on the power of God, otherwise they operate in practically the same manner.

The Use of Smoke for Healing

Prophets sometimes prescribe smoke treatment in cases where fetish-magic, witchcraft, or "black man hand is behind this". The patient is made to sit on a chair with a blanket totally covering head and body. A coal-pot with burning charcoals is placed at the invalid's feet under the blanket. *Churai*, a pounded mixture of spices and special wood chip imported from Nigeria, is placed on the burning coals and thick clouds of sweet smelling incense envelop the patient. The incense drives away the evil spirits and any poison put into the system by sorcerers or witches. Sometimes the treatment can last several days, as in the case of persons diagnosed as demon possessed and requiring exorcism. The possessed are kept in

chains in the "faith-home" during the smoke treatment period.⁸⁰ There are psychological and therapeutic benefits, and some psychosomatic healings do take place. An informant's aunt who had been suffering severe arthritis in the foot was given the smoke treatment and experienced some relief. However, when she moved to another area the arthritis returned.⁸¹

Therapeutic Healing and Pastoral Care

In operating a ministry of divine healing the most obvious strengths of the Spiritual churches lie not in the area of New Testament *charismata*, which is where the healing emphasis of the Pentecostal-evangelicals resides, but in the areas of pastoral care and culturally conditioned comforts. As in indigenous cures, after holy enquiries and prayer and religious ritual conducted in a spiritually charged environment, a healing process can begin. The rituals prescribed by the prophet-healers are powerful psychological inducements to psychosomatic healing.⁸² Indigenous healing techniques are being increasingly introduced into Western medicine and their psychological benefits acknowledged. The prophets, who live among the poor and have their fingers on the pulse of their communities - unlike many denominational ministers - are willing to give any amount of time to their patients, and involve themselves unsparingly in praying, fasting, and performing spiritual exercises for the sick or troubled members. This is the secret of their success as spiritual and medical practitioners. In the caring, culture-affirming atmosphere with which they surround their patients, tensions are relieved and the healing of stress induced sickness begins. Eye problems caused by pressures brought on by anxiety respond particularly well to this healing therapy.

Barrenness and child-bearing constitute the most common healing problems. These are often induced by the pressures imposed on women in a male dominated society and the tensions and fears that arise as a result. The difficulties are compounded by the fact that many young women are traumatised and mutilated during their initiation ceremonies and circumcision rites. Women who do not bear children, or who lose a child during pregnancy, are suspected of being witches. The most ardent supporters of the Spiritual churches are

women who testify to having conceived following revelations by a prophet, and to having safely delivered a healthy child after prayer and washing in holy water. During the final stages of pregnancy when fear of witch attack is greatest, the church's support and protection help overcome fears and tensions. When a healthy child is born there is a profound feeling of gratitude to the prophet and the church. Failures are explained on two levels, indigenous and Christian. Most commonly, failure is due to neglecting to fulfil the ritual demands of the prophet, or to hidden, unconfessed sin which opened one to witchcraft assault. On the Christian level failure is attributed to insufficient faith being exercised, but this again is generally understood as being a failure to obey the prophets' instructions to the letter.

Many patients obtain only a measure of relief and become members in the hope of gaining a complete cure. Others are so convinced that the power of God to heal is among the group that they become life members. The testimony of one member is typical of many:

I need not waste my time telling you about the wonders performed in this church. Enter, so that you can see what power God has given these spiritual churches. There one feels closer to God. I am a baptised and confirmed Anglican, but I always see a practical demonstration of God's power here. The church does not merely preach sermons, but also heals the sick. For example, some mentally ill people have been cured in this church. All these together with many others have convinced me that this type of worship is worth following.⁸³

On the other hand, a large number of the sick drift from one healing ministry to another in their search for a cure and a more powerful spiritual healer. They go to where the power is most active and effective. In Freetown at present, this is at Saint Peter's Healing Temple.

A Theology of Healing

Theologically the emphasis on power and the need to obtain immediate and total victory over enemies, an emphasis found in several Psalms, has delayed the development of a *theologia crucis* and a Christological dimension to the questions of sickness and suffering, both in the world and in the Church. The necessity to triumph over evil spirits and witches has led to the continuation of magical and occult practices within the churches, and indigenised Christian practices being interpreted in magical ways of thought. Turner describes the development of

a "Theology of Water" and a sacrament of healing based on water in the Church of the Lord (Aladura).⁸⁴ Operating a form of natural theology, the church maintains that God cursed the soil because of Adam's sin, but not the water. Water, uncorrupted by human sin and the consequences of the Fall, retained its Paradisal purity and is thus ideally suited for mediating God's power to men. After invoking the Spirit, the water changes into holy water, "water of life", and becomes what Jesus meant when he said, "Let him that thirsts take of the water of life freely". Ade Aina, who defected to Oshitelu from Faith Tabernacle, in seeking to refute criticism of his church's use of water as a magic medicine, attempted to reconcile Bible teaching with this indigenous practice and work out a theology of water. Around 1932 he wrote a pamphlet, *The Present Day Prophets and the Principles upon which they Work*.⁸⁵ There he stated:

Christians believe that ... at the time of the Lord's Supper ... the wine (is) His Blood, after invoking God's blessing.... If this is true, is the water not then the Water of Life which is *Christ himself* [italics mine] after invoking God's blessing over it.... Is it then common or mere water?

Paralleling the mediaeval European indigenisation of the Eucharist which produced the doctrine of Transubstantiation, and blending Biblical teaching and indigenous pneumatology, Aina attempted to produce an African doctrine of transubstantiation for water and a sacrament of healing based on water.

Turner recognises that although there are references to Christ in Aina's theology of water, his mediation in the sacrament is ignored, and the water is perceived as having an inherent healing quality of its own.⁸⁶ Nevertheless, he praises the attempt because it affirms faith in the power of God independent of any contribution of man and it is precisely at this point that "the radical departure from paganism has occurred: salvation by God alone through faith and prayer to him."⁸⁷ As Turner is aware, New Testament salvation is not merely "by God alone through faith and prayer to him", but "*en Christo*" and in the name of Jesus. The Spiritual churches do not perceive salvation simply on these terms or within that framework, unlike the Pentecostal-evangelicals who much more seriously seek to confine the locus of God's

salvation to faith in Christ alone. Turner claims that if the water is understood as having no power of its own, and "is in no sense a medicine, but is simply a specially suitable instrument which God blesses and uses for our redemption from sickness", then this, being an advance on the harmful concoctions of indigenous healers, is "an innocuous practice capable of sustaining at least that portion of the Christian faith these churches have made particularly their own", and the theology of water thus worked out cannot be faulted.⁸⁸ Unfortunately, as he has already observed, the water is understood as having a power of its own, as also the cross, the iron rod, the Bible, the Psalms and the holy names. Despite the fact that much of what the leadership "affirm" in their theology of water seems on the surface to be "fundamentally true and Christian", the evidence hardly supports Turner's claim that the church obtains salvation by God alone through faith and prayer.⁸⁹ Very few, if any, of the Spiritual church members or the prophets see the water in the powerless light postulated by Turner, nor would any ever describe the practice of healing through holy consecrated water as "innocuous". Turner further claims that, "On the whole we are satisfied that this church has achieved a radical rejection of magical practices, if not of the magical way of thought".⁹⁰ There has been a radical rejection of many old forms of magical practice, yet it is surely obvious that there has not been a rejection of magical methods and "the magical way of thought", and that the much simplified Christian armoury of "means" at the church's disposal is being used in magical ways. Also, if "the magical way of thought" persists, so does the magical method of acting, and this is nowhere so apparent as in the magical use of water and the way it is perceived as a Christian medicine inhabited by the Holy Spirit.

The greatest contribution of the Spiritual churches to evangelical Christianity and the ongoing development of the modern and universal Church in Africa has been in the area of indigenised worship. Within that context their most significant single contribution is healing. They provide a community of healing power and pastoral care for the poor and underprivileged. In the therapeutic environment they create, sufferers from psychosomatic diseases, neuroses, schizophrenia, psychological disorders and emotional upsets, find some

relief and healing. There is, however, a tendency to make exaggerated claims regarding their successes. They have been criticised for inhibiting rather than promoting rapid socio-economic development through an unscientific approach to disease and the delicate area of mental illness.⁹¹ Their treatments have often delayed the start of scientific medical care and hindered rather than helped the healing process. However, the Spiritual churches are dynamic, adaptable and innovative. They have seriously addressed the problem of sickness and the realities of the African situation and condition, areas only lightly touched on by the historic denominations who rejected almost all indigenous religious practices and concentrated on satisfying the intellectualism of the rising educated elite. Yet, it is difficult to see how the Lordship of Christ has been realised in the healing ministry of the Spiritual churches when their theology of water and the sacrament of healing through water have so deficient a Christology, and the Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit is still being basically interpreted in terms of the old pneumatology. The consecrated water is taken to be a *theoduct*, a vehicle for the Holy Spirit and also angels, a repository of God's power, and a medicine. This misconception of the *modus operandi* of the Holy Spirit is fuelled and sustained by the ongoing ancestor cult and the rites and rituals of the secret societies.

REVELATIONS, PREDICTIONS, DREAMS, VISIONS AND VOICES

The Spiritual churches attract by their revelations, predictions and ability to receive and interpret visions and dreams. Prophets make "divine enquiries", seek revelations, for members on all aspects of life, marriage, marriage partners, job opportunities, business ventures, difficulties at home or at work, and so on. These "holy enquiries" are conducted in a style reminiscent of diviners seeking help and information from familiar spirits. Because of this the prophets are often referred to as "fortune-tellers" and "Christian morimen". Prophets are encouraged to begin their enquiries by invoking holy names such as *Ahumieoa Ahumieo Hullah Gbanoyyamullah Jehovah Ajubitafial Yieohor*, and to pray along the lines of:

By these holy names, O Lord, reveal unto me any secrets which I may place before Thee for approval. Thou art the only true and Living God, Who can search the depth of the human hearts and manifest everything clearly to Thy servants. Hide not Thy face from me, neither forsake my petition; I shall always do according to Thy holy direction and sacred purposes ... make me clean and pure O Lord that nothing may obstruct my spiritual virtue.⁹²

The names of angels who have some specialist knowledge or expertise are also invoked.

Fasting and praying exercises are used to encourage and enhance visionary power and the ability to discern the source of troubles. The main areas of spiritual enquiry concern health and witchcraft. While the majority of members come from the lower income levels, many rich and important people visit the prophets privately for fortune-telling revelations, the reasons for failures and the identification of jealous rivals. The seeming obsession with fortune-telling revelations must be understood within the context of the fears and anxieties which beset West African societies and the traditional problem-solving role of indigenous diviners. However, on the negative side, Hackett considers that:

The independent churches ... seem to perpetuate, rather than extirpate, witchcraft. Although the churches are constantly reminding their members of their moral obligations as Christians and the realities of inner sinfulness, the emphasis tends largely towards the exteriorisation of evil. People flock to the churches complaining that they have failed their exams, missed promotion, fallen sick or crashed their cars because of the maleficence of others. The churches reinforce these beliefs and fears with their systems of explanation and prophetism.⁹³

Their emphasis upon taboos, "mercy grounds", polygamy, divination, healing, dancing and drumming and trance-like states and their theories of misfortune and evil have traditional roots, even if justification for some of the practices may also be found in the Old Testament.⁹⁴

In seeking predictive revelations the prophets operate along indigenous lines although their symbols of power and their words of power are Biblical. The revelations are sought from the Holy Spirit, but angels and familiar spirits are also invoked and the Holy Spirit himself is expected to operate along the lines of revelatory ancestral spirits.

Dreams and Visions

Traditionally the primary medium of communication between the supernatural world and man is through dreams and visions. These are still the main avenue by which the ancestors

communicate with their families. Alien and bush spirits approach men and women of strong psychic disposition in the same way to initiate them into their secrets and select them to become channels of their specialist knowledge and power. Only rarely and in extreme cases are dreams and visions attributed directly to God. Interpreting dreams and decoding spirit messages was supremely important for West African societies and was a function of the diviner. While their role has changed and their authority diminished in the new social order, they continue to be much sought after as dream interpreters. The great innovation made by the Spiritual churches has been to attribute many of their dreams and visions directly to the Holy Spirit. The ability to receive dream revelations from God and interpret the dreams and visions of others makes one a powerful prophet or prophetess. Many go to the Spiritual churches to have their significant and troublesome dreams interpreted. Dreams and visions are being interpreted less frequently as messages from ancestors and more as messages from the Holy Spirit and holy angels, although very often the figure of a masquerading devil appears in the dream or vision. Anything seen in dreams is of significance. If someone falls asleep in church they should not be wakened as they may be receiving important revelations. To see blood in a dream is a warning of great danger.⁹⁵ The Church of the Lord (Aladura) claims its dreams and visions fulfil the prophecy of Joel for African peoples:

**And afterwards I will pour out my Spirit of all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
Your old men will dream dreams,
And your young men will see visions. (Joel 2: 28-29).**

Not only psychic clairvoyant ability, but psychological talent is involved in correctly interpreting visions and dreams. Dreams reveal a person's state of mind, aspirations and anxieties. Useful information can also be gleaned from the prolonged counselling sessions conducted by the prophets and the very full confessions demanded. The prophets are in touch with the local situation and know what goes on in peoples' lives. Many of their revelations are of a general nature where the odds on them being fulfilled are reasonably high. However, when the prophecies are specific, their hit and miss character is apparent. For instance when Adejobi named by vision the first four prophets to be trained in Freetown

only one responded positively, and he soon left to do further studies in England. Oshitelu, in his 1945 and 1946 visions, declared Oduwole would open up the work in Ghana. Adejobi did this, much to Oduwole's irritation. Many of the prophecies and predictions are subjective fancies, but are boldly claimed to be the voice of the Holy Spirit or a vision from God.

In the 1950s Bishop Orebanjo produced a twelve lecture correspondence course entitled ***Spiritual Lectures Compilation*** where he enunciated a four stage progression in the art of obtaining revelation from the Holy Spirit. The lowest level of "spiritualist" ability is dreaming. Here one travels and acts spiritually while asleep. The trainee must learn to overcome evil spirits who interfere with the messages coming from the Holy Spirit:

Sometimes you may dream of cows pursuing you, or masquerades terrifying you. When you still fear and run ... you are weak in that stage.... Witches transform themselves to the above named creatures.⁹⁶

After developing an ability to identify and banish evil spirits and to interpret dreams with some degree of accuracy, one can "advance to another stage of spiritualism". The second stage of spiritual advancement is:

... clairvoyance ... the power of seeing spiritually in form of vision.... When you close your eyes during prayer some picture-like objects will be appearing before you ... they will be passing away as when cinema films are displayed ... this may be for some seconds before vanishing.⁹⁷

Turner sees this clairvoyance as being of the same order as Scriptural revelations:

This is clearly the phenomenon of after-images, which may have some meaning if properly interpreted. It is akin to the scriptural visions in which objects of ordinary sight, such as the desert bush or the budding almond tree, give rise to a visionary experience in which they play a symbolic part.⁹⁸

The third stage of spiritual advancement is to be able to see "high spiritual attendants who will show you exactness in things". The high spiritual attendants are messengers from God. Ancestral spirits, deceased family heads and clan heroes, are all understood to be God's messengers. Thus prophets invoke ancestral spirits in the traditional *babalawo* or diviner fashion, and regard them as angels carrying messages and insights from God. Resulting from this perception some prophets will visit graveyards and seek communication with and information from good spirits who are perceived of as being messengers of God. Night-time

graveside visits require a surrounding hedge of lighted candles for protection from the witch and other evil spirits who would seek to prevent their communication with the good spirits.⁹⁹

The fourth and highest level of visionary experience is trance. Trance is to be "in full contact with your guardian angel".

During the hour of prayer you will be seized away ... an angel will be piloting you to an unknown place just like another world; this, of course, may not be more than three minutes. Thousands of things may be shown to you in a second; the most difficult part of it is to remember the things seen. Any that may be recollected will actually come to pass. This is what is called a TRANCE.¹⁰⁰

In developing a trance technique and relationship with a guardian angel there is real similarity with the spirit "channelling" of the New Age Movement where the New Age medium develops the ability to enter speedily into trance and communicate with a spirit Teacher or Master.

Hearing Inner Voices, the Acme of Spirituality

It may come as a surprise that in Revelatory-Healing churches there is a higher mode of revelation than vision. Clairaudience is regarded as superior to clairvoyance, and this is understandable since verbal communication is more intimate and personal than the merely visual, and speech transmits a clearer and more definite message than vision. The ultimate in receiving spiritual communications would, of course, combine seeing and hearing. Hearing voices is the especial genius of the indigenous diviner. Bishop Orebajo talks of "the power of hearing voices through the air spiritually", and understands these external voices as being "the voices of angels":

You will feel as if a slight wind blows towards you in which you will hear distinct slow voices from no visible person, but holy spirits.... The secret is that there is an angel speaking into your ear.... If you are not vigilant in fasting and prayer, some deceitful voices will come to deceive you, but immediately you can be bold to enquire his name, he will vanish totally in case of evil voices. It is good to be writing down messages as you are hearing them, for ... only if you are developed up fully, can you recall back the voice for interpretation or for deliverance.¹⁰¹

Western psychiatry would interpret such behaviour as symptomatic of schizophrenia.

Inner voices can also be heard. The ability to hear the inner voice clearly is the acme of all audio-revelatory experience. Voices emerging from one's inner consciousness and reflecting

one's experience, knowledge and intuitive insight, provide the most personal and accurate spiritual or psychological communication. Orebanjo interprets the operations of human consciousness and man's reasoning analytical faculties as voices. Where favourable it is the voice of the Holy Spirit, where unfavourable the voices belong to evil spirits or witches:

There are two spirits in man - good and evil. Both of them are talking inwardly with their individual advice ... you should try to overcome doubts which are always from the evil spirit. The more you obey your good spiritual conscience, the higher you develop in the Inner Power.... That is the Holy Ghost that dwelleth in man.... It is the inner person and the inner voice.... Whatever thought may be out from your mind will always be correct. Gradually you will be hearing voices speaking from your heart. Take note of them. They are true. If you keep to constant prayer your chest will many a time be expanded and the capacity ... occupied by the Holy Ghost.... This will result to what we call INSPIRATION.¹⁰²

Bishop T. K. Davies of the Christ Pentecostal Church, and former bishop of the Church of Salvation, maintains the voice he hears is the voice of the Holy Spirit. He will make no important decision until he hears the voice. To him the voice is a higher authority than Scriptures since it is the Holy Spirit coming to him directly and personally. He began to hear the voice while staying with the Rev. J. B. Rogers and attending the UMC primary school at Bonthe in the late 1940s.

In the night I was taught all my subjects. I heard a voice. I would listen and the person would ask me, "When in church did you remember this and this?" Almost everything the preacher said would be relayed to me. It talks in Mende, it talks in Krio, it talks in English. It guided me throughout, but I didn't know if it was God, an angel or a strange spirit. There was not much teaching on angels in Sierra Leone. The didn't tell us that the true Spirit was actually a visitor who could come into a young one or that one could be born with it.¹⁰³

It was not until 1962, when he first visited Fofana's Church in Bo seeking prayer for a "pressing problem", that he came to understand that the voice was the Holy Spirit speaking. Fofana pointed to him and declared, "He has been hearing the voice. He had visions long ago and he still hears the Holy Spirit."¹⁰⁴ From then on Davies was fully convinced that the voice he had been hearing was the Holy Spirit. After joining the Church of Salvation he developed his clairaudience ability through fasting and praying in the Spiritual manner.

I don't know up to this moment how it operates. It does not tell you, "I am coming". When it is ready to come it comes. You just hear this voice or just get the inspiration. People are singing and you get the inspiration and then you speak. At times I am instructed to write, "Write! Write so, so, so ..." You just listen to the voice. Don't add good English or good expression, just write. At times I see pictures on the wall like a

cinematograph, a sort of camera. It prays through me about somebody in secret form giving pockets of information about the person. It disappears and goes to another person. You can't switch it on or off. Oh, no! You can make yourself more ready for it in different ways. One, by obeying the instruction of Christ to pray and fast and give out alms. Fasting must have prayer and giving out alms to the poor. Prayer and fasting for three, seven, forty days. It gives you the feeling, the thing comes. It bothers you. "I have a message for this man. Pray for him." It gives you the instructions what psalms to use. It involves discipline, a mortifying of the flesh.¹⁰⁵

While in the Church of Salvation the voice would instruct him, "This person needs a sacrifice. Do it! These things are working, but I will tell you." In 1973, the year he was appointed Bishop, he heard the voice saying, "You have to leave this place, but don't worry I will tell you the time. Wait till the fullness of time." In 1983 Davies was involved in an acrimonious dispute over being a Spiritual Bishop while continuing as a salaried director at the Bank of Sierra Leone. When the Primate abolished the part-time ministry and Davies was faced with the choice of the bank or the full-time ministry, he knew "the fullness of time" had arrived. Shortly afterwards he heard the voice commanding, "Launch out into the deep and do your own fishing."¹⁰⁶ In obedience to the voice he resigned as Bishop at Church of Salvation and went out to found the Christ Pentecostal Church.

Rewards and Gifts for Revelations

Despite having a few wealthy supporters, congregations are generally poor, thus prophets are severely tempted to seek gifts for services rendered. Turner notes:

Some ministers have been known as "heavy chargers" for spiritual services, and have been arraigned for charging "thirteen packets of candles and incense to make marriage enquiry", or for "overcharging the patients, unduly exacting more than was appointed, extortioning, telling lies by false prophesies, and hiding under the canopy of a finger by mixing incantations with spiritual words, thus seducing aspirants". An intelligent layman in the Ghana civil service related how his minister had predicted promotion for him, and that several people were working against this; he should therefore make a vow that when promotion did come he would give £20 to God. When he asked "But how can I pay God?" he was told that the minister stands for God.¹⁰⁷

Prophets set plates for donations from those who come for prayers. Some are accused of being "hand-bag prophets", "peddlers of the Gospel", and of operating a system of PAYE and charging according to the status of the enquirer. Others prolong the treatments and sometimes predict dangers which can only be averted through much praying and paying.¹⁰⁸

Indigenous diviners demand gifts and sacrifices for their spiritual enquiries, so Spiritual prophets are easily tempted to prophesy for reward. Arguments arise between prophets over finances. Some insist their clients rely exclusively on them and warn of the consequences of going to rival prophets. Successful revelatory-prophets are well rewarded by grateful clients. The Rev. Sidney Davies, Evangelism Director of EFSL and founder of Glory Ministries, was deeply involved in the Spiritual churches. He claims commercialism and adultery to be the besetting sins of these churches. He accuses them of demanding payment for their special prayers and buying bulk quantities of Florida water, incense, oil, soap, candles, to sell on a profit basis. Their "Annas bazaar" commercialism thrives because of the importance members attach to healing, protection, security, and obtaining the favour of the prophets.¹⁰⁹ Prophets who conduct exchange-of-life animal sacrifices, are never short of meat.

Although tithing is official policy, many members are unable to donate a tenth of their meagre incomes. Thus fund raising is given a high profile at divine services and is conducted in traditional style with entertainment, competitions, songs and poetry. Each contribution draws forth another collection from the congregation. Opportunity is given for the "big man" to demonstrate his generosity ostentatiously. Others are pressurised to give generously to save face. Major fund-raising take place during the New Year, Easter, anniversary and harvest thanksgiving services, but special thanksgiving services may be called as needs dictate. The pressure to give more than one can afford has led to many leaving these churches. Fund raising is also a conspicuous feature of the Spiritual churches' evangelistic outreaches.

EVANGELISM IN THE SPIRITUAL CHURCHES

From its origins the Church of the Lord (Aladura) has had the vision of being a world-wide movement and Oshitelu saw his church as one of the seven Last Days manifestations of the true prophetic Church of Christ on earth. The heady idealism of the early period now needs

to be tempered with the recognition that, despite remarkable growth in Nigeria, especially in the Yoruba areas, and the extension of branches to several West African countries, even to England and America, the Yoruba character of its liturgy, and the competition from other Spiritual and Pentecostal churches has severely limited its universal appeal. Nevertheless, this has always been a missionary church with witness and outreach given a high priority and profile. However, their evangelistic message is not particularly Christocentric or Cross-focused, but rather proclaims that their church has the power to heal and provide success in life's ventures, they conquer evil spirits and witchcraft, and they can predict the future and expose the root-cause of one's troubles. Open air services attract prospective members. The Church of the Lord (Aladura), Saint Peter's Healing Temple and the Celestial Church of Christ are all very active in outdoor evangelism. The less missionary-minded Church of Salvation has now dropped the practice. The outreach band with their white robes, bells ringing, drumming, singing, clapping and dancing easily attracts a crowd. The number of evangelists and the exact location of the open-air service depends on prophetic revelation. Kissy Street, Garrison Street near State House, the Model School at Circular Road, the foot of Campbell Street near Saint John's Church, Kru Town market and Fourah Bay Road are favourite locations for open-air services. A little wooden table, with a bell, a Bible, a Hymnal, and a plate for donations, is standard equipment. According to Sankoh-Cole, "They display their crosses and iron rods both to advertise their piety and their confidence in them as their protective custodians."¹¹⁰ When individual prophets or prophetesses conduct outreaches they are suspected of primarily collecting money for their own expenses for that day or week. Several younger ministers at Bishop Mayers' Saint Peter's Healing Church have recently complained that they are becoming mere fund raisers and not "good news bringers".¹¹¹

Once a crowd gathers the evangelists, while pacing back and forth, preach messages like, "God does not want us to go to the ju-ju man. God does not want us to be corrupt. Have faith in God."¹¹² The outreach team then group together to pray, not for empowering to preach and witness to Christ, but for visions and revelations for the onlookers. Prophets will

leave the prayer band and approach individuals in the crowd saying, "I have a vision for you!"

The revelations go along the lines of:

The Lord has revealed that someone is after you. Someone is trying to harm you. You are pregnant, if you are not careful that pregnancy will waste. The Lord has revealed that you must come to see me.¹¹³

The revelations are mainly pronouncements of divine judgement and urgent warnings of misfortunes which can only be avoided by the prophets' prayers. The revelations often shock the recipients. A student researcher recorded the events at an open-air outreach:

People deliberately refuse to pass close to them during their open-air service for fear that they will be told that they will die the next day or that some danger might befall them soon. I was among a large crowd watching their open-air service at John Street. A boy was caught by an elderly member and aloud she told the boy to "Watch and pray" for his life was in danger. All eyes fixed on the boy and as soon as he was released he immediately left the scene heartbroken. A girl was told that there was a short thin invisible rope before her and she is going to die whenever she steps on the rope.

Another time a woman was told that her daughter who had travelled to Nigeria was ill and was at the point of death. The woman collapsed and had to be carried home. The woman was preparing to leave for Nigeria when she received a letter from her daughter saying she had been slightly ill, but had recovered and was doing fine.¹¹⁴

Pastor Jones of Bethel Temple remembers that Adejobi prophesied he would die young and must attend the prayer meetings if he wanted to avoid this tragedy. He also prophesied that he would go to England. Jones did not die young, but like many educated Krio he did travel to England, although much later on in life.¹¹⁵

Although some call them "liars and false prophets", "hand-bag prophets" and "Christian *morimen*", others, mainly women, are impressed and join the group for further "holy enquiries" and prayers. The special prayers normally include reciting special Psalms, lighting candles, stream bathing and mercy ground rolling. Many seeking "holy enquiries" are barren women desperate to find release from their social disgrace and fear of being either under a witch's curse or suspected of actually being a witch. Holy enquiries can diagnose the cause of people's troubles and proscribe a cure. Many have already been to indigenous diviners and healers, but with no success. The prophets usually offer simpler, less costly remedies.

Claudius Davies of SU Sierra Leone, did not regard their outreach, during his time in the movement, as New Testament evangelism:

There is not an emphasis on evangelism which is the message of Christ. That evangelistic aspect seemed to be lost. People are not brought to an awareness of their sin and the need for repentance and the salvation that comes from God. Their attention is not made to be focused on the Cross and to see Christ as the source of their salvation. Basically it seems as if the movement is causing people to see the man behind it all as the source of their salvation. Adejobi seems to be seen as the man of power, the ultimate source. When you go to the Adejobi church you are sure to receive your healing, your this, your that.

Their main evangelistic thrust is centred on their revelations. It is not an evangelistic message that will tell people they are sinners and which help them discover how to come to know Christ. That is completely absent. They are really enthusiastic, but their outreach is not evangelistic in nature, something which will really lead people to knowing the Saviour Jesus Christ and committing their lives to him as Lord. That is absent.¹¹⁶

The Spiritual churches welcome the poor and the provincials. Non-Krio feel comfortable in the surroundings and no inhibiting cultural leap need be made. A shift in spiritual allegiance is demanded, but this is not uncommon in indigenous religion where one is constantly searching after new sources of spiritual powers that work. The core and mainstay of the indigenous faith, the ancestor cult, remains relatively untouched. In a threatening and insecure environment which is also inhabited by spirits, many of whom are hostile, and peopled by witches who are conscious or unconscious enemies within one's own circle of family and friends and whose identity is unknown yet whose designs are evil, fear and anxiety drives many to seek shelter and security under the Spiritual churches' protective umbrella. These churches provide a haven for many who are struggling for survival in the present harsh social and economic conditions. One informant declared:

They feel welcome and at home in the church with its comparatively informal worship. The church is not particular about dress and is open to all regardless of status, tribe or age. They do not ask anyone to leave a pew for another [as in the Krio churches]. The African poor can feel at home here.¹¹⁷

A 1985 Sociology Department survey discovered that the main reason women joined the Spiritual churches was because they were burdened with troubles at home and were seeking domestic harmony and peace. Health came second. 30% of women members joined

seeking help with disputes with their husbands, 20% joined because of sickness, and 15% because of evil spirit attacks. 10% joined to overcome barrenness. When sickness, evil spirit attack and barrenness are grouped together as health problems, the figures indicate that 75% of the women joining the Spiritual churches do so for domestic harmony and health reasons. Women also joined to obtain revelations concerning promotions and successes for their husbands. Seeking help with unemployment and indications of future prospects and financial freedom are the main reasons why men join. At examination times school and University students attend for special prayers. Pens are prayed over and consecrated. Some are instructed to fast during the examination period so as to get spiritual wisdom. All obtain bottles of holy water for washing their faces and drinking. The unemployed hope for natural and supernatural help in finding a job, many having arrived from the provinces and been disappointed in their search for work. Some seek cleansing from the ill-luck that has hounded them since arriving in the city. Unmarried women request prayers and revelations concerning prospective husbands. Barren wives desperately want children. In churches where females outnumber males by two or three, sometimes four or five, to one:

Several ex-members have commented sceptically on the dubious motives of some of the more recent male converts for whom the sight of a large number of female members has provided a dramatic spur to their devotion.¹¹⁸

Sidney Davies of EFSL, whose office on Circular Road is practically opposite Saint Peter's Healing Temple, comments on their problem-solving ministry:

Top class society people visit Saint Peter's Healing Temple every day, young girls wanting to get married, women who are barren, unemployed. Top officials visit for security and permanence in their position.¹¹⁹

The involvement of full members with their communities of power becomes all consuming and practically cultic. Every day spiritual exercises are performed and various services attended. Prayers start around at 5:30 a.m. Thanks is given for surviving the night and success in the day's ventures is sought. Prayer meetings are held every three hours. The day's activities are concluded with "bed time prayers" when protection throughout the night is entreated.¹²⁰ Evening services are held, except on Saturday which is a day of preparation

for Sunday. "Revival Services" where special revelations and predictions are given, attract large numbers and may go on late into the night. Special healing services are usually held on Friday evenings and the sick anointed with consecrated holy oil. This service is very popular with the poor who cannot afford drugs or medical treatment. A higher percentage of women than normal attend this healing service. Many carry their sick children for prayers. At the Church of Salvation and Saint Peter's Healing Temple morning services are held on Wednesdays and Fridays when animal sacrifices are performed. Sunday morning is divine service. The multifarious involvements put severe strains on marriages, sometimes leading to divorce, especially where the husband has little sympathy for the Spiritual form of worship. The camaraderie and group loyalty generated by the churches is very strong. Group self-consciousness is intense. To slacken in commitment is to demonstrate disloyalty and remove oneself from the church's protective shield. The leaders put curses, uttered in the language of the Imprecatory Psalms, upon defectors. At Saint Peter's Healing Temple on 13th November 1991, a defector, who was now speaking out against their practices in the evangelical churches, was condemned as an evil doer who would perish. Her removal as an evil teacher was prayed for. She was inspired by an evil spirit and preaching not against Saint Peter's Healing Temple, but against Jesus. Jesus did not come to destroy the Law and the Prophets and the practices of the Spiritual church, but to fulfil them and perform them.

Revelations, healings and deliverances are the main emphases of the Spiritual churches' Gospel presentation. Turner cites Church of the Lord (Aladura) publicity for their Revivals:

Come and hear your Divine Predictions and Revelations.... There will be individual testimonies and Prayers, to stamp out the disease in this our present age. What is your Trouble? Your souls? Salvation? Real Bible Interpretation? And Immediate Healing Power? Are you after Child Bearing? Promotion? Victory over Enemies? etc. Be Present to hear the voice of the Spirit of the Living God.

And again:

We know that you people have many troubles ... and that your juju-men and their charms and medicines have cost much money but failed to help you; God has sent this church and us to you, and given us the power of the Spirit to help you, as many others have been helped; but you must stop "using means", for all that is evil idolatry and will bring judgement upon you; instead, you must come and share our power

through prayer and faith, using nothing but the water we shall consecrate for you, and listening with an obedient spirit to the messages we have for you from God.¹²¹

Assessing the fruit of the church's evangelism by analysing the personal histories of 253 members, Turner points out:

It is at once apparent that the official basis of membership stated in the constitution - being "consciously persuaded of a spiritual rebirth" and confessing "Jesus Christ as the Son of God" - has little relation to what actually happens; only fifteen out of 253 interpreted their experience in these conventional terms, although many others would feel that they had become aware of new spiritual power for the first time.¹²²

Dealing with the present expansion of the Independent churches in Nigeria, Rosalind Hackett, although frequently slipping into the common error of treating Spiritual and Pentecostal-evangelical churches, such as Christ Apostolic, Church of the Lord (Aladura), the Celestial Church of Christ and the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star, as being ecclesiastical birds of a feather, which they are not, correctly observes:

The "spread of the church" preoccupies many of the churches as evidenced by their prayers, sermons and financial commitments. However it would seem preferable to term their orientation "expansionist" rather than "conversionist" for there seems to be more emphasis on adherence and regular attendance than on personal conversion.¹²³

The distance between the church's official statements of faith and doctrine and their actual practice is again worth noting. There is no doubt the evangelism is directed towards areas of great need and presented in culturally contextual terms. It certainly has had some degree of success as many become members after being cured of barrenness or sickness following the revelations, spiritual exercises and rituals of the prophets. Those cured are impressed with the prophets' insights and care. Compared with traditional diviners and healers, and General Practitioners, the prophets' offer relatively simple and inexpensive treatments. However, the absence of any great attention to the person of Christ, his divinity, and his atoning death on the Cross, is disturbing, and a result of giving pneumatology precedence over Christology, not only in the church's theology, but also in its evangelism. Paul had a revelatory, healing and delivering ministry, yet in evangelism he aimed at "knowing nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified". In other words Christ crucified was the primary focus of his evangelism and from the Calvary event all other benefits proceeded subsequentially. Christo-centric

evangelism and the Golgotha event were the hall-marks of Apostolic mission. To dislodge Christ and the atonement from their pre-eminent place in the Church's evangelism, and emphasise instead fortune-telling revelations, is to run the risk of presenting an imbalanced and distorted Gospel. Also, their over-emphasis on predictions and problem-solving, reduces their pneumatology to a great extent to the operations of the human psyche. This pragmatic pre-occupation deflects the Holy Spirit from his main function which is to glorify Christ and witness to Jesus. "When the Counsellor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me." (John 15:26).

The Spiritual Churches' Attraction for Muslims

At the beginning of the work in Freetown relations with the Muslim community were friendly. In 1952 Muslims from the Mountain Cut area attended services. At that year's harvest thanksgiving festival Adejobi declared, "Our Muslim brethren were also represented fully, and they also contributed to the joy of the occasion when they raised one of their popular shouts: Lahhellel Helah lah!"¹²⁴ Turner notes:

It appears that these visits ceased when the divergent attitudes of the two groups to medicines and charms became fully apparent. The relationship seems to have been one of both attraction and repulsion, and there have been almost no converts from Islam in Sierra Leone; the one Timne candidate for the ministry failed to continue, and work has not developed in Timne country, which is largely Muslim.¹²⁵

The position is now quite different and up-country Muslim, Temne, Mende, Limba, are attracted to the Spiritual churches, especially Church of Salvation and Saint Peter's Healing, for revelations and healing. Many Sierra Leonean Muslim find the Spiritual form of worship attractive and much akin to their own pattern. They have their *mori* diviners and *alpha* healers. They rely heavily on dream interpretations and angel messengers. In their mosques shoes are removed, the sexes are segregated, ritual ablutions are mandatory, fasting and prohibitions on such things as pork and alcohol are practised. They often come to the Spiritual prophets after their *mori* and *alpha* have failed to solve their problems. Illiterates find no academic demands, they just need to get into the inspiring atmosphere. Muslim women are especially attracted because, free from male suppression, they feel able to

abandon themselves to spirit possession. In fact, in the Spiritual churches in Freetown, those who come under possession experiences are mainly Muslim women.¹²⁶

The Spiritual churches, having so many familiar practices, become a religious refuge for Muslim seeking alternative sources of spiritual power. Very often they are stepping-stones on the way to membership and ministry in the evangelical and Pentecostal-evangelical churches. The Muslim converts come in secretly at first and are included, like many prominent Krio and national politicians, within the "Nicodemus" category of visitors. They are especially attracted to the fortune telling abilities of the prophets. Muslims in Sierra Leone are accustomed to offering special sacrifices, *sara*, to the ancestors, and also giving gifts for spiritual services. Thus to be asked to offer animal and other sacrifices is compatible with their normal religious practice. A prophet claimed that while the Muslim may continue a while with dual membership of both temple and mosque the tendency is for them to eventually become baptised and fully-fledged members of the church.¹²⁷ For Muslims, unlike the Krio, despite the tradition of religious tolerance claimed by Sierra Leoneans, it is not so acceptable to continue for long with dual membership and a choice one way or the other must be made. Some Muslim converts have become leaders in the movement as for example Primate Fofana of Church of Salvation, and Pastor Ngobeh who was a senior prophet with the Church of Salvation before leaving them to become pastor of Joy Assembly, director of Deliverance Ministry, and a highly respected leader in AOG.

EXCHANGE-OF-LIFE ANIMAL SACRIFICES

On animal sacrifice Turner is remarkably silent, only twice referring to the practice. He first mentions in passing that some prophets, in order to eat, have given revelations that a sheep should be killed for the church.¹²⁸ Towards the end of his second volume animal sacrifice is briefly discussed in connection with Christ's work of redemption.¹²⁹ Sundkler and Peel

likewise only briefly touch on the subject, yet this is a crucial area in the worship of the Spiritual churches and casts much light on their understanding of sin and salvation.¹³⁰ Sacrifice, which includes offering food, drink and blood, is essential for maintaining harmony in the man and spirit relationship in the indigenous religious system. Sacrifices of food and drinks are often demanded in prophetic revelations, either from an individual or the whole church, in order to avert trouble and effect a bright future. Normally rice is cooked and soft drinks provided. Feasts can be held either in the church or the house of the person offering the sacrifice. After feasting the water in which hands have been washed is sprinkled over the church or the house. Professor Fashole-Luke claims, "Sacrifice enters every facet of West African life."¹³¹ Because sacrifices to placate the ancestors and bush spirits are offered daily in Sierra Leone, Harry Sawyerr sees sacrifice as, "the open sesame of the heart of the African to Christian teaching."¹³² According to Idowu sacrifice is "of the essence of the religion of the Yoruba".¹³³ The Church of the Lord (Aladura) is essentially a Yoruba expression of Christianity. Although they have not included animal sacrifice in their official statement of doctrine, propitiatory animal sacrifice is an essential part of their practice. Animal sacrifices are performed at the unofficial, individual and private levels when the necessity of such sacrifices is revealed by the prophets. They are also offered undercover at the church's "love feasts".

Bishop T. K. Davies, then Church of Salvation, confided at the 1979 Fourah Bay College Annual Clergy and Ministers' Easter Vacation Course:

Sacrifices are observed. These sacrifices do not form an integral part of worship as such. They are observed only as a result of divine revelations.¹³⁴

This statement raises the question of whether these revelations are from the Holy Spirit or purely private prophetic initiatives. Turner claims, "The Church is uneasy about this African survival which contradicts its insistence that God is almighty to deliver and one should rely on him alone."¹³⁵ However, the feeling that animal sacrifices are required by God and necessary for obtaining divine blessing and protection remains strong in the Freetown

Spiritual churches. There are four main types practised; peace sacrifices, sin sacrifices, exchange-of-life sacrifices and stability sacrifices. Even Krio Spiritual churches, such as the Lord's Church of Holiness, offer animal sacrifices, despite the long influence of evangelical Christianity on Krio culture and society. T. K. Davies who is gradually moving his Christ Pentecostal Church in a more evangelical direction, appears not yet to have totally abandoned animal sacrifice. Bishop Mayers of Saint Peter's Healing Church, Tower Hill, influenced by his Canadian and American contacts, is distancing himself from the practice.

When prophets reveal that life is being threatened, the sacrifice must be animal. Anyone under the wrath of a spirit is in danger of death. When witch-spirits or avenging angels need placating, propitiatory sacrifices are offered and blood exchanged for blood. Rams are the appropriate exchange-of-life sacrifices. In the offering of exchange-of-life animal sacrifices the Spiritual churches demonstrate their doctrine of Redemption. Exchange-of-life sacrifices are not officially conducted by the Church of the Lord (Aladura), but as has been pointed out by Bishop Jenkins of the Christ Apostolic Church, it is a part of their original practices.¹³⁶ Rams are killed at the church's "love feasts" and this feasting conceals the propitiatory aspect of the slaughter. Oshitelu's apologetic for animal sacrifices at love feasts is that while one cannot give a sheep to God directly, it can be given to his people. One can feast the children of salvation. When they are happy God is pleased and well disposed to answering one's prayers. At baptisms, naming ceremonies (*komojade*), weddings, birthdays, and other highly significant occasions, rams are killed. Despite the church's evangelical statements of faith and claim to be continuing the *agape* feast of the Early Church, the slaughtering of rams at love feasts has the same significance as ram sacrifices in the other Spiritual churches where the slaughter and feasting is conducted within the framework of propitiatory sacrifices.

From its early days in Freetown the Church of the Lord (Aladura) conducted exchange-of-life animal sacrifice. A lady member was given a revelation that her son would drown. The prophet, a "Pa" still living in Freetown in 1990, suggested a goat be slaughtered to avert the

disaster. This was done and the head taken to Lumley beach and buried in the sand.¹³⁷ Sometimes a large hole would be dug in the sand and a sheep buried alive. The authorities fearing pollution at one time threatened to ban Church of the Lord (Aladura) prophets from Lumley Beach.¹³⁸ A Church of the Lord (Aladura) minister from 1974 to 1977 testified to slaughtering sheep, goats and fowls at Lumley Beach. The senior priest would burn the sacrifice as a burnt offering, bury it, or cast it into the sea.¹³⁹ Rev. Ngobeh claimed other traditional sacrifices such as smashing eggs and casting offerings into the sea to the sea spirits were being made, but secretly within the full membership group so as not to cause conflict with UCC.¹⁴⁰ On the naming ceremonies conducted in the church compound when the baby is eight days old, nine if female, Mereweather-Thompson observes:

In this ceremony certain elements are used like sugar, water, honey, candles, palm fronds and the ringing of a bell. The child is named at the hands of the prophet, after this ceremony the mother and child will not enter the church because they are considered unclean; it is only after purification ... that they are eligible to worship inside the church.

There is the exchange of life sacrifices. This sacrifice is not however claimed to be the practices of the Church of the Lord (Aladura). It is said to be in the breakaway churches of the Aladura. The breakaway churches are not denying that they do this practice but they also attest that it is done by the Church of the Lord (Aladura).¹⁴¹

CCSL have recently investigated accusations that the Church of the Lord (Aladura) conduct animal sacrifices. Rev. Speck who conducted the investigation felt satisfied that no animal sacrifices were being carried out. He confessed his investigation amounted to no more than reading Adejobi's book *Adejobi on Aladura*. He passed on a copy saying:

You'll love it! When you hear what people say outside about the Church of the Lord (Aladura) and then read the pamphlet, it gives a different picture. I think I have to go by what the book says. Don't listen to what people say.¹⁴²

However, Bishop Jenkins who is also Director of Evangelism at CCSL, takes the opposite view, contending that they conduct animal sacrifices at night and at special places, and that while they explain it as an Old Testament practice some are beginning to see the truth that it is not a Scriptural practice for Christians, and are breaking away. His own opinion is that it is better to keep the Church of the Lord (Aladura) within the CCSL fold so as to encourage them to understand what the Bible teaches.¹⁴³ EFSL, on the other hand, will have nothing to do

with them until this practice is totally abandoned. Exchange-of-life animal sacrifice has always been a high profile ritual practice in the indigenous Spiritual churches such as Church of Salvation and Saint Peter's Healing Temple and are performed openly several times a week. Primate Vidal Walters is an enthusiastic priest after the Aaronic order.¹⁴⁴

Exchange-of-life sacrifices are made upon divine revelation by a prophet in order to avert impending death. Sin or misdemeanour has caused a breach in the church's protective cover, and allowed a witch-spirit or the Angel of Death to attack. Blood must be redeemed by blood. A ram is presented by the threatened person to the priest at the altar. While the suppliant kneels by the ram the priest, by prayer, transfers the curse of death onto the ram and the "virtue" of the ram to the sinner, usually a woman. The ram is then led out and slaughtered. Before the slaying, in traditional fashion, the suppliant knocks her head against the animal three or seven times. For most this is the precise point where the transfer of the death sentence and the exchange-of-life actually takes place. After the slaughter the delivered person jumps over the blood as a sign of victory. A man jumps seven times and a woman nine.¹⁴⁵ The blood of the ram is smeared on the redeemed person's forehead and hands marking the sign of the Cross. The blood smearing, as in indigenous sacrifices, is important. It washes away any witchcraft pollution and witch-spirit foothold. After the animal is skinned the prophet's portion is taken to him for his own and his family's use. The rest is cooked and the "children of Salvation" are feasted.¹⁴⁶ The poor, who attach themselves to the Spiritual churches and help in preparing and cooking, also share in the feasting and for them the church sacrifices offer a welcome social welfare service. Neither the persons offering the exchange-of-life sacrifice nor their families are allowed to eat the meat.

To whom are the sacrifices offered? Turner maintains that the propitiation and preventive animal sacrifices offered by the Church of the Lord (Aladura) are made to the indigenous spirits and not to God.¹⁴⁷ In the sacrifices offered in the Church of Salvation, many are clearly presented directly to God. In any case, all sacrifices are ultimately offered to God as

he is the source of all spiritual power and is the final and Supreme Judge of all human affairs. Sacrifices to ancestors are generally carried out within the private and family domain and the Spiritual churches, like the denominational churches, are not directly or officially involved. There is an increasing tendency to interpret sacrifice in Old Testament terms while the underlying concepts and practices remain indigenous. Where sacrifices are offered to propitiate destroying and avenging spirits, they are, as in the indigenous exchange-of-life sacrifices, most commonly offered to appease destroying witch-spirits. The most terrifying of all the destroying spirits is the Angel of Death. This is the ultimate "swear" spirit avenger; "swear" spirits being the supremely powerful spirits released by diviners and medicine-men from a community's most powerful medicines to "catch" thieves and witches. The Angel of Death is associated closely with Satan. This has arisen out of Christian and Islamic influences, particularly Islamic teaching which identifies destroying "swear" spirits with Satan. Writing within the more Islamicised Nigerian context, Imasogie, states:

Satan or the Devil is another spiritual being to which sacrifices for protection are often made. Strange as this may be to a Westerner, he has to remember that in the traditional religions found in much of Africa, the Devil is not the out and out evil being he is depicted in the New Testament. He is more of "a trickster-messenger of the gods, who brings irrationality and confusion into the world." Perhaps the Biblical description of Satan that most nearly corresponds to such traditional African conceptions is that found in the book of Job. There, Satan appears in the assembly of heavenly beings and, in response to God's question, he describes himself as one who "walks up and down" on the earth. This is why Professor Bolaji Idowu has described Satan as the "Inspector-General" in African traditional religions. Among other things, his function includes the inspection of the appropriateness of any sacrifice made to the divinities.

In addition to this function, Satan can be persuaded to guard one's house from any spiritual invasion. This is why, in most cases, especially among certain ethnic groups, every traditional religionist household has a shrine for Satan at the entrance to the compound or house. There sacrifices are made regularly to Satan to ward off any evil spirit that may attempt to invade the house. In this case, Satan becomes the "bodyguard" of the one who makes regular sacrifice to him.¹⁴⁸

In the Spiritual churches, while the connection with Satan exists and is growing, the Angel of Death is still perceived more as a great avenging "swear" spirit. It may have been released by a sorcerer for evil purposes, or legitimately by someone else. However, because of some sin, wittingly or unwittingly committed, the church member has become exposed to an Angel of Death attack. The swear must be "pulled" by exchange-of-life blood sacrifice to the Angel.

Sin offerings, however, are made to God directly. It is understood that if they are not accepted hostile spiritual powers will be allowed to attack. For sin offerings a male goat is brought to the entrance of the church. The sinner kneels and confesses. The priest reads Psalm 51 which the sinner repeats line by line. He then prays the prayer of transference where the "virtue" of the animal is transferred to the sinner and the sin is transferred to the goat. This is clearly a transaction between the sinner and God through the intermediary ministry of the priest and carried out within the Old Covenant framework. The animal is then led away to be slaughtered, cooked and eaten in a church feast. Peace sacrifices are made to induce God to bless a quarrelling family with unity and harmony, to restore good relationships between former friends, or to effect peace at the work place, etc. If the peace offering is accepted God protects from the disturbing spirits. The peace offering should be a ram which is slaughtered, boiled or roasted, and eaten by the church members. If prophetic revelation indicates that instability in business, marriage, employment - the sort of problems that would send many to the fetish man - is leading to disaster, although not life threatening, instructions will be given to offer a stability sacrifice. Here a sheep is brought to the priest, prayed over and taken to an area of bush and released as a scape-offering. The person offering must not go after it. Some suspect the prophets or their friends, manage to capture the animal later. Sometimes the animal is merely taken outside and brought back in again. It now becomes the personal property of the prophet who may either sell it or eat it.¹⁴⁹ In all these cases of direct sacrifices to God, when circumstances demand the specialist ministry of angels such as Mighty Kenkella, these sacrifices may be offered directly to them first.

Direct animal sacrifice to the Supreme Being is not common in Sierra Leone, but it does occur. In Mendeland, during catastrophes or a severe "hungry season", a red cock and a goat are taken to a shrine and ritually slaughtered. The goat is consumed by the people while the cock is offered to *Ngewoh*. When an offended party has no other means of avenging oneself, the Mende can, in a lonely place, offer a white fowl sacrifice to *Ngewoh* and entreat him to curse the enemy. The appeal is, "Come down *Ngewoh* and take back

your fowl."¹⁵⁰ To the Mende this is a fearful curse and the worst possible threat an aggrieved person can make. When the curse of *Ngewoh* is released it can even reach out and "catch" the person who called for it, and any others implicated in any deceitful practices in the whole matter. Direct sacrifice to God, *sara*, takes place in the folk Islam of Sierra Leone and this includes animal sacrifices. This is strongly opposed by the Ahmediyyas and the Basharias. Of course, animal sacrifice takes place officially at the great *eid al fitir* festival. If the Spiritual churches have made any advances in this area it is to bring animal sacrifice within the framework of the Old Testament rituals and, like Folk Islam, guide a large proportion of their animal sacrifices directly to God. Even exchange-of-life sacrifices can, in desperate situations, be offered directly to God. While animal sacrifices continue to be offered in the Spiritual churches the trend, under Old Testament teaching, is towards offering them all, including exchange-of-life directly to God.

As the New Testament revelation takes the locus of salvation away from the animal sacrifices of the Old Covenant and puts it on Jesus Christ our Pascal lamb, the lamb of God sacrificed for us, the Spiritual churches return the pivotal point of their salvation and deliverance from Christ to the blood of the sacrificial animal. In the case of sin offerings and exchange-of-life animal sacrifice, the offerings cannot be explained as merely gift, they are sacrifices of propitiation and atonement. According to Rev. Sidney Davies:

They strongly believe that the blood of the animal is sufficient to cleanse their sins. Since it was done in the Old Testament it is still effective today. They forget that one sacrifice has been offered once and for all. They are still blind to the New Testament sacrifice. They hold very strongly to it considering it Scriptural.¹⁵¹

Bishop Browne, minister-in-charge at Edward Lane, argues that God must love sacrifice otherwise he would not have sacrificed his Son. "Jesus is a sacrifice so God loves sacrifice."¹⁵² Jesus did not come to destroy the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfil them by his performing them, therefore he put his seal of approval on animal sacrifice.¹⁵³ Bishop T. K. Davies of the Christ Pentecostal Church, who claims to be moving away from these

Spiritual practices, still upholds the Spiritual churches' doctrine that animal sacrifice is acceptable because Jesus "fulfilled" the Old Testament law.

There are those who hold onto the New Testament Church. It bothers one a little. It is as if we were abandoning the Old Testament. This is a problem with New Testament believers and I am particularly against it. I believe in the totality of the whole Bible. He never condemned it. He fulfilled it. That's it, he fulfilled it.¹⁵⁴

Jesus' fulfilling of the Law in the practice of animal sacrifice is identified not with his own sacrificial death on the Cross, but with his directive in Matthew 8:1-4 to the cleansed leper to go and offer the sacrifices God commanded through Moses in Leviticus 14:1-32. There is no denial of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus as such, but the traditional and Old Covenant way of animal sacrifice is perceived to be the best and most immediately effective method of dealing with serious and life threatening sins and transgressions for Africans.

For the ordinary Spiritual church member, sin is a very serious, life threatening matter. Members claim that going to the established churches and reciting the Confession, "We have sinned in thought, word and deed ... ", does not really deal with sin. Something which has life and death consequences must be dealt with in real, concrete and immediately effective ways. Deeply concerned over the penalties for sinning they argue that something must be offered such as a ram, a goat or even a cow, whose value is commensurate with the crime and its dire consequences. Animal sacrifice is the ultimate soteriological ritual in the Spiritual churches, even although some of the more educated, theologically and Biblically aware members are becoming increasingly uncomfortable with the practice. T. K. Davies's 1979 claim that they are not integral to the worship of the Church of Salvation because, "They are observed only as a result of divine revelations", is a meaningless statement since every practice of the Spiritual churches must have the imprimatur of prophetic revelation. Reacting to Davies's statement, one of the educated younger generation of Church of Salvation members commented:

A note of warning is relevant here. In the church's fundamental belief it is clearly stated that Jesus Christ, the second person of the Godhead and the eternal Son of God, is the only saviour from sin.¹⁵⁵

The gap between the Spiritual churches' profession and practice must be closed in order that they retain their educated and Biblically aware young members and not continue losing them to the Pentecostal-evangelicals, and also that they remove the major stumbling-block in their ecumenical relations with all the Freetown evangelical churches.

OBJECTS OF SPIRITUAL POWER

The Spiritual churches officially condemn all involvement with the overt manifestations of the old religious systems. In their house consecrations all charms, fetish and indigenous medicines found, are either burnt, buried, or dumped into the sea. They condemn consulting with diviners. The Spiritual churches have, however, not abandoned all indigenous ways and practices, in fact their supreme contribution has been to Africanise and indigenise the Western Christianity transplanted by missionaries and sustained by their national successors. What is in question, however, is whether a newer, simpler and more powerful system of "means" for accessing God's power has merely replaced the old outdated one? The Spiritual churches have removed themselves, officially at least, from direct association with the spirits, fetish and power sources of the past. For example, the Holy Spirit indwells the holy water rather than healing ancestor spirits, and possession is interpreted as being by the Holy Spirit rather than by familiar and bush spirits. Yet the suspicion remains that the perceptions of the nature, character and *modus operandi* of the Holy Spirit remain fundamentally indigenous. The Holy Spirit, while not in any way regarded as an ancestor spirit, is understood to operate along the same lines as the good ancestral spirits. This is particularly evident in the Spiritual churches use of their Christian objects of power.

The Cross as an Object of Power

In evangelical Christianity the Cross represents the suffering, death, and vicarious atoning sacrifice of Christ, through which all who believe are saved. In the Spiritual churches,

despite the official statements of evangelical faith, the Cross is frequently seen and used in the same manner as a charm or fetish. The order of Crossbearers was introduced in 1937 by Oshitelu following a divine revelation. Crossbearers were to be an elite corps who, according to the church's 1960 *Book of Rituals*, would be "separated for the Lord to be overlord over dark powers, satan, world, witches, wizards, and all spirits of disease and sickness, to subdue and to cast them out." While the anointing into the order confers spiritual power, the small wooden cross which is presented "is the 'key' that carries the power about." "That is why we feel special power and confidence whenever we hold the Cross in our hands." The church has tried to control sundry power-seekers by warning ministers against recommending infidels and the unconverted for "Holy Crosses". Turner notes that this superior order of membership has "brought its own problems, for the association of spiritual power with the possession of the wooden cross is inevitably interpreted by many in terms of a new 'medicine'."¹⁵⁶ However, the Cross also represents the sacrificial aspects of the Christian life, the persecutions, sufferings and disciplines. Thus members are exhorted to "Take up thy Cross" and bravely face all the prophetic demands and subsequent oppositions.

Adejobi's exhortation to Crossbearers for "Carefulness" and "Watchfulness" in respect to their crosses reflects a superstitious rather than devotional approach:

A Cross bearer/holder must take care not to get the Cross missing or lost, as this depicts great Spiritual omen - that the bearer or holder had committed some sins and must quickly confess to avoid loss of Spiritual powers, virtues, material setback and great misfortunes.

A Cross bearer/holder must not allow the Cross to fall down carelessly, for it depicts some misfortune, mishap and unexpected calamity.

A Cross bearer/holder must not carry the Cross to the toilet in his or her pocket/hand when answering "Nature's Call". If he/she mistakenly does that, the Cross must be submitted for consecration, and the holder/bearer undergoes 3 to 7 days penance.¹⁵⁷

When the leadership, particularly one so influenced by Western evangelicalism as Primate Adejobi, persists in propagating a fetish and magical approach to this crucial area of Christian and New Testament soteriology, serious questions regarding the speed at which perceptual changes are taking place must be raised. Some Crossbearers will point the cross at opponents believing, or making use of the popular belief, that one can be hypnotised by the

power of the cross.¹⁵⁸ The Cross has obviously become a Christian charm. In the prayer beads, which are popular with ministers, the power is particularly located in the attached Cross.¹⁵⁹ Even the sign of the Cross transmits God's power. This is no mere symbolic aid to devotion. The Church of the Lord (Aladura) claims, "The sign of the Cross is the sign of salvation, and a terror to devils and all evil doers."¹⁶⁰ Turner writes:

It is found on mercy grounds, buildings and altars, chalked on the door of the minister's faith-home or embroidered on his vestments, planted in the water for baptism, signed on the new-born, and given into the hand of the Cross-bearers; even the dreamer who sees a cross is taught how to interpret the dream, for God is speaking to him through the cross. Any theological interpretation is more likely to refer to the Christian "taking up his cross" of suffering, hardship, or persecution, just as Jesus did, than to the atoning death of Christ, so that the symbol itself has undergone a shift of meaning in transference from Western Christianity to this aladura church.¹⁶¹

When the Cross is seen in dream or vision it is not usually associated with the vicarious atonement, rather it requires interpretation depending on the shape and form of the Cross in the dream. The *Book of Rituals* instructs on how to interpret a vision of the Cross:

- Cross becomes two: it means increase of power and victory.**
- Cross becomes longer: means elevation, power, etc.**
- Cross becomes sword: means victory, virtue.**
- Cross becomes golden: means beauty of holiness.**
- Water flushing out of the Cross: means you are full of virtue.**
- Cross becomes smaller: means you cheat God, you sin, etc.**
- Cross becomes damaged: means you are falling in danger or sin.**
- Cross becomes drowned ... or missing: ... you have provoked the Spirit.**
- Cross is burnt: means loss, God's anger, etc.**
- Cross ... in dung: means fornication, lust of the flesh, corruption, etc.**

Seeing the Cross as an object of power, a Christian fetish which operates magically, and through which the Holy Spirit operates in the fashion of the good indigenous spirits, encourages the development of a defective soteriology and devalues the New Testament doctrine of salvation. This has not occurred in Pentecostal-evangelical "Aladura" churches.

Iron Rods, Symbols of Authority and Channels of Spiritual Power

The staff of a chief is a symbol of the ancestors. It is carried by the head of the family as their principle symbol of authority. The spirits of the ancestors may indwell the staff and periodically libations are poured over the stick.¹⁶² In the Spiritual churches the iron rod is the

symbol of authority for the higher leadership ranks. It is claimed to be the equivalent of the rod of Moses. In the early days of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) Oshitelu and the leaders carried sticks as their staff of office.¹⁶³ The iron rod is not only a symbol of ecclesiastical authority, but to the ordinary member it is an instrument like a wand wherein the power of the Holy Spirit is believed to reside and from which his power flows.¹⁶⁴ When consecrating holy water or a pool for stream bathing, the rod acts as a conduit through which the Holy Spirit flows into the water. Turner observes:

Some carry the rod with them everywhere; others place it in a leather sheath when not in use, for no one is permitted to touch the rod. It is likened to the rod of iron mentioned in Revelation ii. 27 ... in the Church of the Lord it is primarily a "rod of power", the symbol and instrument of the special powers of the prophet.... It is inevitable that some regard this as a magic wand.¹⁶⁵

During Communion service the bread and the wine are consecrated by a prayer and spiritually energised by a touch of the iron rod. In exorcisms the deranged or possessed are touched with the iron rod in order that the demon will be forced out. When praying for healing and blessing the prophets tap their patients with their rods. Primate threaten opponents with destruction and silence opposition by pointing their iron rods at the rebels.¹⁶⁶

PLACES OF SPIRITUAL POWER

The church retains the indigenous belief in special places of spiritual power. Special prayer places, shrines, graves, large trees, rocks and hills are the residences of ancestral spirits and are impregnate with spirit presence and spiritual power. The Spiritual churches believe that there are places where the Holy Spirit is most present, which angels frequent and where spiritual power is particularly accessible - African equivalents of Lourdes, Knock, etc., the holy places in European Catholicism where miracles of healings reputedly take place. These holy places are special hills revealed in vision, the Temple where the congregation worship, and areas set apart for spiritual exercises and special prayers known as "mercy ground". The perception of holy ground is more in line with indigenous and Old Testament pneumatology

than New Testament pneumatology where, as Jesus pointed out to the woman at the well in Samaria, what is important is not the place, but the right attitude of heart towards God.¹⁶⁷

The Mount Tabborarr Festival

"High places" are favourite abodes of ancestor spirits and at certain times in the agricultural calendar, as observed with the Mende and Kono peoples, annual pilgrimages are made to these holy mountains, and sowing and harvest festivals are held at their base. Turner writes:

Aladura Christians in Nigeria share in the Yoruba tradition of sacred hills and have developed this for their own purposes. For example, some seventeen miles north of Ibadan, off the Oyo road, stands a hill called Orolunkole, or the place that "God built", which is used by aladura from all over Nigeria. An elder of the Cherubim and Seraphim acts as keeper of the hill, and many come for peace and quiet, or to sleep there in order to receive revelations in dreams.¹⁶⁸

Holy mountains are found also in the Bible, Sinai and Zion. The phonetic similarity between the Yoruba *tabborrar*, "power", and Mount Tabor, the mountain involved in Barak's defeat of Sisera and the Canaanites in the book of Judges, made for a fortuitous connection and gave the Church of the Lord (Aladura) Biblical justification for choosing a holy mountain - as already done by the Cherubim and Seraphim - to which annual pilgrimage would be made. The location of the first Church of the Lord (Aladura) Mount Tabborarr, sometimes spelled *Tabbieorrah* and *Tieabbieorriear*, was revealed to Oshitelu on the 10th August 1937. Tabborarr is the equivalent of South African Holy Zions, including Isaiah Shembe's *Ekuphakameni*, "the high and holy place". Mount Tabborarr was not a hill at all, but a flat area fifty yards from the Primate's residence at Ogere.

That day, while Oshitelu was fasting and praying and rolling on this plot of ground, he had a revelation that this area would be the Mount of the Holy Spirit where everyone would receive blessing. It was to be called Mount Tabborarr. Everyone visiting the mountain must wear white robes and carry a lighted candle and a bottle of water. It was not the elevation, but the concentration of spiritual power that made the area a holy mountain. Since 1959, to cater for the large numbers attending the Mount Tabborarr festivals, Mount Tabborarr was moved to

another flat area about a quarter of a mile away. Adejobi displays pride in the fact that his anointing and appointing took place on the original sacred spot.¹⁶⁹ The church's Ogere Cathedral has been built on the original site. By ascending Mount Tabborarr like Moses, Oshitelu and the leaders were able to receive special revelations for each church year. The leaders spend thirteen days, from 10th to 22nd August, in temporary shelters seeking visions, revelations and prophetic messages for the church. On the last day the membership and well-wishers process to the mountain for a great celebration and to receive their own personal revelations. The Tabborarr festival is the church's equivalent of the Feast of Tabernacles.

The Freetown Mount Tabborarr is at Oke (the home of) Muri, just beside the O'Neil Street church on the lower slopes of Mount Aureole. Oke Muri was an indigenous sacred site also used by Yoruba Recaptives for Shango worship. Muri derives from *mori* which means, like *moreh* in Hebrew, seeing or divining or teaching, as for example "the great tree of Moreh at Shechem" in Genesis 12:6. The term entered West African languages via Arabic where the root *royaa* (to see) is the same as the Hebrew *raah*. Thus Oke Muri means the home of the diviner or teacher, that is the *mori*, or the place of divination. This area is still regarded with reverence and awe by the residents of Freetown, and is frequently visited by secret society masqueraders, diviners, groups and individuals seeking supernatural power. Nowadays Mount Tabborarr is fenced off and gated, but prophets seeking special power or visions can fast and struggle on the mountain. Prophets can even, in special cases, permit ordinary members to fast and struggle on the mountain for a specific number of days. Mount Tabborarr is the place of revelation *par excellence*.

As the ministers ascend the slope on the 10th of August to fast, struggle and make spiritual enquiries, members write their problems, or have them written, on papers which are passed on. At the evening service on the great last day of the festival, the revelations and predictions are given out. From late afternoon members from various branches assemble and make their way to Oke Muri. A band leads the expectant and rejoicing pilgrims to the

sacred site and they wait at the gate until it is opened at seven o'clock. All must enter barefooted and menstruating women are barred. The ministers and candidates for office process singing "Onward Christian Soldiers", or "I am going to my Lord on the Mount", the church's own composition. Containers and bottles of water are brought up to the dais for consecration. With a seven-fold "Hallelu!" shout order is restored and the service proper gets under way. Psalm 51, which so emphasises sin, confession and ritual cleansing, is read, prayers for forgiveness are made and "Saviour wash me" is sung. This is followed by the "Thirteen Questions on the Mountain". Turner describes the start of this interrogative litany:

Priest: Whence comest ye thou hither, ye pilgrims in white robes?

Cong.: Tabborarr, Tabborarr the Mountain of the Lord.

Tabborarr, Tabborarr, Holy Mountain of Power.

Priest: What is your first request here, ye pilgrims in white robes?

Cong.: Forgiveness of our sins, from King Olluffijj.

That God of Tabborarr may forgive all our sins.

Priest: Prayer of Forgiveness.

Priest: What is your second request here, ye pilgrims in white robes?

Cong.: God's cleansing, Orrewemottola.

That God of Tabborarr may purify us all.

Priest: Prayer.

Mount Tabborarr is the supreme location of God's power and that here sins will surely be forgiven. Cleansing and purity are basic preliminaries to forgiveness as any witchcraft pollutions must be removed. Subsequent requests are for God's mercy, God's blessing, good children, perfect peace, victory, salvation, God's healing, lasting joy, God's favour, mighty power of Spirit, and steadfastness.¹⁷⁰ A highlight of the service is the anointing of Crossbearers. As the candidates kneel for anointing with oil, the congregation sing, "Take up thy Cross the Saviour said". Their small, but powerful, wooden crosses are now presented with the charge:

And he that taketh not his cross and followeth after Me is not worthy of Me. You are given this Holy Cross in the name of the Father, in the name of the Son, and in the name of the Holy Ghost. As a token of power unto you a true follower of Christ from this day to herald the Gospel. Go heal the sick. Go raise the dead. Cast out devils. Release them that are bound. And perform miracles in the name of the Master. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.¹⁷¹

Each Crossbearer is presented with three palm leaves symbolising victory over the enemies. They remain kneeling as the congregation sing, "Jesus keep me near the Cross". Candidates

for the spiritual ministry receive their iron rods. Members rush to the new ministers crying out, "Pray for me! Pray for me!".¹⁷² Following various spiritual exercises and singing, water with olive oil is consecrated and given out for drinking. This signals the breaking of the thirteen days white fast. Sugar, honey and salt are blessed and distributed. Sugar signifies joy and happiness, honey signifies wisdom and understanding, and salt that the lives of the members are made tasteful for the following year. Fruit is shared and eaten in common as an acted prayer that God will bind them together in peace and harmony as a holy community possessing God's power, healing and blessing.

Next comes "Fulfilment of Vows". Thank offerings of money, animals and foodstuffs are brought forward by those who received revelations the previous year, made vows and were blessed. Many testify to miracles of healing and childbearing. Those seeking blessings in the coming year are sprinkled with water to cleanse from witchcraft, and prayed over. A time is allocated for "individual silent vows" when personal intercessory prayers are made, and in faith, or as an incentive for divine action, the thank offering for the next Tabborarr festival is silently promised. Palm leaves are presented as tokens of future victories and miracles. With some more spiritual exercises and shouts of joy the lively, colourful and exciting Mount Tabborarr celebration comes to an end. Saint Peter's Healing Temple, who celebrate at Holy Mount, New England, and the other Spiritual churches have their own Mount Tabborarrs. The pattern followed is essentially the same.

Turner compares the Tabborarr festival with the annual Methodist covenant renewal service:

They both proceed through confession or cleansing and thanksgiving to the renewal and making vows before God. At this point the Methodist renewal of the covenant may seem much more spiritual and Christian than the vows at Tabborarr, which suggest a bargain made with God for some particular and often material need rather than a total personal rededication. Tabborarr, however, must be understood against a certain conception of salvation and the nature of the religious blessing While the original form and content of the season cannot be said to express the central features of the Christian faith, they are patient of Christian use and understanding as well as of pagan interpretation, so that the future of Taborar probably depends on which way the life of the church itself develops. The ambiguous nature of its chief liturgical creation is a token of the uncertainty attending its own future.¹⁷³

Turner's criticism that the major power and salvic event in the church's calendar inadequately expresses "the central features of the Christian faith" is a serious one, and explanations as to why this highlight of the church's year is, at its heart, more essentially in the spirit of an indigenous festival than a Christian one must be sought. The crucial area of the Spiritual churches' "conception of salvation and the nature of religious blessing" will be discussed when dealing with the doctrines of sin and salvation.

The Temple of the Lord

The church building rather than the regenerate believer is the Temple of the Lord. In this the Spiritual churches are little different from most other Christians anywhere in the world. However, the perception of localised spirit presence, a feature of indigenous worship, is particularly strong in the Spiritual churches. Their attitude concerning the Temple is closer to indigenous perceptions than to Old Testament, as the primary function of the Temple is to provide a safe haven from evil powers. The Temple, however, like Mount Zion, is also a place of revelation, of visions and dreams. Prophets sleep in the Temple to receive them. The prophets direct sick clients to sleep in the church for a period. Someone in danger from enemies will remain in the "sanctuary" for several days. The various taboos, which can be explained as indigenous, Islamic and Old Testament practices, have been mentioned already. The altar area is the Holy of Holies and is particularly sacred. In the home, if space and finance permits, a holy area can be set apart as a home altar, a special place for private worship. In this domestic shrine there will be a wooden Cross, a candle stand with candles burning and *churai* giving off incense. Private devotions, however, are not a popular form of religious expression in community-oriented societies, and for those affording it, the main purpose of a home altar is individual and domestic protection from sorcerers and witches.

Mercy Ground and Beach Rolling

The mercy ground is explained as the equivalent of the Old Testament cities of refuge. It has obvious similarities with Muslim prayer grounds and the sacred struggling and wrestling

areas attached to indigenous shrines where priests dealt with those suffering from fits, seizures and spirit possession. However, the basic perception of its function derives from the sacred bush areas where tribal secrets were revealed at initiation and where the communities' most powerful medicines were kept. In 1930 Oshitelu had a revelation to set apart an area where spiritual exercises could be conducted. Each church has its mercy ground, a room or a fenced off area which is spread with the white sand traditionally associated with separation from witchcraft in the indigenous burial rites. Here members roll while engaged in spiritual struggles or making special prayers.

Contact with the sand gives contact with Mother Earth. You put your face in the sand and your spirit opens up, via Mother Earth, to God in heaven. The Mother Earth influence and intermediary role is strong in the Spiritual churches.¹⁷⁴

Traditionally, Mother Earth is the Queen of the Underworld and the ruler of the ancestors who are buried in the earth.

The mercy ground is used when a person seeks to escape from some impending disaster. The rolling area is marked off by lighted candles stuck in the sand. The number of candles used indicates the seriousness of the problem. The struggler normally rolls in a white robe or gown. As personal sin may have exposed one to witchcraft, one first kneels on the mercy ground and confesses all sins. Special prayers are offered and ablutions performed. When the person is judged clean bodily and spiritually, permission is given to roll on the sand. The struggler lies on the sand, cuddles himself or herself, then rolls back and forth, seven rolls in one direction and then seven in the other. One may assume the shape of a ball for more strenuous struggling. Rolling continues until one feels sure their sins are forgiven. The rollers sometimes roll till the skin blisters.¹⁷⁵ If one is too old or infirm to roll, an able bodied member can substitute. Rolling is a way of publicly confessing sin. It is a sign of abject submission, and the roller expects God, via Mother Earth, to appreciate this demonstration of earnestness, forgive the sin, and deliver from any impending danger. For prophets and visionaries the main reason for rolling is not confession of sin, but the search for vision, revelation and spiritual empowering from the Holy Spirit and patron angels. In the middle of

the mercy ground there is a wooden cross and the "mercy rock" on which one jumps, laughs, and shouts 7, 21, or the specific number of times given by "instruction" or revelation. The exercise enables one to become powerful and victorious and chase witches and demons away. The normal times for rolling are between 5:30 and 6:30 in the morning and 5:30 and 6:30 in the evening. Ministers should roll daily, especially first thing in the morning. Some prophets roll for two or even three hours and in the process lose consciousness of the physical. Some will roll at midnight for an hour or more.¹⁷⁶

Because the conditions for rolling are favourable, Lumley Beach has become a popular mercy ground. Strugglers roll on the sands and afterwards enjoy a purifying bath in the sea. On arrival at the beach, a hole, approximately one foot wide and one foot deep, is dug in the sand. A palm branch is stuck near the hole and a Bible and a container of holy water are placed by the hole. The palm branch signifies victory. Three candles are bunched together, placed in the hole and lit. The three candles represent the Trinity and the light, represents the Holy Spirit and protection from evil spirits. The hole is an altar where God comes to dwell while the "struggle" for spiritual power or physical healing takes place. The prophet then dons a red robe, red signifies blood which drives evil powers away. At beach rituals, house consecrations, and church services, evil spirits are always present to interfere and bring confusion. The prophet rings his bell over the hole, pausing three times to invoke the Holy Spirit with prayers and incantations. In addition to calling the attention of the Holy Spirit the bell ringing accompanied by incantations chases the demonic spirits away in terror. After the bell ringing exorcism, all involved in the ritual come up to the hole altar and "struggle" on the sand. With eyes closed they roll about ten or twelve feet to the right and to the left. When the boundaries are reached the rollers are ordered, "Go back!". Twenty-one lengths of rolling make up one complete session. Several sessions may be undertaken. God observes the earnestness of the strugglers, considers their plight and is inclined to have mercy. After the rolling the strugglers bathe in the sea in a specially consecrated area. Those bathed by prophets believe they are being bathed clean from sin, uncleanness, and disease, by the

Holy Spirit operating through the prophets. The prophets conclude the ritual by pronouncing their clients and disciples clean. That the Holy Spirit is perceived to operate along similar lines to indigenous spirits can hardly be doubted. Critics maintain that at certain levels marine and *Mami Wata* spirits are directly contacted as mediators of God's healing power.

Beach rolling is a familiar exercise for indigenous people and also for traditionalists in Islam. It is common practice in Sierra Leone to go to the river and talk to the river spirits.¹⁷⁷

Beach rolling is a major means of procuring spiritual power. Prophets will roll until they begin to hallucinate and receive visions. Their subjective feeling is, "because of the struggling I have attained this spiritual height".¹⁷⁸ When asked what was the effect produced by the struggling and beach rolling, Claudius Davies replied:

It definitely brings an ease. It was only when I came to Christ and was born again that I obtained a different perspective. When I was involved in it, when I struggled, because of what you are told the struggle will bring about, you have the feeling that having gone through the struggle I am going to attain this, or I have already attained that. So you have the feeling of ease, the feeling of fulfilment, because I have finally completed the struggle and what I want will come to pass.¹⁷⁹

Beach rolling and bathing at midnight is considered especially efficacious.¹⁸⁰ As well as special places of power where the divine presence is to be encountered there are special times and periods of power. Praying and performing rituals in the middle of the night is popular, not only because of the peace and solitude, but because it is a highly charged time spiritually. Lent, Easter, Harvest Thanksgiving, founders day, Mount Tabborarr festival, Christmas and New Year are times and seasons of particular power. While dying from cancer, Phebean Walters, the founder of Saint Peter's Healing Temple, went secretly by night to Lumley Beach seeking healing from God, but unfortunately her disease was at a terminal stage and her body was later found on the beach in a sad state of decomposition.¹⁸¹ Bishop Browne of the indigenous Church of Salvation, in a dramatic shift away from one Church of the Lord (Aladura)'s fundamental practices, recently declared beach rolling to be "unscriptural" and a "doctrine of demons".¹⁸² Obviously some major perceptual shifts are currently taking place within the Spiritual churches in Freetown.

THE PLACE OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE IN THE SPIRITUAL CHURCHES

According to Rosiland Hackett, power is the Spiritual churches' primary concern:

Despite the wide variety of independent churches and movements to be found nowadays on Nigerian soil there would seem to be a common denominator. This common element is spiritual power - how to obtain it, how to retain it, how to use it.¹⁸³

The Aladura churches, in their hymns and prayers, frequently call God "*Alagbara*", meaning "Dispenser of Power".¹⁸⁴ They maintain their powers derive from the Holy Spirit who distributes "spirituals" according to his will, yet as Hackett points out:

In practice, however, the attainment of spiritual power in its various manifestations is surrounded by ritual and manipulatory techniques, cultic objects, environmental preconditions and ascetic demands.¹⁸⁵

She also points out that in the pursuit of spiritual power these churches train and temper the "body's spiritual activities", and that:

Herein lies the avid interest of many of the independent church members in the occult and spiritualist literature (such as that propagated by the Rosicrucians) which seems to have flooded the Nigerian market in recent years.¹⁸⁶

There is a pressing need to protect this spiritual power from sorcerers and witch-spirits who drain and deplete the power of both the individual and the community. Protection is achieved by maintaining ritual purity through ablutions with holy water, spiritual bathings, ritual prayers, keeping the taboos and obeying the prophetic commands. Associated with power enhancing rites and ritual cleansings there is a moral and ethical requirement. While the external apparently dominates, an internal purity, according to the moral and ethical standards of the church, is absolutely essential.

Ethics and Morality in the Spiritual Churches

Proper behaviour is vitally important for the Spiritual churches, and their concentration of this surpasses even the Pentecostal-evangelicals. Their concerns and priorities, however, are different. Rules and regulations abound, mainly prohibitions against adultery, indigenous magic and idolatry, alcohol, tobacco, and litigations involving members. Positive commands concern praying, fasting, ablutions, evangelism, charity, maintaining church unity and

"struggling". To be a successful Christian one must be empowered and directed by the Holy Spirit. Sin causes a diminution of spiritual power. This weakens spiritually and physically, and results in misfortune, sickness and even death. As Pedersen, in *Israel its Life and Culture*, makes plain, a fairly similar understanding of sin prevailed in Ancient Israel.¹⁸⁷ The Holy Spirit inspires the Spiritual church prophets through dreams, visions, and voices, to identify the sinner, discern the cause of sin, bring forth a full confession, and give directions on removing the disease and making amends and sacrificial atonement. "The exposure of the evil person in the midst," according to Turner, "is akin to the traditional detection of witches, and is necessary for the spiritual vitality of the Church."¹⁸⁸ Punishment for offences, usually fornication, adultery and finance, although others like attending a secret society meeting or getting drunk do come up occasionally, is usually remedial spiritually and integrated into the church's spiritual exercises programme. There are set numbers of beach rollings, jumps on the mercy ground, runs around the Temple, days of fasting, ablutions, candles to be burned and animals to be sacrificed, all depending on the seriousness of the crime. The threat of excommunication and receiving the anathema curse of the prophets, constitute a powerful deterrent against refusing discipline.

The Church of the Lord (Aladura), unable and unwilling to break with customary marriage practices, which include plurality of wives and fertility trial periods before marriage, pays lip-service to monogamy and the ideals of Christian marriage while accepting polygamy as an African cultural practice which has Biblical support. Thus polygamists have been attracted to the church and many have joined from the historic churches because of their tolerant stance. While Islam permits up to four wives the Church of the Lord (Aladura) only allows three. However, Banton still sees this as allowing the male to, "at all times be able to satisfy his natural desires".¹⁸⁹ Oshitelu claimed he was granted his seven wives by divine revelation, thus the monogamist position was severely undermined and polygamy was seen to be sanctioned by God. However, the Church of the Lord (Aladura) condemns adultery because

it depletes one's spiritual power and hinders spiritual development. Bishop Orebanjo has written in his 1956 correspondence course of lectures:

A womaniser ... can never be successful in spiritual development.... In the days of your special prayer, consecrate yourself highly and avoid women entirely.... Menstruating and fornication are deadly enemies to the Angels, who fly away at the slightest smell of them.... When you are inclined to think much of women to instigate your private nerves, read Psalm 53 three times and you will be free.¹⁹⁰

The Church of Salvation claim not to be "forcy" about polygamy or monogamy. Once a person decides to live monogamously he is encouraged to remain in this state. According to Priscilla Fofana, the daughter of the Primate, the church "does not interfere with the culture of the people", but "does condemn any practice that contravenes the Decalogue".¹⁹¹ Adultery, as in the Old Testament, is not seen as applicable to polygamous marriage *per se*. Divorce is discouraged, and the church, through fasting, fervent prayers and counselling, encourages domestic reconciliation and the healing of damaged marriages.

Leaders of the Spiritual churches have obvious opportunities to take advantage of their positions of power and several have become quite renowned adulterers and womanisers. Adejobi is reported to have caused much distress in Freetown with his womanising practices.¹⁹² When an attractive new female trainee arrives in one particular Spiritual church, the Spiritual Head, who already has a large number of girl-friends, claims the right to personally conduct the training and threatens to use his powerful iron rod against anyone who dares interfere.¹⁹³ Periodically, scandals concerning prophets appear in the local press. An article in **Wee Yone** in 1977 featured a young lady, Frances, who was being treated at the Williams Street Faith Home for "spiritual confusion". Her fiancée made a late night visit concerning their eighteenth month old daughter. He had to bang on the door to gain entry. The room reeked of cigarette smoke.

I took the candle and putting it on the floor I peered under the bed. Underneath the bed was a full grown prophet in white regalia prostrating on the floor. I booted the prophet and when he emerged to make a hasty getaway we had a brief scuffle.¹⁹⁴

According to Sankoh-Cole:

Immorality is rampant in these churches. It does not seem to hurt them and no one condemns it because the worst culprits are the leaders themselves. They treat people for infections and yet inflict disease. The more spiritually powerful one becomes the more immoral he becomes.... Disciplinary problems are brought to the Disciplinary Committee. The Committee is highly influenced by the ministers who cannot avoid having private affairs with ordinary members of the church and will not allow the Committee to do its work without fear or favour.¹⁹⁵

The most severe punishments for moral offences are suspension or demotion from office. Excommunication, the ultimate deterrent, is rare as this could lead to a breakaway rival church forming. According to the present Acting Provincial Head of the Church of the Lord (Aladura), Bishop A. E. Bona, who was himself recently involved in a public financial scandal in Koidu and called a "Polygamist priest" by *The Vision* of 14th February 1990, "We don't have the right to drive anybody from the church. In fact we try to make them see the gravity of their sins and encourage them to repentance."¹⁹⁶ Sister I. Taylor added, "We have our mercy ground where sinners go and struggle until they are forgiven."¹⁹⁷ Rev. Sidney Davies of EFSL, a former prophet, is not convinced by such arguments. He asserts that adultery is a kind of life-style, and denied it was the Paramount Chief model which the leaders were following, as some have claimed, but rather the satisfying of fleshly desires. EFSL had received many reports of family relationships being broken through the prophets misusing their powers. However, according to Davies, "many people are now leaving some of these churches because of these practices."¹⁹⁸ This assertion is supported by Sankoh-Cole:

The failure of the Spiritual churches to be committed to any clear Christian ethics has resulted in people leaving their churches for the Pentecostal churches. In the Pentecostal churches the Ten Commandments are effectively taught and practised in the daily lives of the members. Those who are strong uphold the weak by observation, comments, reference to the Bible and open rebuke. Such churches can be said to have a Christian ethic. On the contrary the Spiritual churches may be called Free churches where one is almost quite free to do as he or she likes. They cannot claim to follow either Old Testament or New Testament ethics because they don't obey their commands.¹⁹⁹

The 1961 Church of the Lord (Aladura) conference in Freetown admitted that "fornication and adultery were rampant in the Church".²⁰⁰ The situation, according to Sankoh-Cole, is not much better in the historic denominations. Professor Fashole-Luke has highlighted the immorality problems in the Freetown mainline churches where "illegitimacy is rife", and

"Freetown Christians seldom seem to relate their religious beliefs to their morality."²⁰¹ However, sexual immorality is a human problem and a world-wide phenomenon, one that has accompanied the collapse of the Church's authority in the West and Scriptural authority within the Western churches. The particular circumstances of the Spiritual churches, where most members are poor and illiterate, many are dislocated from their home environments, and many of the prophets are young and unmarried, make the problems even more acute in these churches. The Spiritual churches, however, are surprisingly ingenuous in their dealing with adultery problems and working out practical solutions, in contrast to the mainline churches which mostly ignore or tacitly accept promiscuity by members and ministers.

Sin and Salvation as Understood by the Spiritual Churches

The seriousness with which the membership of the Spiritual churches regard sin is evident in their unsparing efforts to fulfil the demands of the prophets for ritual performances. It is particularly demonstrated in their animal sacrifices, especially exchange-of-life sacrifices. Sin drives away the personal guardian angel and places the transgressor outside the defensive covering of the *koinonia* of power. To deal with sin a full confession is required followed by ritual cleansing and ritual atonement. Salvation is comprehended as a dualism of purity and power. While sin in the indigenous theology can be conceived of as offences against God, this is only because God is acknowledged as the ultimate source of all existence and the final judge in every matter. Sin is primarily the "transgression", (cf. 1 John 3: 4), of the laws and mores of society, laws traditionally believed to have been "lowered down" to man, after God had removed himself from earth and departed into heaven. When initiated into an indigenous society such as *Poru* or *Bundu*, sin is explicitly understood as contravening the rules of that society, betraying the members, divulging its secrets and discarding the traditions handed down from the founding fathers.

Sin results in soul weakness which affects the physical. It allows entry into one's life of forces hostile to one's own well-being and that of one's family, forces which bring along sickness,

misfortune and even death. To escape, full confession must be made to a priest, diviner, or medicine-man, and a purification programme of ritual ablutions undertaken followed by some form of atoning sacrifice. Sacrifices may be the performance of penance, food and drink offerings, or fowl and animal sacrifice. Sin must be detected as its consequences, especially in witch activity, affect the whole community. Taylor observes that in indigenous societies, sin being primarily acts against the "neighbour", one encounters a "shame culture" not a "guilt culture".²⁰² Sin, however, is also an act which offends the ancestors who uphold society's laws and customs, and at that level one encounters a "fear culture", as to lose their protection is to be in a most fearfully defenceless position. Sanctifying and atoning works, rather than the rest of faith *en Christo*, is the ground upon which salvation is sought. Man must himself deal with the problem of atoning for human sin. Vicarious atonement is certainly a well understood concept as the sacrificial system amply demonstrates, yet the vicarious atonement of Christ seems to be only dimly comprehended. Salvation is not sovereign grace appropriated by faith in consequence of God's redemptive act in Jesus Christ and Him crucified, but is the result victories over spiritual and human enemies and problem situations, which are achieved through human efforts such as fasting and "struggling" in response to prophetic revelations following holy enquiries. The process clearly imitates the indigenous soteriology where salvation worked out ritually under the guidance of the indigenous diviner. The traumatic conversions of the Nova Scotians, who "found the Lord", "found peace", and came "under the power" and were "filled with joy" through releasing their burdens of sin and guilt at "the foot of the Cross", rarely feature in the Spiritual churches' soteriological agenda.

Sanctification

Having procured salvation one must remain in a state of ritual purity. Spiritual uncleanness again opens the way for witchcraft attacks and the process that undermines salvation returns. Sanctification is understood as the way a state of spiritual cleanness is maintained. In divine services, reading the penitential Psalm 51, leads the whole congregation into confession of sins. It is ironic that this Psalm which, with its confession "Against Thee, Thee only, have I

sinned and done this evil in Thy sight" (v. 4), emphasises that sin is primarily an offence against God, and portrays the restoration of personal covenant harmony with Yahweh through repentance and contrition of heart, should be so popular and used so constantly in the Spiritual churches where sin is seen as bringing "dishonour to the Church of God", and restoration is seen in terms of ritual ablutions and expiatory works. However, the reason becomes apparent when one notes the ritual cleansing language the psalmist uses. "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin" (v. 2), "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me and I shall be whiter than snow" (v. 7). The sprinkling of holy water at the end of the prayers of confession indicates absolution from sins and reincorporation into the "joy and gladness" (v. 8) of the "children of salvation".

This cleansing rite, rather than any proclamation of the revelation of God to man, is the heart of the first part of the service.... This simple and impressive ritual, completely clear in intent to all participants, is concluded by an absolution strengthened by the mystery of the holy names.²⁰³

The mere act of reciting Psalm 51, and also the parallel Psalm 32, which are Psalms of power, almost automatically brings cleansing from sin.²⁰⁴ Having been ritually cleansed by water and word one is now in a fit state to pursue possession by the Holy Spirit.

Baptism

Christian salvation is believed to be especially received during the sacrament of water baptism. The place of stream bathing during initiation into indigenous societies reinforces that perception. By baptism one is initiated into the Christian community through ritual washing in water which is charged with the presence of the Holy Spirit. In a daytime vision experienced by Oshitelu on 13th July 1927, he saw "the Lord" standing on a white barrel in the middle of a river. He had white soap in his hand. He called to Oshitelu and his brother, who were covered with dust, "Come, ye my lambs, come ye my elected people." Entering the river, they were put into a small barrel by the Lord who ritually washed them saying:

This is a special birth and regeneration of the spirit, and a change of the body. Rejoice before me. Your joy shall be full as from today.²⁰⁵

They were given white robes. The Lord stretched up his hands and flew upward with Oshitelu and his brother following in his train. The belief in baptismal regeneration is reinforced by the officiating minister, following the triple immersion in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, praying that the baptised person "may be overshadowed by the Holy Ghost to have a true rebirth into newness of life".²⁰⁶ In the baptismal preamble of the Church of the Lord (Aladura), faith in Christ is a prerequisite for baptism, but according to Turner, "the confession of Christ has no integral relation to the salvation which is proclaimed."²⁰⁷

Turner, in his analysis of the Biblical texts used in the sacrament, notes, "Taken all together these texts suggest that baptism is thought of as the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to confer the new life of the Christian."²⁰⁸ Doctrinal confusion obviously exists as this Spiritual church seeks a baptismal formula based on its inherited Anglican baptismal order and its own indigenous understanding of the operations of the Holy Spirit. As the Holy Spirit is believed to be in the waters of baptism consequent upon consecratory prayer, being immersed in the consecrated water is to be baptised in the Holy Spirit. Manifestations of spirit possession frequently occur during water baptism services. In indigenous ritual water ablutions, possession by water spirits such as *Mami Wata* is common. However, in this public act of worship the Spiritual churches are careful to distance themselves from any suggestion that the possessing spirit is an indigenous water spirit. Water baptism signifies purification, a washing away of sins, initiation into a new community of spiritual power, and an experience with the Holy Spirit which confers salvation, "a true rebirth into newness of life" and entry into "the new life of the Christian".

Faith in the Resurrection of the Body

Being weak on Christology has resulted in doctrinal vagueness concerning the resurrection of the body, the main New Testament resurrection emphasis. New Testament Christianity believes in a viable connection and an element of physical continuity between the present body of humiliation and the future body of glory, even if that continuity is as tenuous as the

connection between a seed sown and the fully grown plant. Faith in the resurrection of the body, as witnessed to by the bodily resurrection of Jesus, leads to respect for the body even after death. This is conspicuously absent from the theology of the non-Krio Spiritual churches. This lack of respect for the dead body is evidenced in the Church of the Lord (Aladura)'s refusal to "church" the corpse, a practice which became a Krio tradition. In *The Bible Speaks*, Adejobi writes:

Dead bodies are not allowed in our Church as corpses are rank filth before God. There is no forgiveness in the grave. And I heard a voice saying, "The beautiful feathers of the bird Agbe cease to adorn when it dies". There is no more respect for the body that puts on Death.

The church believes there is a new heavenly and spiritual body for the departed, but generally sees no direct connection between that body and the earthly one despite the reference to the resurrection of the body in the committal part of the church's burial service, a reference which obviously derives from the Anglican order for the burial of the dead in the *Book of Common Prayer*. The lesson in the *Book of Common Prayer* which makes so much of the connection between the earthly and the heavenly bodies, 1 Cor. 15: 20-58, has been replaced in the church's order by 1 Thes. 4: 13-18 which has less obvious emphasis on bodily resurrection and more on the dead being asleep in Christ awaiting his return.²⁰⁹ The decaying corpse must be quickly removed and not allowed to pollute any holy place, especially the Temple.²¹⁰ Paradoxically, funerals of members are usually joyful celebrations, with singing, drumming and dancing. As in indigenous burials it is the spirit of the departed, and that alone, which is being honoured, and libations will certainly be poured on the grave and the fortieth day *Awujoh* will be kept.

THE SPIRITUAL CHURCHES' DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Spiritual churches see themselves as African Christians worshipping God in African ways and dealing with the African realities. They are proud of their indigenous origins and

regard the mission planted churches as a product of the colonial era and foreign. They see themselves as the true and original Church of God now planted in Africa as the Church of the Last Days with Oshitelu as the "last Elijah". The older churches quenched the Holy Spirit, but in the Church of the Lord (Aladura) the Pentecostal Spirit has come back into the Church. They are the Ark of God where the Holy Spirit dwells and into which the "Children of Salvation" come. Although Oshitelu is given a position of great authority in the Church of the Lord (Aladura) as founding father and the last Elijah, he has not become a Messiah figure. Being more a revelatory prophet than a healer, he did not have the miracle healing ministry which becoming a divinity demands; healing being the most tangible manifestation of the presence and power of deity. Leaders of Spiritual churches with a reputation for miraculous healings such as Olumba Olumba Obu, founder of the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star, and Samuel Bileou Oschoffa, the late founder of the Celestial Church of Christ, have been divinised by their followers.²¹¹ Olumba is regarded by many of his church members as God incarnate, eternal and immortal, and as Christ.²¹² Both the Celestial Church of Christ and the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star now have branches in Freetown, the Celestials from 1987 and the Brotherhood from 1989. Oshitelu was never able to generate this degree of popular adulation. In fact he is personally of little significance in Sierra Leone where Adejobi is regarded as the founding father of the Spiritual churches. What is significant about Oshitelu is his perceptions of the operations of the Holy Spirit and the spiritual legacy he passed on to the church he founded and also to its offshoots.

The Spiritual churches have been shown the divine way of prayer. They receive divine revelations and have the Holy Spirit. Their church buildings and associated holy places are sacred and sanctified. The "Children of Salvation", wage a spiritual warfare against witches, sorcerers, and a host of hostile spirit and human persecutors. In the Church of the Lord (Aladura) sermons frequently recount the early persecutions of the church and the *magnalia dei* of God in mighty deliverances. According to Bishop Orebanjo the church triumphs through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and the use of spiritual methods in order to obtain

spiritual power over spiritual enemies.²¹³ Orebanjo like the rest of the movement is in no doubt that the spiritual dynamics are emanating from the Holy Spirit of Biblical revelation. On the other hand Oosthuizen has stated:

The functions of the ancestor spirits have been transferred to the Holy Spirit, or simply "The Spirit", so that in the independent post-Christian movements their "holy spirit" is no longer the Holy Spirit of whom we learn in Scripture.²¹⁴

Being inspired by the Spirit, especially through visions and voices, is the highest level of spiritual experience and it is in this area of spiritual inspiration that the church sees its most distinctive characteristic, and what separates it from the materialistic, uninspired mission churches.

Possession by the Spirit

The overriding goal in communal public worship in the Spiritual churches is to encounter the power of the Holy Spirit in subjective emotional and physical experiences. The condition for being filled with the Holy Spirit is purity and this is achieved through ritual washing in holy water and performing spiritual exercises. The presence and power of the Holy Spirit is generally evidenced in the Spiritual churches by the members, mainly women, coming under possession and shaking, rocking, convulsing or even falling on the floor and rolling about, sometimes quite violently.²¹⁵ Repetitive monosyllabic utterances, accompanied by rapid breathing and gasping (hyperventilation), are taken to be the inspired messages of the Holy Spirit. Dancing, which is seen as "a body sacrifice given unto God, a body pleasure given unto the Lord", and "hot drumming", stimulate members to deliberately induce spirit possession experiences. "The more beating, the more intense the drumming, the more spiritually charged the atmosphere becomes".²¹⁶ Singing and drumming are, according to Oshitelu, "the relished goods of the Holy Spirit" and attract Him down. It has been observed, however, that in some very lively services no spirit possession has taken place, whereas in a very uncharismatic service such as the Lord's Supper, possession may occasionally occur. This is explained as the Spirit blowing "where it listeth" (John 3: 8). Spirit possession is understood in terms of 1 Samuel 19: 24:

And he [Saul] stripped off his clothes also, and prophesied before Samuel in like manner, and lay down naked all that day and all that night. Wherefore they say, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"²¹⁷

Possession is a sign of spiritual or second baptism and, for women in particular, it results in enhanced status within the church. It is not regarded as the highest manifestation of the Holy Spirit. This is reserved for prophetic revelations and healings which, although not exclusively male areas, are spheres of male domination. All utterances given out while under spirit possession, when intelligible or interpreted, are taken seriously and acted upon. Most ecstatic manifestations are taken as evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit. At the close of the Church of the Lord (Aladura)'s memorial service on the first anniversary of Primate Adejobi's decease, a young woman began to convulse; retching-like convulsions are a common symptom of spirit possession. She then leapt out onto the floor and whirled around dervish-like, jerking violently. Eventually, she collapsed on the floor shouting repeatedly, "My Spirit is here! My Spirit is here!" She then climbed onto her seat and began to cry out, "I am Jesus Christ! I am Jesus Christ!". On being asked, "What is happening here?", the Venerable Archdeacon Macarthy's reply was:

She is inspired! It is the Holy Spirit! She is being moved by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is inspiring her.²¹⁸

Since no such manifestations occur in the services of the major denominations, the problem of discerning of spirits does not arise as a practical issue for them. The late Canon Fashole-Luke has complained that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the Spiritual churches has become seriously distorted because they have ignored the Biblical teaching on the person of the Holy Spirit, as in John 14-16, and over emphasised the dynamic aspects of his works.²¹⁹

Sometimes the possession is so strong and long-lasting that, in order to keep a certain level of order, the inspired ladies are ushered out to the Mercy Ground. If they are uttering inspired messages someone stays with them to write them down. However, if the symptoms manifested become extraordinarily violent and threatening, an "attack" by a witch-spirit is discerned. Ministers, mostly female disciples, will then surround the possessed and attempt

to exorcise the evil spirit. Severe cases are dealt with by the senior male ministers who ring their bells and touch the possessed with their iron rods while invoking holy names. When it is discerned that a witch-spirit is impeding a prophecy, water is put in a bell, consecrated, and given to the possessed to drink so as to release the utterance. In these cases the women usually shake, wail or sob, and repeat phrases like, "He died! He died! He died! ... ", "Hallelou! Hallelou! Hallelou! ... ", "Lord Jesus! Lord Jesus! Lord Jesus! ... ". When the prophecy goes on into *glossolalia*, this too may be considered an "attack", but it is usually ignored because the Spiritual churches are unskilled in the interpretation of tongues. During possession repressed emotions and guilt feelings may be released. In the indigenous ontology these are understood as the confessions of witches. Sankoh-Cole testified:

I have witnessed women confessing wrongs they had committed against their husbands in secret and vowing never to do the same again. I have witnessed a woman confessing to having actively abused her husband and her mother-in-law and vowing never to repeat it. In some of these cases the husbands themselves were in church and were asked to pray for their wives and forgive them. In the same church the possessed have confessed to being witches and having joined the church to hide themselves and obtain protection. Such women have been absolved and given positions of trust.²²⁰

Both the interpretation of this phenomenon and its treatment follow indigenous lines. Witches who make full confession are forgiven and restored - usually the witch-spirit overpowered and compelled its unwilling host to act as she did. Following confession, appropriate and effective neutralising action with holy water and sacrifice is taken.

Daneel notes that in the Shona "Churches of the Spirit", the ideal in worship is "to be seized by the Spirit in order to reveal God's will".²²¹ Dillon-Malone describes the stimulated Spirit possessions, frequently accompanied by seizures and violent shaking, which are the essence of the *chima* healing rituals and exorcisms of the Bantu "Mutumwa" prophet-healing churches.²²² Baeta observes that in the Musama Disco Christo Church in Ghana there exists "a revivalist tradition and a sort of baptised African spirit possession".²²³ In the Freetown Spiritual churches, male ministers rarely come under spirit possession in public worship, as consciousness and self-control are required for their role of interpreters of the Holy Spirit's

messages. For them certain non-public conditions are preferable for experiencing Spirit possession. Women, however, frequently come under possession in church services, particularly young women from a Muslim background. Possession may be by the Holy Spirit or a *jinni*, a good indigenous spirit whose power can be used advantageously. The attitude to possession by *jinni* is that these spirits are greater than the greatest man and their power can be used to advantage by those with spiritual wisdom and the skill to outsmart them. At the extreme end of this "Trickster" philosophy is the belief that under certain conditions men of spiritual power can gain the help of evil spirits, and even Satan, to overcome other evil spirits.²²⁴ Evil is not conceptualised abstractly, but is regarded as the operation of evil spirits. In this whole area, a knowledge of psychology and psychiatry would be most helpful.²²⁵ This is also the case in the Pentecostal Movement world-wide where being "slain in the Spirit" is becoming an increasingly popular phenomenon and eagerly sought after manifestation of the Holy Spirit's presence and power. The latest phase in this development is the Toronto Experience, a grass-roots, layman ministering, baptising and slaying in the Holy Spirit movement which upsurged in the Vineyard Church, Toronto, in January 1994.

Spirit possession which lacks self-control, provided the manifestations are not excessively aggressive, is regarded as a baby stage in experiencing the Holy Spirit. However, there is no sign of the Spiritual churches outgrowing the practice, rather the present trend, both in the Spiritual and Pentecostal-evangelical movements is to increasingly seek such possession experiences during the worship. In Pentecostal-evangelical churches, however, when demonstrations of even this level of uncontrolled spirit possession occur, they are usually discerned as manifestation of demonic spirits and a ministry of exorcism is attempted. In the Pentecostal-evangelical New Testament Church, women manifesting disorderly spirit possession are counselled and prayed for by Mrs. Kallon. While not denying that the Holy Spirit does possess believers and that strong symptoms may be manifested during that experience, Pastor and Mrs. Kallon look for the evidence of the fruit of the Holy Spirit, such as love, joy and peace, in all genuine Holy Spirit pneumatic experiences. If these are not

particularly in evidence, counselling and exorcising prayer are offered. Almost every Sunday morning, testimonies are given by those delivered from witch-spirits through Mrs. Kallon's deliverance ministry.

Speaking in Tongues

Pentecostal "speaking in tongues" was possibly first introduced into the Nigerian Aladura movement either by missionaries of Faith and Truth Temple of Toronto in the 1928-29 period, or by Rev. D. P. Williams and the pastors of the Apostolic Church during their visit in October 1932. Speaking in tongues as ecstatic utterance in the form of incoherent babbling, grunts, barkings and animal sounds was a common enough phenomenon in the indigenous religious system and probably was in evidence in the Aladura movement prior to these visits. These *glossolalia* utterances, unlike the *charisma* of tongues first recorded on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2, do not exhibit normal grammatical form or structure.²²⁶ The Spiritual churches believe that the gift of tongues may be given by God at birth and be brought into operation through spiritual exercises such as mercy ground rolling. During worship services it is common for several members of the congregation to come under possession and give out utterances with varying degrees of coherence. Most would come under the description of "babbling". Monosyllabic utterances such as "Ba ba ba ba baaa ba ba baaa ..." or "Ta ta ta ta ta ta ta ta ..." are common, as well as high pitched shrieks from women and bellowings from men. Prophets sometimes attempt interpretation, but while they see these ecstatic utterances as signs of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, they are uncomfortable with interpretation as they believe that this gift has not yet been granted to the Spiritual churches. Sometimes prophets utter holy names and words and so appear to be exercising the New Testament *charisma* of tongues. When prophets do attempt to speak in tongues it is a common practice for them to hold out their iron rods and invoke God and their holy angels. When the Spirit, or angel, arrives, the rod starts to vibrate and shake, sometimes violently as the power increases. The rod bearer himself will shake and perhaps fall to the ground. In this state of overpowering possession, *glossolalia* utterances issue forth.

THE ROLE OF JESUS CHRIST IN THE WORSHIP OF THE SPIRITUAL CHURCHES

The Spiritual churches have tended to perceive salvation as being the work of the Holy Spirit with a quite tenuous connection being made with Christ. This results in the Spirit being given pre-eminence in God's soteriological operations, and Jesus Christ being removed from his central role in the redemptive work. Salvation and the power of the Holy Spirit is wrestled from God through spiritual prayers, fastings, and other spiritual struggles. Jesus Christ is seen not so much as the incarnate God who saved the world through vicarious atonement and physically rose again, but as a man of great spiritual power, a mighty prophet full of the Spirit who through prayer and fasting conquered demons and healed the sick. His spiritual presence in the world is ambiguously and confusingly identified with the Holy Water. Despite the use of his name in the conventional phraseology, and invoking his name during exorcisms and healings, Christ's divinity is not a major consideration in the worship. Christ, even as healer and exorcist, functions more in an intermediary role similar to angels and spirits, rather than operating directly as The Deliverer and The Healer. In healing, the primary ministry of the Spiritual churches, the healing power is not from Christ Himself, but from the Holy Spirit who has been channelled into the holy water by the minister's consecratory prayer and rod. The Spirit's power flowing through the iron rod also produces the exorcisms. For esoteric knowledge and speedy assistance, the mighty Kenkella, or other ancestral spirits who, like Mary and the Saints in popular Roman Catholicism, are thought of as being more in touch and more understanding, are invoked as intermediaries in preference to Jesus. Surprisingly, Christ has not yet taken over the supreme intermediary role, instead he has had to fit ambiguously into a Christian system which includes the Holy Spirit, angels, ancestral spirits, and men and women of spiritual power.

While there is no developed Black-messianism in the Sierra Leone churches, such as has evolved around Simon Kimbangu, Andre Matswa, Isaiah Shembe, Enginasi Lekganyane, the West African prophets Olumba Obu, Samuel Oschoffa and Prophet Wovenu of the Apostolic

Revelation Society of Ghana, yet the prophets, being perceived to be filled with the Spirit of God and open to His divine inspiration, are the primary, although not the most powerful, mediators between God and the congregation.²²⁷ Like the indigenous diviners they are the first human contact on the hierarchical rung. The Primate is the final authority on all matters concerning the mysteries of supernatural power. In one of the visions received during his call experience Oshitelu was given the "key of power like Moses", and in the catechism of the Church of the Lord (Aladura), question 20 asks, "To whom was handed the key of the Water of life?" The response is that it was handed to the "last Elijah" who is Oshitelu. Those who turn to Oshitelu, the man who holds the key of power, will be given this holy salvic water, those who don't "shall perish". While not exactly presenting himself as a Black Messiah, Oshitelu was seen by his church in Nigeria as the primary mediator between God and the people. In Sierra Leone, it was Adejobi who was perceived as the prime mediator of God's healing and predictive powers, Oshitelu being a fairly remote figure to most Sierra Leoneans.

Christ, in the worship of the Spiritual churches, has not even fulfilled the traditional concept of sacrifice. While sacrifice, "the essence of Yoruba religion", is mainly understood by the Spiritual churches as costly efforts and struggles which win the sympathy of God, in life-threatening situations exchange-of-life animal sacrifices have to be made. These sacrifices, unlike sin and peace sacrifices, are not primarily understood as Old Testament sacrifices offered to Yahweh, or as a re-enactment of the sacrificial death Christ, something which Turner considers:

... would seem such an easy step for those whose traditional religion makes sacrifice so fundamental, and who have also maintained the Western language about the sacrificial death of Christ.²²⁸

While, as has been pointed out, there is now an increasing tendency to interpret sacrifice in Old Testament terms, and sin offerings are being offered directly to God, at the most critical soteriological level exchange-of-life sacrifices are still offered to the destroying spirits, the angels of death. This indicates that salvation and deliverance at the most life-threatening crisis points in the experience of the Spiritual churches are still being sought along

indigenous lines. What then is Christ's place in the Spiritual churches? His major role seems to be that of Christian ancestral hero of the *ndebbla* category. He is a mighty prophet and great exemplar of the spiritual power available to those who exercise faith in God, pray and engage in intense spiritual strugglings.²²⁹ However, Adejobi, Fofana, Walters and others, not to mention a host of ancestral spirits and angels, are also prophets, exemplars, healers and exorcists. Being contemporary Africans involved in the African reality, being more directly accessible, and being better informed and more deeply involved, they are perceived as being more sympathetic and effective intermediaries between Africans and God than Jesus Christ.

The Authority of the Prophets and the Authority of the Scriptures

The Spiritual churches of Freetown uphold the standard Christian doctrines and gladly assent that the Scriptures are the inspired Word of God. The Bible contains the infallible revelation of His will and is the authoritative teaching on doctrine. The Old and New Testaments are inspired by God and contain messages prophets spoke when moved by the Holy Spirit. The Spiritual churches take the Old Testament as being of direct application to the present, and having equal revelatory importance to the New Testament. In fact within the African context much of the Old is taken as being more relevant than the New. However, while the Bible occupies a prominent place in the public life of the Spiritual churches, as has already been noted, prophetic revelations take pre-eminence. Biblical references are sought and frequently given to back up these revelations. Prophets, like Bishop Browne of the Church of Salvation, are skilled in finding texts to back up their church's beliefs and practices. When discussing with Bishop Browne the practice of animal sacrifice in his church, the Bishop, from his own hermeneutical standpoint, put up a good argument, well laced with Scriptural verses, as to why God was happy with this practice. However, he made no reference to the book of Hebrews. He declared:

I love God's Word. I am a student of God's Word. God wants obedience, but how do we know what he wants except through his Word?²³⁰

He claimed we needed the Old and not just the New Testament, and argued that it was wrong to over emphasise the New Testament. By refusing to perform animal sacrifices, Peter, Paul and the Early Church were "acting in the flesh".²³¹ Although the Bible is often used in a magical and superstitious way, it is regarded with reverence and many earnestly desire to study its teachings. In their circumstances of much poverty and illiteracy this is to be admired. The reverence with which the Bible is held and the simple believing attitude towards its divine inspiration, may encourage one to visualise a steady transformation of faith and practice as these congregations become more literate and better informed theologically. The recent trend to send trainee ministers to Theological Hall will help in this direction. However, Sankoh-Cole, who was the first Saint Peter's Healing Temple trainee to attend Theological Hall, sees the training as promoting dissatisfaction among the young ministers:

After Theological Hall I didn't fit in. These people will not fit in when they go back. Evangel [the Assemblies of God Bible College] is worse. There you will go entirely Pentecostal.²³²

This transformation process is being accelerated at present by the Spiritual churches' exposure to the Pentecostal-evangelical revival, despite many in that movement being very hostile towards them. The Pentecostal-evangelical leaders are not slow to expose publicly what they see as the errors and falsehoods of the Spirituals; their holy water and animal sacrifices in particular. They accuse them of being "hand-bag" prophets, bewitched, and working with false spirits.²³³

Where it is believed that God is speaking directly and authoritatively through the prophets today, just as he did in Old Testament times, the Bible for all the reverence attached to it must be regarded as a secondary source of revelation and authority. The prophets speaking now, not the prophets and apostles who spoke long ago in another continent, are the contemporary voice of God. These prophets, and especially the Primates, with their traumatic experiences of the Spirit, intense spirituality, their commitment to rigorous "struggles" in fastings and rollings, their expertise in praying using holy names and Psalms, their clairvoyant and clairaudience abilities, and their esoteric spiritual knowledge, they are

the supreme spiritual authorities in the Spiritual churches. The directives of the Holy Spirit through the prophets are to be obeyed immediately and without question. Members are warned against quenching the Spirit or despising prophesyings since the prophets are uttering the oracles of God and are "the pillars and strength of our church".²³⁴ The overriding of Scriptural revelation by prophetic utterance takes place, for example, where the revelation of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) prophet for an animal sacrifice to be offered, supersedes any New Testament teaching on the subject, and even the official policy of his church. Another example is when "the voice" commands Bishop T. K. Davies to sacrifice, even though he is aware it is not a practice of New Testament Christianity or the new Pentecostal-evangelicalism he has identified his church with.

The Spiritual churches have adapted their Christianity to the African realities, infused it with a dynamic pneumatology and produced something new and unique. Those who have left the Spiritual churches and become leading figures in the evangelical scene in Freetown, while critical of many of their beliefs and practices, invariably express gratitude for the spiritual and rigorous training they received, and these churches' commitment to solving the problems of the poor and needy in Africa in spiritual ways, through prayer, fasting and the power of God. Several Spiritual churches are beginning to respond positively to the challenge from the Pentecostal-evangelicals during the present period of revival and are moving cautiously in their direction. The comments of FBC student Priscilla Fofana, daughter of the Primate of the Church of Salvation, are worth noting:

The massive change in religious attitude and belief taking place today is not a transition from unbelief to belief, but a shift from one kind of belief to another. If only the older churches could try to understand the problems which have brought into existence the independent churches, if they could accept the Holy Spirit in inspiration as for example it has been accepted in the Charismatic Renewal in European and American Christianity, then ecumenical relations between the two types of churches could develop at a more serious level.

On the other hand, if the independent churches could learn from the administration of the "historic churches", they could make their churches corporate bodies rather than the private properties of individual leaders competing against other leaders. Furthermore, if they could make Jesus Christ rather than charismatic leaders the focal point of their churches then many of their difficulties would be resolved.

Only when the older churches have accepted the importance of the Charismatic Renewal and the newer churches have surrendered their primacy and independence to Jesus as Lord will it be possible to see the divided Pentecostalist and Orthodox traditions converge from the poles to the equatorial centre in Jesus Christ in whom is the one Spirit, one Body, one Lord, one Church.²³⁵

There are penetrating inside insights in this sensitive and Christocentric statement from one of the younger and educated members of the Spiritual churches. There is the cry for recognition that the Spiritual churches have their *raison d'être* despite their human limitations. There is a condemnation of the "historic churches" for stifling inspiration and quenching the Holy Spirit, for their lack of power and their frequent failure to meet the spiritual and existential needs of the ordinary African. There is criticism, however, of the controlling, self-seeking attitude of the Spiritual church leaders, and condemnation of the leadership cult which makes the men of spiritual power rather than Jesus Christ the primary focus of the Spiritual churches' worship.

The final three chapters which follow will document the origins of the Pentecostal-evangelical movement in Freetown and survey their steady expansion which has significantly accelerated over the past ten years to make them the unrivalled growth area of Sierra Leone Christianity. Their influence on both the Spiritual churches and mainline denominations, as well as their impact on society as a whole, will be investigated. An attempt will be made to ascertain the factors which have contributed to the successes of the Pentecostal-evangelicals who are spearheading Freetown's present evangelical revival, and assess the Pentecostal-evangelical movement's present position in the complex, multi-faceted, vibrant and expanding Christian community that now exists in Freetown.

- ¹ For an "insider" view and brief historical survey of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) in Sierra Leone and its breakaways, see the paper presented by the Sierra Leone Provincial Head at the 1979 Fourah Bay College Annual Clergy and Ministers' Easter Vacation Course: L. E. Adeyemi, "African Indigenous and Pentecostal Churches in Sierra Leone: Challenge or Problem? - The Church of the Lord (Aladura)" in *SLBR*, 1, December 1980, pp.51-58.
- ² *Ibid.*, p.53.
- ³ For an analysis of the litany of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) and a comparison and contrast with the Anglican litany showing the practical adaptation of the Anglican liturgy to the Nigerian environment see Turner, (1967-b), pp.161-8.
- ⁴ Claude Tuboku-Metzger, *The Holy Spirit: His Person and Functions in the Church of the Lord*, a dissertation submitted to the Theology Department, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Licenciante of Divinity, 1985, p.15.
- ⁵ Adrian Hastings, *A History of African Christianity*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp.226-7.
- ⁶ For some information on the *The Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses* (published in New York in 1880) see, Turner, (1979), pp.170, 279-80, 283. Many Sierra Leoneans are aware of the existence of this book are afraid to read it as they believe that while the information could make one powerful it could also drive one insane. For an account of the influence of *The Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses* on the use of the Psalms in the Church of the Lord (Aladura) see Turner, (1967-b), pp.72-76.
- ⁷ Adejobi, *ibid.*, p.14.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, p.6.
- ⁹ Turner, *ibid.*, p.72.
- ¹⁰ John S. Mbiti, *The Prayers of African Religion*, (London: SPCK, 1974).
- ¹¹ Turner, (1967-b), p.74.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, p.74.
- ¹³ Hastings, *ibid.*, p.226.
- ¹⁴ Turner, *ibid.*
- ¹⁵ Awoonor-Gordon, *ibid.*, p.59.
- ¹⁶ Sankoh-Cole, *ibid.*
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁹ Turner, *ibid.*, p.75.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.72-73.
- ²¹ Rosalind I. J. Hackett, *Religious Pluralism and the Development of a Nigerian Humanism*, a paper presented at a Departmental Seminar at the Department of Religious Studies and Philosophy, University of Calabar, Nigeria, on 6th July 1982, p.6. Bryan R. Wilson, *Magic and the Millennium*, (London: Heinemann, 1973), p.41f.
- ²² Idowu, (1962), pp.9-10.
- ²³ Sanneh, *ibid.*, p.224.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.* For more detail on the seals and script see Turner, *ibid.*, pp.41-43.
- ²⁵ Adejobi, *ibid.*, p.7.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.11.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.12.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.24-25.
- ²⁹ The infant consecration ceremony developed out of the consecration and anointing of Adejobi's firstborn son. See Turner, *ibid.*, pp.187-8.
- ³⁰ Turner, *ibid.*, pp.204-5.
- ³¹ Sankoh-Cole, *ibid.* This was disputed by Rev. Larty-Baker who maintained that they do speak in tongues, but not tongues in the Holy Ghost because of their unholy life style.
- ³² Turner, *ibid.*, p.209.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, pp.279-80.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.284.

³⁵ Bucher writing on the role of angels in the Spiritual churches of the Shona and the way they are taking over the functions of the ancestral spirits, *midzimu*, comments:

The *angerosi* (angel) replaces the ancestor and urges the dreamer to fulfil his obligations towards what I would call his new "kin group", i.e. the Church. However, members of "Churches of the Spirit" are still frequently visited in their dreams by their ancestral spirits, although they classify these as "bad spirits", whose requests must be evaded, if possible. Bucher, *ibid.*, p.168.

In his discussion on the Zambian Mutumwa Church founded by Peter Mulenga, Dillon-Malone observes:

Distant ancestral and/or other spirits ... are now more explicitly acknowledged as spirits of God (*mipashi yakwa Lesa*) or angels (*bangeli*). Little or no attempt, however, may be made to distinguish clearly between an ancestral spirit and an angel of God.... Spirits are known by their effects and little interest is shown in the analysis of their nature. The important thing is that they be identified as "good" spirits as distinct from "bad" ones. Clive Dillon-Malone, "The Mutumwa Church of Peter Mulenga (Part 2)" in *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 17(1), February 1987, pp.15-16.

³⁶ Abane, *ibid.*, p.32.

³⁷ Sankoh-Cole, *ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ Donald Guthrie, *The Letter to the Hebrews: an Introduction and Commentary*, (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1983), pp.50-51.

⁴⁰ Banton, (1957), p.220.

Communicating with the "shades" through lighted candles has also been observed by West in the Zionist churches of Soweto. One church leader testified that the shades were remembered in his church by lighting candles and that members would talk to them since the shades were interested in the church. West, *ibid.*, p.182. The church leader was at pains to emphasise that one talked to the shades, but prayed to God. The shades were concerned and had power, but they were not prayed to, only God was.

In *Ambiguous Africa: Cultures in Collision*, (London: Chatto and Windus, 1966, English translation), Georges Balandier observed that the Bakongo Independent churches used candles as a substitute for the fire that used to be associated with sacrifices and offerings to the spirits and their burning represents a continuous offering. He notes that the Independent churches learned the use of candles from the Roman Catholics, but associate their influence with that of fire and sacrifice in the indigenous religious tradition.

⁴¹ Sidney Davies, *ibid.*

⁴² Bishop T. K. Davies, *ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Turner, *ibid.*, p.107.

⁴⁵ Claudius Davies, *ibid.*

⁴⁶ Turner, *ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p.53.

⁵⁰ Mereweather-Thompson, *ibid.*, p.66-67.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p.67.

⁵² During Lent when all members of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) are supposed to fast, the seats are removed from the Temple and worshippers sit on the floor during services. At other times the floor may be used for rolling. Ministers may wear black gowns at this time and members dark coloured clothes. Drumming is either abandoned or played "cool". Struggling in prayer for God's forgiveness is carried out from 9 p.m. until 5 a.m. in the Temple by the various bands in the church. From all this deprivation and struggle there is the hope that, "... before the season of fasting is over, our sins may be forgiven". Turner, *ibid.*, p.114.

⁵³ Turner, *ibid.*, p.80. For Turner's treatment of fasting in the Church of the Lord (Aladura) see *ibid.*, pp.79-82.

- 54 *Ibid.*, p.81.
- 55 *Ibid.*
- 56 Larty-Baker, *ibid.*
- 57 Turner, (1979), p.193.
- 58 Awoonor-Gordon, *ibid.*, p.59.
- 59 Tuboku-Metzger, *ibid.*, p.17.
- 60 *Ibid.*, p.18.
- 61 The Spiritual Healing Church of the Lord was based first at Ibadan, but the headquarters has now been established at Rumueme near Port Harcourt.
- 62 Turner, (1967-b), p.155.
- 63 Abane, *ibid.*, p.31.
- 64 Larty-Baker, *ibid.*
- 65 Turner, *ibid.*, p.107.
- 66 Ref. pp.225-30, 235 above.
- 67 Parrinder, (1953), p.21.
- 68 Larty-Baker, *ibid.*
- 69 Edward W. Fashole-Luke, "An African Indigenous Theology: Fact or Fiction?" in *SLBR*, 11, 1969, p.9.
- 70 Turner, *ibid.*, p.216.
- 71 *Ibid.*, pp191-2.
- 72 Fashole-Luke, *ibid.*, p.10. His insert quotation is taken from Turner, (1967-b), p.172.
- 73 Turner, *ibid.*, p.108, quoting from Adejobi's *The Bible Speaks on the Church of the Lord*, (Lagos: 1945, 2nd rev. edn., Freetown, 1950), p.8. The Mosaic sprinkling of the congregation of Israel was with the blood of the covenant, although there is a sprinkling of "water of cleansing" for Levites (Nu. 8:7), and water with the ashes of the red heifer - a case of an Old Testament medicine - for those in contact with dead bodies and leprosy (Nu. 19:1ff.). Even if Adejobi is mistaking the blood for water an interesting point concerning the Mosaic incorporation of indigenous practices into the cultus of Israel is raised. With primitive Israel, as seen also with Joseph Babalola and his use of the "water of life" in the 1930 Nigerian revival, some deep rooted indigenous religious practices could meaningfully be incorporated into Yahwehism when Israel was young in the faith and the elements used were shorn of their magical powers. Also Yahweh himself and his holiness were clearly the operational powers.
- 74 Turner remarks that:
Formal statements of doctrine and practice and confessions of faith are not necessarily accurate indications of the religious understanding that controls the life of a group claiming to be a Church. Turner, (1979), pp.231-2.
- 75 Turner, (1967-b), p.108.
- 76 Parrinder notes that among the Igbo staffs are symbols of the ancestors and are sometimes believed to be the abode of the spirits. Parrinder, (1961), p.124.
- 77 *Ibid.*, p.149-50.
- 78 Mereweather-Thompson, *ibid.*, pp.70-71.
- 79 Claudius Davies, *ibid.*
- 80 Sidney Davies, *ibid.*
- 81 *Ibid.*
- 82 On the therapeutic benefits of the healing techniques and rituals used in the Mutumwa churches in Zambia, see Clive Dillon-Malone, "The 'Mutumwa' Churches of Zambia: an Indigenous African Religious Healing Movement" in *Journal of Religion in Africa*, (3), 1983, pp.219-20. Dillon-Malone writes:
Holistic healing in a culturally determined context is at the centre of Mutumwa medico-religious practices. It has been pointed out by T. Adeoye Lambo that "concepts of health within the framework of African culture are far more social than biological." He also goes on to say: "Anxiety, which is the most common and crippling psychiatric disorder in Africa, also forms the central core of other neurotic reactions in the African." The wide rang of problems and illnesses that bring people

to the Mutumwa churches cannot be separated from widespread processes of social change accompanied by increased anxieties and tensions in marital life in the urban setting. Just as illnesses are a product of, and find their definition in such a socio-culturally determined set of circumstances, so a solution requires a similar matrix.... No statement can be made here with regard to the permanency or lasting quality of Mutumwa healings.... As so many illnesses are psychomatic in nature, the fact of believing that one can be cured in a sociocultural context of reassurance and concern enables one to mobilize one's inner resources in order to bring about at least a partial cure. Indeed, as Kiev has well pointed out, even though a healer may not provide a psychiatric cure, he does nevertheless provide "a corrective emotional experience" such that, although the patient may remain vulnerable to the recurrence of the illness in question, a temporary "social remission" from it is obtained. The fact that so many Mutumwa patients return repeatedly for help is testimony to their conviction of the efficacy of Mutumwa therapy.

⁸³ Mereweather-Thompson, *ibid.*, p.27.

⁸⁴ Turner, (1967-b), pp.147-50. Turner, (1979), chapter 19, "A Theology of Water, in Introduction to J. Ade Aina's *Present Day Prophets*", pp.225-30.

⁸⁵ A. Ade Aina, *The Present Day Prophets and the Principles upon Which They Work*, (c.1932, issued by the College of Religion, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, 1964).

⁸⁶ Turner, (1967-b), p.149.

⁸⁷ *ibid.*, p.150.

⁸⁸ *ibid.*

⁸⁹ *ibid.*

⁹⁰ *ibid.*, p.157.

⁹¹ P. C. Lloyd, *Africa in Social Change*, (London: Penguin, 1972), pp.263-5.

⁹² *ibid.*, p.278.

⁹³ Rosalind I. J. Hackett, "Nigeria's Independent Churches - Gateways or Barriers to Social Development?" in *Africana Marburgensia*, 15(1), 1981, p.21.

⁹⁴ Rosalind I. J. Hackett, "Innovation and Adaptation among Traditional Religions in Post-Independence Nigeria: Some Observations and Examples" in *Africana Marburgensia*, 15(2), 1982, p.41.

⁹⁵ Turray, *ibid.*, p. 27.

⁹⁶ All the quotations from Bishop Orebango's compilation of lectures are to be found in Turner, *ibid.*, pp.122-6.

⁹⁷ *ibid.*, p.123.

⁹⁸ *ibid.*, p.123.

⁹⁹ Claudius Davies, *ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ Turner, *ibid.*, p.124.

¹⁰¹ *ibid.*, pp.125-6.

¹⁰² *ibid.*, p.126.

¹⁰³ Bishop T. K. Davies, *ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ Turner, *ibid.*, p.56.

¹⁰⁸ Mereweather-Thompson, *ibid.*, p.37.

¹⁰⁹ Sidney Davies, *ibid.*

¹¹⁰ Sankoh-Cole, *ibid.*

¹¹¹ Alhaji Bangura, *ibid.*, p.7.

¹¹² Claudius Davies, *ibid.*

¹¹³ *ibid.*

¹¹⁴ Turray, *ibid.*, p.26.

¹¹⁵ Recorded interview held with Pastor Jones at K22, FBC, Freetown, on 14/2/90.

¹¹⁶ Claudius Davies, *ibid.*

¹¹⁷ Turray, *ibid.*, p.21.

118 Awoonor-Gordon, *ibid.*, p.44.

119 Sidney Davies, *ibid.*

120 Turray, *ibid.*, p.14.

121 Turner, *ibid.*, pp.90-91.

The this-worldly appeal of the Spiritual churches and their localising of the Spirit and power of God within their own community and Temple can be seen also from the evangelistic propaganda composed by an Apostle of the Nigerian Brotherhood of the Cross and Star:

Whoever wants power, must come into the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star ... the centre for all wealth, peace, life, progress, health, freedom, wisdom, and youthfulness.... if you want Health - you must come to the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star. Money - you must come to the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star. Children - you must come to the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star.... Popularity.... Freedom.... Power - you must come to the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star.

Friday M. Mbon, "Public Responses to New Religious Movements in Contemporary Nigeria" in *New Religious Movements in Nigeria*, ed. Hackett, (Lewiston, New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1987), pp.211-2. The Brotherhood of the Cross and the Star established a branch in Freetown in 1989.

122 Turner, *ibid.*, p.90.

123 Hackett, (1981), p.13. For a study on the Dahomean origins of the Celestial Church of Christ, its spread to Nigeria and its social significance see, Rosalind I. J. Hackett, "Thirty Years of Growth and Change in a West African Independent Church - a Sociological Perspective" in *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 11(3), 1980, pp.212-31. The article appears also in Hackett, ed., (1987). For a descriptive analysis of the Celestial Church in Nigeria see, Jacob K. Olupona, "The Celestial Church of Christ in Ondo: a Phenomenological Perspective" in *New Religious Movements in Nigeria*, ed. Hackett, (Lewiston, New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1987), pp.45-73. For a study on the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star see, Essien A. Offiong, "Schism and Religious Independency in Nigeria: the Case of the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star" in *New Religious Movements in Nigeria*, ed. Hackett, (Lewiston, New York, The Edwin Mellen Press, 1987), pp.179-90, and Mbon, *ibid.*, pp.209-35.

Rosalind I. J. Hackett, "Power and Authority in Nigeria's Independent Churches" in *West Africa Religion*, 20(1/2), 1983, p.37, gives a figure of 24.7% for the Independent churches' share of the Christian population of Oyo state, but this figure does not differentiate between the Spiritual churches and the Pentecostal evangelicals and therefore gives a somewhat exaggerated picture of the expansion of the Spiritual churches and their membership. The article appears also in Hackett, ed., (1987), pp.161-77, but here she adds a Postscript on the death in Lagos on 10th September 1985 of Samuel Bileou Oschoffa the founder of Celestial Church of Christ.

124 Turner, (1967-a), p.128. The shout was their version of *la illa ila Allah* (there is no God but Allah) and Adejobi's interpretation of it.

125 *ibid.*

126 Sankoh-Cole, *ibid.*

127 Mereweather-Thompson, *ibid.*, p.18.

128 Turner, (1967-b), p.56.

129 *ibid.*, pp.349-53.

130 In *Bantu Prophets in South Africa*, Sundkler mentions animal sacrifice only on pp.250-1 and p.260, while Peel in *Aladura: a Religious Movement among the Yoruba* refers to animal sacrifice only once, on p.117.

131 Fashole-Luke, (1969), p.11.

132 Harry Sawyerr, "Sacrifice" in *Biblical Revelation and African Beliefs*, eds. Dickson and Ellingworth, (London: 1969), pp.57-82.

133 Idowu, *ibid.*, p.118. For Idowu's description of the Yoruba sacrificial system and its rituals see, *ibid.*, pp.118-25.

134 T. K. Davies, *ibid.*, p.85.

135 Turner, *ibid.*, p.350.

- 136 Bishop Jenkins, *ibid.*
- 137 Claudius Davies, *ibid.* The lady in question is a very close relative.
- 138 Mereweather-Thompson, *ibid.*, pp.83-84.
- 139 Larty-Baker, *ibid.* Rev. Larty-Baker was involved with both Church of Salvation and Church of the Lord (Aladura) during the 1974 to 1977 period and maintains that the practices of both churches are practically identical.
- 140 Rev. Ngobeh, *ibid.*
- 141 Turner, *ibid.*, pp.67-68.
- 142 Interview held with Rev. Speck, Evangelism Secretary, Christian Council of Sierra Leone, at CCSL offices, King Harman Road, Freetown, on 8/7/92.
- 143 Bishop Jenkins, *ibid.*
- 144 Sankoh-Cole, *ibid.*
- 145 Mereweather-Thompson, *ibid.*, p.68.
- 146 Sankoh-Cole, *ibid.*
- 147 Turner, *ibid.*, p.350. This has also been confirmed by former members of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) as for example Claudius Davies, *ibid.*
- 148 Osador Imasogie, *Guidelines for Christian Theology in Africa*, (Achimota, Ghana: Africa Christian Press, 1983), pp.61-62; *African Traditional Religion*, (Ibadan: University Press Ltd., 1985, second edition), p.74. On Satan as the "trickster-messenger" see Benjamin C. Ray, *African Religions: Symbols, Ritual and Community*, (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1976), p.110.
- 149 Sidney Davies, *ibid.*
- 150 When *Ngewoh* departed from his cave on earth to dwell in the sky, he left behind a fowl with instructions that when his children really needed his help they should offer the fowl in sacrifice with this appeal for his intervention. When he is called back for his fowl he will personally intervene in the dispute and smite with a curse.
- 151 Sidney Davies, *ibid.*
- 152 Bishop Browne, *ibid.*
- 153 *ibid.*
- 154 T. K. Davies, *ibid.*
- 155 Fofana, *ibid.*, p.7.
- 156 Turner, *ibid.*, p.11.
- 157 Adejobi, (c.1978), p.16.
- 158 Sidney Davies, *ibid.*
- 159 Larty-Baker, *ibid.*
- 160 Turner, *ibid.*, p.106.
- 161 *ibid.*
- 162 Parrinder, *ibid.*, p.124.
- 163 Adejobi, *ibid.*, p.10.
- 164 Larty-Baker, (5/3/90), *ibid.*
- 165 Turner, *ibid.*, p.105.
- 166 Sankoh-Cole, *ibid.*
- 167 John 4:23-24.
- 168 Turner, *ibid.*, p.221.
- 169 Adejobi, *ibid.*, p.17.
- 170 Turner, *ibid.*, pp.225-6.
- 171 *ibid.*, p.226.
- 172 *ibid.*, p.224.
- 173 *ibid.*, pp.229-30.
- 174 Sankoh-Cole, *ibid.* This particular conversation took place at K22, Kortright, Freetown, on 13/6/92.
- 175 Mereweather-Thompson, *ibid.*, p.70.
- 176 Larty-Baker, *ibid.*
- 177 Sankoh-Cole, *ibid.* This particular conversation took place at FBC on 5/3/92.
- 178 Claudius Davies, *ibid.*

- 179 *ibid.*
- 180 Sidney Davies, *ibid.*
- 181 *ibid.*
- 182 Bishop Browne, *ibid.*
- 183 Hackett, (1981), p.9.
- 184 Hackett, (1983), p.38.
- 185 Hackett, (1981), p.9.
- 186 *ibid.*, p.11.
- 187 Johannes Pedersen, *Israel its Life and Culture*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1959).
- 188 Turner, *ibid.*, p.59.
- 189 Michael Banton, "An Independent African Church in Sierra Leone" in *Hibbert Journal*, 55, (1), October 1956, p.62.
- 190 Turner, (1967-b), p.43.
- 191 Fofana, *ibid.*, p.8.
- 192 Interviews with Rev. Sankoh-Cole and Rev. Larty-Baker gave the impression that Adejobi's life style was open to much criticism. Larty-Baker insisted Adejobi was "a great adulterer". Recorded interview held with Rev. Larty-Baker at the Aqua Sports Club, Aberdeen, Freetown, on 26/2/90.
- 193 Sankoh-Cole, *ibid.*
- 194 Mereweather-Thompson, *ibid.*, pp.89-90, quoting from *Wee Yone*, 18th September 1977.
- 195 Sankoh-Cole, *ibid.*
- 196 Solomon Sheku, a research paper presented to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, 1988-89.
- 197 *ibid.*
- 198 Sidney Davies, *ibid.*
- 199 Sankoh-Cole, *ibid.*
- 200 Turner, *ibid.*, p.60.
- 201 Fashole-Luke, (1968), pp.136-7.
- 202 Taylor, (1958), p.175.
- 203 Turner, *ibid.*, p.207. Turner was commenting on the rite as it is used in the Church of the Lord (Aladura)'s Communion service.
- 204 Larty-Baker, *ibid.*
- 205 Turner, *ibid.*, p.348. The vision is recorded in Oshitelu's 1930 compilation of prophecies.
- 206 *ibid.*, p.192.
- 207 *ibid.*, p.335.
- 208 *ibid.*, p.194.
- 209 *ibid.*, p.260.
- 210 Concerning the body of Christ, Peter Mulenga, the founder of the Zambian prophet-healing church, the Mutumwa Church, declared in a sermon delivered on 13th June, 1982: **When the body of Christ went into the grave and rotted [italics mine], the Spirit rose. It was that same Spirit that later met with the disciples. It was also that same Spirit that the Father wanted back and received back. It will also be the same with us. God will not get our bodies back but he will get our spirits back.** Dillon-Malone, (1987), p.22.
- 211 Samuel Bileou Oschoffa, a Dahomean with Yoruba ancestry, died in Lagos on 10th September 1985 after being involved in a car accident on the Lagos-Ibadan expressway. As his death approached he said, "Why should people think that Oschoffa cannot die? Jesus Christ died. He was only thirty-three. Why shouldn't I die? I am seventy-six." Hackett, (1987), p.176.
- 212 Hymn 92, verses 3-4, in the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star hymnal, *Sure Foundation Hymnary*, extols Olumba as:

**Olumba Obu is the King
Great Saviour and a helper**

King of Kings, Lord redeemer is on
Earth among men to dwell.

No more are there tears in our eyes
Olumba wiped them away.
No more sorrows on our way, old things
Have been done away with.

A song composed in his honour makes Olumba a Nigerian replacement of Christ:

Come unto Olumba,
Ye who are weary and worn,
Bring unto Him your burdens,
And hearts with anguish torn.

Come unto Him, ye toilers,
Tired of stress and strife,
Find in Him a resting place,
And calm for that troubled life.

Come unto OLUMBA,
Ye restless, homeless and friendless,
He will give you a resting place,
A place in HIS HOLY Home.

He knows what it is to be weary,
With no place to lay the head,
He shares the sorrows of man,
And wept beside the dead.

Come unto OLUMBA,
Ye who are in distress,
In HIM you will find
A sweet and perfect rest. Mbon, *ibid.*, pp.211-3.

213 Tuboku-Metzger, *ibid.*, p.22.

214 G. C. Oosthuizen, (1968), p.129, quoted in Bucher, *ibid.*, p.157.

215 For spirit mediumship and possession among indigenous peoples see J. H. M. Beattie & J. Middleton, eds., *Spirit Mediumship and Society in Africa*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969). For spirit possession in the Shona "Churches of the Spirit" see Bucher, *ibid.*, pp.151-66. Bucher maintains the Churches of the Spirit "regard the Holy Spirit in the light of the Shona traditional territorial spirits, believing him to use their leaders and prophets as his mediums." *ibid.*, p.151.

216 Larty-Baker, *ibid.*

217 Sankoh-Cole, *ibid.*

218 Interview held with the Venerable Archdeacon S. O. D. Macarthy, Dip. Th., at the Church of the Lord (Aladura) Cathedral, 17 O'Neil Street, Freetown, on the occasion of the first anniversary memorial service for Primate Adejobi on 17/5/92.

219 Personal conversation held with Professor Fashole-Luke.

220 *ibid.*

221 Daneel, (1974), pp.352f., quoted in Bucher, *ibid.*, p.158.

222 Dillon-Malone, *ibid.*, pp.214-5. Dillon-Malone describes the *chima* ritual, which has many similarities with possession experiences in the Spiritual churches of Freetown, as observed in Peter Mulenga's Mutumwa Church:

The *chima* ritual is an essential part of the therapeutic process of Mutumwa healing. It is a ritual which confronts the perception of spirit forces in the lives of people. While clearly having a close affinity to a ceremony common to many Central Bantu-speaking peoples of Africa - that is, a ceremony in which people with certain illnesses believed to be caused by alien spirits are enabled by dancing to the rhythmic beating of drums

to enter into a state of trance during which the harmful spirits are appeased - the *chima* ritual as practiced by the Mutumwas has been redefined in terms of the biblical holy spirit.... Strictly speaking, it is not solely a rite of exorcism but rather a ceremony in which the holy spirit is allowed to possess one thereby removing the presence of undesirable spirits.... Patient are directed to sit in a straight line on the ground with their heads down.... They are then instructed just to sit there quietly and not to resist whatever may happen. They are then prayed over and the holy spirit is invoked to enter into them.

As the choir begins to sing, all those present who stand around the patients in a circle join in. The singing is accompanied by the rhythmic clapping of hands. As the volume of sound grows louder and louder, an atmosphere of heightened expectancy spreads among the participants ... an element of disappointment is expressed in the case of patients who fail to *chima*, that is, to express the coming out of the spirit. This occurs at the moment when the patient falls back on the ground. While this may take place in a very quiet and gentle fashion, it more usually takes a violent form. The time required for this to happen varies enormously. For some, it may only be a matter of seconds. For others, it may take the best part of half an hour. For most, however, it takes from between five to ten minutes.... The shaking first of all manifests itself in the legs. Then it makes its way up the arms and to the region of the chest as the shoulders begin to shake. Finally the head begins to shake violently up and down and back and forward as if some force has taken over there. This results in the patient being thrown back on the ground in a fit of frenzied activity which is followed by a rolling about on the ground as arms and legs are thrown about in all directions. A variety of sounds, shouting and screaming may accompany this activity.

Once a patient begins to *chima*, he or she is removed from the line of patients and allowed to roll about at will elsewhere. In the case of women, female Mutumwas are careful to tie their long Zambian skirts ... around their legs. In the case of patients who fail to *chima* easily, Mutumwa healers will assist them by using a variety of techniques such as touching them gently on the forehead or chest, keeping a copy of the Bible open in front of them, or creating the movement of air by waving a piece of cloth in front of their faces.

For further description and comment where the emphasis is on the exorcism of the "bad" spirits which are perceived to be the main cause of sickness, see Dillon-Malone, (1987), pp.17-19.

The *chima* healings and exorcisms in what he calls "the church of the spirits" have been severely criticised by Emmanuel Milingo, former Catholic Archbishop of Lusaka, who had himself won renown as an exorcist. He sees the whole operation as the work of demons who "inflict both spiritual and physical pain and pretend to temporarily heal the patients". The "spirit-healers" who "diagnose diseases when they go into trance" have been cleverly recruited into their work by these demonic spirits. Milingo writes:

When the patients who are subject to the control of the spirits come together for healing, they also go into a trance and according to the orders, if they are told to dance, they dance as long as they can till they are tired. This is where a human being is humiliated, becomes cheap, eats raw meat or soil, performs all sorts of strange bodily gestures and is not aware that he/she is naked if there is nobody to give a small cover for his/her body. To many people, especially here in the town where many are ignorant of what is happening, this is taken as a drama in the streets and anyone can come and watch where there is no paying a fee. See Dillon-Malone, *ibid.*, pp.25-26.

²²³ Baeta, *Prophetism in Ghana*, (London: SCM, 1962), p.140.

²²⁴ Sankoh-Cole, *ibid.*

²²⁵ For background reading on the subject of psychiatry in the African religious context see, A. Kiev, (ed.), *Magic, Faith and Healing*, (New York: The Free Press, 1966), particularly A. Kiev, "The Study of Folk Psychiatry" in *ibid.*, pp.27ff.; M. Gelfand, "Psychiatric Disorders" in

ibid., pp.160ff.; T. A. Lambo, "Patterns of Psychiatric Care in Developing African Countries" in *ibid.*, pp.446ff.

²²⁶ For a good treatment of this issue see Dennis J. Bennett, "The Gifts of the Holy Spirit" in *The Charismatic Movement*, ed. M. P. Hamilton, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1975), pp.15-32. A different understanding is expressed by psychotherapist John P. Kildahl in his essay "Psychological Observations" in *ibid.*, pp.124-42. For a good exegesis of Paul's treatment of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians and the use of the terms *charisma* and *pneumatikon* see Leon Morris, *The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians: an Introduction and Commentary*, (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1985, revised edition), pp.162-99. For a scholarly treatment of the subject of charismatic gifts see Siegfried Grossmann, *Stewards of God's Grace*, (Exeter: The Paternoster Press, 1981), who also supplies an extensive bibliography on the subject. See also Walter J. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals*, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1972). Other important works on the subject of the power of the Holy Spirit in the Church include Michael Harper, *Power for the Body of Christ*, (London: 1964), Jurgen Moltman, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1977).

²²⁷ For background treatment of the subject of black-messianism see, Marie-Louise Martin, *The Biblical Concept of Messianism and Messianism in South Africa*, (Morija: Sesuto Book Depot, 1964).

A credal statement of one of the Kimbanguist churches shows the developed black messianism of the Kimbanguists. While the Church of the Lord (Aladura) have not elevated Oshitelu to the status of a Black Messiah there are some parallels in how they are both regarded as special mediators between God and the African people. Andersson writes:

He is the one in whom lives the Lord God, the gracious father of the Blacks ... the priest that the Lord God has exalted to be an eternal priest, like the priesthood of Melchizedek. He is the priest of the Black race ... he is the cup with the oil of blessing for the black race ... he is the ruler's rod of the Blacks ... the mighty sword of government that the Lord has given to the Black race ... he is the banner of dominion for the Black race ... the shining lamp that the Lord has given to the Black race ... and prepared the way upon which the Black race may enter heaven ... the river with the living water for the Black race He has become the stair on which they reach the heaven of their God *Mfumu* Simon Kimbangu is the open door that the Lord God has opened among the Black race that they may enter by it He is the door through which they enter the heaven of their God. Andersson, *ibid.*, pp.195-96.

²²⁸ Turner, *ibid.*, p.351.

²²⁹ Dillon-Malone comments on the attitude towards Christ in the prophet-healing Zambian Mutumwa Church:

Christ is looked upon as the privileged bodily form in which and through which God chose to communicate his Spirit to humans. In the words of Peter Mulenga:

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God which comes through his son, Jesus Christ. The most important thing, however, is the Spirit of God. When Jesus was returning to the Father, he said that he would ask him to send the Holy Spirit. Jesus himself was not the "owner" of the Holy Spirit. He had to get it from God. Dillon-Malone, *ibid.*, pp.21-22.

²³⁰ Bishop Browne, *ibid.*

²³¹ *ibid.*

²³² Sankoh-Cole, *ibid.*

²³³ Sidney Davies, *ibid.*

²³⁴ Sankoh-Cole, *ibid.*

²³⁵ Fofana, *ibid.*, pp.12-13.

PART 111

THE PENTECOSTAL-EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT

**CHAPTER SEVEN: THE ORIGINS AND GROWTH OF PENTECOSTAL-
EVANGELICAL CHURCHES IN SIERRA LEONE**

**CHAPTER EIGHT: THE PENTECOSTAL-EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT
SPREADS AND INDEPENDENT AFRICAN EVANGELICAL
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**CHAPTER NINE: RECENT FREETOWN MASS EVANGELISM CRUSADES
AND THE PRESENT STATE OF THE PENTECOSTAL-
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CHAPTER SEVEN

THE ORIGINS AND GROWTH OF PENTECOSTAL-EVANGELICAL CHURCHES IN SIERRA LEONE

A SURVEY OF THE PENTECOSTAL AND CHARISMATIC MOVEMENTS

Hollenweger traces the roots of the modern Pentecostal Movement back to Wesley who:

... made a distinction between the sanctified, or those who had been baptised in the Spirit, and ordinary Christians. This view was adopted and simplified by the evangelists and theologians of the American Holiness movement... such as Asa Mahan and C. G. Finney.¹

Snyder in *The Divided Flame*, a study of the Wesleyans and the Charismatic Renewal, entitles one chapter, "The Charismatic Wesley".² Modern Pentecostalism grew out of the nineteenth century Holiness Movement, which was itself a revival movement within Methodism which taught the Wesleyan doctrine that entire sanctification could be had through a definite experience of the Holy Spirit subsequent to regeneration.³ Bloch-Hoell, in *The Pentecostal Movement*, argues that Charles G. Finney and his co-workers, Thomas Upman and Asa Mahan, were the founders of the Holiness Movement, and that:

In their preaching Finney and his colleagues aimed at a definite, and preferably datable, conversion, a Puritan attitude to life, and Spirit baptism as a particular experience, together with the possibility of entire sanctification in this life.⁴

R. A. Torrey carried on Finney's doctrine of the Holy Spirit. In *Baptism in the Holy Spirit* (1895), Torrey taught that Baptism in the Holy Spirit was a post-conversion experience open to all genuine believers who lived a life of obedience, prayer and surrender. It was a datable experience, an enduement with power for soul-winning and you knew when you received it. Torrey did not make speaking in tongues the proof that Spirit Baptism had taken place. Moody and Sankey were part of the Holiness Movement. Other leading figures were William E. Boardman, Robert Pearsall Smith and Andrew Murray. Murray pioneered the movement

in South Africa and prepared the ground for the emergence of the Zionist and Pentecostal-evangelical movements there. Smith brought the American Holiness Movement to England where the Keswick Convention became its main focus. H. C. G. Moule, Bishop of Durham, and F. B. Meyer, a Baptist minister, became the leading figures in Britain. Bloch-Hoell describes the general character of Holiness Christianity:

The main theme of the experimental Christianity was the jubilant message of the possibility of Christian perfection in this life. Sanctification was often connected with a definite experience, the Spirit baptism. With this preaching was often combined a vivid, if often naive, miracle-faith. Supernatural healing was preached and practised by several Holiness preachers. The idea of physical healing by divine intervention or mental influence was fairly widespread at that time, especially in America. So too were more or less confident expectations of the second coming of Christ. Motoric outbursts of ecstasy, such as glossolalia, involuntary screams, and convulsions, were already appearing among the Quakers and Shakers.... This kind of physical phenomenon has accompanied American revivalism from the very beginning of the Great Awakening, often in the form of epidemic cases of screaming, trembling, falling, and fainting.... Physical phenomena also occurred during Finney's activities, and motoric movements like "jerking, falling, barking, rolling and dancing", were common at nineteenth-century camp meetings. The Holiness Movement warmly encouraged the practice of such or related phenomena, and later the Pentecostal Movement demanded it, *emphasising one kind of motoric movement above all: glossolalia.*

Thus, before the Pentecostal Movement as such got underway, scattered groups and individuals existed within the general ambit of the Holiness Movement and the fringes of Methodism, who had experienced the Baptism in the Holy Spirit and had spoken in tongues. The *charisma* of tongues was in evidence among the Scottish Irvingites as early as 1830.⁵

In autumn 1900, a Holiness Movement Bible study group in Topeka, Kansas, led by Charles Fox Parham, formed themselves into an interdenominational Bible college called Bethel College.⁶ The building was locally known as "Stone's Folly".⁷ The thirty men and women decided the only textbook they would use would be the Bible. The topic most attracting their attention was, "What is the Bible evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Ghost?" Their unanimous conclusion was, "Speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance." On 1st January 1901, Agnes Ozman spoke in tongues. Parham, who claimed to have earlier been divinely healed from crippled legs, spoke in tongues on 3rd January 1901. Others received the Baptism in the Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues. Elmer T. Clark traces the

start of the Pentecostal Movement to a Holiness Revival led by the Baptist preacher R. G. Spurling in Monroe County, Tennessee, in 1886.⁸ There is no record of tongues-speaking having taken place then. Spurling and his son were expelled from the Baptist Union. In 1892 Spurling Jr. held a revival where it is recorded that several were baptised in the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues. Because of the lack of reliable records, however, Bloch-Hoell prefers to date the start of the Pentecostal Movement proper to 1901 at Topeka, in Parham's new Apostolic Faith Church. Parham set the Pentecostal Movement's theological agenda. His simple literalistic biblicism, which "neither makes allowance for the history of the church nor is able to consider the Scriptures historically", laid the foundations for the Pentecostal Movement's doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and tied the movement into the theological straight-jacket of tongues being the initial and essential evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Parham and his followers spread their Pentecostal teaching throughout the South.⁹ In the American Holiness Movement the ground-swell of interest in a deeper experience of the power of the Holy Spirit was growing. This was intensified by the reports of the emotional and enthusiastic revival which broke out in Wales in 1904.¹⁰ In 1905 Parham moved to Houston, Texas, and opened a Bible training school with twenty-five students. One student was William J. Seymour, "a poor Southern Holiness preacher".¹¹ In 1906 Seymour was invited by Neelly Terry to preach at the Negro Church of the Nazarene mission she pastored in Los Angeles. Although Seymour himself had not experienced the baptism in the Holy Spirit with speaking in tongues, his first message was an uncompromising statement of Parham's doctrine; "Anyone who does not speak in tongues is not baptised with the Holy Spirit."¹² Members of the mission who claimed to have received the baptism in the Holy Spirit without the evidence speaking in tongues resented his message. Neelly Terry had Seymour and his two female assistants locked out of the church. Seymour was taken in by a Richard Asbury and meetings, "accompanied by unusual religious ecstasy", were conducted in the living room at Bonnie Brae Street.¹³ On 9th April "the fire came down", several were baptised in the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues. The first was an eight year old Negro boy.¹⁴

Seymour hired a run-down, abandoned Methodist church at 312 Azusa Street. The Pentecostal revival immediately attracted press attention. On April 18th the *Los Angeles Times* reported on its front page:

In a tumble-down shack on Azusa Street ... devotees practice fanatical rites, preach the wildest theories and work themselves into a state of mad excitement.... Coloured people and a sprinkling of whites compose the congregation, and ... the worshippers spend hours swaying forth and back in a nerve-racking attitude of prayer and supplication. They claim to have the "gift of tongues" and to be able to comprehend the babel.

For three years 312 Azusa Street was the central focus of a nation-wide Pentecostal revival which saw much of the Holiness Movement going over to Pentecostalism. By the end of 1906 there were nine Pentecostal congregations in Los Angeles. Seymour who has been described as "black with only one eye...meek, plain spoken and no orator", founded the Apostolic Faith Gospel Mission.¹⁵ Hollenweger writes:

The ecstatic outbursts in the original church, where the floor was covered with sawdust and the pews made of planks laid on empty packing cases, sometimes knew no limits.... The early stages of the revival met bitter opposition from the Holiness churches, and other churches also; they were a laughing stock to the press. The *New York American* of 3 December 1906 reported:

Faith Gives Quaint Sect New Languages to Convert Africa. Votaries of Odd Religion Nightly see "Miracles" in West Side Room. Led by Negro Elder. The leaders of this strange movement are for the most part Negroes.

Originally Parham was the leader of the Azusa Street revival, but from November 1907 on his name no longer appears on the official letterhead. In 1908 the whites withdrew.¹⁶

Hollenweger attempts to put the Azusa Street phenomenon into historical context:

The "Pentecostal experience of Los Angeles" was neither the leading astray of the Church by demons (as the German Evangelical movement claimed), nor the eschatological pouring out of the Holy Spirit (as the Pentecostal movement itself claims) but an outburst of enthusiastic religion of a kind well-known and frequent in the history of Negro churches in America which derived its specifically Pentecostal features from Parham's theory that speaking with tongues is a necessary concomitant of the baptism of the Spirit.

I do not wish to assert here that the Holy Spirit was not at work in the Los Angeles revival. I agree with the pioneer British Pentecostal Alexander A. Boddy who wrote:

It was something very extraordinary, that white pastors from the South were eagerly prepared to go to Los Angeles to the Negroes, to have fellowship with them and to receive through their prayers and intercessions the blessings of the Spirit. And it was still more wonderful that these white pastors went back to the South and reported to the members of their congregations that they had been together with Negroes, that they had prayed in one Spirit and received the same blessing as they.¹⁷

As Pentecostal churches sprang up in various parts of the United States the direct influence of Azusa Street on the movement decreased. Splits arose over the issue of a two or three-stage salvation. Coming out of the Holiness Movement the first Pentecostals held that conversion came first, next a crisis experience of sanctification, then the Baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues. W. H. Durham, a Baptist evangelist who was baptised in the Holy Spirit in 1907, proposed a two-stage salvation, first regeneration and secondly the Baptism in the Holy Spirit with speaking in tongues. Sanctification was a process continuing throughout the Christian's life. Assemblies of God, who spearheaded the Pentecostal-evangelical movement in Sierra Leone, follow the two-stage salvation doctrine. Parham's teaching on tongues being the decisive initial evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit has remained the basic and distinctive tenet of classical Pentecostalism. Mainline evangelicals, particularly the Reformed Evangelicals, tended to identify regeneration with the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, and to believe that speaking in tongues was a charismatic gift for evangelism whose operation was restricted to the Apostolic age. Since then it has ceased to operate, except as a Satanic counterfeit, as its function became redundant when the canon of Scripture was completed.

Pentecostal meetings were characterised by ecstatic utterances in tongues, prophesyings, laying on of hands for healing, and unrestrained expressions of emotionalism. Emphasising the immanent return of the Lord Jesus and the end of the age, Pentecostalism quickly became an international movement and soon spread to Europe, India, Latin America - where at present eight out of every ten evangelical Protestants is a Pentecostal - and South Africa.¹⁸ Although the early Pentecostals did not intend to organise themselves as separate denominations they were forced into this by the virulent opposition they attracted from the evangelical churches, particularly the Holiness Movement, because of their sometimes excessive emotionalism and the rigidity of their doctrine concerning the baptism in the Spirit and speaking in tongues. The Assemblies of God (AOG), which originated in Hot Springs, Arkansas in 1914, expanded rapidly to become the largest Pentecostal denomination.

The Charismatic Movement was a radical development of the Pentecostal Movement which appeared within the historic denominations in the early 1960s. They were radical *vis a vis* some fundamental tenets of the "Classical" Pentecostals. For example, they were less dogmatic concerning speaking in tongues as the essential initial evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and also more prepared to engage in ecumenical dialogue with the "liberals" and "modernists" in the mainline denominations. As regards ecclesiology they were, as described by Gifford, "low key pentecostals who remain in the mainline Protestant denominations or even in the Catholic Church."¹⁹ The literature on the Charismatic Movement, or the Second Wave, is extensive.²⁰ While Charismatics generally have been willing to remain within the mainline denominations, many found it impossible to continue and established independent "house churches". Sometimes the movement, particularly the independent Charismatic fellowships and churches, is called Neopentecostalism. Missiologist Peter Wagner of Fuller Theological Seminary comments:

The closing decade of the twentieth century is shaping up to be, in the opinion of many observers, the decade of the greatest outpouring of the Holy Spirit around the world - at least in living memory. The harvest has never been riper. Year after year more people are becoming Christians, and more Christian churches are being multiplied than ever before. The book of Acts appears as a mere pilot project compared to what God is doing today.

An increasingly visible and influential component of all that God is doing is what we know as the independent charismatic movement. This movement, which David Barrett calls the Second Wave, is now the fastest-growing segment of Christianity in many sectors of the world, the United States included. While its beginnings can be traced back to the 1960s, the great growth spurt of the independent charismatic movement began in the early 1980s. Already, in a surprising number of world-class cities, the largest Christian church in the city is independent charismatic.²¹

David Barrett classifies the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement as Classical Pentecostalism, Charismatic Renewal, and Third Wave.²² By 1983, Wagner was using the term "Third Wave" to describe:

... straightline evangelicals and other Christians who are open to the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit that the Pentecostals and charismatics have experienced, but without becoming either charismatic or Pentecostal.²³

Evangelicals, influenced by Wagner and John Wimber, who taught the controversial "Signs, Wonders and Church Growth" class at Fuller Theological Seminary, were encouraged to

receive charismatic experiences outside the framework of Pentecostal and Charismatic dogma. Wagner described himself as a Third Waver:

I see myself as neither a charismatic nor a Pentecostal. I belong to the Lake Avenue Congregational Church. I'm a Congregationalist. My church is not a charismatic church, although some of our members are charismatic.... However, our church is more and more open to the same way that the Holy Spirit does work among charismatics. For example, our pastor gives an invitation after every service ... for people who need physical healing or inner healing to come forward and go to the prayer room and be anointed with oil and prayed for, and we have teams of people who know how to pray for the sick.

We like to think that we are doing it in a congregational way: we are not doing it in a charismatic way. But we are getting the same results. I myself have several major theological differences with Pentecostals and charismatics, which don't mar any kind of mutual ministry, but keep me from saying I'm a charismatic.²⁴

Wagner takes the position that the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is not a second stage experience, but takes place at conversion and is not to be sought as a separate work of grace. Speaking in tongues is one of many gifts of the Holy Spirit which all Christians may receive as the Holy Spirit distributes and is not directly linked to the Pentecostal Baptism in the Holy Spirit.²⁵

Some Pentecostals and Charismatics are suspicious of the Third Wave. In a 1989 article entitled "Old Paths", Dennis Bennett, the Anglican bishop at van Nuys, California, whose 1959 experience of being baptised in the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues was a major factor in introducing the Charismatic Movement into the Anglican Church, claimed the Third Wave contained the seeds of the destruction of the Charismatic Movement. According to Bennett, Wagner held "a modified evangelical position that clearly leaves out the very essence and meaning of Pentecost."²⁶ He acknowledges that this is the most open stance yet taken by straight-line evangelicals towards Pentecostalism and the Charismatic Movement, but warns that a Third Wave theology, "would allow preachers and priests ... to breath a sigh of relief, since they need no longer seek a definite experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit." Bennett claimed the attitude of Third Wavers towards Pentecostals and Charismatics was, "If you good people would just stop insisting that there is a baptism in the Holy Spirit following

salvation, and that it is important to speak in tongues, we will all get along fine."²⁷ A further development called "Postcharismatic" has been observed by Barrett.²⁸ Pousson comments:

A major dilemma is confronting renewal leaders within mainline churches today.... After about two or three years of involvement in charismatic prayer groups, most Catholic and mainline Protestants begin to lose interest and become what David Barrett calls "postcharismatics." Based on Barrett's estimates, more than half of the 140 million charismatics around the world today are actually postcharismatics.... They are no longer consistently involved in the charismatic movement. Given this dilemma, the visible fruits of the renewal could eventually slip through the fingers of the historic churches.²⁹

He further states:

This postcharismatic phenomenon points up the significance of the role being played by independent charismatic churches today. This is where the charismatic renewal is growing the fastest. Like new wineskins for new wine, these churches serve as a necessary, nondenominational expression of the renewal, preserving the fruits of the movement, and acting as a catalyst for ongoing renewal of traditional churches.³⁰

While independent Pentecostal-Charismatic churches are proliferating during the present Pentecostal-evangelical revival, the Third Wave has not affected the Pentecostal Movement in Sierra Leone where, inspired by the indigenous religious pneumatology, spiritual power experiences and encounters are earnestly sought after. Speaking in tongues is generally accepted as a sign not only of being initially baptised in the Holy Spirit, but of being filled with the Spirit at any time. Pentecostalism in Sierra Leone has, until the 1980s, been dominated by the American version established by the AOG missionaries. This is now changing in Freetown as independent Pentecostal-evangelical churches proliferate and the process of indigenisation accelerates. These newer independent, indigenous, Pentecostal-evangelical churches sometimes call themselves Charismatic churches, for example Transceia Charismatic Church founded by Ghanaian John Oppon in 1988, but they are certainly not replicas of the Charismatic churches of the West. They are in reality Pneumatological churches, and only Charismatic in that they would accept several manifestations of the Holy Spirit as indicative of being baptised in the Holy Spirit, and these manifestations are generally highly charged emotionally. It is better when dealing with the Pentecostal-Charismatic phenomenon in its present form and state in Sierra Leone, to continue for the

time being to use the term Pentecostal-evangelical. The missionary planted Christians in Action Church emphasises the regeneration experience, but takes a low-key stance on speaking in tongues and does not regard it as being the initial evidence of being baptised in the Holy Spirit. This is the most Charismatic church in Freetown in the Western sense of the term. The recent penetration of Pentecostal-evangelical revivalism into the Anglican church in Freetown through the initiative of the late Bishop Thompson, despite some resistance from his senior clergy, could lead to the rise of a Charismatic wave affecting this ailing church. Much depends on the new bishop having the same vision of a breath on the Holy Spirit being imperative if the Anglican Church in Sierra Leone is to survive.

Manifestations of spiritual power, ecstatic experiences, emotionalism and enthusiasm were features which had practically died out in Freetown churches by the third quarter of the nineteenth century, following the decline and demise of the Nova Scotian chapels in the face of ascendant Creoledom, with its Victorian values, and missionary take-over. Flickering embers of the Nova Scotians' revivalistic fervour continued in a handful of women's prayer fellowships such as the Martha Davies Confidential Benevolent Society, which developed into the Jane Bloomer Church, and the Mami Pinkney Band at Dworzark Farm. Here people still came under conviction of sin, fell down under the power of God, and could, "fen the Lord", "fen peace" and "fen Spirit". Manifestations of religious enthusiasm, stifled by the orderly, intellectualist, European forms of worship adopted by the Krio educated elite, were not a concern of most Freetown churches until fairly recent times. Although challenged by the African style and exuberance of the Spiritual churches, the Krio generally dismissed the "Adejobis" as charlatans and "hand-bag prophets", and their followers as "empty headed women" who were easily led astray. Only in the late 1980s, in the light of the chronic decline in its active membership, has the Anglican Church, the largest single denomination in Freetown since 1860, begun to seriously address the issue of rival movements.³¹ As late as 1990 Canon Fashole-Luke was still exhibiting a certain amount of Anglican Krio complacency in the face of the exodus of the young members from the Anglican Church:

It goes on all the time. They maintain a dual membership. They go into the Aladura or Pentecostal churches, but they retain their membership of the more established churches. Not that it is not a cause for concern, but it is something which has been happening for quite some time. I suppose we'll just keep plodding on and see how things go.³²

The main threat to the Anglicans, and Methodists, of which there are five types in Freetown, has come, not from the Spiritual churches, but from the Pentecostal-evangelicals.³³ This movement did not make the same dramatic, high profile entrance onto the Freetown stage which Adejobi and the Church of the Lord (Aladura) did in 1947. However, since its inception in 1905, it has grown steadily, and now poses a much more serious challenge to the mainline denominations than the Spirituals.

THE ORIGINS OF THE PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT IN SIERRA LEONE

As early as 1905, a year before the Azusa Street revival - popularly and erroneously regarded as the origin of the world-wide Pentecostal movement - an independent Pentecostal mission was opened in Freetown by two American ladies, Jennie Fuller and Grace Belshar.³⁴ This was three years before the first Pentecostal missionaries arrived in South Africa, and nine years before the first AOG General Council was organised in 1914. Miss Belshar left soon after the mission was established. While on furlough, Miss Fuller married James Hare and together they maintained a Pentecostal witness in the city until Mrs. Hare died and the mission closed down.³⁵ Typical of the early Pentecostal missionaries, no real attempt was made to found a Pentecostal church. The aim was to bring souls to Christ through personal evangelism, stimulate Pentecostal worship, and encourage the local Church. In 1916, Ira and Eve Shakley were sent out to Freetown by their Pentecostal Church in Cleveland, Ohio, to reopen the Pentecostal mission.³⁶ This was a year before Prophet Harris' meteoric and somewhat inglorious visit to Freetown in July 1917 which was reported in the *Weekly News*:

He preached of death and destruction to the world because of sin. He carried a Staff with a Cross at the top end and a "Shake-Shake" (a calabash with beads strung loosely over it), this he said was a "Bell" calling people to assemble to hear him and a "harp" to captivate the multitude. He also denounced the Priest of every church. He

led people into fits of ecstasy with songs and many a time the vast throng would fall unconscious.³⁷

As a result of a paralysed woman being healed as he prayed and placed his Bible on her head, Harris began to impress as a healer. However, he suddenly disappeared taking with him two young ladies who had been functioning as his prophetesses. The Harris influence on Freetown was ephemeral, his main impact being among his fellow Kru. It was among the Kru, however, that Pentecostal-evangelicalism was about to take deep root in Freetown.

The Shakleys were officially appointed as missionaries to Sierra Leone in 1920 by the AOG Foreign Missions Department and sponsored by the Illinois District. On 10th December 1921 they were joined by Swedish born Jennie Carlson from Cleveland, Ohio.³⁸ Despite being dogged by ill health, Ira Shakley continued as AOG missionary in Freetown until 1939.³⁹ Initially they concentrated their missionary efforts on the Krio, but they also had contact with Kru and Limba who lived in the area around their rented premises at 46 Campbell Street.⁴⁰ The house was "an old rocky affair" which the owner wanted to pull down and reconstruct. The Krio owners of the better houses were unwilling to rent to the Pentecostals. Their prayer and Pentecostal fellowship meetings were attended mostly by women. Neighbours would report them to the landlord when the meetings became noisy. The missionaries visited homes and prayed for the sick. They ran a well attended Sunday School. A missionary who stopped in Freetown early in 1921 *en route* to Liberia reported 130 children in the Sunday School.⁴¹ Mrs. Shakley reported a baptismal service - held on 2nd January 1922 - where fourteen men and fourteen women were baptised. All except one were Kru.

It was a very precious service. Some were shaking under the power and tears were seen to run down the faces of others. It seemed good to see so many men.⁴²

Shortly afterwards a notable healing took place. A Kru woman with, according to Jennie Carlson, "the most dreadful swelling I've ever seen", had tried all sorts of medicines, but to no avail. She announced she wanted to wash and be clean from all her medicines, and have the missionaries pray for her.⁴³ They did, and for two weeks she seemed to get worse and be about to die. A Wesleyan doctor advised Miss Carlson to insist the lady be hospitalised

immediately as convulsions were sure to take place and death would likely follow. The missionaries continued to pray and to their relief the lady made a dramatic recovery. Later in 1922 a woman was baptised in the Holy Spirit. Mrs. Shakley was reading of a great revival in Scotland when several women called at the house. She told them about the revival and one young woman expressed great hunger for such an encounter with the Spirit of God. They began to sing and pray that God would send them a revival also. After a while the young woman came under the power of the Spirit and spoke in tongues. She remained all night at the house and was still "mightily under the anointing of the Spirit" in the morning. According to Miss Carlson, "Many others are earnestly hungering."⁴⁴ Two months later she described a Kru woman being baptised in the Spirit in her home:

She came through most gloriously, speaking fluently in two different languages, both African languages, but entirely unknown to her. Some men who were present heard and understood them. Since that time she has been wonderfully under the anointing of the Spirit. This has put hunger in the hearts of some others and so they are most earnestly seeking God.

God is doing wonders among the sick as well. One mother brought her little girl here one Sunday a.m. and it looked as though the child might die in our hands for she had a terrible fever. We prayed for her and the mother took her home. In the evening she came again and the fever was gone.⁴⁵

When the Shakleys went on furlough in the summer of 1923 they reported the results of their five years of Pentecostal witness in Freetown and the impact of their "signs and wonders" and healing ministry:

When they get sick they all want to come to the mission to stay. They trust God for their healing. I have seen many souls kneeling at the altar. I judge there have been about a hundred saved and quite a number baptised in the Spirit.... Pentecost is the same over there as it is here. When they are baptised in the Spirit they shout and sing and speak in tongues and praise the Lord with a loud voice. And so they have nicknamed our mission the "Hallelujah Mission" and call us "Mr. and Mrs. Hallelujah".⁴⁶

The report commented on their contacts with the Kru who lived in the area:

A few years ago the Kru tribe would not let us come anywhere near them with the gospel. But prayer changes things, and now they beg us to come to them. When finally we had to tell them we could not come they said, "You are going back to your country. We want you to promise us that you will beg some one over there to come and tell us about Jesus."

We have one Kru boy who was so fierce that they called him the leopard. But God has changed him to a lamb. Some of our boys are subjected to great persecution.

One of them was working on a steamer and the heathen boys stole all his clothes. But the Lord looked after him all right, for one of the white men on board gave him better clothes than those he had lost.⁴⁷

The conversion of "The Leopard" was significant. He was a notorious charge-hand on his ship and the other Kru were profoundly impressed by his character change. His conversion was consequent on his wife, who had been at death's door, being healed through prayer. The Shakleys, just leaving for furlough, were not able to reap the benefits. Neither was Jennie Carlson who, being female, could only hold the fort in a male dominated culture. Into the spiritually ripening situation in Freetown stepped Matthew Sinclair, an independent Pentecostal missionary supported by the Church of God in Kilsyth, Scotland.⁴⁸ Sinclair had arrived in Sierra Leone in March 1920.

The Shakleys asked Sinclair to look after their Campbell Street house during their furlough.

I was invited by a missionary couple, Mr. and Mrs. Shakley, who had been trying to start a work among the Creoles, to look after their rented house for them whilst they went home to America on furlough. During their absence I started holding meetings with five men of the Kru tribe in the basement of the house and this was the beginning of the Kru Pentecostal Work in Freetown.⁴⁹

All five testified to Christian conversion and deliverance from their involvements with witchcraft. If this was not "the beginning of the Kru Pentecostal work in Freetown" as Sinclair claimed - an issue which was to result in later tensions between Sinclair and AOG - it was a significant step forward, because for the first time the Pentecostal mission had a group of committed adult males who were to form the nucleus of the first organised Pentecostal church in the city. Previously, adult Kru males had proved resistant to the Gospel while adult Krio males had always been unwilling to break with their denominational churches. These five converts - the first being Nah Jonah whose two wives immediately abandoned him, thus enabling him to become a monogamist and later marry a Christian wife - all became pastors. Three worked among their own people in Liberia. The young converts pleaded with Sinclair to go to their Kru homeland with the Pentecostal Gospel. Sinclair sailed for Setta Kru, Liberia, on 2nd February 1924.⁵⁰ Jennie Carlson wrote home a few months later:

Mr. Sinclair has gone down the coast to the Kroo's native country expecting to open up work there. I have had reports from him. He says it is a fine country. He announced a meeting the first Sunday at two o'clock, but when Sunday came, he had

to change the hour from two to twelve, as at eleven a.m. the people from the many towns around came, he said there must have been over 250 in his first congregation. Oh! what a joy to speak to so many people, eager listeners they were.

However, she underestimated the quality and zeal of the infant church in Freetown:

It would be a pity if this work should have to be left without a missionary, it has been the case in the years past, but that is too bad. Should I have to go and no one be here in my stead, it would cause pain in my heart exceedingly, for I know about what would soon happen. I leave this with you for an earnest subject of prayer.⁵¹

Shortly afterwards she reported a baptismal service conducted by the Freetown Kru where "six happy souls followed the Lord" into their watery grave.⁵² Sinclair returned to Freetown in

March 1925 to find the Shakleys had returned and the Kru Pentecostal Church, which he claimed to have started, prospering.⁵³ Later that year Shakley reported:

We are glad to tell you that the Spirit is being poured out in the little mission in a very marked way in the past two weeks. For a few months there seemed to be so little doing until one morning in the service at six o'clock the Spirit was poured out and the fire continued to fall until about one-thirty. One woman has been coming a long time and is very deaf. The Spirit struck her and she seemed to see a vision of Jesus holding some white clothes for her to put on. She said that He was such a big man and she was so little that it frightened her, but now she is losing her fear.... One backslider who had gone very deep in sin was struck down by the power of God and cried mightily. They were slain right and left.... In the afternoon of that same day the power fell again in the service lasting from four until about eight-thirty. The Lord gave a spirit of prayer in the young people's meeting and the most of them were all praying together.... So many strangers are coming in. They tell us how God spoke to them. One woman told us how she had taken all her gods out and had thrown them away. She said that they cost her plenty of money, but she was blind then.⁵⁴

Healings also took place. At one prayer service the women were urging the men to pray when a deaf and dumb man started to do so.

While he did not speak plainly, none had ever heard him speak like that. Now he can hear some words plainly. He is so happy that the Lord is healing him.⁵⁵

In December a lot was purchased for £50 on Campbell Street, directly opposite the mission, with offerings raised from the congregation, and work on the church began. The unskilled labour was supplied mainly by women:

At last we have started to build a much needed mission. For a long time we have been crowded in our little basement room, so we finally succeeded in securing a lot just opposite ... and our Kru people are paying for it. It has meant sacrifice for some for several years. We have been laying aside their small offerings. Then recently we asked them to make a special effort to raise enough to pay for this lot.... On 29th of December the first stone was broken. The African is naturally proud, and at first they could not understand how a woman could take a hammer and break stone, but when

they once got at it, it was with willing hearts and hands. You could hear them singing as the hammers were kept busy. In an amazing short time they had a pile of stone that surprised the outside folks.... The next thing was to carry the sand on their heads from a distance of something like a mile.... On January 25th the mason started to work, so we are beginning to see with our eyes the thing we dreamed of so long. I wonder if the people in the homeland wouldn't like to call these people to service. A bell is one of the important things for a church here, as very few of the people have any time-piece and many of them couldn't tell the time if they had.⁵⁶

Helped with funds from the Shakleys' home church the first AOG church in Sierra Leone was completed and dedicated in April 1926. At that time there were ninety full members and many others who attended regularly while maintaining membership in their family churches. Pentecostal-evangelicalism took root in Freetown, the bastion of Victorian evangelicalism, among the Kru. However, being planted among a low-status, minority group, its effect upon the Krio, during this early period of development, was peripheral, and its influence on main-line Krio Christianity, relatively insignificant.

AOG AND UNITED PENTECOSTAL MISSION DEVELOPMENTS AND INTERACTIONS FROM 1926 TO 1940

While on furlough in 1926, Sinclair attended Hampstead Bible College. There he met and married Eveline Scarisbrick, a student from the Glad Tidings Mission, a Pentecostal church in Whitefield Road, Liverpool.⁵⁷ The Sinclairs, accompanied by Miss Gertrude Sparkes from the Lighthouse Mission in London, who had volunteered to join them in the work, arrived in Freetown on 6th November 1926. On their first Sunday in Freetown they attended the Kru Church. While Mrs. Sinclair and Miss Sparkes sang a duet, "Marching on in the light of God", accompanying themselves on tambourines as there were no musical instruments in the church, a woman "came rolling down the aisle" to the front of the church.

We had been used to Pentecostal Services in the homeland but I'd never seen anything like that before: the Power of God was really manifest in the meeting.... The Church was indigenous and filled with happy Christians, and souls were being added to their number.⁵⁸

The church grew through the witness of its members, the preaching of its own Kru pastors, and the benevolent supervision of the Shakleys, the Sinclairs, and Jennie Carlson. Miss Carlson returned from furlough on 2nd January 1927, accompanied by nineteen years old Miss Grace Bowie, from Cleveland, Ohio, and recorded:

I was greatly pleased to see the new church. The Lord has certainly done the exceeding abundant for the Pentecostal Mission in Sierra Leone. The church stands as a monument of the Almighty and ever-living God.

Souls are being saved and baptised.... We went to see a poor woman who had been paralyzed three years. As we were praying the glory of the Lord filled her heart and she was most gloriously saved; and as to her body, the Lord did a mighty miracle, and we are expecting that she will be completely delivered.⁵⁹

Soon after their arrival twenty-eight candidates were baptised. Two days earlier, a woman, who seemed to be dying, dreamed she had come to a large expanse of water. When the ancestors came for her in a boat the white woman did not agree for her to cross over.⁶⁰

Later that year the missionaries reported a Pentecostal revival in the church:

Surely God has answered our prayers and has opened the windows of heaven and showered down a Pentecostal revival. Hallelujah! Within the last five weeks 31 people have received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Oh, it has been a time of blessed refreshing sitting on the cement floor beside some dear one as the Comforter comes in to abide.

The services beginning at six o'clock in the morning have at times lasted until one, also the afternoon meeting which commences at four generally closed at gunfire (meaning that all the natives must be off the streets). At times we are apt to feel a little too tired to go to each service, but as we get down beside some dear soul and help to pray them through we at once know that all our tired feelings are taken away and we feel well able to praise the Lord almost as loudly as these people do.... God said that He would pour out His Spirit upon all flesh, and He has poured it out upon the Kroo people away over here in Africa as well as in other mission fields.⁶¹

The experience of being overwhelmed by spiritual power was not confined to the church. At a house meeting where the room was so small that only half the people could be inside, "the power of God struck". According to Miss Carlson:

Many who were standing outside had to be taken in as they were under the power. With great difficulty we took them in as the room was already full, but we managed it by later removing the benches from the room. The power of God was so mighty in the meeting from the beginning it was impossible to do anything but praise the Lord. One man received his Baptism and told us afterwards that on Tuesday night two words so fastened themselves in his heart from the message that he told the Lord he would die if he did not receive the Baptism that week. The Lord met him and a few minutes later another woman also received her Baptism.⁶²

The Sinclairs and Miss Sparkes had left Freetown in March 1927 intent on founding the first up-country Pentecostal mission and church in Sierra Leone at Mapaki, seven miles beyond Makump, in the Tonkolili District. They travelled up to the Christian Missionary Alliance (CMA) station at Mayoso. Here Miss Sparkes suffered a heavy bout of malaria and died.⁶³ A mud house was built at Mapaki and services were held on the veranda. The music from their small portable organ drew the congregation. George Koroma, a convert from a chiefly and strongly Muslim family, who had been educated at the CMA school, came to work for them. He eventually became a leading and long serving United Pentecostal Mission pastor. Meanwhile, the Alliance work at Waterloo had regressed following Mrs. Longstreth's death in 1925 from blackwater fever, and Longstreth's extended furlough. In 1927 Longstreth visited the Free Gospel churches in the Pittsburgh area.⁶⁴ As a result, John Bailie from the Free Gospel Church at McKeesport, West Pennsylvania, felt called to serve God in Sierra Leone.⁶⁵ He travelled with Longstreth to Sierra Leone in 1928, intending to work with him at Waterloo as an independent Pentecostal missionary. Longstreth died aboard ship. Bailie journeyed on to Waterloo alone. He was discouraged to find only one man, who claimed to be the native pastor, still remaining interested. After several unfruitful months at Waterloo, Bailie planned to return home, but he met Sinclair who persuaded him to stay and superintend the Mapaki station during their furlough in 1929. In 1929 Bailie was joined at Mapaki by George Hemminger from his home church at McKeesport.⁶⁶ Hemminger would play a vital part in the AOG work among the Temne and Limba in Freetown in the post-World War Two period.

The Sinclairs returned to Freetown on 10th October 1929. Shakley, who was very ill had asked the Sinclairs to supervise the work in Freetown until he recovered. Mrs. Sinclair records the healing of the four year old daughter of Matthew Songo, a Kru pastor:

Her legs were paralysed and she was unable to stand. Much prayer was made on her behalf and God marvellously healed her and when I saw her ... she was perfectly well and strong. When she grew to be a young woman she was married in the Pentecostal Church in Freetown to a fine young Christian man. I think our Kru people could fill a book with the remarkable answers they have had to their prayers.⁶⁷

Several Kru Christians returned to Liberia and there they prayed for healing for the sick. Reports came back of a woman's back, bent by a spinal disorder, being straightened through prayer, a blind woman receiving her sight, and another with swollen feet and legs being completely healed.⁶⁸ Deliverances from evil spirits also took place. In April 1930, the Sinclairs returned to Freetown after spending three months at Mapaki. They reported:

On our arrival in Freetown our Kru pastor told us of continued blessing as evidenced by the fact that the meetings were starting at 6 o'clock in the morning and going on well into the afternoon. He said the people couldn't leave for the Power and the Presence of God was in their midst.

After one of the meetings a man remained on his hands and knees and some of the people went over to speak to him, but they got no answer.... The poor fellow was demon possessed and when the native pastor spoke to him the very demons within him cried out "I am not one: we are plenty". However, the native pastor had had some experience in dealing with this kind of thing before, and he and the other Christians banded together in prayer and claimed the victory in the Name of the Lord Jesus. The poor man was badly shaken by the demons, but they had to let him go for God gave the victory.⁶⁹

Miss Mildred Reynolds from Ontario, Canada, joined the Sinclairs in Freetown in October 1930.⁷⁰ When they heard that the Shakleys would be returning to take on supervision of the church, the Sinclairs and Miss Reynolds moved up to Mapaki in April 1931 to press on with their vision of establishing a Pentecostal witness in the interior. Rose Watling from the Assemblies of God Church, Tunbridge Wells, joined the group in June. New stations were opened at Mabonto and Makump and day schools started. John Bailie returned from furlough with a proposal from the Free Gospel Church that the Sierra Leone work become a properly constituted mission with the costs involved being shared equally by the American and British missionaries. The United Pentecostal Mission (UPM) was inaugurated in December 1931 with Matthew Sinclair its first Field Superintendent.

After Sinclair left Freetown in April 1931, the Kru Pentecostal Church, without missionary leadership, was ably pastored by a young man, Simon T. Grant. He was to pastor the church for over forty years and become the first National Superintendent of AOG Sierra Leone. Before the Shakleys returned in October 1931, a remarkable conversion took place under

Grant's ministry. Mrs. Shakley had John Tobey, who had come to Freetown from Cape Palmas in Liberia, record his testimony for *Evangel*:

All the people of my tribe recognised me to be their priest in all their native worship, such as idols, jujus, etc., being the son of the ex-chief ... who taught me all the secrets of the said worship. I was obedient to the worship of my father and trusted in all these things.... During all this time I was under the control and power of Satan. I was wicked enough to be called an angel of his.... I came to Freetown and started this same wicked work. I made all different kinds of charms and sold them to the people for a big price. These charms were supposed to give them long life, good luck, big name, etc., and the idols were gods to worship. Sometimes under the influence of Satan I would cut my wife with a razor or knife.... One Sunday morning my sister said to me, "John, will you go with me and pay a visit to the Pentecostal Church?" I said, "Yes." When I heard that preacher he preached altogether against my business, which he said was contrary to our Lord and Saviour, and that the wages of such sin was death.... Next Sunday I was back at the church. That time it was worse than before. He preached till it went through my very bones. At once I was convicted, and on Friday of that same week I was converted. So I gave up all my jujus and idols except one which was like a rope, but sometimes would turn to a snake. I was afraid if I gave that up I would die and if I did not hold God strong and confess to have this thing I really would die. But one night when I was in a deep sleep the power of God came upon me and commanded me to give it up. If I did not obey I would lose my life ... so I gave all up and confessed all and was set at liberty. A week later I went to work on the ship New Toronto, and while there I was baptised in the Holy Ghost. Now I am standing for the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.⁷¹

Several threw away their fetish and charms. The missionaries estimated one man's charms had cost him about \$40, but he wanted to give them all up and follow the Lord Jesus. A singing group visited another church. The Shakleys reported:

The people in this church were so delighted with the spiritual music, that they shouted for joy which was a very unusual thing in that particular church. As a result of that meeting they have had several other invitations from other churches to sing the gospel. A report has just come to us regarding one of these churches in which the minister after hearing our people sing got up and said he had preached a long time, but never had preached to such spiritual people as these. He went on to tell how he had gone to school and studied for the ministry, but now realised for the first time that he had never been converted, and that all his ministry had been valueless without the power of God.⁷²

By 1933 the Kru congregation had outgrown their building and an enlargement project was undertaken. Shakley wrote:

About 200 men went to work bringing sand. You should have seen them start off for the sand, they were not walking, they were running and singing. It is counted a shame for a Kroo man to carry a load on his head, this supposedly being a woman's work, but they have lost their pride, and everyone seems to forget whether he is man or woman. Some of the old folks who are not able to go for sand are breaking stone.⁷³

Late that year the Shakleys started literacy classes with forty young men so that they could read the Bible. Now fifty-nine years old and suffering from ill health, Shakley returned to America in June 1934. The Kru church, not expecting the Shakleys to return, gave them a touching valedictory:

Reverend and Dear Sir: With aching hearts and deep regret, we, for ourselves and on behalf of other members of the Kruo Pentecostal Mission, take this opportunity to bid farewell to yourself and your dear partner on your departure to your dear homeland - the United States of America.

It seems but yesterday as we recall your attempt to start this Mission when you first landed here; we think again of your untiring efforts, your deep sympathy and kind patience towards us all through these long years of ceaseless labours as a leader, and only wish to exclaim "The Lord God bless you both forever."

Your life was a true example to every one of us. How you have won souls for Christ our Lord Jesus we cannot here now sufficiently recount; but we are sure your names will rank among those of living history who have been pioneers of missionary work and enterprise in this much dreaded continent of tropical Africa. We realise today how much dear you are to us as you say good bye. Many were your hardships in the noble fight. How you were able to erect the beautiful church we are now worshipping in would stand out to everyone, now and after, as a model of the untiring zeal of our dear old Reverend and Mrs. Shakley.

You are leaving us for good, but one golden thought gives us hope that we shall meet once again on yonder Golden Shore. May the Lord bless you. We still need your prayers and hope your lives will both long be spared to enjoy the bliss of your labours.

We cannot sufficiently express ourselves, and only pray that God's richest blessing be showered in abundance on you for the long years of faithful labours for our soul's salvation.⁷⁴

Shakley's replacement, Dewey Crabb, reported manifestations of spirit possession taking place in the church, "The power of God fell in our midst in one of the morning meetings so that many were slain under the power of God and one was filled with the Holy Spirit." The following year he also reported:

We just held our first baptismal service since coming here, baptising thirty-two on April 5. The Lord gave us a wonderful service with many slain under the power of God, and one received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.⁷⁵

A distinction - which still holds in the present "slain in the Spirit" experiences of the Toronto Vineyard Movement - was being made between being "slain under the power of God", and the "Baptism in the Holy Spirit", the former describing an overwhelming pneumatic experience which produced unconsciousness, and the latter being a conscious spiritual experience during which one spoke in tongues. Crabb visited the Kru Coast in Liberia in

October 1934. Confusion over this visit revealed the tensions existing between the AOG missionaries and Matthew Sinclair. In a letter dated 27th February 1935, W. Lloyd Skinner wrote from Ghana to Noel Perkin, the Liberian Area superintendent who was later to become AOG Missions Director:

While we were on Board ship at Accra to see the Garlock children and Miss Buchwalter off we visited among the crew a bit and found that there were fifty-five Kru boys taken on board at Freetown and of this number forty attended the Pentecostal Church.

Brother Garlock and I went and had a service with them and they were so grateful. The Captain voluntarily gave testimony to us of their upright christian lives. He said that he has been sailing the West Coast for ten years and during all that time he has had the same head-man. This man used to be quite a sinner but eight years ago he got to going to Shakley's church and got converted. Since that time he has been a different man.

We were greatly puzzled when the Krus told us that the Crabbs had left them and gone to Liberia. They were greatly discouraged because Bro. Crabb had told them they did not need a missionary. We do not know whether the Crabbs went to Liberia with your approval or not but we all feel that such a good work as Freetown should not be left without supervision.

Mr. Sinclair is in Freetown and he will surely try to get this work again. I would consider this a great calamity. I am sure that if you could visit this work you would want to see one of our own American missionaries in charge. If a couple could be gotten to go there and agree and stay in Freetown I believe a much greater work can be done. The present work is a wonderful testimony to the work of the Shakleys but there is still a great field of labour there. The work is not able to stand alone.⁷⁶

Restored to health, the Shakleys returned to Freetown in October 1935. They were encouraged, and the Pentecostal cause strengthened among the Kru, by the election of one of the church members as chief:

When he first began coming to the mission he was very sick. He had tried all kinds of witchcraft but received no help. He was finally healed at the church through prayer. When election day came the candidates all tried various kinds of witchcraft, bribes, etc., to gain the chieftainship except this one man. He said, "If God gives me the work, all right, but it will be God's power alone." The result was that he was elected with a great majority.

Followed by a large crowd of cheering, shouting enthusiasts, he came to greet the missionaries and to tell of his victory. Then he led the people to the church to give God thanks and to have prayer.⁷⁷

Early on Easter morning in 1936 a congregation numbering several hundreds assembled at 3:30 a.m. at some distance from the church, dressed in white and holding lighted candles. They processed slowly, singing Easter songs, and entered the church just as day was breaking. However, the church suffered a severe blow when in 1938 Charles F. Davies, one

of their own missionaries to their fellow Kru in Liberia, ill and exhausted by strenuous itinerating, died. As he was dying he called his wife and friends and said:

The hour is near for me to depart from you. I see the heavenly hosts surrounding me, singing beautiful songs, showing me where I shall dwell. The foundation I came here to lay is laid.⁷⁸

Another couple quickly stepped into the breach, indicating the strength of the Kru Pentecostal church's commitment to mission and evangelism. At the same time two young men J. T. Wilson and William Toe were attending Bible School in Liberia preparing for the full-time ministry. When the Shakleys did finally retire from the Freetown work in February 1939, the Sunday congregation at Campbell Street invariably exceeded two hundred adults, despite the fact that many of the men-folk were employed as sailors and frequently away. Just before leaving Sierra Leone the Shakleys reported two being baptised in the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues, one dramatic healing, and thirty candidates preparing for baptism.⁷⁹

On 11th October 1938, the Shakleys' replacements arrived. Axel and Helen Oman were experienced missionaries who had witnessed dramatic church growth in AOG work in Belgian Congo since 1924.⁸⁰ The lengthy period of overlap indicates that AOG were being very careful to avoid any supervisory vacuum in their Freetown operations. Axel Oman, whose ministry in Freetown emphasised the Pentecostal baptism in the Holy Spirit, claimed some dramatic results almost immediately after the Shakley's departure in February 1939:

This week the native Christians are spending the whole week in what they call a camp meeting. They go out into the woods and there continue in prayer the entire day.... They told me last night that such a tremendous burden had gripped their hearts that they wanted to have a whole week in which to pray for lost souls. Oh, that Christians everywhere would feel the same kind of burden for those who are lost! Last night we had a mighty visitation from God. After the message, we gave the altar call, requesting those who wanted to accept Christ to show it by the raising of their hands. About twenty-five responded and then stepped forward making their way to the altar. Such crying out to God I have not heard for a long time. Over at one side of the church God was filling hungry hearts with the Holy Spirit. The saints who were praying for the seekers and the ones who came forward for salvation began with one voice to sing and praise God. Some of the elders of the church said they were so full of joy that they could not contain any more. One after the other those who came forward for salvation witnessed to the change of heart which they had experienced. Surely there must have been rejoicing in heaven for those who repented of their sins.⁸¹

While obviously many were having real, meaningful, and deep encounters with the Holy Spirit of God, it would seem that Oman was prone to slip into that error which has almost become the hallmark of American Pentecostal evangelists in Sierra Leone, interpreting almost every act of religious enthusiasm as being the direct operation of the Holy Spirit and also interpreting these religious responses within the framework of Western evangelical conversion and sanctification. From later reports it would appear that Oman was beginning to realise that some of those who had had ecstatic experiences were more concerned with encountering spiritual power *per se* than having divine revelations of the person of the Holy Spirit and the nature and character of God:

We did not have any tarrying services until we were able to teach the Christians about the Holy Spirit. With a little teaching we were able to show them from the Word that the Spirit is a person, and that they should tarry for Him.⁸²

The Omans supervised the AOG Kru Church until they retired to America in November 1941.

UPM OPERATIONS IN FREETOWN FROM 1940 TO 1946

On moving to Freetown in September 1939 at the outbreak of World War Two, Matthew Sinclair discovered there was no longer a leadership role for him in the Campbell Street church pastored by Simon Grant and supervised by Axel Oman. Grant regarded Shakley as his spiritual father and was devoted to the American AOG connection. The AOG missionaries had long been uneasy about the Sinclair's involvements with the Kru AOG Church and suspicious about his intentions. The Sinclairs therefore carried out personal evangelism among Freetown's Limba and Temne people, their obvious target groups for mission. They also began a completely new outreach among the Kru. Mrs. Sinclair records:

We started with about ten people, but within a very short time we had more than we could accommodate. The Kru Chief then granted the use of a Kru Day School, and as time went on it was marvellous to see crowds of people gathering Sunday after Sunday. Many we saw filled with the Holy Spirit according to the scriptures, many we saw Divinely touched in their bodies and the Sunday School grew rapidly.⁸³

The Hemmingers returned to America in January 1941. While at home the Hemmingers resigned from the UPM and joined AOG. Throughout the War period, the Sinclairs pastored the new Kru congregation, the Kru Pentecostal Church, which AOG regarded as a rival Pentecostal church among the Kru. The Sinclairs also held Sunday evening meetings for the Temne around Signal Hill at Wilberforce.

The mother of one of the Kru Christians kept a snake which had a familiar spirit. She fed the best food to the snake and told it all her troubles and entreated its help. Becoming aware of her need of Christian salvation she called on "the Pentecostal people" to pray for her and was "soundly saved and filled with the Holy Ghost". Mrs. Sinclair testifies that many times when she was suffering from malaria this old lady would lay hands on her and pray, "and God heard and answered her prayer". There were several in this new church in the school who moved naturally into a prayer-healing ministry. Instructed by the Sinclairs, they made a rule not to pray for anybody until they had turned to the Lord and been "really soundly saved".

On one occasion there was a man who was very very sick, and the people, thinking that he was going to die, had gathered together.... Someone came along and suggested that he should be taken along to the Pentecostal Meeting so that prayer could be made for the healing of his body. They carried the man along to the meeting and hands were laid on him after he had been anointed with oil and God wonderfully healed him. We subsequently had the pleasure of his fellowship in the meetings for quite a number of years during the war.

They laid hold of God for one woman who had been blind for seven years, and God restored her eyesight.

They prayed for another woman who had a bent back and God delivered her in answer to their prayers.⁸⁴

A man named Tulo, who was in a dreadful state of health and abandoned by his family, had a dream in which he saw a young man who said, "Follow me." The next morning a young man did visit and invited him to the morning service. There he confessed his secret sins and trusted in Christ. "Since then he has had no worries, his health has improved, and he has been baptised in the Holy Ghost." When Mrs. Sinclair had a breakdown, as a result of the worry, stress and "various misunderstandings", the believers prayed. She felt God undertook "in a very wonderful way". She also records a child, believed dead, being restored to life:

One man, who had been sick for a very long time, eventually went away into the bush and pleaded with God for deliverance, and God healed him. Some time later he was sitting on his verandah ... when a woman went past, wailing, and, on enquiring what was the matter, she told him that her piccin had died and she was just taking it away. He told her to leave the piccin with him and to return in three days. The mother did as he said and after she had left he took hold of God, and God healed that child, so that when the mother came back he was able to restore the child to her alive and well.⁸⁵

However, Mrs. Sinclair admits that not all the sick were healed and often although the believers "really pleaded with God" no cures were effected. Nevertheless, "Power evangelism" and ministries of healing and deliverance, were taking place in Freetown both at the Kru AOG Church and latterly at the Kru Pentecostal Church, long before the arrival of Adejobi and the Spiritual churches in 1947. However, it took place mainly among the Kru, outside the mainstream of Krio society and church, and was thus contained "in a corner".

The fellowship at the Kru Day School grew only slowly as the Sinclairs, concerned about the UPM work up-country, where the only remaining missionaries were Miss Watling and Miss Ruck at Makump, made frequent trips to Makump, Mabonto, Masambiri and Bumbuna. In April 1944 the Sinclairs were evacuated from Freetown on the Queen of Bermuda.⁸⁶ Shortly afterwards Miss Ruck obtained a passage home and Miss Watling was left holding the fort until the Bailies were able to return towards the end of 1945. When the Sinclairs returned to Sierra Leone on 8th May 1946, they concentrated all their efforts on reviving UPM fortunes and restoring the stations which were in great need of repair. During their absence from Freetown numbers attending the Kru Pentecostal Church had declined, "although the people were as bright as ever for God". The number attending Sunday School, which had been over one hundred, "had dropped considerably".⁸⁷ The main thrust of the Pentecostal work among the Kru was obviously taking place in the steadily progressing Campbell Street assembly. However, on visits to Freetown in November 1948 and April 1949, the Sinclairs could report with some satisfaction that the work they had started was continuing. The Sinclairs again visited the Freetown church in April 1951 to encourage the congregation, celebrate Communion, and hold a Baptismal Service at which eleven were baptised. On another visit in June, they found ten candidates awaiting baptism. Mrs. Sinclair commented:

Don't be misled into thinking that the natives, immediately they had made a decision, were baptised, for they had to prove themselves first. They were careful, too, in their preparations for the Communion Service: if one member had a grudge against another, or if there had been harsh words, or a quarrel amongst them they would not partake of the Lord's Supper but would sit at the back of the church until things had been put right, thus keeping the unity of the Spirit.⁸⁸

In October, thirteen others were baptised. The Kru Pentecostal Church, which built a church of its own at Guy Street, has continued to struggle on as a small fellowship. However, the death of Rev. Lawrence Davies in 1985 was a severe blow to the ageing congregation. Having no Kru preacher, the ministry was conducted in Krio. On the Sunday of the 1990 Greater Freetown Survey visit there were 22 worshippers present; 9 males, 6 females, and 7 children. A later report indicated that the church building had been demolished and Mrs. Davies and some members had moved to Saint Thomas Kru Anglican Church where the services are in Kru, except First Sunday when English is used. Others joined Saint Anthony's Roman Catholic Church who were offering relief supplies and a good burial scheme.⁸⁹

AOG ACTIVITY IN FREETOWN FROM 1941 TO 1966 AND THE PLANTING OF PENTECOSTAL-EVANGELICAL CHURCHES AMONG THE TEMNE, LIMBA AND LOKO

In May 1941, John and Daisy Kennedy arrived in Freetown to take over from the Omans.⁹⁰ Daisy Kennedy had worked in Liberia since March 1930 and had been stationed at Cape Palmas, in the Kru homeland.⁹¹ The Kennedys had been planning to go to Liberia, but AOG had redirected them to Freetown. Until leaving Sierra Leone in April 1962, John Kennedy held the position of AOG Field Superintendent.⁹² George and Helga Hemminger, former UPM missionaries, joined the Kennedys on 30th November 1943. On 1st January 1944, Paul and Miriam Wright arrived, both having graduated from Central Bible Institute in 1943. Miriam was John Kennedy's daughter from his first marriage. Paul Wright records:

Our responsibility was the Campbell Street Assembly of God for the Kru-speaking people. The church was a large stone building that could seat up to 300 and was always full. A service was held each morning of the week, and three on Sunday, starting at 7:30 AM. The Sunday School attendance was between 200 and 250. The large choir in white and blue robes was situated in an alcove off the platform. The

pastor, Simon T. Grant, knew English fairly well, but he did not have Bible school training per se. He did most of the interpreting for Pa Kennedy and for me.

When you made what seemed like a good point, he would take off explaining it at length, until you began to wonder who was doing the preaching.... The Kru people used the same universal shout of "Hallelujah!" to which the whole congregation would respond with a loud "Amen!"

Prayer was in unison, but they would go on and on until the pastor rang a little bell to indicate that the time was up. Instantly they would stop and sit down like one man. The difference was surprising. "The spirit of the prophet is subject to the prophet."

God's healing power was often manifested in the Assembly. A woman was healed of witchcraft, after which she vomited a black juju she kept in a "gullet" in her throat to perform her rituals. A young man, Cape Bestman, had been blinded while trying to put out a fire with the Fire Brigade, but the church Prayer Band held long periods of intercessory prayer for him. Awakening one morning he sensed the Lord was standing beside him. The Lord said to him, "Open your eyes." He replied that he was blind, but the Lord repeated the command: "I say open your eyes!" He tried and his sight was restored. It was permanent, for the pastor had warned the people if they reverted to the old ways, their ailments would return.⁹³

The Wrights remained in Freetown until transferred to South Africa in January 1946.

The Temne Pentecostal Church

With long experience of Temne evangelism and fluency in the language, the Hemmingers concentrated on the Freetown Temne with the goal of establishing a Temne church. The Sinclairs had held Sunday evening services in Temne homes around Signal Hill from late 1939 until returning home in April 1944. Axel Oman reported that early in 1940 he had also begun a new outreach among the Temne, meeting with a group of them on the veranda of a chief's house. This meeting had been taken on by the Kennedys. The Hemmingers, however, rented a house at Sackville Street and immediately organised a regular house-fellowship. The Freetown Temne were greatly impressed by their ability to speak Temne and soon they had to move out of the house and meet in a "pan bodi", a stick hut twenty foot square covered with flattened oil drums and which could seat one hundred on benches. As the congregation grew, the "pan bodi" suffered from overcrowding. Paul Wright records:

They packed almost 200 children, men and women. Their singing was most enthusiastic. We assisted them with music - the organ, trumpet and trombone - which served to attract the crowds, and helped train them to sing the new songs with the right notes. Many souls were saved and a strong work was built.⁹⁴

Land was leased at Ambrose Street, beside the Regent Road market, from the City Council for a monthly rent of two Leones fifty cents. A concrete block building thirty feet by eighty

feet, which cost AOG \$1,000 to build, was dedicated on 25th August 1946. It was named the Assemblies of God Temne Church. M. L. McNutt, who came out to oversee the work, wrote:

We hired as many Themne men as possible, and they have all taken a real interest in the job. Our head man was saved just last December. He really worked for the Lord on the job, testifying to everyone about the saving power of Jesus. We prayed much that the rains would hold off until we had the roof finished. The people who have lived here for years called it unusual.... The Themne people have really appreciated the effort put forth in their behalf. One of the Christians said to me, "My heart be glad to God that you have come to make this building for us."⁹⁵

Following the dedication George Hemminger wrote:

August 25, 1946, will long be remembered by us all, as that is the day we dedicated our new Themne church in Freetown. It was a great event.... In all our work with the Themne people we had not seen such expressions of joy and satisfaction on their faces. Now they had a church of their own!

We had hoped for a fine day, but as August is our month of heavy rains, we were not too disappointed when we awakened early in the morning and heard the rain coming down. In spite of the rain, the morning service started at 9:45 with about two hundred people present. We were so happy to see the Themne chief and two of his head-men come to the service. When brother Rhodes and I gave the invitation to the chief the previous afternoon, he replied, "Yes, although I and my people are Mohammedans, it will not hurt us to go and listen." There were also several missionaries present from other stations. Brother Musselman, Field Superintendent of the UBC Mission, preached the dedicatory sermon.

At 2 p.m. we had Sunday School, with an attendance of 197. The children were so thrilled that they could sit comfortably, such a change from our former place of worship. Brother Kennedy preached the message of the afternoon at the service which followed immediately, and three little children were dedicated to the Lord. Two of these little ones had lost their mother just three weeks before, and it was a touching scene to see the father, our head carpenter, standing there alone to dedicate his children to the Lord. When six candidates followed their Lord in water baptism at the close of the service, the attendance had reached 407, although it was still raining.⁹⁶

It was another year before the painting and decorating was completed and the pews made.

Harold and Geraldine Rhodes arrived in July 1946 to help in the Temne work. In early 1948 Speed-the-Light sent them a new pick-up with which to do evangelistic outreaches in the villages beyond Freetown. Alfred Kamara, a Temne with the *chrism* of evangelism and a burden to share the Gospel with his own people, and who had graduated from Bible School in Liberia in December 1947, worked with them as preacher-evangelist. Several converts were made. Kamara was appointed the first AOG Temne pastor. Rhodes described him as:

A spiritual young man. He does wonderful personal work among the new converts. He has brought wonderful testimonies of victories in the lives of many of the young people and his face glows as he speaks of them.⁹⁷

Although originally intended to be a Temne church, other ethnic groups such as Limba, Loko, Mende, Kissi and Kru were attracted by its Pentecostal-evangelical style of worship and became members. The Limba and the Loko later broke away to organise their own fellowships along similar lines. It is worth noting that two years before Adejobi and the first Spiritual church arrived in Freetown there were in the city at least four Pentecostal-evangelical churches, the two Kru churches, the first having started in 1924, the God is Our Light Church begun by James Kajue and Robert Sesay in 1945 on their return to Freetown after serving with the British Navy at Takoradi, and the AOG Temne Church.

The Limba Pentecostal Church

Daniel Aribo Konteh was born at Kaffa, Kasongo Chiefdom, in Koinadugu District in 1925. His parents were Brewa Limba from a ruling family in Bombali District. The boy was brought up by an uncle, Momodu Konday Konteh, and an aunt, Teneh Mansaray. At the age of eighteen Konteh left Kasongo to work at the Delco mines at Lunsar as a steward for an expatriate manager. He became fluent in Temne and also made friends with Siaka Stevens who was then Secretary of the Union of Mineworkers. On leaving Sierra Leone, the manager arranged for Konteh to work for the Freetown Cold Storage Company. While walking along Ambrose Street one Sunday morning in October 1948, the twenty-three years old Limba heard the congregation of the AOG Temne Church singing in Temne. Konteh was amazed, and after listening for ten minutes he joined the Temne in their worship. The white preacher, George Hemminger, invited Konteh to the Monday evening prayer meeting. Konteh's testimony appeared in the AOG magazine *Slant* in 1962:

My father had so many children he did not know them all. I was a child of one of the head wives, from a total of seventy-five wives. A nurse cared for me and gave me the best of food and care. At an early age I was taken into the bush for three months for the regular tribal ritual, being initiated into the society.

Life really began for me in October 1948 when I was born again. One day I was passing an Assemblies of God church and I felt a power drawing me in. I heard the preacher say that there is Someone who loves us more than our parents, and that He gave His life for us. Well, I was interested to know who this man was. Then I heard him say, "It is Jesus." On Monday I went to the prayer-meeting and there gave my heart to the Lord. Since then I have been a very happy man.

I said, "If this man Jesus can make me so happy all the time I will tell my people too that someone loves us. Then the Limbas can tell many others about Him."

A few weeks after his conversion, Konteh's European employer noticed the liquor and sugar supplies were lasting unusually long. This gave Daniel an opportunity to witness to the change in his life and ask forgiveness for pilfering. The manager was so impressed that he increased Daniel's salary and gave him more responsibility. Konteh brought his friends along to the Ambrose Street church. The missionaries, observing his obvious gift for evangelism, sent him to night school at Upper East Street to prepare him for full-time ministry. After doing well at school, Konteh was accepted for pastoral training. He resigned from Freetown Cold Storage despite being offered another pay increase and called a fool.⁹⁸

In 1954, as the number of Limba attending the Temne AOG Church increased, Konteh and Kennedy inaugurated a Limba AOG Church in a compound at Congo Market, Campbell Street, with Konteh as pastor. Numbers continued to grow and after a few months the group moved to a "pan bodi" at 12 King Street. Kennedy commented:

With his enthusiasm and inspiration he soon won many of his Limba people. With only half the pay to which he had been accustomed he began his ministry as pastor of the Limba church.⁹⁹

Benches were made and the old shack was transformed into a place of worship. A Death Benefit Fund was introduced to help the low income members. This attracted many new members. AOG statistics for March 1955 show the Temne Church, pastor Alfred Kamara, as having an average Sunday morning attendance of 50, the Limba, pastor Daniel Konteh, having 150, and the Kru AOG Church under Simon Grant having 270. The AOG church at Hastings, started by former UPM missionaries Rose Watling and Florence Ruck among the Limba and Temne, was now pastored by Temne convert Bai Sesay and had 25 attending. In September 1955 the Limba Church held a baptism service where thirty-six Limba and one Temne were baptised and 500 attended. To cater for the Limba in East Freetown, a branch was opened at Fourah Bay. In this Muslim stronghold they encountered opposition and were forced to move location several times, pelted with stones, and had filthy water thrown over them. The July 1956 statistics show the churches growing steadily; the Temne had average

attendances of 65, the Kru had 300, and Hastings had 30. The Limba Church, however, was experiencing dramatic growth. On average, 250 attended Sunday morning services at King Street with many more standing under a pan roof extension added to the main building. The Limba, who had been resistant to Islam and Christianity in the past were, in the changing post-War period, attracted by the charisma of Daniel Konteh and his fellow evangelists, and the dynamism of Pentecostal worship. In January 1958, the elders of the Fourah Bay congregation approached Frank Wood, the British Principal of the Grammar School at Bishop's Court. He made available the school chapel which could seat six hundred. The Fourah Bay Limba continued to worship there until 1989 when they opened their own church at Garawani Street, along Fourah Bay Road. According to a 1959 missionary report:

This second Limba church, across town from the original church, has outgrown the original congregation. The Limba revival continues and 170 converts were baptised in water recently.¹⁰⁰

Towards the end of 1958 the Kennedys reported several Limba converts abandoning their fetish to follow Christ and there being over 100 meeting each Wednesday night for instruction and Bible study preparatory to a great baptismal service.

In 1961, the expanding Limba congregations, having no buildings of their own, secured a ninety-nine years lease on military land at 85 Fort Street in the name of AOG Limba Church. John Kennedy's friendship with an army captain influenced Governor Sir Morris Dorman grant the lease. The corner stone of the new building was laid on 11th March 1962. In April the Kennedys were transferred to Liberia. The Limba were upset and vainly requested AOG to send them back for a final tour of duty. The large, impressive, Limba Pentecostal Church was dedicated on 1st December 1963. The King Street congregation transferred to Fort Street. At the ribbon-cutting ceremony, Prime Minister Sir Milton Margai declared:

The new Limba church symbolises not only unity, but also the co-operation and determination of the Limba people. The Limbas have proved their worth.¹⁰¹

He later remarked how greatly impressed he was with all he had seen and that God belongs to all peoples. More than 2,000 attended the dedication, including the late Siaka Stevens, a

Limba himself and the then leader of the Opposition. The building was packed and a large crowd stood outside. Superintendent N. Saunders of the Wesleyan Mission preached the sermon and Superintendent S. M. Renner of the EUB Mission offered the dedicatory prayer. Limba from the interior brought an offering of \$100, a cow, rice and palm oil. Practically all but a few hundred dollars of the \$32,900 cost of the building was raised by the Limba themselves. George Hemminger wrote:

This church ... is a sample of what can happen when a group of people and their pastor are determined to succeed. Brother Conteh is a thoroughly dedicated Christian who has raised up four Limba congregations in Freetown. This building programme alone entailed the expenditure of \$32,900 without any overseas assistance except a few hundred dollars given by friends and a \$3,000 loan from the Foreign Missions Department. The congregation is now making monthly payments on the loan.

One has to sit in the services and feel the touch of God and the initiative and ability of the pastor in order to understand how this group of Africans - all of them new converts with less than five years of Christian experience - could accomplish this feat. Already Brother Conteh and some leaders of other Limba congregations are planning another church in Freetown!¹⁰²

Later that year a new branch was opened at Congo Cross, in a classroom of the Roosevelt School. Siaka Konda Kemoi pioneered the outreach and became the first pastor. A building was erected in 1964 on land leased from the school. Kemoi was born in 1920 at Kamakwie in Bombali District in the Northern Province. His father was a chief and a Muslim. Kemoi had no formal education. He migrated to Freetown in 1940 and attended the Sanders Street mosque. Frustrated because he could not understand Arabic, he began to attend Ebenezer UMC Church. He found it difficult to understand the sermons which were in English, but continued for a few years. He was one of the first Limba to join the Temne AOG Church and become an elder. Bankole Sesay was also born into a Muslim family at Londengi, in Bombali District, around 1920. He came to Freetown during the War and worked for the military as a messenger. At the same time he attended school. Around 1951 he was approached by Daniel Konteh at his work place and challenged to become a Christian. At that time he smoked, drank and went to dances.¹⁰³ Aware that God was calling him just as He called Samuel, in voices and dreams, he attended the Kru Church on Campbell Street. After John

Kennedy preached on John the Baptist's message, "Repent and be baptised", he confessed his sins to Kennedy and gave his heart to Jesus. He attended the Temne Church and was baptised in 1952. Along with Konteh and Kemoi he was one of the first group of four Limba elders elected in the Temne Church. Sesay and Kemoi worked with Daniel Konteh in Limba evangelism, visiting Limba all over Freetown and inviting them to the new AOG Limba Church. On 4th February 1967 Bankole Sesay was put in charge of the Fourah Bay congregation. On 14th January 1968 the Fourah Bay Limba Pentecostals leased an old church building in Kissy, at the junction of Blackhall Road and Davies Street, from Saint Patrick's Church (Anglican). Kemoi was moved from Congo Cross and put in charge of the new East Freetown branch.

The Loko Pentecostal Church

Like the Limba, many Loko had migrated into Freetown looking for work in the post-War period. Several had had contact with the American Wesleyan Mission churches in their home areas. Some attended the Temne Church on Ambrose Street, later others attended the Limba churches at King Street, Fort Street, Fourah Bay and Congo Cross. As numbers increased, a group of Loko led by Pa Morlai Koroma approached Daniel Konteh with the suggestion that the Loko have their own church. Konteh and the Limba elders welcomed the idea, as did AOG. The "pan bodi" at 12 King Street, formerly used by the Limba, was rented for 14 Leones a month.¹⁰⁴ The Ambrose Street Loko constituted the largest group in the first Loko church in Freetown which met for the first time on 6th February 1966. The first service was led by George Hemminger, but afterwards the Loko conducted their own services under the paternal supervision of Daniel Konteh.

Immediately after the new church was formed, a group, which was to go out and preach the Good News of Salvation in all Loko communities, was organised. This group was headed by K. S. Kamara. They visited Loko people in different homes, telling them about a church for the Lokos and inviting them to become members. They even conducted street meetings with the aim of winning people in order to increase the membership of the church. Through their efforts the church continued to develop and new members were added every day.¹⁰⁵

In March there were reports of attendances passing the six hundred mark. This was not sustained, however, and the average attendance by the end of the year was around the 200 mark. A new church building became a necessity and in 1968 Konteh advised a search be made for suitable government land. A suitable site was discovered on Circular Road and their request for a long term lease was granted.

The Loko Pentecostal Church, following Daniel Konteh and his Limba churches, broke with AOG on 6th February 1969 to become, with the Temne and Kru AOG churches, part of the newly formed National Pentecostal Mission. The Loko who chose to remain with AOG began to meet in a class-room at the Model Primary School, but their opposition to the majority was short-lived and most soon rejoined the main body. A remnant merged with the Limba AOG and began to meet in the afternoon at the West African Methodist Church on Wellington Street. In 1983 they moved to 38 Bass Street, Brookfields, to found the Faith AOG Church. The Konteh controversy will be looked at in detail later. K. S. Kamara was appointed pastor-in-charge following the break with AOG. After delays caused by government officials, the construction of the new church began late in 1971. Daniel Konteh saw the work as the major project of the National Pentecostal Mission and greatly encouraged the effort. On 3rd February 1974, the Loko Pentecostal Church, which cost 25,000 Leones to build, was dedicated. The dedication ceremony of this Loko "Cathedral" was conducted by Bishop Simon Grant of the National Pentecostal Mission and the tape was cut by the Hon. N. A. P. Buck.¹⁰⁶ At the close of 1974, to meet the growing numbers from Congo Cross, Wilberforce, and Lumley, a branch was started in a school building at Main Motor Road, Wilberforce. In February 1975, to mark the first anniversary of the Circular Road Church, Daniel Konteh declared the Loko Pentecostal Church an autonomous body with K. S. Kamara as head of the church. A few months later Daniel Konteh, the charismatic and sometimes controversial pioneer of Pentecostal-evangelicalism among the Limba, and the Overseer of the National Pentecostal Movement, died at Hill Station Hospital following a brief illness.

The Circular Road church membership grew steadily. In February 1979 land was purchased at New Castle Street, Kissy, for a second branch of the church. This was to cater for the increased numbers from Kissy and help them overcome transport difficulties. Construction of a two storey parsonage and office building in the Circular Road compound was begun in 1980, and major renovations of the church had to be undertaken in 1981. An up-country branch was also established at Ghobana, in Bombali District. In 1983, Pastor Kamara was ordained into the full-time ministry after completing the Pastoral Studies course at Theological Hall. Work on the parsonage was completed in July 1984. At a meeting of representatives of the Baptist Convention of Sierra Leone (BCSL) and the Loko Pentecostal Church, held at the Robert Street Baptist Church on 3rd October 1984, discussions took place on the Loko Pentecostals joining the Baptist Convention.¹⁰⁷ The Loko church was particularly attracted by the Baptists' evangelistic emphasis, their training programmes for the laity and potential national leaders, and their overseas connections. They claimed to have similar doctrinal beliefs and practices and to be independent without obligations to any outside body. At the January 1985 meeting of the Baptist Convention, the Loko Pentecostals, led by K. S. Kamara, adopted the name Loko Baptist Church. According to Rev. Valcarcel, the Baptist Christian Education Director:

At the beginning we were very suspicious of them. We thought that because they had learned that Baptist missionaries were interested in school work and medical work they were coming for these purposes. Actually they immediately took on our own vision. The Pentecostal body had never paid any attention to the church, they only took their money, their offerings and other things. I must confess that the Circular Road Church has been a model to our Baptist churches in the aspect of evangelism. They are the largest Baptist church in Freetown, numerically and financially. They have many business and educated people in the congregation. They use Krio and translate into Loko. They are a very progressive church.¹⁰⁸

The Loko Baptists are the most expanding section of Baptist work in Sierra Leone. Their evangelistic strategy aims at contacting every Loko who migrates into the city. The Circular Road mother-church had a 1990 baptised membership of 359 with normal Sunday attendances of around 260; males 65, females 52, children 134. While Loko dominate, constituting one third of the congregation, Temne make up just under a quarter, and the

Limba, Mende and Krio make up the remaining 40% in equal proportions.¹⁰⁹ The services are in Krio with Loko translation. In the other churches the percentage of Loko attending is somewhat higher. The Circular Road Church has older established branches at Wilberforce (pastor Samuel Sesay with 210 baptised members), and Kissy (pastor Alimamy Kargbo with 146 baptised members). New branches were opened in Gloucester village in 1987, and Ascension Town in 1988. In 1990 Gloucester had 32 baptised members, and the Ascension Town branch, which met in Saint Peter's Primary School and was pastored by Michael Bangura, had 158.¹¹⁰ While the Loko Baptists exhibit a certain amount of American Pentecostalism, and more recently American fundamentalist evangelicalism, in their worship, and take a fairly negative public stance on indigenous practices such as the ancestral cult and society membership, their evangelistic success indicates that they are providing the Loko with an attractive dynamic religious alternative which is in tune with indigenous religious concerns while having at the same time clear Biblical support.

AN INDIGENOUS PENTECOSTAL REVIVAL AMONG THE KISSI IN THE KOINDU AREA

The origins of the Pentecostal-evangelical revival among the Kissi in the Eastern Province can be traced back to church planting by Swedish Pentecostals among the Kissi at Foya Kamara in Western Liberia. In 1952, Swedish missionaries visited Koindu and shopped at a store run by Mrs. Princess James, a Krio trader. Mrs. James was conducting evening prayers with her Kissi employees, "So that Kissi boys would learn something about God."¹¹¹ One of the boys was Moses Fayiah, a baker. In 1989 he was to become General Secretary of AOG Sierra Leone. Following this encounter, Liberian Kissi, who had been studying the Bible in Kissi and had learned to sing hymns in Kissi, came over to Koindu to evangelise and exhort the Koindu Kissi boys to "wash their hands" of "society business". Through their witnessing Moses Fayiah and Tamba Kondo, a carpenter, were won to Christ. Fayiah

destroyed all his charms and fetish, was baptised in water and subsequently baptised in the Holy Spirit. An AOG missionary testified regarding Kondo:

T. K. was a man with a terrible temper, hence a man with many enemies. His life was full of sin, but his heart was hungry for God. When he heard the message of salvation, he yielded himself to Christ, but a fear lingered in his heart. He trembled when he tried to witness for the Lord. Dread of evil spirits tormented him. This new Christian had heard of the Holy Spirit, but doubted that God's Spirit could live in a man. As he sat on the steps of his house one evening praying to understand the way of the Holy Spirit, he suddenly felt God's presence in such reality that he could hardly contain himself. He began praising God for full assurance of salvation. About a month after his doorstep experience, T. K. was praying with a sick Christian brother when he began to speak in a language he did not understand. He recognised that God was filling him with the Holy Spirit. His fear of evil spirits, idols and death was gone. His enemies became friends. God has performed a miracle in his life and the whole town had seen it.¹¹²

Every Sunday for almost three years, Fayiah, Kondo, and several others, visited the Kissi church at Foya Kamara, fourteen miles away. They also began to preach in the villages around Koindu where they met a ready response. In 1955 they decided to establish their own church in Koindu with Moses Fayiah as pastor and Tamba Kondo his assistant. At first they met in an unfinished house with no shutters on the windows. During an evening service *Poros* members threw in some powerful medicine which causes severe burning. It had no effect, and as a result the townspeople began to ridicule the *Poros* members who had been unable to harm the Christians.

Among the Koindu Kissi, the early development of Pentecostal-evangelicalism was almost entirely indigenous. Through the Christians' uncompromising Gospel message many believed and brought their charms and fetish for burning. Severe persecution followed. The local *Poros* took the leaders to a flat rock at one in the morning to beat them into submission. Surprisingly, they let them go saying they would try the case in the morning. The Christians maintain that the intention was to follow them and kill them, but with God protecting them their pursuers were not able to catch them. On another occasion some of the young men were taken into the bush and severely beaten, their heads were shaved and they were forced to eat all their hair. Some became sick, but all stood firm. Moses Fayiah was taken into the *Poros* bush and the society devil danced around him in a costume composed of heavy planks

which stood straight out as he whirled around. The intention was to end the dance by striking Fayiah with the whirling planks. Fayiah, moving he believed in response to the voice of God, went and stood next to the chief. Thus he was protected.¹¹³ According to Kondo:

Poison enough has been used against us to kill hundreds of men, yet not one of us has suffered the slightest ill effect from it. God is able to deliver his own.¹¹⁴

Even the elements were perceived to fight for the young church. During a thunderstorm a bolt of lightning struck the society devil's house and burned it to the ground. The Christians were blamed. They claimed innocence as it was an act of God. The *Poros* responded that God had sent this great fire to destroy the devil house in answer to the Christians' prayers. Gilbert Olson relates the case of an old man who was particularly antagonistic and lived close to where they had started building their church. He beat them and destroyed their pile of sticks. One day he became very sick and neither native nor European medicines could cure him. In desperation he asked the Christians to pray for him. He recovered, burned all his charms and joined the group. Olson points out:

The high moral demands and the definite break with the old ways, including polygamy, secret society membership, and Sunday marketing, generated general persecution of Christians. This has yielded a strong church and has impressed upon the tribespeople that to become a Christian means not just the taking of a name, but giving their lives to God.¹¹⁵

At Moses Fayiah's request the Swedish Pentecostals tried to establish a station at Koindu in 1955, but their application was refused by the Government. Hearing there were Pentecostal missionaries in Freetown, the church sent Moses Fayiah and a companion to Freetown, 325 miles away, to talk to them about helping with Bible teaching and pastoral training. George Hemminger travelled back to Koindu with them and was amazed to find a group of around one hundred new converts.¹¹⁶ AOG missionaries made periodic visits to encourage the young and persecuted Pentecostal church. In 1957 the local *Poros* society arranged a dance during which they intended to attack the church and the Christians' homes, and also burn down Mrs. James' store. Mrs. James's sister, Euphemia Thomas, was visiting at the time, prior to her marriage to Ade Jones, future pastor of Bethel Temple and General Secretary of

AOG Sierra Leone. Mrs. James drove to Kailahun and alerted District Commissioner Derek Hughes. Hughes, a Roman Catholic, hastened to Koindu with a lorry load of soldiers and the dancers retreated. He thereupon passed a bye-law making "devil" dancing illegal in Koindu since it was a trading town. The angry chiefs imprisoned and tortured thirteen of the church leaders and then went up to Freetown to protest against the law. The Minister of the Interior came to Koindu to investigate. At this time, John Kennedy, who was visiting, was taken to the court *barrie* and fined £600. Mrs. James complained to the Minister that the chiefs could not fine Kennedy as he was not a *Poro* man. Kennedy was released and began a campaign to obtain fair treatment for the persecuted Christians. He reported the incident:

We held meetings in Kissy and the Lord blessed greatly. On Sunday afternoon the power of God was very present and many burned their fetishes.... Thirteen Christians were put in stocks for preaching the Word. The chief commanded them not to preach Christianity in his chiefdom. The places where the Christian workers worshipped were burned. The little chapels had been built with much sacrifice. Special prayer has been made regarding the palaver we are to have with the authorities in Kissy. The United Christian Council has offered to lend its support in granting the Christians freedom to witness in that particular chiefdom.¹¹⁷

Kennedy's intervention was crucial for the development of the Koindu church.¹¹⁸ George Hemminger stayed six months in 1961, to construct a cement-block church and a mission residence. The land for the church, a *Poro* sacrifice site, was granted by the chief. In March 1962, the new church was dedicated by AOG Field Secretary for Africa, Everett Phillips.

Aware of their need for Bible teaching, the church requested that a Bible school be opened in Koindu. Faced with a ripe field and willing, but untrained national workers, AOG, who had for several years felt the need for a Bible School in Freetown, their oldest mission field in Africa, decided that the time to open one had now come.¹¹⁹ Jonathan and Gwen Glover were commissioned to go to Koindu to establish Eastern Bible Institute. They arrived in Sierra Leone on 2nd March 1962 and in April they moved up to Koindu.¹²⁰ In January 1963 Eastern Bible Institute held its first classes with forty enthusiastic students. The school year lasted only six months as most students had to work their farms to support themselves. They were taught Bible and also assigned villages to evangelise. Almost every Sunday new people

appeared in the church as a result of their outreach.¹²¹ Six congregations - Sefadu, Kayiah, Yende, Bengbedu, Bongcongo and Konyumodu - were founded and they erected their own church buildings. Most of the students were illiterate and were taught English, the official language. This was proved extremely difficult for the older students. Several pastored congregations. They attended classes for three months, then returned to their churches, and farms sometimes, for the next three months. This made for a slow, but practical training programme. The first students took eleven or twelve years to graduate. Gwen Glover writes:

The school grew, and new students with more formal education enrolled. Training was shortened considerably. Almost all of them pastored while they took classes.... These men and women loved the Lord deeply and were willing to go into difficult places to pastor. Many times their prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread," was a literal plea. Yet even through the hard times - when church members caused problems, when death claimed a child, when they were ridiculed by the village people - these men and women faithfully remained at their posts.¹²²

The supporting rather than dominating role generally adopted by the AOG missionaries is worth observing, as also their Foreign Missions Board policy that all pastors should be supported by their own congregations. This policy sought to minimise the debilitating dependency on foreign funding which has plagued church life in Sierra Leone from the start of missionary involvement. The 1965 AOG annual report for the Koindu field listed 19 national workers, 7 organised churches, 23 preaching points, 123 active adult members, 300 other believers, 36 baptised in the Holy Spirit, and 375 enrolled at Sunday School. Olson has observed that despite the high standards demanded by this Pentecostal-evangelical church, the number of Koindu Christians grew dramatically.¹²³ He points out several lessons from the Koindu situation which other Sierra Leonean churches should note and emulate:

(1) A complete break with the past through the burning of medicines and charms. This is a symbol of complete rejection of the old way and of complete dependence upon God through Christ and the Holy Spirit. In all the Churches of Sierra Leone, members are prohibited from using charms or making sacrifices. But often members comply by word of mouth only, and yield to the pressures of family to protect their children by the use of charms. As a result, many "Christians" believe both in Christ and in the power of charms. This leads to syncretism, There needs to be a complete, formal, public break with the old way.

(2) Faith in the power of God to heal. This is an integral part of the Assemblies of God Church. It is almost wholly lacking in the other Churches. Because of this, many Christians still use magical charms and "medicine". Church is merely a Sunday

affair. Christianity is not relevant to their whole life. Assemblies of God pray for those desiring healing through the laying on of hands. Some are healed, others are not. But the Christians have a firm belief in the power of God in their lives.

(3) Holy Spirit baptism. This usually implies speaking ecstatically in tongues. But it also means complete submission to the will of God and the receiving of God's power and guidance, which results in holy living and in zealous evangelism and soul winning. This zeal was evident in the lives of the Christians at Koindu. With a few notable exceptions, I found it wholly lacking in the lives of Christians elsewhere - both leaders and followers. Many Christians seem merely to have become church people. They bear the name of Christ but do not possess His power. One reason for this is the almost total lack of instruction concerning the Holy Spirit. The Churches and Christians of Sierra Leone need revival and Holy Spirit baptism.

(4) Enthusiastic worship, using clapping, drums, and shake-shakes, in which all participate. Two things which have most harmed worship services in the churches of Sierra Leone are dead singing and nonparticipation of worshippers.¹²⁴

The Mende Pentecostal Church

A new AOG church planting effort was begun in Kenema, the third largest city in Sierra Leone, by American missionaries, Betty Savage and Katie Jean Jones who transferred from Liberia in September 1966.¹²⁵ The aim was to establish an AOG church among the Mende, the country's largest ethnic group. The missionaries began a church in their house and continued to hold services there until September 19th 1968 when they moved into their new church building which had been constructed with help from Miss Jones' church in Texas. The actual dedication of the church took place on 6th October with 300 attending. Simon Grant offered the dedicatory prayer.¹²⁶ On the following Sunday the church received its first 11 members and 157 attended Sunday school. The next Sunday was a baptismal service and 13 were baptised.

THE PENTECOSTAL-EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT PENETRATES KRIO SOCIETY

During the post-War decades AOG was very loosely organised. With Kennedy as Field Superintendent, a Field Fellowship of missionaries and pastors met once a month at Hemminger's house. The intention, in line with general AOG mission strategy for Africa, was that new churches would as soon as possible become completely independent of the mission

parent, but continue in Holy Spirit fellowship with them.¹²⁷ The Kennedys were transferred to Liberia in April 1962.¹²⁸ Alongside his AOG work, Kennedy had pioneered Youth With Christ in Freetown. Hemminger took over as Field Superintendent. A church for Freetown Kissi was started in January 1965 in the unused Spa Fields Countess of Huntingdon Connection church on Short Street, which had been taken over by the Methodists. That month Simon Grant heard of Shakley's death in the USA and wrote a touching letter of sympathy.¹²⁹ By the end of 1966, AOG had churches among the Kru, Temne, Limba, Kissi, Loko and Mende. An AOG Sierra Leone Council was formed with Simon Grant as National Superintendent and Daniel Konteh the National Secretary. The ultimate control remained in the hands of the missionaries, the Field Superintendent and the Field Treasurer, although most congregations had raised the majority of the funds for their church buildings and also supported their own pastors. Some had received loans from the AOG Missions Board and were repaying them.

As a result of continuing growth, despite a major set-back which shall be looked at shortly, a new administrative structure had to be formed. On 8th January 1970 the General Council of AOG Sierra Leone came into being having two District Councils, Eastern, which included Koindu, Sefadu and Kenema, and Western, which covered the area from Freetown to Bo. In seeking to fulfil their vision of bringing into existence strong indigenous Pentecostal churches in Sierra Leone the AOG missionary contribution was to concentrate on Bible teaching, and both student evangelistic outreaches and high profile mass evangelism campaigns called Good News Crusades. In October 1966 James and Judith Berry started an evening Bible School at Fort Street to train evangelists and pastors.¹³⁰ It was not until 1971 that a full-time school, the Freetown Assemblies of God Bible College, was opened at Bethel Temple on Tower Hill and a three years diploma course in Theology begun. Among the first students were Ade Jones who was to become the first Sierra Leonean General Superintendent of AOG Sierra Leone, his wife Euphemia Jones, and Richard Shaka who would also hold the position of General Superintendent. Nine students were enrolled in 1973. Meanwhile, there were thirty-nine students at Eastern Bible Institute.

The Paul Olson Crusade - 1966

English evangelist Peter Scothern, invited by the Freetown Ministerial Alliance on Kennedy's recommendation, had held revival meetings at the Queen Elizabeth II playing field in February 1959. Scothern emphasised salvation and physical healing. The two weeks Gospel Crusade, the first in Freetown which included physical healing, drew crowds of ten to twelve thousand nightly. Many stood for hours in the heat of the day waiting for the services to begin. "Hundreds accepted Christ as their Saviour and scores testified to God's healing power."¹³¹ AOG were initially somewhat baffled by the enthusiasm generated and the spontaneous responses. However, in November 1966 they held their own Good News Crusade at the Recreation Grounds, Brookfields. This campaign was spearheaded by evangelist Paul Olson and attracted over 4,000 on the first night. It was advertised in newspapers and on radio, and over 50,000 Gospel tracts were distributed. At the "invitation for salvation" on the first night over 500 people "went forward". At every service the sick were prayed for and healings were reported. During one of the prayers, the audience moved by this demonstration of Gospel power, spontaneously lifted their hands to God in thanksgiving. Altar calls proved to be so great that separate nights were allocated to men and women, and 4,000 decisions for Christ were recorded for the whole campaign. Morning services at the Fort Street church attracted 400 daily. The teaching emphasised "New Birth" and the necessity of forsaking idols and fetish and trusting wholly in Jesus. According to AOG missionary James Berry, "God has knocked pockets of light in this city. Greater victory is to come."¹³² After the Crusade Simon Grant sent a glowing account to Everett Phillips.¹³³

Dear Brother Phillips,

Thousands of people flocked every night to the Brookfields Stadium to hear and see the wonderful works of God, as the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ was proclaimed by Brother Paul Olson. The Lord so worked it out for His glory in choosing one of the national workers, Brother John Davies of the Kru church, to be the interpreter throughout the crusade.

In the commonly spoken language, Creole, the claims of Jesus Christ reached everyone who attended the crusade during the three weeks at the Brookfields Stadium and two weeks at the Fort Street Church.

As a result of the crusade, great revival broke out, and over 500 converts signed decision cards each night at the stadium. Several hundreds received divine healing. Many hundreds received the baptism of the Holy Ghost, among whom were most of the prominent citizens of the country.

Many gave up their jujus: and on Monday night, the last night at the stadium, a big fire was made and all of the jujus and cigarettes of the new converts were burned to ashes.

We have had other evangelistic crusades in Freetown, but the Olson Party turned the city upside down! The whole city was moved so much that the people expressed their desire that the Olsons remain here for another six months. Everybody enjoyed their singing and invaluable and unparalleled wonderful ministry of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

At the conclusion of the crusade, an English-speaking Assemblies of God church was organised, for which we are very thankful to the Lord. Missionary James Berry and Brother John Davies are co-pastors over the new church. The Lord is wonderfully blessing. Many are being filled with the Holy Spirit, and many more souls are being added to the church daily. Praise the Lord!

The district brethren, our churches, and myself express our sincere thanks and appreciation to you and the brethren at the Assemblies of God Headquarters for your kind thought of us in Sierra Leone. This has made the dreams of our pioneer missionaries a reality. It also placed us on the centre of the map!

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours in His service,

Simon T. Grant.

The prospects for impressive AOG growth in Freetown were bright. However, as in all mass evangelism campaigns, the great majority of converts soon drifted away. Other than the fact that the Christian Gospel was presented "with demonstration of the Spirit and power", the most notable feature of this Crusade was that for the first time the Krio responded to Pentecostal-evangelicalism in significant numbers. A Krio Pentecostal church was organised called the "English-speaking Church", co-pastored initially by recently arrived missionary James Berry, and John Davies from the Kru AOG Church. This was a major breakthrough for Pentecostal-evangelicalism into the closed ranks of the Krio community, and as the new church grew and attracted some eminent citizens it created a considerable stir among the Christians in the city. In 1967 there were nine organised AOG congregations in the Western Area, eight in Freetown and one at Hastings. The Freetown assemblies were the Limba churches at Fort Street, Congo Cross and Fourah Bay, led by Daniel Konteh; the Kru church at Campbell Street led by Simon Grant; the Loko church at King Street led by K. S. Kamara; the Temne church at Ambrose Street led by David Kargbo; the Kissi church at Short Street led by Tamba Peters; and the English-speaking Church led by Berry and Davies which met at the Limba Church on Fort Street. AOG could claim a regular attendance of around one thousand four hundred, making them "the strongest evangelical force in the Colony".¹³⁴

BETHEL TEMPLE - THE FIRST KRIO PENTECOSTAL EVANGELICAL CHURCH

Adebayo Emile Walter Jones and Euphemia Bertha Abesodun Jones were crucial figures in the planting and development of the first Krio Pentecostal-evangelical church. Ade Jones' father, Frederick Nathaniel Jones, was born at Regent in 1880. His own father was an itinerant schoolteacher from Waterloo with Yoruba connections. Frederick Jones joined the Civil Service in Freetown and eventually became Supervisor of Customs at Bonthe, Sherbro. He died of a sudden fever at Bonthe on 10th December 1934 aged fifty-four. He was a member of the Methodist Church. Jones' mother was Rachel Tugowa Cole (1894-1963), a Freetown Aku. Ade Jones was born on Good Friday 18th April, 1919, at Savage Square and brought up by his mother and grandfather at Goree Street, off Bombay Street. Although an Aku, the grandfather did not force Islam. Young Ade grew up in a liberal and varied religious environment, a feature of Freetown's tolerant and religiously mobile society. His mother went through adult baptism at King Memorial, the UMC "cathedral" on Regent Road. Later, she again changed her religious association and became actively involved in the Church of the Lord (Aladura). After attending Government Model School, Ade's father, while on a visit from Bonthe, arranged he enter the Methodist Boys High School in January 1934. In 1936 he transferred to the Prince of Wales School and remained there till 1940. Nominal Christianity was the strongest religious influence on his life as a youth.

They were nominal in the sense that they knew nothing of the being born again experience. What they did know they imparted to their children very strongly and we accepted it. That is why we were going to church and feared God. I feared God. I was exposed to the Gospel. I grew up liking the things of God.¹³⁵

However, he points out:

Throughout my career there were certain questions about the things of God which I was asking myself and couldn't get an answer which made sense to me until the evangelists of the Assemblies of God came to hold a series of evangelistic meetings at the Stadium. I went there not because I wanted to be a close participant, I just wanted to listen. I was not even in the crowd, I was in the background listening to what was going on. While he was preaching some of the questions which were raised in my mind were being answered. I said to myself there must be some truth in what this man is saying, I'd better keep myself close to them. That is how I started moving towards Pentecost.¹³⁶

Jones was a member of Gibraltar Methodist Church, Kissy Road, and sang in the choir. When his mother became an "Adejobi" he did not join her. "I was set in my ways as a Methodist." The Methodist ministers W. E. A. Pratt, M. W. Cole and E. J. T. Harris influenced his life deeply. With his ingrained Krio tolerance he commented:

What they had they gave. It is quite different from what we receive from Pentecostals now. You did not hear much of the born again experience and the way of salvation and the life in the Spirit after you are converted. But what they had they gave.¹³⁷

On 28th April 1941, Jones started his Civil Service career, joining the Public Works Department. He progressed through the Civil Service grades. In April 1957, at Wesley Methodist Church, Lamina Sankoh Street, he married Euphemia Thomas, a nurse whom he had met five years previously. From September 1957 to July 1958 they attended the Civil Service administration course in Oxford run by the Colonial Office. While attending a summer conference in Cambridge in 1961, the newly independent Government of Sierra Leone asked Jones to stay on and work in their London office. The Joneses remained there until December 1963. From June to December 1965 Jones was posted to Washington as Head of Chancery. Back in Freetown in 1966 he was made Senior Assistant Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs. In November of that year, the Joneses attended the Olson Crusade meetings at Brookfields Stadium. They attended because Mrs. Jones, who had two major operations in Freetown and one in London for a stomach complaint, and was heavily dependent on pain killing tablets, heard that the AOG evangelist prayed for the sick. During the meeting she "felt something happen and she had the inner witness that she was healed". When the invitation was given for the sick to come forward for healing Mrs. Jones responded. Olson called her up to the platform and asked, "What do you want?" She replied, "I came for healing, but while I was sitting up there in the stand I felt that the Lord healed me, and so I am well now." Olson gave her the mike to testify. Mrs. Jones stated that her mother, who had an eye problem which confined her to her room, was in the line for healing. Olson called her up onto the platform and prayed for her. From that night she was able to go out of her house and also attend church. On another evening when there was an

altar call for those seeking the Baptism in the Holy Spirit Mrs. Jones went forward, was baptised in the Spirit, and spoke in tongues.¹³⁸

Before Olson left Freetown he was invited to tea at Mrs. Princess James's house at 28 Savage Street - Princess James was Mrs. Jones's sister. Ade Jones was not yet ready to fully commit himself to the new movement. At the reception Olson said to him, "I hear you have been an ambassador for the government of Sierra Leone. I'm praying that one day you will be an ambassador for the Lord Jesus Christ." "He prayed for me," said Jones, "and that was the end of it. I did not take him very seriously then." Nevertheless, a seed was sown. Olson then asked those present, mostly Krio, if they would like to have a Pentecostal church of their own. They responded enthusiastically and another meeting was arranged for Sunday afternoon at the Church of God Baptist Church on Regent Road. Here on 11th December 1966 the first Krio Pentecostal church, the "English Speaking Church", was inaugurated. There were seventy present including Mrs. Jones, her mother and sister, Vera Harding, Georgina King, Dorothy Jones, Christine Hope, Harold Deveneux and Rebecca Stevens the wife of APC (All Peoples' Congress) leader Siaka Stevens. Ade Jones drove his wife to the meeting, but did not go in himself. His reserve was mainly due to an earlier involvement with a Spiritual church run by a prophetess. "We followed them all along the way and then were disappointed because we found out that the leader did certain things which were displeasing to God." The new Krio church took the name Calvary Temple. Later, it was renamed Bethel Temple. Meetings were held in an upper room at the Limba Church on Fort Street. The number of foundational members dwindled, eventually going down to eleven. According to Jones, "Some went away and some were disqualified because of marriage complications."¹³⁹ At this time Siaka Stevens was resisting Albert Margai's imposition of One Party rule and contesting the March 1967 elections. Stevens won the election, but as he was being sworn into office by governor-general Sir Henry Lightfoot Boston, a military coup led by Brigadier Lansana interrupted the proceedings. Martial Law was declared and Stevens was imprisoned. Lansana was deposed two days later by junior officers who set up the National

Reformation Council with Lt. Col. Juxon-Smith as chairman. During the turbulent year which followed, until the non-commissioned officers' coup of 18th April 1968 which led to Siaka Stevens being released and sworn in again as Prime Minister, Rebecca Stevens, although she never became a full member, frequently visited the church for prayer.¹⁴⁰ According to Ade Jones, she was a woman of faith who strongly believed in the power of prayer.

Euphemia Thomas, who was the spiritual power house of Bethel Temple during its first two decades, was born at Waterloo on 24th December 1918. Her background was Christian Krio with Igbo ancestry, and staunchly Methodist. Her father, Peter Sama Thomas, a building contractor and plantation owner at Waterloo, played the organ at the Dove Memorial Methodist Church. Her mother came from the prominent Freetown family the Beckleys. Mrs. Thomas's father had built Wesley Memorial Methodist Church on Lamina Sankoh Street, along with other red stone churches in and around Freetown. When Peter Thomas died in 1925, the family moved into Freetown and attended Wesley Methodist Church. They also visited Zion on the Hill, Wesley Street, and Buxton Memorial Methodist Church. While nursing at Connaught Hospital, and bringing up her twin daughters, Euphemia Thomas met Ade Jones. They married in April 1957 at Wesley Methodist Church. According to Jones:

She was a nominal Christian like myself. It was the Crusade and the healing that made her fully committed. It caused the Lord to be more real in her life.

Her mother, because of her own healing, gave up her class book at the prestigious Wesley Church, where she was a class leader, and came over to the fledgling, but enthusiastic and power conscious group that constituted the "English Speaking Church". During a meeting in the upper room, Euphemia Jones had a second powerful spiritual experience.

When she came home she could not eat, for the whole of the day she could not eat. She was just filled with the experience she had got. I knew something had happened although I didn't hear her speak in tongues.¹⁴¹

Euphemia Jones exercised a powerful praying, preaching and healing ministry. Her praying was spontaneous and inspirational, and she would frequently break out into utterances in

tongues. She laid hands on the sick and many women testified to healing and having their babies healed. In Freetown there were many divided homes and abused women. She "worked relentlessly" and would visit troubled women at any time of the day or night and pray with them.¹⁴² Her preaching emphasised the basic New Testament doctrines of repentance and salvation. Mrs. Irene Chinsman, the widow of an African Methodist Episcopal Church minister, who joined the church in 1969 commented:

When she is preaching I don't feel she is in this world. She preaches that you should live right, do right, love God and keep His commandments. This woman of blessed memory was a very prayerful woman, she laid hands on you and prayed and healed you. She laid hands on one crippled old woman; you should have seen her run home afterwards....

Sister Jones did many miracles. One lady who had been bellowing with pain was brought from the hospital on a stretcher. Sister Jones prayed and the lady got up and walked back. Others took the stretcher back. She is now in Ghana. She visits my house. The pain does come back, but it goes away again. Sister Jones says to keep your healing you must pray more, keep a clean life and be forgiving."¹⁴³

Mrs. Chinsman's daughter-in-law had had four miscarriages. Sister Jones prayed and prophesied, "You will have a baby and she will live." As prophesied, a healthy baby girl was born. According to Mrs. Chinsman, Sister Jones would pray all night for the sick. Once her great grand-daughter was in hospital, in a coma and dying. The doctor paid no attention as it was a lost cause. Mrs. Chinsman, in desperation, took a taxi to Mrs. Jones' home at Tengbe Town at 1 a.m. When she left at two, Sister Jones was on her knees praying. In the hospital the girl began to move her hand and regain consciousness. The nurse was startled and the doctor amazed. When Mrs. Chinsman returned to Tengbe Town in the morning, Sister Jones was still on her knees praying. "Sister Jones," claims Mrs. Chinsman, "was called by God. Pastor Jones was brought in by Sister Jones."¹⁴⁴ A Major Duwatie, who had suffered from insanity and had travelled to USA for treatment, but had not improved, went to Sister Jones's house for prayer. He became "a completely healed man". According to Mrs. James, "She had the power, a really strong gift." Catherine Wright suffered from dumbness and was also crippled. After Sister Jones prayed and fasted, she began to speak, and while "she hops a bit, she speaks and goes to church regularly".¹⁴⁵ Fasting was an integral part of Sister Jones's Christian ministry. In one "dry fast" she went without food or drink for seven days.

In all her ministry, however, unlike many of her Spiritual counterparts, she disciplined herself to operate within a strictly evangelical and Biblical framework. All her actions had to have the clear vindication of Scripture. She was not only a woman of prayer, a charismatic healer and a visionary, she was also an organiser who took the practical steps to bring her vision of the church into existence. Her full daily programme was carefully arranged. Visits to people with whom she prayed had top priority. She had a special concern for praying for, and with, the country's political leaders. Government ministers came to Bethel Temple and her home at Tengbe Town for prayer and spiritual guidance. In fact thousands of sick and troubled people came to her for prayer and she was reputed never to have turned anyone away.¹⁴⁶ While Pastor Jones ran the church as the administrator and quiet diplomat, Sister Jones, with her greater vision and ability to reach out to people, was its spiritual power-house.

Ade Jones's Evangelical Conversion Experience

Ade Jones continued attending Gibraltar Methodist Church. As it normally finished earlier than the English Speaking Church, he would sit in the compound at Fort Street listening to "Community Half-hour" on his car radio. Then he would go in and listen to the end of their service. One morning he decided to give Mrs. Jones a surprise and attended the whole service. From then on his tie with the Methodist church was broken. When the English-speaking Church planned their second baptism-by-immersion service, Jones secretly intimated to Berry his desire to be baptised. Again he wanted this to be a surprise for his wife who had been putting pressure on him to volunteer for "believers' baptism". Afterwards, he had second thoughts and wondered if he had acted foolishly. He felt strongly drawn back to his former life-style. On a visit to 28 Savage Street he entered his dark night of the soul:

A kind of fear came over me. I became terribly afraid of what was going to happen to me. I had decided to trust God to save me and here I was being enticed back into the world and He was not doing anything about it. I knelt down in the house. I said, "Lord, what are you trying to do with me? After you have saved me do you want to leave me to the Devil to destroy my life? I'm praying to you for deliverance. This is the last time I'm praying to you. If you don't give me victory I know you want to leave me in the hands of wicked people."

That very moment I had a release in my spirit that I had got the victory. I got up a renewed man.

Another crisis soon followed. This was the challenge of consecration. Before a Communion Service, missionary Berry preached on how the Christian should approach the Table. In the Methodist church Jones had loved Communion Sunday, particularly the congregating in the vestry afterwards to consume the elements, especially the wine, along with the minister. He had believed that anyone going to church could take Communion. As Berry preached Jones felt there were many things not right in his life, and that he could not rightly partake. However, he faced a dilemma. People would ask, "Why has this man not gone to the Communion Table to partake?" Again Jones prayed earnestly:

"Lord, I cannot go to the Communion Table and I want to go and partake. I promise you that if you give me permission this once to go and partake, from this day forth I will begin to live a life clean before you and according to your dictates." I said that prayer and immediately I had a release of spirit to go and partake. I went to the Communion Table. Since then I have had victory and I know what should be in my heart. I consider that incident as the final struggle, the final battle fought.¹⁴⁷

That was the final stage in his evangelical conversion, a profound regenerative experience of self-surrender and total commitment. Before going to Ghana in February 1967 as Acting High Commissioner, Jones was re-baptised by total immersion in the Pentecostal manner. It was an elevating experience:

It was as if I was floating on air. I was seeing pictures of the Lord Jesus Christ coming down from heaven. It was not a vision, just pictures in my mind.¹⁴⁸

After his return to Freetown in June the highly rational and normally down-to-earth Jones was baptised, to the point of intoxication, in the Holy Spirit.

In London and Washington, the Joneses had enjoyed the social round. Jones observed, "At that time we had not been exposed to Pentecost." In Ghana they found it increasingly uncomfortable to live the life of committed Christians and top diplomats. Feeling he was now on the right track, Jones, following the Pentecostal ethic, stopped smoking and drinking spirits. Gifts in the form of cigarettes and cases of wine and whiskey from other embassies were refused. When he was advised to take the gifts and pass them on to someone else, his reply was that if they were not good for him they were not good for others. At his diplomatic receptions people began asking for soft drinks. An ambassador, a Muslim who liked whiskey,

asked Jones if he too was a Muslim. All dishonest associations were dropped. Fortunately, or unfortunately, his stay in Ghana was brief. In June 1967 he returned to Freetown and the post of Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs.

I was glad to get out. I didn't like politics even in these politically strong days. If I have a friend who goes into politics I avoid him. I'm always conscious that they know how to get people into trouble.¹⁴⁹

Mrs. Jones who had lost all interest in the diplomatic scene had gone back to Freetown earlier to "engineer" his return.

The Daniel Konteh Scandal and its Aftermath

At the Limba Pentecostal church at Fort Street rumours began to spread that Pastor Konteh, who was also AOG National Secretary, was committing adultery. The Krio sided with the minority anti-Konteh faction, and as a result of their interference relations between the pro-Konteh Limba and the Krio deteriorated. Shortly after the Joneses had left for Ghana in February 1967, Daniel Konteh locked the doors of his church to the Krio Pentecostals. The group moved along Fort Street to the Jane Bloomer Church. Shortly afterwards, being under pressure to move on, they transferred to the Grammar School on Lightfoot Boston Street and met in the school hall. When Jones returned from Ghana in June, he joined the beleaguered little group at the Grammar School. The strict ethic of the AOG missionaries and the divisions caused by the Konteh controversy, resulted in only eleven of the original core group remaining among a congregation of about twenty-seven regulars. Some of the eleven, unhappy about the altercation with Konteh, felt Jones would strongly support the protesting faction. Matters came to a head during the election of church officers. Euphemia Jones was voted out of office. Shortly after the election, Berry, unaware of all the undercurrents swirling around, brought before the Working Committee the case of a young member who had rented his house to a tobacco company. They used it to store cigarettes. The committee said they didn't see anything wrong with that. Berry expressed amazement that after all his teaching they could give such a response and immediately suspended the committee. The matter went to the AOG council and Simon Grant insisted the committee continue because they had

been elected under the new church's constitution. Jones, demonstrating astute diplomatic skill, asked the Secretary to read the minutes in which the constitution was adopted, and also the minutes of the meeting where the original minutes were confirmed. No minutes had been kept. That settled the matter. The suspension was upheld and the five left the church. They went back to the upper room of the Limba Pentecostal Church and continued to call themselves the English-speaking Church, but they did not grow and eventually faded away. Ade and Euphemia Jones took over as unofficial leaders of the English-speaking Church at the Grammar School. They now decided to call themselves Bethel Temple, a name suggested by Berry, to distinguish them from the seceders.

Early in 1968 the Konteh controversy resurfaced when Berry was handed a newspaper report on a "palavah" between AOG National Secretary Daniel Konteh and another man over a child born on January 20th to a Vivat Mansaray. She was not the pastor's wife and both men claimed to have fathered the child who was registered on 7th February as Aribo Caleb Konteh. An arbitrating Police Inspector dismissed the disputants with the words, "This is disgraceful, and you a man of God."¹⁵⁰ Berry took the article to National Superintendent Simon Grant, but he did not want to be drawn into this sort of "palavah" with his popular National Secretary.¹⁵¹ The AOG missionaries were annoyed with Berry because he had approached Grant without consulting them. At a specially convened meeting, attended by Jones, Grant suggested the best way to deal with the problem was to ask the AOG Missions Board to withdraw Berry from the Sierra Leone field. Jones declared they were under obligation to investigate if there was any foundation for Berry's complaints.

The Konteh affair dragged on inconclusively till the end of 1968. Bethel Temple, encountering difficulties at the Grammar School, began to raise funds for a church building of their own which would also house an AOG Bible school. Helped by a Government minister who was a school friend, and the Lands Officer, also a school friend, Jones secured a twenty-five year lease on one and a half acres of Government land at Tower Hill near the Parliament

Building. While discussing whether National Secretary Konteh would be invited to the ground-breaking ceremony, the man at the centre of the cigarettes dispute disclosed that Konteh had impregnated another lady. Bethel Temple refused to have Konteh attend their ceremony. The matter was to be discussed at the AOG General Council meeting in January 1969. Before the meeting, Jones obtained a certified extract of the child's birth certificate proving Konteh was the father.¹⁵² In the face of such incriminating evidence Konteh broke with AOG just before the January 1969 General Council meetings, taking his four Limba congregations with him. Simon Grant followed him with the Kru Church. Together they founded the National Pentecostal Mission. They were joined by the Ambrose Street Temne, and the Loko at King Street. It was a tremendous blow to AOG operations in Sierra Leone. The Kissi Church at Short Street, the Koindu congregations - the largest AOG group in the country - the churches at Hastings and Kenema, and Bethel Temple, remained with AOG.

Konteh's secession caused a major split among the Freetown Limba. Those who wished to continue under AOG leadership met at 4 Janju Street, Brookfields, under the leadership of Sampha Sesay - alias Sampha Taylor - Samuel Mansaray, and the late Hon. John Kanu.¹⁵³ They filed a series of court cases against the National Pentecostal Mission on the grounds that the Fort Street lease was in the name of AOG and therefore they owned the church. Meantime, Konteh began the construction of a parsonage behind the church. The Loko who remained with AOG met at the Model School. The Kru AOG Church rejoined AOG after the death of Simon Grant in 1972, and the following year the Temne Church, whose building at Ambrose Street belonged to AOG, returned to the AOG fold. The Limba and Loko AOG groups united in 1973 and met in the afternoon in the West African Methodist Church on Wellington Street. In 1983 they moved to 38 Bass Street, Brookfields, and renamed themselves Faith AOG Church. The loyal Fourah Bay Road Limba started a new Limba AOG Church in Cline Town. Ade Jones's opinion of the breakaway National Pentecostals is:

They have multiplied in quantity, but that does not mean they have grown in quality. They have moved away from the pure practices and teaching.¹⁵⁴

Hurt by the ill-feeling exposed, and discouraged by the attitude of his fellow missionaries, Berry planned to return to America. Jones suggested that to leave without putting up the proposed building would demonstrate a loss of faith. Berry was persuaded to stay and oversee the building programme. When Berry and Jones went to the bank to draw money from their building fund, which included a \$10,000 loan from AOG Foreign Missions Board, they were informed that Superintendent Grant had frozen the account. Jones asked, "Who had deposited the money?" "Berry." "Whose name is on the account?" "Berry's." The manager could see no reason why Berry could not draw from his own account. They withdrew all but £20 and opened a new Bethel Temple account. After four and a half months of intense building activity, Bethel Temple was dedicated on 10th June 1969, a simple yet impressive L-shaped building, approximately 93 feet long and 37 feet wide, able to seat around four hundred. Because of their troubles at the Grammar School, the congregation had been holding their services in the building when only its walls were standing and there was no roof over their heads. Berry performed the opening ceremony. There were no pews, so chairs were brought over from the Parliament. According to Jones there was no Press publicity, "We had many enemies who didn't want to see us start."¹⁵⁵ The loan repayments were \$96 a month. For a church of only ten full-members and whose income at the time of applying for the loan was \$35 a week, this was a bold step of faith. By 1980 their faith was vindicated and the loan fully repaid.

Although Berry was a young man on his first tour of missionary duty, the new Krio congregation, lacking confidence in their own ability to run their own affairs, were happy to have him as pastor. They were also, at that time, content to be under the control of the missionary Field Superintendent and later the missionary General Superintendent. According to Jones, "We wanted it to be that way because we were not too sure what would happen if it were in the hand of Africans." This lack of confidence, which was later clearly demonstrated to be ill-founded, was the result of generations of Krio dependence on foreign missionaries and mother churches, and fear that unity among the group, who came from

various churches, would not be sustained unless there was missionary oversight. Adding to their feelings of insecurity was the political turmoil into which the newly independent African state had slipped over the "One Party State" issue. Once in their own building, Bethel Temple, guided by the sophisticated and gracious Civil Service Permanent Secretary and inspired by the praying and prophetic ministry of his wife, expanded rapidly. Several significant healings took place following Mrs. Jones's prayers. Visitors, mainly Krio, were attracted in increasing numbers. Several, including Christine Hope, Sarah Mack and Violet Kissling were baptised in the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues during these heady days, and freely expressed their religious affections and emotions in word and action. Membership reached seventy and over two hundred were attending the Sunday morning worship service.

Ade Jones's Call to the Ministry and his AOG Service

Jones had for some time been earnestly seeking the Pentecostal encounter with the Holy Spirit his wife and others had experienced. In Accra he had attended the AOG Evangel Church on Kojo Thompson Street, and many times had gone unsuccessfully up to the altar to receive this baptism. Back in Freetown he tried even harder, believing he had not hitherto released himself sufficiently enough unto the Lord. Still nothing happened. "After a while I more or less stopped forcing about being filled with the Holy Spirit." Towards the end of 1968, while the church still met at the Grammar School, Ade Jones, elegant, sensitive, and sophisticated, a "Krio of the Krio", who was now Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Information, was teaching Sunday school prior to the main service:

All of a sudden I felt excited about the whole thing and I felt like weeping. I resisted the temptation. I said it would be foolish for me to stand in front of the whole crowd and weep. That sensation passed away. I started teaching again. The next thing I experienced a wave coming over me. I could not contain myself. I just broke down completely and I started weeping vehemently. I walked away from the lectern, leaving all the papers there and went and sat down. Rev. Berry and all the others came around me and started praying over me. I started coming out stuttering, "Ti-ti-ti-ta-ta-ra-ta-tat". All the day my grand-daughters were tormenting me saying, "Granpa said 'Ti-ti-ti-ta-ra!'" [Recalling this, Jones laughed heartily.]

Jones preached to the congregation for the first time that Sunday. The absence of self-stimulation, frenzy and hysteria, makes this Krio gentleman's experience of being filled with

the Holy Spirit quite impressive. His calm dignity and self-control have exercised a salutary restraining, though not quenching, control over all pneumatic manifestation and spiritual experiences in this Krio Pentecostal church. When his call to full-time ministry did come, this earlier dynamic experience was a proof to him that God wanted to use him in His service.

Unlike many Spiritual church prophets, his call to the full-time ministry did not come in dreams and visions, instead, at a time when he should have been enjoying the fruits of his distinguished Civil Service career, his call took the form of a growing conviction. A type of call to service common among mainline ministers and Roman Catholic priests as pointed out by Sundkler in *The Christian Ministry in Africa*. While worshipping in the new church, Jones told his wife he had a conviction that God was calling him into the full-time ministry. Her response was that she had no message from God to confirm that it was the Lord's call. However, two days later, the male members of the church, who had been discussing the matter of leadership among themselves, approached Jones. Their spokesman, Harlod Deveneux said, "We were thinking it would be a nice thing if you were to leave the Service and come and stand in front of us as our leader." Jones took this as, "a confirmation of the thought the Lord had laid on my heart." His call to the full-time Pentecostal ministry was very rational and pietistic. He informed the elderly Hemminger of his call. Hemminger advised caution and making sure it was from God. "I was afraid when I heard that," said Jones, "maybe I did not hear the voice of God, but the voice of the Devil." While in this state of uncertainty, his wife telephoned his office to saying that while she was praying she had received a clear, unequivocal message from God that he should leave Government service immediately. Kanje Duramy, the Minister of Information, was not surprised to receive Jones's letter of resignation. Duramy said his wife's father was a minister. It was a hard life. Sometimes he had no food. Sometimes he would only have rice to eat with no sauce, just some palm oil poured on top. Yet whenever he saw him he was always looking fresh. These words greatly encouraged Jones. In December 1970, at the end of his last day in Government service, Jones went directly from his office to Bethel Temple and spent the

night there praying. He was joined by his wife. This became a regular practice for the pastor and his wife and other members. The belief that praying in their holy temple where the presence of God particularly dwells, is held by the Krio Pentecostals as well as the Spiritual churches. Jones testified, "Since I took this great step of faith I have never been disappointed and He has never failed me."¹⁵⁶

In January 1971, Ade Jones was officially installed as full-time Pastor of Bethel Temple. Euphemia Jones was appointed Assistant Pastor. Jones was also elected Treasurer and Secretary of the newly-formed Western District Council. He later became District Superintendent. In September, Pastor and Mrs. Jones both enrolled for a three year, full-time, Bible training course at the newly founded Freetown Assemblies of God Bible College. Paul Seaberg was the Director, Pastor and Mrs. Jones were the first full-time students.¹⁵⁷ Classes were held at Bethel Temple. The Joneses also continued their pastoral ministries. Pastor Jones had oversight of the Kissy outreach, the fruit of a Good News Crusade initiated by missionary Walter Kornelsen. At this time Bethel Temple had regular Sunday congregations of over two-hundred and fifty. In Mrs. Jones's 1971-72 Bible College report, Seaberg recorded a fail for Acts of the Apostles, noting she "needs to improve" work habits, promptness, and follow directions. Her spiritual flock, operating within a pneumatic, *kairos* (opportunity time), African framework, would never have imagined her needing improvement in these areas. Freetown's future verdict on her ministry was that it was indeed Apostolic.

After the initial burst of growth, the Tower Hill church settled down to steady expansion. Teams went out on evangelism, visiting hospitals and reaching as far as Kissy and Wellington. According to Jones, "These were glorious days."¹⁵⁸ As a result of Bible College outreaches branch churches were started. The first was at Masiaka (Mile 47). Ernest King, a draughtsman, was given charge of this congregation since he had a car and could travel there on Sundays and Tuesdays. Pastor and Mrs. Jones conducted an outreach at Aberdeen Community Centre. After some confrontations with local Church of the Lord (Aladura) group,

the embryonic congregation moved to Lumley. Richard Shaka joined the Bible College for the 1972-73 session. Pastor and Mrs. Jones continued to pastor and study until they graduated in June 1974. After graduation they visited the USA on the invitation of Joe Righteous, pastor of the AOG church in Modesto, California, who had earlier that year led a team of musicians to Sierra Leone and held meetings at Brookfields Stadium. In February 1975, Director Paul Seaberg left Sierra Leone. From 4th June 1975, Jones held the post of Secretary of the General Council. The Kissy branch was taken on by newly enrolled student Sidney Davies, the present Director of Evangelism for EFSL and founder of Glory Ministries. This branch was struggling. At one time only two turned up. Davies, discouraged, refused to go back, but Jones persuaded him to continue. He soon built up a good congregation which met on Sunday evenings in the Methodist Church. An attempt to hold Sunday morning services failed. Most of the congregation wanted to continue attending their family churches. On 31st October 1975, the Hemmingers, no longer having the physical strength to continue, left Sierra Leone and the people to whom they had given of themselves unsparingly.¹⁵⁹ With their departure the pioneer era of AOG mission in Sierra Leone came to an end. A new era in mission and national leadership relations was about to begin. Pastor and Mrs. Jones were ordained AOG ministers on 12th June 1976. At that point AOG Sierra Leone had 10 missionaries, 57 national workers, 29 organised churches and 33 outstations, 534 full active members, 2,624 "other believers" including children, and 252 baptised in the Holy Spirit.

At the AOG General Council Meeting of Ministers in Koindu on 16th January 1979, Pastor Jones was "unexpectedly" elected General Superintendent of AOG Sierra Leone, the first Sierra Leonean to hold the supreme authority position since AOG officially began its mission work in 1920. Moses Fayiah was elected Assistant General Superintendent. Richard Shaka, pastor of the Bo AOG Church, and John Charles, pastor of the ten years old Kenema AOG Church, were both ordained as AOG ministers. The Bo church, which met in the Red Cross hall, had branches at Ngelehun, Gerihun and Yamandu. All in the garden seemed rosy. AOG with its expanding Sierra Leone operations led by the distinguished Krio diplomat,

seemed to have fully recovered from the National Pentecostal Mission breakaway and to be forging ahead. However, the result of the January elections was not simply the climax of AOG's recovery, and the finishing touches to its indigenising programme for the Sierra Leone field, rather it was the result of the national AOG leadership flexing its muscles. Having heard that Sierra Leone, AOG's oldest African field, was the only one without a national as General Superintendent, they decided that, with Glover going on leave, they did not want a younger missionary, like DeVane McGee who arrived on the field in October 1976, as General Superintendent. The missionaries, who had controlled operations through the Field Fellowship, which was directly in touch with the American HQ, whereas the General Council was not, were not, like the Anglican bishops a century earlier, ready to relinquish their control. They did not believe the nationals were ready for the full implementation of AOG's indigenisation programme and running their own church affairs. After his election success Jones soon became aware that the basis of the relationship between missionaries and nationals had significantly changed, but not in the way he had expected.

It was all right when I was District Superintendent, but when I was unexpectedly voted in as General Superintendent I started having problems. My first disillusionment was when I was told I couldn't have a car from the mission in America. I thought it was the normal practice.

The missionaries' displeasure at the national take-over, or nationalisation, of AOG Sierra Leone, was also demonstrated by Glover's refusal to allow the new General Superintendent access to mission files. Jones wanted the file which contained the correspondence between former General Superintendents and Springfield HQ.

I asked him, but he did not respond. I had no handing over notes as one should expect. This is how one goes about such things. From that moment I felt discouraged and knew that this would be an uphill task.¹⁶⁰

In June 1979, with the graduation of Sidney Davies, the Bible College, with few students and declining missionary interest and involvement, was closed. The AOG missionaries claimed their intention was to establish the college on a proper foundation with its own premises, and providing degrees recognised by the Government. Superintendent Jones, who was not given

prior notice of the intention to close down the Bible College, interpreted the move as an attempt to limit his power, and also curb the growing influence of Bethel Temple, the Krio Pentecostal church, on the Pentecostal movement in Sierra Leone.¹⁶¹ From this point on relations between Bethel Temple and the AOG missionaries were to deteriorate, a "cold war" developed, and suspicions of each other's motives and intentions increased. Bethel Temple felt the missionaries prejudiced the provincial leaders against them, with the exception of Moses Fayiah, a long-standing personal friend of the Joneses through Princess James. At Bethel Temple many felt that with the Pentecostal work prospering in Freetown, some missionaries wanted to move to the city from the Provinces. However, they felt the influence of Pastor and Mrs, Jones would severely limit their influence and control at Bethel Temple, the main centre of AOG work. When the new Bible College did not start up immediately, suspicions of "political" manoeuvring heightened. However, before boiling point was reached, attention started to focus on the forthcoming AOG Good News Crusade.

The William Caldwell Crusade - 1980

On Sunday 20th January 1980, at the National Stadium in Freetown, AOG evangelist William Caldwell spearheaded a Good News Crusade. Bo and Sefadu were also visited. According to Pastor Jones of Bethel Temple, then General Superintendent of AOG Sierra Leone:

Never has the preaching of the Word been received with such enthusiasm in Sierra Leone.... For more than a year the people of Sierra Leone had felt the need for a revival. Prayers had been made before God constantly.¹⁶²

There had been a widespread feeling in the city that the mainline churches had not been fulfilling their proper role in society and had both lost touch with their adherents and failed to make much impact on those outside. Last minute difficulties over the use of the National Stadium were overcome by the personal intervention of President Siaka Stevens. Lady Rebecca Stevens had been associated with Bethel Temple from its inception. Pastor Jones described the Freetown Crusade:

After the first day's message many thousands from Sierra Leone, including leading Muslims, responded to the invitation to accept Christ. So great was the impact of the message and the excitement of the crowd that many young people jumped over the

stadium rail to the ground, 8 to 10 feet below, to come forward and make their decisions.

Evangelist Caldwell prayed for the sick each night. One night a deaf and dumb man received his hearing and started speaking. In his excitement he ran across the grounds with hands raised high, a group of admirers following closely behind.

The meetings on subsequent evenings followed the same pattern of miracles - the blind seeing, the deaf hearing, the paralyzed walking, and the dumb speaking. Some received their healing as they walked home.¹⁶³

Lady Stevens attended with her family each evening. The events were reported in the press and on television and radio. The mayor of Freetown, Dr. June Rolst Roness, stated that at times it had seemed that God had forgotten Sierra Leone, but the miracles at the Good News Crusade indicated that He had not.¹⁶⁴

The Bo Crusade started on January 30th at the Coronation Field. Almost half of those attending were Muslims. One evening the attendance reached six thousand. Once again physical healing through the power of God was emphasised, and to this message the Muslims responded enthusiastically. This has been a striking feature of mass evangelism in Sierra Leone over the past decade. Muslim cosmology in Sierra Leone is particularly open to divine interventions, miracles, and manifestations of supernatural power. One old man who came forward for prayer was instantly healed of total blindness. At Sefadu, a diamond mining town, a Muslim in typical dress demonstrated on the platform that he had been cured of blindness by identifying various objects much to the delight of the crowd. A deaf man caused a stir as he made his way to the platform to testify to his hearing having been restored during the evangelist's prayer. The most dramatic healing was when a girl who had been deaf and dumb began to hear and speak clearly. Her father, a Muslim, took the microphone and declared that he was now abandoning Islam and becoming a Christian. DeVane and Mary McGee reported the results of the Bo and Sefadu Crusades:

On Sunday both the Bo and Kenema churches were filled with people. The Sunday school attendance at the Kenema church was up from 153 to 260. Another 100 people came for the morning worship service. Throughout the day people continued to come for prayer.

The attendance at the Bo church was up from an average of 60 to 400. It probably had the largest attendance of any Assemblies of God church in Sierra Leone that day. The building was too small to accommodate the crowd so many people came carrying their chairs. They sat outside the crowded building while others stood and listened. The service lasted all afternoon, until the time for the evening service.

From the natural viewpoint and past experience, it seemed improbable that revival would ever come to Bo.... Following the crusade both the Kenema and Bo churches had to schedule extra services, and people would come several hours early. As our pastors and workers called upon God, miracles took place. The blind were made to see, the deaf to hear, and the crippled to walk, just as in the crusade meetings.¹⁶⁵

Many of the new church attenders were Muslims. At Bo, the assembly in the Red Cross hall pastored by the charismatic Richard Shaka, had for several years been looking for land on which to build a church, but the Muslim landowners had frustrated their plans. One of the Crusade converts, a Muslim landowner, sold the assembly land on which to build a church large enough to accommodate their expanding congregation. Since then Pentecostalism in Mendeland has expanded. In 1992 there were three organised AOG churches in Bo.

As a result of the 1980 Crusades AOG was inundated with requests to conduct evangelism in various parts of the country. They saw clearly the necessity of having well trained and Biblically instructed evangelists and pastors, in order to reap the fields which were obviously becoming white unto harvest, but not willing to revive the Bible College at Bethel Temple, a three acre campus at Murray Town was purchased in August 1980. Another important teaching ministry, aimed at the ordinary member and especially the new converts, was the International Correspondence Institute (ICI) correspondence courses which AOG have used in conjunction with their Bible school and Good News Crusade ministries.¹⁶⁶ The 1980 Good News Crusades made a significant national impact. The dramatic healings and public demonstrations of spiritual power resulted in the most extensive spiritual awakening in the history of Christianity in Sierra Leone up to that point in time. Not only were the Muslims attracted, but the Spiritual churches were no longer seen as the place for the poor to go to for healing and experiencing the power of God. In fact from this point on the Pentecostal evangelical churches clearly began to replace the Spiritual churches in the popular perception as the main centres of healing and "storehouses" of spiritual power in the country. In January 1982 AOG had 63 national workers, 25 ministers with national credentials and 38 with local credentials, 38 organised churches and 32 outstations. They had 730 full active baptised members, 2,474 other believers including children, and 351 baptised in the Holy

Spirit. AOG, with its Pentecostal enthusiasm, healing ministry, and a deep commitment to training a ministry of evangelical and Biblically knowledgeable men and women, was now exceptionally well placed for significant expansion and a clear outstripping of the Spiritual churches. However, the already brewing storm was to return in full force and lead to a major confrontation between the AOG missionaries and Bethel Temple and another AOG split.

The Bethel Temple Secession from AOG

At the General Council elections in January 1981, Jones was re-elected General Superintendent, but when Glover returned from furlough in 1982, Jones felt:

He started cutting the grass under our feet and finding fault. I suppose he wanted to be in the position of General Superintendent all the time. We were told that it was mission policy for nationals to take over as soon as they were available, but knowing human nature being what it is, that is the problem. He went around the national brethren to make them happy. By the end of 1982 he had got a good following.¹⁶⁷

Jones suspected there was a missionary plot to discredit him and Mrs. Jones, and put divisions between the Krio church and the national brethren. He maintained the missionaries had brought "politics" into the church, the devious manoeuvre of divide and conquer:

We had enough of that in the Colonial days. The national brethren, specially those from the provinces, were hostile to us, because of what they were being told; that we were looking down on them, we had enough money and didn't need their help. This is exactly what the colonialists did. They were saying to the people of the provinces, "The Krio don't like you. They look down on you." This is why, even up to now, it is difficult for the Krio and the peoples of the provinces to come together, to have confidence in each other.¹⁶⁸

Another factor which was to increasingly exacerbate the already tense relationship that had evolved between the AOG missionaries and Bethel Temple was Mrs. Jones' interest in Israel. Moved by an urge to attend the 1979 Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem, without preparation or visa, she travelled alone to Israel. Towards the end of her visit she came into contact with the Mount Zion Fellowship in Jerusalem run by Ruth Ward Heflin and Susan Wooderman. Ruth Heflin was the sister of healing evangelist Wallace Heflin Jr. the director of Calvary Pentecostal Camp, in Richmond, Virginia. The Heflin family have been involved in the Pentecostal Movement since 1908. The free spontaneous charismatic worship of the

Jerusalem fellowship, along with its emphasis on praying for the nations and their leaders, greatly appealed to Mrs. Jones. The following year Sister Jones again attended the Feast of Tabernacles and renewed fellowship with the Mount Zion Fellowship, but this time she was accompanied by a group from Bethel Temple which included her elder sister, Princess James. This became an annual pilgrimage from Bethel Temple with the highlight being a baptism in the River Jordan. Ade Jones joined the group in 1981 and 1982. The missionaries were worried about the expenses involved in such trips and also the elitist attitudes which seemed to be developing among those who travelled to Israel, and especially with those who were baptised in the Jordan. They suspected that Bethel Temple was in danger of becoming a cult which emphasised baptism in the River Jordan. However, for the vast majority of the congregation a trip to Israel was a financial impossibility. Jones himself, who had been baptised as an infant and more recently as a believer, was also baptised in the Jordan. The theological problems involved in the issue of re-baptism proved no hindrance to their participation in a River Jordan baptism when the experience presented itself. The Krio Pentecostals regarded it as a very special form of spiritual bathing, renewal and cleansing.

Euphemia Jones became increasingly irritated with the critical attitude of the missionaries towards her association with the Mount Zion Fellowship. This she regarded as jealousy. She was particularly annoyed when the missionaries vetoed a proposed Thanksgiving Service to be held for James International, a major Sierra Leonean company with interests in diamond mining and transport. Mr. James who was a member of Christ Church had not asked for it. The idea came from Mrs. James, Mrs. Jones's sister, because she felt that Mr. James "who was not a Pentecostal" would come under the power of the Spirit and be spiritually affected for good by attending a service at Bethel Temple. The Joneses were in agreement, but not the missionaries who pointed out that Mr. James was involved in the manufacture of *sasman*, "an injurious drink that kills people", made from cane-sugar. Mrs. Jones and another national minister walked out as one of the missionaries was speaking. From outside they called on Pastor Jones to join them. As Jones was leaving he said to Betty Savage, "I have worked

with white people before, and I know what they do when they want to destroy." She began to weep and said if that was what he thought of her, she would get her ticket and go home. Another missionary came up to Jones and said, "You are burning your candles at both ends." Jones took this to mean that he was acting foolishly and that his period of being a burning light, that is General Superintendent, would soon be over.

The spark which ignited the final explosion which eventually drove Bethel Temple and AOG apart was the visit of Americans Bart and Pam Singer from the Mount Zion Fellowship. This followed the 1982 Feast of Tabernacles trip. Bart Singer was an ex-boxer who believed that God had called him into the "dancing ministry" with the promise that if he would dance before the nations He would bless him. At the time of Singer's visit, Pastor Jones was in Nigeria. Standing on the platform of an AOG church, he was surprised when the congregation started to dance and especially when the pastor went down and danced among them. Jones thought, "This church is AOG. Why is it that AOG in Sierra Leone don't dance?" Meantime, on his first visit to Bethel Temple, Singer danced from outside the church, down the aisle and up onto the platform. Several Krio members were not happy with the dancing ministry, and anticipated Pastor Jones putting a halt to it on his return from Nigeria. Jones, however, had no desire to stop the congregation dancing, on the contrary he felt that, "It is what the Lord wants, and I will not interfere." From now on Bethel Temple, the Krio Pentecostal church in this former outpost of Victorian evangelicalism and the home of Creoleism, became known as "The Dancing Church". The missionaries, particularly the long-serving Betty Savage, were opposed to dancing in worship. AOG as a denomination were traditionally opposed to dancing in any form, Western or African. The missionaries were supported by several members of the congregation. Matters came to a head during the Lady's Day evening service. After performing a skit, "Building God's House", the ladies asked Mrs. Jones to present "The Challenge". She suggested Betty Savage have the honour. Miss Savage, who had been critical of the Israel visits, and saw herself as the champion of the anti-dancing faction, took the opportunity publicly to condemn dancing in worship. To add fuel to the fire,

the Joneses had a guest attending the service, a Sister Chappell from the Heflin's camp in Virginia, who had preached in the morning service. The Joneses were outraged:

I thought she was going out of her mind the way she was behaving. She said it was indecent. She said openly we were dancing like kangaroos and it was like going to the disco. She said this openly in front of all the members. We were sitting there. We had a stranger in our midst from America. The missionary lady was disturbed and she wept. After she had spoken I got up and said what I wanted to say and Sister Jones got up and said what she wanted to say. We were openly disgraced. But instead of the church breaking into fragments the members all came together and embraced the dancing ministry. The missionaries openly showed that they were opposed to the two people who came, but what I did not understand was that even though they were frowning at their ministry they wanted them to go and preach in other places. I thought that was strange! They hated us because of that and started cutting the grass from under our feet, Sister Jones and myself. But the Lord was in control and we were not disgraced. God took control.¹⁶⁹

The final salvo in the battle was initiated at the January 1983 General Council Meeting of Ministers at Kenema. The Bethel Temple faction accused Glover and Savage of adopting the colonial strategy of divide and rule, and creating ill-feeling between the Krio and the other groups. They also noticed that pro-Glover voters were bussed in at the last moment. Whatever the truth of the matter, Glover was elected General Superintendent. Moses Fayiah who had, at Mrs. James invitation, gone to Israel with the Bethel Temple party, also lost his position of Assistant Superintendent. Betty Savage who was General Secretary rose to intimate she did not wish to be re-elected, but proposed that Richard Shaka, the rising star of AOG, be elected by acclamation. This was unconstitutional as all elections were to be by secret ballot. Shaka was elected. According to Jones, the Israel connection was the big issue. "They thought we were getting too big for our shoes, that we were doing everything without consulting them. They wanted us to toe the line."¹⁷⁰ The attempt to have so intelligent, independent-minded and proud a group as the Krio Pentecostals "toe the line" through such means was doomed to failure. Even before Jones returned to Freetown word had spread that Bethel Temple were breaking away from AOG.

In response to a letter from Bethel Temple to the AOG Missions Board in Springfield, Missouri, Morris Williams, the Africa Field Secretary, flew to Freetown. The congregation felt

the case was being prejudiced against them from the start, because Williams met first with the missionaries at Murray Town and discussed matters with them before a meeting had even been arranged with the church. When Williams did meet with the Bethel Temple party, Mrs. Jones judgement was, "I don't trust this man. He is not on the level."¹⁷¹ Williams admitted that the election had been unconstitutional, but suggested that matters should be allowed to run for two years and at the next elections everything would be done properly. Jones rejected the compromise claiming the matter should be righted immediately. Williams responded that since the vote expressed the popular choice he was not prepared to change it. He said to Jones, "You are a man of God. Pray about it and let this thing ride for two years." Jones's reply was, "I believe my legs are diseased, sir. I can't give strength to my feet." Williams intimated that he had asked Miss Savage to apologise to Bethel Temple for her behaviour, but she had refused. This was seen by Jones as ironical, since Miss Savage had once told him that what spoils the work of God is where Christians refuse to say "I'm sorry". Jones raised the subject of Bethel Temple having autonomous status under the AOG umbrella. They wanted to formulate their own rules and regulations and follow their own doctrines and practices. This was refused. After the meetings letters were sent to all Bethel Temple ministers holding AOG credentials stating that Bethel Temple had ceased to be in fellowship with AOG and warning that if they did not resign from Bethel Temple their credentials would be withdrawn. Bethel Temple have never seen themselves as breaking away from AOG, rather they believe they were pushed out by the missionaries who resented the independent line they had been taking and their success in running their own affairs. When Mrs. Jones and others urged Pastor Jones to write the AOG Missions Board asking to have the missionaries withdrawn, as had happened in the Limba controversy, Jones replied that they could not do that as they had not invited them to come. The Lord had brought them and the Lord should take them away. According to Jones:

They took the decision. We did not leave AOG. It is technically not correct to say that we did. They decided that we had ceased to be in fellowship with AOG. I was glad. It was a relief.

Fearing AOG would claim the church and drive them out of their place of worship, although the building loan of \$10,000 had been repaid with 6.5% interest to AOG and the church had invested a lot of its own money in the building, Jones moved quickly to have the lease, which had only been a verbal agreement, re-negotiated and Bethel Temple's ownership of the land and building made legally secure. Helped by Government friends this was accomplished. When the missionaries heard about it they threatened court proceedings, but realising the futility of such action, and the damage such a case would cause, the matter was dropped. After the split, Pastor Jones claimed Bethel Temple suffered at the hands of the missionaries because they discouraged people attending Bethel Temple and concentrated their own efforts on building up Evangel AOG Church at Murray Town. The ruptured relationship caused bitterness and much heartache on all sides. Jones' comment on the whole affair was:

When people go away the church loses whatever happens. The one who goes out loses. There are many losers in the one exercise.¹⁷²

His opinion of the American AOG missionaries was:

We found out they wanted to made Americans out of Africans. They wanted us to do things their own way. One thing which burdened us was their secrecy, their tendency to hide things from the nationals. I thought that in the work of God there should be no secrets. They should not have adopted the divide and rule policy. We had enough of that during the colonial rule. The provincials were hostile to us because they were told we were looking down on them and had enough money and didn't need their help. This is what the colonials did. Even up to now it is difficult for the Krio and the people form the Provinces to come together and to have confidence in each other.¹⁷³

The vast majority of the congregation remained at Bethel Temple under the pastoral care of Ade and Euphemia Jones. Only five full-members left for Evangel Church. According to Pastor Jones, "It was a question of running for your life. It was a hard struggle to keep our members together."¹⁷⁴ In May 1983 a new outreach started at Wilberforce by S. B. Slowa the church organist. Pastor and Mrs. Jones with Mrs. James and nine other pilgrims celebrated their first year of independence from AOG with a visit to the Feast of Tabernacles. Bethel Temple demonstrated that Pentecostal-evangelicalism could attract and hold intelligent, upper and middle class Krio, and that they could stand on their own feet. In this "dancing church" Krio could at last show to all of Sierra Leone that they were both Christian

and African. In independent Pentecostal-evangelicalism and its form of worship, the Krio identity crisis had been overcome. They were African Christians, pneumatological and evangelical, worshipping in the form and style they were comfortable and happy with, and they were running their own affairs. Bethel Temple gave the movement they represented status within the wider Freetown community, Christian and non-Christian. Although a difficult period was to lie in front of them, the impetus they gave to Pentecostal-evangelical Christianity, the example they set, and the role model they provided, were crucial factors in the general acceptance of this form of Christianity in Freetown, and in the ensuing expansion of Pentecostal-evangelical churches that took place in the latter half of the 1980s, and which from 1988 onwards was to become almost explosive.

- ¹ Walter J. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals*, (London: SCM Press, 1972), p.21.
- ² Howard A. Snyder, *The Divided Flame: Wesleyans and the Charismatic Renewal*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986), pp.54-67.
- ³ For the history and theology of the Pentecostals see, Nils Bloch-Hoell, *The Pentecostal Movement: its Origin, Development, and Distinctive Character*, (London: Alan & Unwin Ltd., 1964); James D. G. Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, (London: SCM Press, 1970); Hollenweger, *ibid.*; Jurgen Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1977); Karl Rahner, *The Dynamic Element in the Church*, (London: 1964); Snyder, *ibid.*; Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Movement in the United States*, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971), *In the Latter Days: the Outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the Twentieth Century*, (Anne Arbor: Vine Books/Servant Publications, 1984), *The Spirit Said 'Grow': the Astounding Worldwide Expansion of Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches*, (Monrovia, California: MARC, 1992).
- ⁴ Bloch-Hoell, *ibid.*, p.15.
- ⁵ See William S. Merricks, *Edward Irving: the Forgotten Giant*, (East Peoria, Illinois: Scribe's Chamber Publications, 1983); C. Gordon Strachan, *The Pentecostal Theology of Edward Irving*, (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1973); Andrew L. Drummond, *Edward Irving and his Circle: Including Some Consideration of the "Tongues" Movement in the Light of Modern Psychology*, (London: James Clarke & Co. Ltd., 1937).
- ⁶ Charles F. Parham has been described as "a man of unsavory reputation" who had charges brought against him in several states. In 1922 he "suddenly fell into disrepute". Bloch-Hoell maintains that Parham fell into disrepute because of homosexual activity and claims to have obtained evidence that Parham "was not free from sin" during his time at the Bible School in Topeka. The Pentecostal Movement found Parham an embarrassment. After being the leader of the movement, even its apostle, during the 1901-6 period, he was thereafter deliberately sidelined. See, Bloch-Hoell, *ibid.*, pp.19-22.
- ⁷ Synan, (1992), p.33.
- ⁸ Elmer T. Clark, *The Small Sects in America*, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1949).
- ⁹ Bloch-Hoell, *ibid.*, pp.30-52. Hollenweger, *ibid.*, p.22-24.
- ¹⁰ For connections between the Welsh revival and the Azusa Street revival and American Pentecostalism generally see, Edith L. Blumhoffer, "Transatlantic Currents in North American Pentecostalism" in *Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and Beyond, 1700 - 1990*, eds. Noll, Bebbington, Rawlyk, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp.351-64.
- ¹¹ Snyder, *ibid.*, p.40.
- ¹² Hollenweger, *ibid.*, p.22.
- ¹³ Snyder, *ibid.*, p.41.
- ¹⁴ Hollenweger, *ibid.*
- ¹⁵ J. D. Douglas (ed.), *The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*, (Exeter: The Paternoster Press, 1974), p.763.
- ¹⁶ Hollenweger, *ibid.*, p.23.
- ¹⁷ *ibid.*, p.24.
- ¹⁸ For the history of the Pentecostal Movement in South Africa see Hollenweger, *ibid.*, pp.111-75, and Bengt Sundkler, *Zulu Zion: and Some Swazi Zionists*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), pp.13-67.
- ¹⁹ Paul Gifford, *The New Crusaders: Christianity and the New Right in Southern Africa*, (London: Pluto Press, 1991, revised edition), p.4.
- ²⁰ For background on the Charismatic Movement see, Dennis Bennett, *Nine O'Clock in the Morning*, (Plainfield N.J.: Logos, 1970); David J. du Plessis, *The Spirit Bade Me Go*, (Plainfield N.J.: Logos, 1972); Laurence Christenson, *Speaking in Tongues*, (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1968); Siegfried Grossmann, *Stewards of God's Grace*, (Exeter: The Paternoster Press, 1981), who also supplies an extensive bibliography on the subject; Michael P. Hamilton (ed.), *The Charismatic Movement*, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1975); Michael Harper, *Power for the Body of Christ*, (London: 1964); Synan, (1992); Peter Hocken, *Streams of Renewal: the Origins and Early*

Development of the Charismatic Movement in Great Britain, (Exeter: The Paternoster Press, 1986); Rene Laurentin, *Catholic Pentecostalism*, (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1977); Kilian McDonnell, *Presence, Power, Praise: Documents on the Charismatic Renewal*, Vols. 1, 2 and 3, (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1980); Edward D. O'Connor, *The Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church*, (Notre Dame, Indiana: Ave Maria Press, 1971); Edward K. Pousson, *Spreading the Flame: Charismatic Churches and Missions Today*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992); Kevin Ranaghan, *Catholic Pentecostals*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1969); John L. Sherrill, *They Speak with Other Tongues*, (New York: Grune & Stratton, 1970); Tom Smail, *Reflected Glory*, (London: 1975); David R. Wilkerson, *The Cross and the Switchblade*, (New York: Bernard Geis Association, 1963).

²¹ C. Peter Wagner in "Foreword" to Pousson, *ibid.*, p.13.

²² Synan, *ibid.*, p.59.

²³ *ibid.*, p.58.

²⁴ C. Peter Wagner, "A Third Wave?" in *Pastoral Renewal*, July-August 1983. See also C. Peter Wagner, *The Third Wave of the Holy Spirit*, (Ann Arbor: Vine Books/Servant Publications, 1988a).

²⁵ Synan, *ibid.*, p.59, quoting from an article by Wagner which appeared in the May-June 1988 issue of *AD2000*.

²⁶ Synan, *ibid.*

²⁷ *ibid.*, p.60.

²⁸ On Postcharismatics see, C. Peter Wagner, "Church Growth" in *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, eds. S. M. Burgess and G. B. McGee, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1988b), p.183;

²⁹ Pousson, *ibid.*, p.51.

³⁰ *ibid.*

³¹ The situation around the year 1850 is summarised by Walker:

The period following the Liberated African divisions of the 1840s witnessed a move away from the independent chapels and into European mission churches, first to the Wesleyans and then, as the families grew in social position, to the Anglicans. By 1848 the Wesleyan Methodists had twice the membership of all independent black churches combined, and by 1851 the Anglicans with 13,863 members were virtually equal to the Wesleyans' 13,946. In the latter year "African Methodists", both settler and Liberated African, numbered 5,134, the Huntingdonians 2,849 and the Baptists 462. Then in 1860, for the first time, the Church of England became Sierra Leone's largest denomination. Walker, *ibid.*, p.370.

While the Anglican Church claims a membership of around 25,000 in the Western Area, the 1990 EFSL/YWAM Greater Freetown Survey gave the average church attendance as 2,569 (1,032 males; 960 females; 577 children). By way of comparison the total Pentecostal-evangelical figure for church attendance in 1990 was 12,059 (4,030 males; 4,684 females; 3,345 children). AOG had a regular attendance of 1,343 (410 males; 537 females; 396 children). While the Anglican attendance was in decline and the Methodist Church of Sierra Leone stagnant, the numbers attending Pentecostal-evangelical churches was expanding rapidly and this growth has continued to accelerate.

³² Recorded interview held with Professor Edward W. Fashole-Luke, at his residence at K 8, FBC, Freetown, on 5/6/90.

³³ The five Methodist denominations are the Methodist Church of Sierra Leone, the West African Methodist Church, the United Methodist Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Wesleyan Church of Sierra Leone.

³⁴ For the beginnings of the Pentecostal Movement in South Africa see Hollenweger, *ibid.*, pp.120-2. For background figures such as Andrew Murray and John Alexander Dowie see *ibid.*, pp.111-20. For the first South African Zionists such as Le Roux, Buchler, Mahon, Nkonyane and Mahlangu, see Sundkler, 1976, pp.13-67.

³⁵ Very little information on Jennie Fuller, Grace Belshar or John Hare is available from the AOG archives. This is unfortunate as information on their backgrounds and ministries would be illuminating and helpful.

³⁶ Ira Shakley was born on 18th May 1875 in Congress, Ohio.

³⁷ Gordon M. Haliburton, *The Prophet Harris: a Study of an African Prophet and his Mass-Movement in the Ivory Coast and the Gold Coast 1913-1915*, (London: Longman Group Ltd., 1971), p.191, quoting from *The Weekly News*, 4th August, 1917.

³⁸ Miss Jennie Wilhelmina Carlson was born in Runstorp, Norsholm, Sweden on 20th March 1890 and attended school there until 1903.

³⁹ Ira Shakley died at Bethany Retirement Home, Lakeland, Florida, on 5th September, 1964, aged 89. Eve Shakley passed away on 7th November 1964 at the age of 93.

⁴⁰ AOG archives at Springfield, Missouri; Sierra Leone file; item dated 17/11/23.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, item dated July 1921.

⁴² *Ibid.*, item dated 4/3/22.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, item dated 1922.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, item dated 10/6/22.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, item dated 2/9/22.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, item dated 2/6/23.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ Matthew Sinclair was born in Kilsyth, a coal mining town thirteen miles north-east of Glasgow, on 18th January 1896. He left school to work in the mines. Due to impaired growth of his legs he was just under five feet tall. The Church of God had grown out of a Pentecostal revival in which many were "filled with the Spirit" which broke out in Kilsyth in 1908 at the Kilsyth United Evangelistic Association which met at Westport Hall, a former theatre, under the leadership of John Barton. See, James Hutchison, *Sierra Leone Challenge*, (Cumbernauld: Kelvinprint Ltd., 1989), pp.19-21.

Religious revival was not a new phenomenon in Kilsyth. In 1742 there had been a significant revival under the ministry of Rev. James Robe. Another took place a century later under William Chalmers Burns. The Kilsyth Evangelistic Association was founded in 1897 by Rev. Peter Anton of the Old Parish Church, Rev. John Goodhall of the United Presbyterian Church, and Rev. Dr. William Jeffrey of the Free Church, with the intention of reaching the largely unchurched mining community, especially the children, with the Gospel. As a result of the 1908 revival attendance at the Prayer Meeting averaged between 80 and 100, and over 300 children attended the Sunday School. Out of this revival no fewer than twenty-eight people offered themselves for missionary service, including Maria Tee, a sister of Harry Tee who later became a well known pastor of the Church of God. Maria Tee at the age of twenty-seven went out in 1913 with the Barobo Bush Mission to work among the Kru people of Liberia at their new station at Gropaka. She died there of blackwater fever only three weeks after her arrival.

In 1916 Matthew Sinclair attended revival meetings at the Apostolic Church in Kilsyth. His wife records, "For a whole week Matthew was under deep conviction of sin and then on 11th October, 1916, to the singing of that beautiful hymn, 'There is a fountain filled with blood', he yielded to the claims of Christ." Eveline Sinclair, *The Wee Man with the Big Heart*, (Glasgow: Nexus Press Ltd., 1973), p.1.

Sinclair began to attend the Church of God at Westport Hall. After his profound evangelical conversion and influenced by the testimony and tragic heroism of Maria Tee, he became aware that God was calling him to missionary service in Africa. In 1919 Mr. and Mrs. Longstreth, American missionaries working with the Christian Missionary Alliance (CMA) in Sierra Leone, had visited the Church of God. They presented the need for workers and hearing of Sinclair's call to mission in Africa urged him to accompany them on their return to Sierra Leone the following year. Sinclair sailed with them from Liverpool on the S. S. Abinsi on 10th March 1920. After a few days in Freetown they moved out to Waterloo where they began to hold meetings in the mission house with Temne and Loko people. Sinclair records: **While there we had a mighty outpouring from God and many of the Christians were filled with the Power of God and lay prostrate on the ground. Some of their relatives**

were afraid, thinking that they had died, and demanded that we pick them up. What a joy it was in those days to visit the various villages where many people had never heard of the name of Jesus and his wonderful power to save. Sinclair, *ibid.*, p.4.

The Alliance had stations in Temne country at Magburaka and Makump which are situated on opposite banks of the Rokel River one hundred miles inland from Freetown. Sinclair moved up to do itinerant pioneer evangelism in the Mayatta region beyond Makump. He testified, "My heart was grieved as I realised that for miles around in every direction were thousands of people in utter darkness and ignorance of the way of salvation." Hutchison, *ibid.*, p.22.

⁴⁹ Sinclair, *ibid.*, p.8.

⁵⁰ While at Setta Kru, Mr. Williams the Christian Missionary Alliance field superintendent, invited Sinclair to join the mission with a salary of \$1,000 per annum, but on condition that although he could preach the baptism in the Spirit as much as he liked he should not preach on "tongues". Sinclair unwilling to deny his own experience and the Pentecostal doctrine of his church turned down the offer.

⁵¹ AOG archives, item dated 1925.

⁵² *ibid.*, item dated 13/9/24.

⁵³ Sinclair assisted Shakley until he left for furlough in July. Relationships between Sinclair and the Shakleys were always friendly and co-operative.

⁵⁴ AOG archives, item dated 19/12/25.

⁵⁵ *ibid.*, item dated 20/2/26. The extract comes from an earlier report written by Shakley.

⁵⁶ *ibid.*, item dated 6/3/26.

⁵⁷ Eveline Sinclair was born in Derby on 2nd July 1898. In 1910 the family moved to Liverpool. She testifies to, at the age of fourteen, having a fairly straightforward evangelical conversion experience:

I was invited to attend the Glad Tidings Mission, Whitefield Road. Thank God, through the preaching of His Word, I was brought under conviction of sin on the second Sunday on which I attended. Though previously I had gone to Sunday School and Band of Hope regularly I had never felt the need of receiving Christ and accepting His wonderful redemption, but in August 1912 I gave my whole heart and life to God. Sinclair, *ibid.*, p.25.

Two years later, in 1914, she felt God was calling her to missionary work in Africa, and that same year, at the age of sixteen, she sought for and experienced the Pentecostal baptism in the Holy Spirit. When the Longstreths visited Liverpool in 1920 they preached at the Glad Tidings Mission and stayed at her home. At this time she met Matthew Sinclair. She saw them all sail off to Sierra Leone in March 1920. The Longstreths had encouraged her to join them in Sierra Leone. Mrs. Longstreth, who was to die in 1925 of blackwater fever, said, "Hurry up. I'll get a bed ready for you." In 1925 Eveline attended Hampstead Bible College which was run by Rev. Howard Carter one of the leading figures in the Pentecostal Movement in Britain. Matthew Sinclair while on furlough in 1925 visited the Bible College and met Eveline. On 26th March 1926 they were married at Lee Assembly, Boone Street, London, by Rev. Carter, and sailed from Liverpool to Sierra Leone on 21st October 1926.

⁵⁸ Sinclair, *ibid.*, p.34.

⁵⁹ AOG archives, item dated 5/3/27. Grace Johnstone Bowie was born in Yonkers, New York, on 24th July 1907. Her father George Bowie a pastor at her church in Cleveland, Ohio, had spent several years as a missionary in South Africa. From 1915 to 1923 Miss Bowie had attended school at Troyville, South Africa. In her application papers for AOG she testified to being a Christian "since a little child" and being baptised in the Holy Spirit in 1915 with the evidence of speaking in tongues.

⁶⁰ *ibid.*, item dated 5/3/27.

⁶¹ *ibid.*, item dated 13/8/27.

⁶² *ibid.*, item dated 9/7/27.

⁶³ Mrs. Sinclair movingly describes the passing away of the young Pentecostal missionary martyr showing her Christian faith and devotion in the face of death:

Never will I forget the shock of seeing our sister Gertie so ill. We arrived on Friday morning and, after a hurried breakfast, we took over the sick room. We prayed and prayed throughout the day and at night we were overjoyed to see that her temperature had fallen to almost normal. Saturday afternoon, however, brought a change, and slowly her temperature began to rise again. Matthew and the native pastor went to our room and held onto God for deliverance, believing to the end that there would be victory. For a new missionary it was heart-breaking to see such a young life ebbing away. She said she knew the Lord was going to take her home and that there would be those in the homeland who would say that she had stepped out of the Will of God when she had come to Africa, but with great emphasis she said "I know God called me". She gave me messages for her parents and friends, and special messages for her pastor, Mr. Dorling, and the late Stephen Jeffreys. By that time her temperature was 106 degrees F. but she was still conscious. She called for Matthew and the pastor and, placing her hand on each of our heads, prayed for us all, and then sang with such strength,

There is power, power, wonder working power,
In the Blood of the Lamb.

There is power, power, wonder working power,
In the precious Blood of the Lamb.

She then seemed to have a vision for, pointing her finger she said "Look at him, there he is, the devil" and then she must have seen Jesus for she said with such a sweet smile "But there is the Lamb, there are His Feet" and then she slipped into His Divine Presence. His ways are not our ways and someday we shall understand. Sinclair, *ibid.*, pp.40-41.

⁶⁴ The Free Gospel churches were part of the Free Gospel Movement which had come out of the evangelistic efforts of two young Englishmen, Frank and William Casley, who had emigrated to the Pittsburgh area in the 1890s to work in the steel mills. They were part of the Holiness Movement and in affiliation with the Christian Missionary Alliance, which had missionaries in Sierra Leone, they founded five churches in the Monoghelia River valley east of Pittsburgh, at Homestead, Turtle Creek, North Braddock, McKeesport, and Glassport. In 1905 the Casley churches were strongly affected by the Pentecostal Movement and because of their stance on speaking in tongues had to withdraw from the CMA to form their own Pentecostal organisation the United Free Gospel and Missionary Society which spread throughout Pennsylvania and into Ohio. They could be called a Holiness-Pentecostal church.

⁶⁵ Bailie was born in Ireland. At the age of seventeen he migrated to Pennsylvania to work for a relative in the construction business. While working at the Turtle Creek Free Gospel Church he began attending their services and was "born again". He became a member of the McKeesport church.

⁶⁶ George Hemminger was born on 12th December 1906. He left school at fourteen and went to work on a dairy farm. Two years later he took a job in a steel mill. While he was working at the furnace he sensed an inner voice saying to him, "George, are you willing to be in my service?" In 1929 in obedience to that call he left to join John Bailie in Sierra Leone.

⁶⁷ Sinclair, *ibid.*, p.54.

⁶⁸ *ibid.*, p.56.

⁶⁹ *ibid.*, p.55.

⁷⁰ Miss Reynolds contracted blackwater fever at Gbinti and died on 7th August 1936.

⁷¹ AOG archives, item dated 29/10/32.

⁷² *ibid.*, item dated 18/6/32.

⁷³ *ibid.*, item dated 30/12/33.

⁷⁴ *ibid.*, item dated 16/6/34. Mr. Shakley made such a good recovery that he and his wife were able to sail for Freetown on 3rd October 1935 for another term on the field superintending the Kru AOG Church.

⁷⁵ *ibid.*, items dated 9/6/34 and 9/2/35.

⁷⁶ *ibid.*, item dated 30/3/35.

⁷⁷ *ibid.*, item dated 22/2/36.

78 *Ibid.*, item dated 15/10/38.

79 *Ibid.*, item dated 4/2/39.

80 Axel Andrew Oman was born of Swedish parents in Ely, Minnesota on 6th April 1895.

81 *Ibid.*, item dated 18/3/39.

82 *Ibid.*, item dated 17/6/39.

83 Sinclair, *ibid.*, p.104.

84 *Ibid.*, pp.112.

85 *Ibid.*, pp.112-3.

86 Mrs. Sinclair, sharing a cabin with three Roman Catholic nuns, observed the nuns, shortly after leaving the harbour, sprinkling "Holy Water" around the cabin. "I had the opportunity of testifying to the fact that I was placing my faith in the Word of God as contained in the 91st Psalm." Sinclair, *ibid.*, p.115.

87 *Ibid.*, p.119.

88 Sinclair, *ibid.*, p.123.

89 Correspondence with Rev. Emerson Thomas, dated 11/8/94.

90 John Kennedy was born in Leavenworth, Kansas, in 1900. Around 1910 the family moved to Oakland, California. He was ordained by the Northern California, Nevada District, and pastored the AOG assembly at Antioch, California, for twenty years before going to Sierra Leone. His first wife, Emily, died of TB in 1929.

91 Daisy Bullard was born at Indianapolis, Indiana. She first went to Liberia as a single missionary in 1930. In 1932 she married AOG missionary John Torta, born in Jackson City, California, 3rd April 1904, who was also serving in Liberia since November 1930. A daughter, Esther Irene, was born in Cape Palmas where the Tortas were stationed. Five months after the birth of their daughter, and shortly before their furlough, John Torta contracted black-water fever and died. He was buried in Liberia. Mrs. Torta returned to America with Esther. In 1936 she returned to Liberia where she ministered alone for three years. In October 1939, while on furlough, she married John H. Kennedy in Sacramento, California. Kennedy had three children from his first marriage, one of them was Miriam Wright who, with her husband Paul, served as AOG missionaries in Freetown from 1944 to 1946. John and Daisy Kennedy had two children, Frances and John, Jr. They retired to the USA in April 1962. On 23rd December 1963 while being interviewed on a TV programme in Vestal, New York, where her daughter Esther Schultheirs (*nee* Torta) lived, Daisy Kennedy suffered a cerebral haemorrhage and died. A newspaper obituary stated, "Few people have lived more selflessly or more victorious than 'Sister Daisy', as she was known to her friends. Her entire life was motivated by dedication to the divine call to Africa." AOG archives, item dated 22/3/64.

92 The Kennedys transferred to Liberia for their last missionary term.

93 Paul C. Wright, *Behind the Scenes*, (Sacramento, California: All Wright Publications, 1994), pp.95-96.

94 *Ibid.*, p.96.

95 Report dated 26th August 1946. AOG archives, item dated 16/11/46.

96 AOG archives, item dated 16/11/46.

97 *Ibid.*, item dated 15/10/48.

98 *Slant*, 3, 1962, p. 23.

99 AOG archives, item dated 30/8/59.

100 *Ibid.*, item dated 30/8/59.

101 *Ibid.*, item dated 15/3/64.

102 *Ibid.*

103 Recorded interview held with Bankole Sesay at his manse at 85 Fort Street, Freetown, on 28/6/90.

104 Mangenda E. H. Fefegula, *The Growth and Development of the Loko Baptist Church at Circular Road*, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts. 1992. p.4.

105 *Ibid.*, p.5.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.6-7.

¹⁰⁷ The Baptist Convention of Sierra Leone was formed in July 1973 by the Nigerian Baptist Mission, the European Baptist Mission, the Bassa Baptist Church, the Calvary Baptist Church and the Church of God at Regent Road. At the 1974 Convention meeting the Rev. J. S. Mans was elected President. For details see Valcarcel, *ibid.*, pp.10-31.

¹⁰⁸ Recorded interview held with Rev. Valcarcel, Christian Education Director for the Baptist Church, at the Baptist offices, Youth Centre, Garrison Street, Freetown, on 27/6/90.

¹⁰⁹ Fefegula, *ibid.*, p.20.

¹¹⁰ Statistics taken from the Baptist Convention of Sierra Leone 1990 statistics and the EFSL/YWAM 1990 Greater Freetown Church Survey.

¹¹¹ Recorded interview held with Mrs. Princess James at her Spur View residence on 15/2/90. Mrs. James was an elder sister of Euphemia Jones, the wife of Pastor Ade Jones of Bethel Temple and also the Assistant Pastor.

¹¹² *Slant*, 2, 1967, p.29.

¹¹³ AOG archives, item dated 4/3/62.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ Olson, *ibid.*, pp.189-90.

¹¹⁶ *Pentecostal Evangel*, 23/2/64, p.22.

¹¹⁷ AOG archives; Sierra Leone file; item dated February 1958.

¹¹⁸ The Koindu Pentecostal church, in gratitude to Kennedy, sent a letter to the AOG Missions Board in July 1962 requesting the Kennedys, who had been transferred to Liberia that April, be sent back to Sierra Leone for their final term of service. The letter demonstrates the good relations which existed between the young church and their missionary superintendent.

July 3, 1962.

Dear Brethren:

Greetings from the Christians in Koindu.

Since there is some possibility of the Kennedys staying in Sierra Leone for their last term and since the people of Freetown have written you expressing their desire to have them remain, we too felt that we would like to write a letter in this regard.

We the undersigned, on behalf of the people of all the Koindu area would like to have the Kennedys remain in Sierra Leone for this term, if you at Springfield feel that it is permissible.

Brother Kennedy means a lot to us, as it was he who helped us when we were imprisoned, as well as having taught and instructed us in previous years.

We do not want to interfere with your decision, but felt it might help in making your decision if you knew our attitude in this matter.

Sincere Christian love,
Pastors and Elders of the Koindu Church:
Moses Fayiah, Pastor.
Tamba Kondo, etc.

The Kennedys, nevertheless, were transferred to Liberia.

¹¹⁹ For the reference to Sierra Leone being the oldest AOG field in Africa see, AOG archives, items dated November, 1959, and April 1962.

¹²⁰ Jonathan Glover (b.1927); Gwendolyn Glover (b.1934). Jonathan W. Glover had pastored AOG assemblies in Wellington and Fowler in Colorado. In 1962 the Glovers came to Sierra Leone from Northwest Bible College with the intention of opening and running the Bible school and training national workers.

¹²¹ *Pentecostal Evangel*, 23/2/64, p.22.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 31/1/88, p.17.

¹²³ Olson's statistics show the total Christian community, which included Active Members and Other Believers, increased from 192 in 1962, to 469 in 1963, and to 671 in 1964.

¹²⁴ Olson, *ibid.*, pp.192-3.

¹²⁵ Betty Savage was born 10th January 1928 in Texas. She became assistant pastor of the AOG Wichita Falls assembly in North Texas. In 1962, Miss Savage and Miss Jones, also

from Texas, went to Liberia to work at the Firestone rubber plantation. After one term they both transferred to Kenema, Sierra Leone. According to Miss Savage, "When we moved to Kenema we knew no one, and none there knew the words Assembly of God."

¹²⁶ Rev. B. J. Manley, pastor of Miss Jones' church in Texas, preached the dedicatory message. Manley who was visiting other African fields was killed shortly afterwards when his Speed-the-Light plane crashed off the Cape Palmas coast in Liberia on 10th October. (Reported in *Pentecostal Evangel*, 1/12/68.)

¹²⁷ Hollenweger, *ibid.*, p.65.

¹²⁸ Daisy Kennedy died in December 1963 while visiting her family in America. John Kennedy immediately returned home and retired from the mission. He died on 8th March 1973 in Santa Cruz, California, at the age of 72.

¹²⁹ When the news of Pa Shakley's death reached Freetown, Simon Grant wrote a letter of sympathy to Ma Shakley on behalf of the Kru AOG Church of which he had long been Pastor-in-Charge. He was not aware at the time of writing that Ma Shakley had also passed away.

**C/O. 35, JOHN STREET,
FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE.**

11th. January, 1965.

Ma. I. G. Shakley,

On behalf of the Kroo Church, I extend our season's greetings to you and the family and wishing you a happy and prosperous New Year, 1965.

The shocking news of your late husband and our Father in Christ was reported to us by Rev. and Mrs. Hemminger. There was no direct communication or message from the brethren in the Headquarters reporting his death. They said that the news of his death came through the Evangel of the Assemblies of God, and that it occurred on September 5, 1964. This had been the reason of our long silence, expressing our warmest sympathy to you and the bereaved family before this time.

The 23 years of Pioneer Missionary work of late Pa Shakley and your goodself which has been the results of the salvation of thousands and hundreds of our people. More than 75 churches had been established in our homeland in Liberia, and Greenville, Sinoe in particular. Praise the Lord! He is not dead! Why seek ye the living among the dead! We shall never forget your good work among our people; as the children of Israel when they crossed the Jordan into the promised land, told it to their children and their children's children; so shall we tell it to our children and their generations to come.

We have written to brother Everitt Phillips, our Field Secretary to contact you and the family for a brief biography of our late beloved Pa Shakley, in order to hold a Memorial Service as a last tribute, all of the Assemblies of God Churches in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

We are very glad that he has finished his work, kept to the Faith fought a good fight, and now reaching for his crown of righteousness.

May the Lord uphold you with His mighty hand is our prayer daily and sincerely. Though we shall never meet again in the flesh but we hope to meet at the Master's Feet and in the blessed land of Hope in glory where we shall meet Pa Shakley in reunion and will never be separated again.

MAY HE REST IN PEACE.

**Yours in His return,
*Simon T. Grant.***

¹³⁰ The Berrys arrived in Freetown on 11th March, 1966.

¹³¹ AOG archives, item dated 30/8/59.

¹³² *Pentecostal Evangel*, 23/2/64, p.22.

¹³³ AOG archives, Sierra Leone file.

- 134 *Slant*, 2, 1967, p.28. For more information see *Pentecostal Evangel*, 19/3/67, and *Global Conquest*, May-June 1967.
- 135 Recorded interview held with Pastor Jones at K22, FBC, Freetown, on 14/2/90.
- 136 *Ibid.*
- 137 *Ibid.*
- 138 Recorded conversation held with Mrs. Princess James on 15/2/90. Mrs. James claimed the information had been passed on to her personally by Mrs. Jones who was her sister.
- 139 *Ibid.*
- 140 For an excellent coverage of this period in Sierra Leone's political history see, W. S. Marcus Jones, *ibid.*, chapter 9, "From Independence to Republicanism 1961 to 1971", pp.197-226.
- 141 Recorded conversations held with Pastor Ade Jones at K22, FBC, Freetown, during February, March and April 1990.
- 142 Mrs. Princess James, *ibid.*
- 143 Recorded interview held with Mrs. Irene Chinsman at Bethel Temple, Tower Hill, Freetown, on 14/5/90.
- 144 *Ibid.*
- 145 Mrs. Princess James, *ibid.*
- 146 Recorded conversation held with Anne Marcus Jones, a member of Bethel Temple and close friend of Sister Jones, at K22, FBC, Freetown, on 10/5/90.
- 147 Pastor Jones, *ibid.*
- 148 *Ibid.*
- 149 *Ibid.*
- 150 *Ibid.*
- 151 Walker notes an accommodation to children born out of wedlock and a strong sense of responsibility towards them by the fathers was evident in Freetown even during Settler times: **Conventional morality as enforced by the chapels could even regard common-law marriages as having precedence over legal ones. One member of the Methodist chapel, Robinson, claimed that his bride of three months had been seduced by a fellow-Methodist called Cheeseman. Cheeseman's defence was that he had lived with the woman for five years before her marriage to Robinson, and the Methodist "court" supported him and gave Cheeseman, not the legal husband, the right to continue a sexual relationship with her. In such circumstances there could be no disgrace to illegitimacy; bastards were honestly declared and listed as such in the census returns. When a lawyer in 1838 challenged a bastard's right to inherit his father's property the chief justice dismissed such a doctrine on the grounds that "it would endanger the title of two-thirds of the property of this colony".** Walker, *ibid.*, p.206.
- 152 The extract of the birth certificate, presently in the possession of the writer, will soon be returned to the Bethel Temple archives.
- 153 David L. Kallay, *A Study of the National Pentecostal Limba Church, Fort Street, Freetown*, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, Fourah Bay College, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, March 1991, p.4.
- 154 Pastor Jones, *ibid.*
- 155 *Ibid.*
- 156 *Ibid.*
- 157 Paul and Jewyl Seaberg arrived in Freetown on 19/ 2/71 and left on 10/2/75.
- 158 Pastor Jones, *ibid.*
- 159 In 1983 George Hemminger's health deteriorated rapidly. On 21st November he died while reading his Bible. Laverne Hemminger Weber, wife of the pastor of the AOG assembly at Beaver, Pennsylvania, wrote in the *Pentecostal Evangel*, 15/6/86, "George Hemminger was a real missionary, a vessel dedicated to the Master's use. I knew him well. He was my father."
- 160 Pastor Jones, *ibid.*
- 161 *Ibid.*

162 ***Pentecostal Evangel***, 27/7/80, p.11.

163 ***Ibid.***

164 ***Ibid.***

165 ***Mountain Movers***, December 1980, p.5.

166 The International Correspondence Institute is a correspondence Bible school with offices in Brussels, Belgium, sponsored by the AOG Division of Foreign Missions. Its purpose is to evangelise, teach and train by extension methods. Among the methods used are correspondence courses, personal and group instruction, radio and audiovisual media. ICI was formed in 1967 and a College Division was opened in April 1974.

167 Pastor Jones, ***ibid.***

168 ***Ibid.***

169 ***Ibid.***

170 ***Ibid.***

171 ***Ibid.***

172 ***Ibid.***

173 ***Ibid.***

174 ***Ibid.***

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE PENTECOSTAL-EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT SPREADS AND INDEPENDENT AFRICAN EVANGELICAL REVIVALISM RETURNS TO FREETOWN

BETHEL TEMPLE AS AN INDEPENDENT PENTECOSTAL-EVANGELICAL CHURCH

Six months after the break with missionary controlled AOG Sierra Leone, the Bethel Temple congregation concentrated their energies on building an extension to the church. In 1982, at a General Council meeting, Jones had proposed enlarging Bethel Temple so that whenever evangelistic campaigns were held, they would avoid the huge expenses holding the William Caldwell Crusade at the Stadium in 1980 had incurred. No further developments took place until June 1983, when Sister Jones presented the newly independent church with the vision that God wanted them to rise and build. With the annual pilgrimage to the Feast of Tabernacles increasingly cementing relationships between Bethel Temple and the Mount Zion Fellowship, Ruth Heflin, *en route* from Jerusalem to summer camp in Virginia, visited Freetown in June 1984. She conducted a week's Prayer and Praise Crusade at Bethel Temple. Crowded rallies were held in the City Hall on 11th and 12th June. Lady Rebecca Stevens, the Chairman of the Freetown City Council Alfred Akibo-Betts, and many other dignitaries attended.¹ Afterwards, the Joneses travelled to the Calvary Pentecostal Camp.² At the camp, Jones raised the question of holding an evangelistic and healing Crusade at the Siaka Stevens Stadium. He believed a Crusade led by evangelists from abroad would enhance the image of his church in the city. He also shared his desire to revive the Bible College at Bethel Temple. Heflin suggested he and Rev. MacDougall head up an evangelistic team for an eight days Crusade at the stadium from 27th November till 6th December. MacDougall would remain behind and start off the Bethel Temple Bible Institute during December and January. The Crusade, organised by Bethel Temple at short notice,

had limited popular appeal, but the church considered it a success, pointing to the healing, "in view of all", of several disabled children from the Cheshire Home. The Bethel Temple Bible Institute started in January 1985 with 11 students. Meantime Bethel Temple was encouraged by the Heflins to continue with their ambitious church extension programme. The grandeur of the building reflected Sister Jones's liking for pomp and ceremony. As the inspiration and power source behind the newly independent Krio Pentecostal evangelical church, Euphemia Jones's ministry in Freetown was now flourishing. Her healing ministry drew many to the church and a Wednesday morning Healing Service was organised. Her prayer ministry encouraged many to become full members.

In June 1985, Euphemia Jones, now sixty-six years old, began to suffer from a lump in her stomach. Much prayer was made, and she found it difficult to understand why she did not recover. She was flown to London for surgery at the Princess Grace Hospital. After the operation she recuperated in the London home of eminent Freetown lawyer and Professor of Law at FBC, Marcus Jones. Ade Jones arranged to attend the Heflin's camp in Virginia in August, hoping that Mrs. Jones would travel with him from London. She suffered a relapse, but persuaded her husband to travel on to camp, promising to join him the following week. While attending the Saturday evening service, Jones had a telephone message that his wife had been readmitted to hospital and her condition was serious. He arrived in London on the morning of Monday 12th August. Mrs. Jones was hardly able to talk, but when a nurse tried to persuade Jones to eat something, she said, "Leave him, he's praying for me."³ Around six in the evening she raised her hand and said, "They shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." With these words on her lips she passed away. Ruth Heflin flew to London and with Pastor Jones accompanied the corpse back to Sierra Leone on the Sunday. The Freetown Christian community was stunned by the death of the dynamic woman of prayer, a notable healer and the spiritual mother of the first Krio Pentecostal-evangelical church. The funeral, which drew a huge crowd of mourners, took place on Thursday 22nd August. There was hardly a Krio home from which someone

did not come to pay their respects. Ruth Heflin preached the sermon. Her text was Isaiah 55:4, "See I have made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and a commander of the peoples." The Bethel Temple congregation were outside in tents, while the church was crammed with around six hundred visitors, including five Government ministers and Lady Rebecca Stevens. The body was laid to rest in King Tom Cemetery. The following Sunday Pastor Jones preached from Joshua 1:2, "Moses my servant is dead; now therefore, arise go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people". Many wept openly. According to Rev. M. E. Renner-Lewis of Bethel Temple, Sister Jones's strong points were prayer and evangelism. Her main preaching emphasis was complete surrender of life to Christ. She dwelt much on the image of Christ as husband and being married to Christ.⁴ Ruth Heflin commented:

She was a marvellous woman of God. She was a praying woman who would pray all night. I've met only a few people like her; women of God who have felt a burden for people in high position.⁵

Euphemia Jones made a habit of arranging interviews with President Stevens for visiting evangelists who would pray for the Government and the country. This has continued under his successors, President Momoh and the present Head of State, Captain Valentine Strasser.

The loss of Euphemia Jones seriously affected the church. Pastor Jones's eyesight began to deteriorate, and still obviously grieving, he was unable to take a firm grip on the helm. Numbers began to decline. Sidney Davies, who as a young prophet had "retreated" from the Church of the Lord (Aladura), and whom Jones regarded as his own son, was called from pastoring the Kissy church and appointed Assistant Pastor. Davies's powerful praying and evangelical preaching helped the congregation overcome their sense of loss. Sidney and Irene Davies were seen as a couple raised up by God to take on the mantle of the Joneses. Meantime, the church extension project gave the congregation a focus of attention. Two dynamic young ministers, Edward Penn-Timothy and Matthew Lansana, were completing the Bible Training Institute course.⁶ Along with Davies, they were poised to lead the church forward into a new phase of growth.

Sidney Davies was born on 30th June 1948. He attended the Prince of Wales School. From 1970 to 1974 he was a trainee electrical engineer with the Sierra Leone Ports Authorities. In 1975, after several years in the Church of the Lord (Aladura), he enrolled at AOG Freetown Bible College and was given oversight of the Kissy branch. Irene Davies had developed a prayer-healing ministry and was also a highly talented singer. Just when the worst seemed over and the membership had stabilised, a scandal involving Davies broke out in April 1988. Jones had been in Lagos, Nigeria, for seven months. He returned in May to find many were blaming him for allowing several situations to develop, including the mismanagement of goods sent out by the Heflins. The most serious matter, however, involved a tenant living in Pastor Jones's house while he was in Nigeria. Davies who had been put in charge of the house, ordered the tenant to leave because of "misbehaviour". The tenant refused, and they fought publicly outside Jones's house. Such a public lowering of standards by a senior minister, especially outside the house of the pastor and his late wife, scandalised the congregation. Davies was suspended. Feeling he had not been given a sympathetic hearing, but was being made a scapegoat for the church's difficulties, he refused to accept the discipline and resigned in July. In August, responding to dreams, inner promptings and the encouragement of friends, he founded his own church, Unto the Glory of God's Son Ministries; Glory Ministries for short. The first Sunday worship service was held at Cathedral Girls' School, near Sewa Grounds (formerly Victoria Park), on 9th September 1988. The loss of Sidney and Irene Davies was a bitter blow to Pastor Jones and Bethel Temple. This internal wound hurt the church much more deeply than the AOG split.

At this time the support given to the ageing and practically blind Pastor Jones by the ministry team, in which Penn-Timothy and Lansana were now playing a vital role, proved crucial for the survival of the church. "We looked after him like a baby," said Mrs. Chinsman, "all he had were his wife and the church."⁷ At Murray Town, Evangel AOG Church, helped by missionary and Bible College students support, began to emerge as a rival attraction to Bethel Temple. Although their premises were smaller, they were now holding two Sunday

morning services. In 1989 the Bethel Temple membership started to grow again and the old vibrancy returned to the worship. A branch church was opened at Wellington. A date was set for the grand opening of the extension which would double the seating capacity and give Bethel Temple the status of being the Cathedral of the Freetown Pentecostals. A great effort was made to meet their deadline; missed by only one week. Over 600 attended the impressive opening and dedication service which took place on Sunday 6th May 1990. Ruth Heflin, who had travelled from Jerusalem, cut the ribbon amid great shouts of joy. She also offered the dedicatory prayer. The sermon, based on Matthew 28:18 (AV), "All power is given unto me in heaven and earth", was preached by a visiting evangelist from Kensington Temple, London, a church with which Bethel Temple had built up close connections. One member, surveying the huge extension, declared, "We will grow, not just because of the building, but because we are growing spiritually."

The Liturgy of the Krio Pentecostal-evangelical Church

Sunday morning service commences at 9:45 with Sunday school. This includes adult as well as youth and junior groups. The influence of American AOG on the club structure is obvious. The Sunday School is large and well organised with around 230 children attending. All members are allocated to clubs which make a vital contribution to the worship and happy atmosphere in the church. The Missionette Club is for girls between five and sixteen.⁸ For boys between four and eighteen there is the Royal Ranger Club. For older youths there are the Christ Ambassadors Club, the Young Christian Association, the Christian Sons and Daughters Union and the Army of Jesus. The club with the highest attendance gets the attendance banner. The Men's Fellowship and the Women's Fellowship are for adults who meet to discuss church problems, conduct Bible Studies, and arrange visits to the sick and various hospitals.

Divine worship service gets underway at 10:45 as the children depart to classes, leaving an adult congregation on between 250 and 300. No lady may enter the church during divine

service without a head covering. Attendants hand out simple, unattractive head-scarves at the door. A ladies choir, dressed in white with yellow capes and bonnets, occupies the inward-facing front rows. The large choir leads and controls the singing. Communal prayer, interspersed with individual intercessions, takes up the concerns and welfare of the congregation. The platform party tend to kneel during the prayer time. While the majority dress in Western style, and the platform party are usually in expensive suits, any notion that we have here a very Western church is dispelled as the worship tempo rises during the open praise time, with strong singing, clapping and rhythmic swaying. Several leave their seats and step-dance up and down the aisles. The concentration on pneumatic encounter resulting in abandon to spirit possession, so common in the Spiritual churches, is not in evidence here. The goal is joyful corporate worship while being filled with the Holy Spirit. Periodically, individuals cry out in agony or ecstasy, but prostrations in trance, frenzy, hallucination or unconsciousness are rare. At baptismal services neophytes tend to get very excited and howl or bellow, but these are not usually Krio. Krio converts usually testify to their born-again experiences, recite a poem, or call out for a popular hymn or chorus to be sung.

Edward Penn-Timothy demonstrates a special gift for exuberant exhortation, while at the same time maintaining a very Christo-centric focus; an excellent example of the Krio evangelical background tempering and controlling the indigenous religious quest for spirit encounter and possession. Receiving the power of the Holy Spirit, how and for what purpose, is a popular preaching theme. Jones tends to select his texts from the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, although he also likes to preach on Old Testament characters. Holy living, victory over sin, deliverance from demons, and national Israel because of their Mount Zion Fellowship connections, are also popular topics. According to Pastor Jones:

We teach salvation. We teach the gifts of the Holy Spirit and Christian living. We teach the power available to the believer, what you receive when you become a believer and what you can receive. We teach holiness. We teach deliverance through the Holy Spirit through the work Jesus has done on the Cross. We teach about Heaven and Hell and the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁹

The congregation responds with loud shouts of "Amen!", "Glory!", and "Hallelujah!", especially when there is mention of Jesus rebuking demons and sickness.

Pastor Jones, who has experienced suffering with great dignity, brings a rare sensitivity and insight into Bethel Temple's celebration of the Eucharist. He believes that preaching the Cross should occupy a central place in the ministry of the church and sees the First Sunday Communion service as the perfect opportunity to teach the atoning significance of the Cross. The visits to the sacred sites in Jerusalem have greatly influenced the church's perception of the Lord's Supper and its Jewish background. While it is basically a memorial feast, there is a pronounced devotional and communion element combined with a future hope. Recently there has been in the celebration a definite focus on the Second Coming of Jesus and the joyful reunion with the saints who have gone before. Holy Ghost Service on Saturday afternoons is for those seeking the Baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues, and those who want refilling. The Healing Service on Wednesday morning is of great importance. The sick may spend the morning, or the whole day, in the church, praying and prostrating on the floor. Members visit the sick in hospitals, old people's homes, the Cheshire Home, SOS Village, the Blind School and the school for the mentally handicapped. A 1985 FBC Sociology Department survey produced evidence that the reasons why people came to Bethel Temple were basically the same as for the Spiritual churches. 25% suffered ill health, 25% had marriage problems, 10% suffered from barrenness, 10% were troubled by evil spirits, 10% had problems at their work-place, 5% were unemployed and in financial difficulties, 5% came because of the influence of friends, 5% came as a result of revivals, and 5% for other reasons. While most Spiritual church members came from Freetown's lower social strata, 70% of Bethel Temple belonged to the upper and middle classes.¹⁰

The Theology of the Krio Pentecostal-evangelical Church

The doctrinal statements of the church are fundamentally evangelical and based primarily on Apostolic teaching and practice. The *Constitution and By-Laws* reveals a church which

expresses its Christian faith clearly and confidently. Salvation is received through an inward spiritual transaction, a faith commitment without any external works or spiritual "struggles". Unlike the Spiritual churches, Bethel Temple embraces a *theologia crucis* as well as a *theologia pneumatica*. The Cross is not perceived as an object of power. Jones declares:

I consider the Cross as a symbol of our redemption. You look at the Cross and it reminds you of the Son of God who went to that Cross and died so that you can be freed from your sins.¹¹

Christ is the Saviour of fallen mankind through his sacrificial death of vicarious atonement. Personal, wholehearted submission to this truth results in being "born again". Bethel Temple's Ariminian doctrine of salvation holds to the possibility of one falling away and losing the benefits of the salvation experience. One can be born-again spiritually and also die-again spiritually. Pastor Jones claims:

Once regenerate you must keep on being regenerated. You can fall from grace. We have known this even in Bethel Temple. They were truly born-again.¹²

Professor Fashole-Luke sees this as an American theological intrusion.¹³ The Christological question of the nature of the regenerate is not pursued. However, this doctrine does keep the level of commitment and pitch of enthusiasm high, and is certainly a form of teaching with which converts from an indigenous religious background are not unfamiliar. Salvation incorporates deliverance from evil spirits, protection from witchcraft, physical healing and emotional well-being.

The church's teaching on water baptism unequivocally declares their rejection of the doctrine of baptismal regeneration:

Many believe that salvation comes at the time of water baptism. To some, water baptism and salvation mean the same thing. This is a very wrong belief. This wrong belief leads to severe spiritual damage. Removing attention from the attitudes of the heart, and focusing on external rites, leaves behind true spiritual experiences. Water cannot cleanse from any sin. Water baptism means nothing when not accompanied by the right attitudes of faith and repentance. Salvation comes first, then water baptism. Water baptism should be given only to those who have truly been born-again and fully understand the meaning of water baptism. Water baptism is the outward sign of what has already taken place inside the heart.¹⁴

Infants are not baptised as this is seen as "a meaningless ritual without Biblical foundation"; however, they are dedicated with exuberant joy and thanksgiving to God for the blessing of children. This church, like its AOG parent, baptises with the Trinitarian formula and rejects the "Jesus Only" doctrine. Candidates for baptism must be filled, or seeking to be filled, with the Holy Spirit, evidenced by speaking in tongues. They must abandon the use of all fetish, charms, "country medicines" and leaves obtained from herbalists. They must relinquish all association with secret societies and never consort with medicine-men or witches. Being for the most part a Krio church, upholding these prohibitions is not as burdensome as for churches where other ethnic groups predominate.

Concerning the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, Pastor Jones sees this as an experience which comes through believing and dedicating one's life towards those things which please God. He maintains that as the process of regeneration and being baptised in the Holy Spirit are the same, a person could theoretically be "saved" and baptised in the Spirit at the same time:

You open your heart to the Lord and you desire to have Him, and you invite Him into your heart. Depending on the degree of your response you could be baptised in the Holy Spirit at that very moment.¹⁵

On the tricky subject of speaking in tongues as the evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit he comments with typical African pragmatism:

I know it is possible for one to be baptised without the sign of speaking in tongues, but we regard speaking in tongues as a sure evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit. It is an evidence for those who are around.¹⁶

Speaking in tongues is mainly for individual spiritual communication with God during the prayer and worship sessions. Jones is aware of the problems caused by undisciplined tongues speaking and does not particularly encourage tongues messages in church:

There are times when we go to extremes. We should not hinder worship by speaking in tongues. If it is the Holy Spirit speaking that is all right, the Holy Spirit won't lead you into confusion.¹⁷

However, during periods of praise and prayer loud utterances in tongues are given and may be interpreted. Prophetic utterances are more popular. Jones, while recognising the need to exercise the gift of discernment of spirits, has only rarely had to admonish anyone speaking

under inspiration. He did recall a lady visitor standing up and shouting, "I see blood! I see blood! I see blood!" When Sister Jones moved over to quieten her down she shouted, "Don't disturb the Spirit! Don't disturb the Spirit! I see blood! I see blood!" Pastor Jones began to sing the Doxology, "Praise Him from whom all blessings flow". The lady slowly lowered her upraised hands and calmed down. She came from one of the Spiritual churches. On the subject of religious ecstasy and being filled with the Holy Spirit in Pentecostal fashion, Jones takes the line enunciated by Hollenweger in his study of Nicholas Bhengu:

No Pentecostal would ever describe his spiritual experiences by the term ecstasy, which is drawn from comparative religion. He rejects this word for describing his religion, for the emotional outbursts experienced in Pentecostalism do not normally lead to the elimination of the personality. If this nevertheless happens, Pentecostals fear a demonic influence, for they say that the Holy Spirit does not overpower us, he ennobles us. But paganism lives by and in ecstasy.¹⁸

While prophetic utterances are received with reverential awe, revelations through the medium of visions and dreams are not so common here as in Spiritual churches. The church does not deny the validity of dreams and visions, but is aware of the problems which wrong interpretations cause. Anyone with a vision may stand up and declare it to the church, but dreams must be shared privately and only passed on if pastoral approval is obtained. The most common vision seen at Bethel Temple is that of angels dancing around the altar area. Similar visions have been seen at Bro. Heflin's camp in Virginia.

Bethel Temple consider themselves to be above all else a praying church. Prayer is not understood as a mechanism for achieving immediate results, or a technique which disposes God to favour the suffering suppliant. While human effort is accepted as an essential element of intercessory prayer, the struggle does not involve self-mortification or ritual performances. The struggle is to overcome human lethargy, that is "the flesh", and stir up appropriating faith. Prayer requires a compassionate involvement with the troubled person for whom intercessory prayer is being made, and a crying to God for the faith which releases the power of the Holy Spirit into the situation. Prayer is given priority over all other activities, and any programme will be interrupted if it is perceived that a person or situation is needing

urgent prayer. All night prayer meetings are called for when circumstances demand it. These are very popular with the spiritual elite of the church. There is a regular Thursday-night prayer meeting which has only recently introduced Bible study on alternate Thursdays. On Mondays and Fridays there are 5:30 a.m. prayer meetings in the church. These last for an hour and a half. They used to be well attended. Nowadays, with the economic hardships and difficulties in obtaining public transport, not many attend unless they are prepared to spend the night in the church. Ladies are increasingly having their handbags snatched, even though they often contain only their Bibles. Fasting, as in the Spiritual churches, is seen as the means by which prayers are made more effectual, and half days and whole days of fasting are called for when important matters concerning the church or nation need the congregation's prayers. This happens two or three times a month on average. The philosophy of prayer at Bethel Temple is that one prays as one is inspired by the Holy Spirit. Anything other than spontaneous praying would be regarded as "strange", if not inconceivable. According to Jones:

We lay much emphasis on praying in the Spirit. You prepare *yourself* if you want to pray, and allow the Holy Spirit to take control. This is a Pentecostal church and the power of the Holy Spirit should be in operation at all times.¹⁹

Prayers in the Pentecostal-evangelical churches can appear very similar to prayers in the Spiritual churches. Both stress inspiration and the power of the Holy Spirit and both deal with practical problems. However, the Christ and Cross centred devotionalism which is so pronounced a feature of the praying at Bethel Temple, is conspicuously absent from the praying of the Spiritual churches. On the other hand, prayer which emphasis deliverance from witchcraft is not as prominent at Bethel Temple as it is in the Spiritual churches.

During Euphemia Jones's ministry, the majority of visitors, as in the Spiritual churches, came initially for healing; mainly physical, but also emotional and mental. Exorcisms were attempted with cases where manifestations of frenzy reached levels which included foaming at the mouth, but no spectacular results were reported. While healing continues to be a major concern, it is not, as in the Spiritual churches, the main pre-occupation of the church.

The Wednesday Healing Service is the main time for the sick to be prayed for, but during Sunday Divine Service the sick are also prayed for, either during the open prayer and praise time or at the close of the service. If anyone manifests distress during any of the services, prayer is immediately offered. In Bethel Temple the prime focus of the ministry is on salvation which is perceived in very broad terms and includes, "all the redemptive acts and processes".²⁰ This encompasses healing, deliverance, physical and emotional well-being, and, last but not least, the gift of the Holy Spirit in Pentecostal dynamism. The manifestation of the Holy Spirit that is particularly sought is a pneumatic infilling which inspires singing, clapping, shouting, speaking in tongues and dancing, and any other expressions of spiritual and emotional agony and ecstasy. Taking into account the historical, social and cultural differences, there must still be quite a similarity between worship at Bethel Temple and worship in the early Nova Scotian chapels.

Bethel Temple, under the exemplary leadership of Ade and Euphemia Jones, seeks to uphold the rigorous ethic of the American AOG parent body and the Victorian virtues of Creolehood, and frowns on smoking, drinking and party revelling. They will not accept secret society members for water baptism or church membership. This means refusing baptism to Free Masons and severely limiting their appeal to Krio males. They claim to have more spiritual concerns than including a large number of important citizens on their membership roll. Bethel Temple is a Krio church which gladly incorporates into its worship elements of indigenous culture such as music, dance and dress, but elements of the ancestral cult are carefully avoided. Pastor Jones's attitude to the ancestor cult is:

We feel it is not Christian. The dead have no power to help you when they are dead. You go to the grave and the person is not there. The spirit has gone to be with the Lord if they are Christians. They communicate with demons. If you say you are having a feast to honour the departed, and have a "cook" and invite family and friends to eat, that is all right. But there is a point which involves the digging of a hole and putting food inside the hole and talking to the dead. That is what we are against. This is occultism. It is not Biblical. It is a strong custom, but we teach our people and they agree to adopt what the doctrine sets down, but we don't run after them to see whether they go to the cemetery. Their relations may think they are strange, but that is the way we educate them.²¹

Bethel Temple, being a Krio church, do not have the Spiritual churches' aversion to bringing a dead member's corpse into the holy Temple. Churching the corpse to pay their last respects to it in the presence of God is normal practice.

Regenerated polygamists are received into church fellowship, but denied water baptism. Only the first wife in a polygamous marriage may be baptised. Their position regarding polygamy has not yet lined up with the AOG General Council's revision of their laws on divorce and remarriage, which was forced on them in 1973 by the realities of the African situation. The General Council's revised laws for membership states:

There are now among Christian people those who became entangled in their marriage relations in their former lives of sin and who do not see how these matters can be adjusted. We recommend that these people be received into the membership of local assemblies and that their marriage complications be left in the hands of the Lord (1 Corinthians 7:17, 20, 24).

We recommend that in no case shall persons be accepted into membership who are known to be living in a common-law state of matrimony.²²

Pastor Jones' uncompromising stance on polygamy is:

If you have more than one wife we won't accept you as a member or for water baptism. When you remember that church membership doesn't take you into heaven, there shouldn't be a problem. If you have accepted the Lord Jesus you can come and worship in the church without being a member. The important thing is that the relationship is right.²³

The church's position on divorce and remarriage is equally hard-line:

We don't allow divorce. If a divorced person comes to the church and desires water baptism, provided you have not remarried we would baptise you. If you want to become a member we will have to print it out that you as a member will not be allowed to marry if the former spouse is living. A contract was made to God until death us do part. God sees that contract. It is when you marry again that you are doing exactly what you vowed you were not going to do.²⁴

Adultery is not grounds for divorce because the couple contracted to live together for as long as they both should live. However, divorce for fornication is allowed; fornication being understood as sex before marriage. Deuteronomy 24:1, where the problematic word *erwa* (AV trans. "some uncleanness") is taken to mean pre-marital intercourse, is used as a proof text. Like the Spiritual churches, Bethel Temple pressurises couples to solve their

differences through compromise. Wives are exhorted to be loyal and reminded of their duty to welcome back unfaithful husbands.

While article 3, section 1, sub-section 14 of the church's Constitution condemns "dancing, gambling and cinema", dancing is one of the most distinctive features of this "Dancing Church". Pastor Jones squares the circle thus:

Dancing in the world is different, you are in that atmosphere and exposed to the temptation of the Devil. You have to go close to someone who is not your wife or a close relative. These people drink and smoke. Therefore we frown against it. If a man and wife and children dance in their homes there is no problem in that. Our dancing in church is something which comes on spontaneously. Our thoughts concentrate on the Lord. David danced before the Lord. It releases your spirit, you rejoice and praise the Lord from the bottom of your heart. Bethel Temple dances, Evangel doesn't. The missionaries gave the idea that dancing was bad, of the Devil. They were jealous of the missionary couple who came from Israel.²⁵

Jones recalled that before Bethel Temple began to dance he had visited the Kenema church founded by Betty Savage, the champion of those opposed to dancing in church. He was leading the praise session, but it had not gone well. He introduced one final song. Suddenly, the place lit up and all the national brethren started to dance. "They were dancing all over the place." Hearing the noise, locals gathered to see what was happening. As they were looking through the windows, a sudden rain-storm drove them into the church. Straightway the missionaries, disregarding all preliminaries, eagerly preached to their new congregation.

It all depends on the way you dance. If the missionaries had any objections they should have called me and talked to me about it. They did not. If they had they would have had to convince me that it was Scripturally wrong. I went to Nigeria and there AOG churches, pastors and members were all dancing. No immorality has arisen out of it. The missionaries came out wanting to make Americans out of Africans. They wanted us to do things their way.²⁶

Despite their visits to Jerusalem and close association with the Mount Zion Fellowship, neither Israel nor the Jews are accorded undue elevation in the present dispensation of grace. Old Testament Israel is the ground out of which the Church has flowered, but there is no question of promoting Jews to a position of spiritual superiority over Gentiles.

The Jews are not in themselves special, but God has a special place for them. Jewish Christians are not better than Gentile Christians. Jews are not in a better position at

the moment, but at the Consummation I believe Jews will occupy special places of responsibility because this is what God has promised them, and Gentile Christians cannot usurp the rights of the Jews.²⁷

Bethel Temple is a prosperous church. During the offering the congregation dances up to the altar, arms raised, swaying, and singing popular choruses like "We bring a sacrifice of praise into the house of the Lord". Several donation dances are made, and the collection baskets overflowing with reasonably high currency notes indicate that there are many generous and "cheerful givers" in the congregation. Unlike the denominational churches, Bethel Temple disapproves of raising money through luncheon sales, bazaars, concerts, and moonlight picnics. Tithing, standard AOG practice, is the main source of income. Negatively, however, one gets the impression that you must be fairly affluent to be a member of this Krio church.

EVANGEL AOG CHURCH

As relations with Bethel Temple soured in the late 1970s, the AOG mission looked for an alternative base in Freetown from which to operate. AOG missionary, Ralph Welch, arrived from America in May 1979. Welch wanted to move the AOG Bible College away from the Bethel Temple environment. In August 1980, he leased property at Aberdeen from the Church of Christ Mission at a cost of \$125,000. Buildings on the campus included a residency, a two-storey classroom, a chapel, two dormitories and a workshop. The following year twenty students enrolled at Evangel Bible College for a three year Diploma in Theology course. The students organised a football team to play in a local league. After their matches they would invite their opponents to join them in the college chapel for fellowship and prayers. As this proved popular and numbers grew, it was decided to hold Sunday services. Thus Evangel Church began early in 1981, the name being taken from the college. Ernest J. O. King, who was pastoring the Masiaka AOG Church, was invited to become the first pastor. The appointment of King illustrates once more the somewhat high-handed approach adopted by the AOG missionaries in their dealings with the national leadership at this time, and their

failure to operate according to constitutional procedures. In Krio eyes this was another case where the whites taught them to play cricket and then changed the rules. It added fuel to the smouldering resentment. Welch talked directly to King and privately obtained his agreement to pastor the new Murray Town church. Ade Jones, the General Superintendent, was not informed and only became aware of what was going on when Welch made a statement to the General Council that King was to be pastor of Evangel AOG Church. Although Jones felt the way King was appointed was "unsatisfactory", he had "no hard feelings against King", whose car he now considered too old for the Masiaka trips, and he willingly took part in the installation ceremonies.²⁸ While King pastored the church, he undertook a course of Biblical Studies at Evangel College, and graduated in 1985.

Pastored by King, Evangel Church grew and prospered. It strove to take over from Bethel Temple as the jewel in the AOG crown. The 1990 survey showed them growing, but still trailing Bethel Temple in the numbers attending worship services. Bethel Temple, with a membership of 136, had 368 attending Sunday morning service. Evangel, with a membership of 56, had 260. Evangel, however, with the advantage of the dynamic input of the Bible School students, and the encouragement of their AOG connections, local and foreign, was growing at a faster rate. Their growth was being hindered by lack space and the increasingly strained relationships developing between King and his congregation, the core of which was the student body. The Krio nucleus of the church were feeling disquiet over the increasing number and influence of non-Krio both in the church and on the Sierra Leone AOG Council. The students also complained about the missionaries. One declared:

The lecturers were far removed from the students. The only contact with them was in the classroom or the chapel. We were struggling with only the basics while just a few yards away the missionaries lived in their fenced compound, guarded by dogs, with generator and all comforts, and they went away every summer. How can we preach about love and sharing in an environment like this I asked. They used American books. They were teaching Africans, but only what came across from America and from one particular school of thought. They were doing a good job, but the colonial legacy remained. They were paternalistic and we looked up to the white man to provide. What was American was best and the missionaries taught us to look down on what was African. The American missionary presence is a new paternalism.²⁹

A dangerous triangular cultural crisis was developing even as the church was establishing itself in the city and expanding rapidly. Matters came to a head following the 1989 "Partnership Meeting" held in Freetown between American AOG and Sierra Leone AOG. Its aim was to discuss the delays in the Task Force Crusade for Sierra Leone caused by the Jimmy Swaggart scandal and to organise a new team, led by veteran AOG evangelist Ben Tipton, for the Crusade now to take place in January 1990.³⁰ King disapproved of the Crusade. He believed that what was needed in Sierra Leone at this time was person-to-person evangelism, not a highly publicised extravaganza directed and orchestrated by Americans. In the ensuing squabble, resentment of American missionary attitudes, life-style, and control, and the Krio's deep-rooted fear of being swept out of their positions of influence by the rising flood of Provincials, both came to the surface.

Samuel Moses Konteh, Superintendent of the Western District Council of AOG Sierra Leone, himself a graduate of Evangel Bible College, invited the pastors to a New Year retreat to pray and "hang heads" (come to agreement and unity) before the start of the Freetown Stadium Crusade on Saturday 14th January 1990. All the pastors were expected to co-operate and participate in the campaign. King did not turn up. In the Sunday service prior to the week-long Crusade, he announced he would not stop anyone attending, but that at 5 p.m. on the Saturday he would be at the church and anyone who wanted to pray could come and join him. It was a trial of strength and a test of the congregation's loyalty. Only a handful turned up. The Stadium Crusade and the ongoing Tent Crusades at Fort Street, George Brook in Kissy, Kenema, Segbwema and Moyamba, resulted in increased membership all across the AOG churches and the formation of new congregations. It was generally acclaimed by AOG as a significant advance in their operations in Sierra Leone. On 23rd January, after the conclusion of the Stadium Crusade, Superintendent Konteh, who describes King as "a very good and strong pastor", wrote King asking him to come to his office for discussion with himself and Assistant Superintendent, Rev. Mrs. Frances Boiro. King refused

to come; instead he resigned and left Evangel with six followers, some of whom returned to the church shortly afterwards.

Pastor King, although "a man deeply loved", misjudged the mood of the increasingly non-Krio congregation and their desire, despite various conflicts and misunderstandings, to maintain their connection with the American HQ. Perhaps there would have been a different response following the American missionary exodus, after the April 1992 military coup, which provoked a very hostile reaction from the abandoned Freetown Christian community. Meantime, the older Krio members did not want another traumatic breakaway from an AOG church, and the newer non-Krio members were happy to have King replaced with a non-Krio. Missionaries Lawrence Lee and DeVane McGee interpreted King's resignation as Krio pride and unwillingness to come under authority, especially the authority of non-Krio Sierra Leoneans. The old core membership of Evangel Church is basically Krio, but now the under forty-five age group is very mixed, made up of Krio, Mende, Temne, Limba, Loko, Kono, Kissi and Koranko. According to one young member although the older folk still resent being led by non-Krio, God is breaking down ethnic prejudices and the various groups within the church are gradually perceiving themselves as one body. ³¹ The present situation at Evangel will be looked at in the final overview of the Freetown AOG churches.

Before Bethel Temple's break with AOG in 1983, and the further proliferation of new Pentecostal-evangelical churches in the latter half of the 1980s, the main Pentecostal-evangelical churches operating in Freetown outwith AOG control were; God is Our Light, an indigenous movement with roots in Ghana; the National Pentecostal Limba Church which broke from AOG in January 1969; Christians in Action, an American Charismatic Movement mission which came originally to Freetown as a para-church movement, also in January 1969; and Christ Apostolic Church, the Nigerian Aladura church whose early history has already been considered and which established a branch in Freetown in 1970. Each of these four Pentecostal-evangelical churches will be surveyed in turn.

GOD IS OUR LIGHT CHURCH

God is Our Light Church was founded by Joseph Stanford Coomson of Narkwa, Ghana, at Takoradi in 1933.³² As a result of reading a tract entitled *The Prince of the House of David*, Coomson and some Methodist friends concluded that the Pentecostal experience of Holy Spirit baptism could be theirs also. On 13th October 1933, after several days of Bible study, fasting and praying, the group, which included Isaac Kweku Barnes, an officer at the Takoradi Government Railway Signals Station, were baptised in the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues. A "strange man" from Liberia, who briefly joined the group, uttered a divine revelation that the church was to be named God is Our Light. The new church took root and established branches. In 1942, James Ngebuva Kajue, a Mende Roman Catholic serving in the Sierra Leone Royal Naval Volunteer Force was transferred to the Takoradi station. He was befriended by Barnes who invited him to his church several times. On Palm Sunday 1943, Kajue eventually accepted the invitation. During the service he was baptised in the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues. Another Sierra Leonean, Robert Sesay, was posted to Takoradi in 1944. Kajue took him along to the church and he was also baptised in the Holy Spirit. In 1945 Kajue and Sesay returned to Freetown, having been encouraged to plant a God is Our Light Pentecostal church in Sierra Leone. They were probably unaware then of the long existence of the Kru AOG Church in Freetown and that a Temne AOG church had just recently been organised. However, if the tenuous Gold Coast connection is overlooked, this is the first indigenous Pentecostal-evangelical church to be established in Sierra Leone. The Kissi Pentecostal church in Koindu would not be inaugurated until a decade later. While in Freetown, God is Our Light was basically a Mende Pentecostal-evangelical church, its greatest expansion was to be among the Kono in Konoland.

The first converts in Freetown were Joseph Kai, Ernest Kandaneh, John Tetangi and Moses Davies. Davies, a soldier, provided a large room at New England Ville where the new congregation could meet. One of the more prominent features of their worship was seeking

and bringing forth divine revelations. Their revelatory and Pentecostal worship quickly attracted members and baptisms in the Holy Spirit took place. Before long they needed more space. Mami Johnson offered her open yard at 37 Macdonald Street. With the approach of the rainy season a "pan-bodi" church was erected. It was dedicated on 25th July 1945. Primate Fofana of Church of Salvation worshipped with them for a period in 1946. After days of fasting and praying he had an ecstatic pneumatic experience in which he gave out utterances in tongues and predicted the future. He pointed out witches among the congregation. His clairvoyant ability attracted many and, believing he was the prophet of God the church had been praying for, he left his job and became a full-time minister. Fofana insisted the congregation stand when he entered the church. Kajue objected saying Fofana was equating himself with God. Fofana suggested offering animal sacrifices arguing that this was an Old Testament practice, but this was refused.³³ Rejected and driven out by the church, Fofana departed for Bo and eventually started his own Church of Salvation in which animal sacrifice occupied a prominent position. In March and April 1947 Adejobi visited the Madonald Street church, but the Adejobis and God is Our Light were not doctrinally compatible and no union took place. One of the early members was Albert Margai, a Mende Roman Catholic like Kajue, who became Prime Minister in 1964. Having become reasonably well established as a congregation, the Freetown God is Our Light Church became isolationist, defensive and inward looking. No further growth took place in Freetown.

The expansion of the church into the provinces moved along the lines of migration for workers leaving Freetown in the post-War period seeking employment and fortune in the mining areas, particularly the Kono diamond fields. Attempts by Robert and Frank Mattia to establish a church among the Mende of Moyamba District failed, mainly because of the church's strong line against *Poru* activities. In Kono a huge influx of migrants, and the disturbance of the traditional work patterns as a result of mining operations, was causing considerable social upheaval and change. Here God is Our Light took root. Mami Lucia moved to Koangor in Gbane Chiefdom in 1952. Aiah Morsay and others welcomed the

Pentecostal form of worship. Lebbie Finoh of Kanekor and Tamba Tumbay of Komende strengthened the group, as did the arrival of Sam Kongomanyi, a police sergeant from Freetown. They evangelised and planted churches in their own localities and among their own families. Kongomanyi, who became the leading evangelist and preacher, pastored the church planted at Gandorhun. The Gbane churches outreached into the neighbouring Soa Chiefdom and beyond. Churches were started as far north as Bankanbaya and Kayima. By 1957, at the same time as the AOG Pentecostals under Moses Fayiah were expanding in Koidu, eighteen branches of God is Our Light had been established in Soa Chiefdom with the Sandayma church the nerve-centre.

A branch was also started at this time in Yengema in Nimikoro Chiefdom by Willie Nanoh, a migrant barber from Sanders Street and a Freetown member. Moses Davies, who migrated to Motema, established a branch there and became the driving force behind the expansion of the new church in that area. God is Our Light was introduced to Koidu town, the District Headquarters, by Genet Davies, Moses Davies's wife, who started a branch in her family home at 15 Gbongbor Street, Koidu, in 1955, and put it under the care of her mother, Borfemba Gbundema. Mami Lucia began another group at 13 Gbongbor Street and, as it grew, the group at number 15 joined them. With numbers increasing, Mani Kellie offered his house on Gbongbor Street for worship until a proper church could be built. Kellie became the leader of the group and Kai H. Lebbie was secretary and preacher. Work was begun on a building at Council Road, Lower Vaama. In the 1961 pre-independence political struggles, Lebbie was imprisoned and died shortly afterwards. A. S. Boima took over as secretary and preacher while Kellie remained overseer. The church was dedicated in 1962. God is Our Light arrived in Kono along the migration lines and spread along the family network lines.

The strictly evangelical stance adopted by God is Our Light caused them to be perceived as a contra-culture group. They regarded indigenous secret societies as being Satanic. When members of the church refused to enter the sacred bush, not only was a vacuum created in

the local religio-political organisation, but their secrets came under threat of exposure. The Kono traditionalists resisted such an attack on their ancient and sacred institution and decided to purge the area of a contaminating poison. Persecution broke out at Sandayama in Soa Chiefdom in November 1957. All men were summoned to the *Poru* bush to discuss the forthcoming initiations. The God is Our Light people refused. Some of the young *Poru* men went to the church and destroyed the drums and *shegureh*. The church were accused of discussing society secrets in their meetings and the paramount chief ordered an investigation. By tradition all society matters had to be discussed in the sacred bush. The Christians again refused to enter. Native Administration policemen came from Kainkordu, the chiefdom headquarters, to arrest the five church leaders, including Aiah Kamanda and Sahr Ngegba. They were imprisoned, beaten and given hard labour. News of the persecutions at Sandayama spread, and Moses Davies, Kai Lebbie, Lebbie Finoh, Aiah Morsay, Kongomanyi and other church leaders from Gbane, Nimikoro, and Koidu, protested. Yaryah Gbakiwa, the Court Chairman, slapped Komba Thomas of Gahun in the face and had some church representatives briefly imprisoned. However, the Court agreed to release the prisoners on condition they attended a society trial in the *Poru* bush at Sandayma. The traditionalists considered this a necessary condition for maintaining their prestige in the face of the new threat to their authority. The Christians refused, and the case went forward to the British District Commissioner in Koidu. He referred the case to the Council of Paramount Chiefs, the highest traditional court. The chiefs offered a compromise on condition that the accused attend the bush trial. They again refused. The chiefs remained in Sandayma several days appealing to the Christians to be reasonable, but without success. They felt dishonoured, and in their report to the District Commissioner they strongly condemned the Christians. The District Commissioner sent three policemen to Sandayama to order the accused to attend the bush court, but again they refused. White District Officers were sent, but the Christians were adamant. A Commission of Enquiry was set up at Kainkordu. The results of their investigations were reported to a gathering of chiefs and church people. The British official heading the enquiry made it clear that the Christians were not obliged to enter

the *Poru* bush and must be left alone to practise their religion. He asked church members to respect the chiefs and apologise to them. They refused to apologise. On being released, the five accused moved from Sandayama in Soa chiefdom to Senjekor in Gbane chiefdom.

Aiah Kamanda and Sahr Ngebga felt it safe enough to return home in mid-1959. The numbers attending the church had declined considerably in their absence. When Kamanda and Ngebga arrived at Sandayama, the chiefs complained to the Koidu police that outlaws had come to cause disorder. Kamanda and Ngebga were arrested and imprisoned in Koidu. At their trial, the Sandayama chiefs and their court chairman, Yaryah Gbakiwa, claimed to have been present when Kamanda exposed the ordeals of the society initiation rite to male and female non-initiates. Gbakiwa accused the church of disclosing the process of childbirth to small boys and girls, and of making their drums from the stomach skin of pregnant women. He demanded other church members be arrested. The magistrate pronounced the accusations fabrications aimed at suppressing freedom of worship, and acquitted the accused.³⁴ Kamanda and Ngebga, however, realised they could not return to Sandayama and settled in Koidu, and joined the Gbongbor Street congregation. In Soa chiefdom the remaining members were severely persecuted, accusations against them were upheld in the court and they were severely penalised by Yaryah Gbakiwa. Their houses and farms were put on fire. Some abandoned their faith and the rest fled the area. By the end of 1961, none of the eighteen God is Our Light congregations in Soa chiefdom had survived.

In Gbane chiefdom the wave of persecution broke upon the church in 1964. By then there were God is Our Light groups meeting in over fifteen villages and towns. Parsons, in his 1964 study, *Religion in an African Society*, quotes a missionary who had come in contact with some God is Our Light families:

They have come to know Jesus Christ and have found him a satisfying dynamic. As I visited with the group ... it was easy to see that what they talked about, they believed in and it was making a difference in their lives. They were happy.³⁵

Parsons considered that:

The vitality of this group seems to surpass the witness of the other Christian forces that preceded them in this area by many years.... They give evidence of being a very sincere group of Christians.³⁶

Kongomanyi at Gandohun headed the Gbane churches. He and his Gbane colleagues, Aiah Morsay of Koangor, Lebbie Finoh of Kanekor, and Tamba Tumbay of Komende, adopted an uncompromising stance on society and other indigenous practices. Tensions between the traditionalists and the Christians gradually deepened, eventually reaching breaking point on 18th February 1964 when Kumba Gbatta, the daughter of a Komende church member, was dragged into the *Bundu* bush. The mother, Kumba Yiima, raised the alarm and the church members demanded that the girl be returned. The society refused to give her up. Police officers from Tankoro were called to help. They entered the *Bundu* bush and removed the girl who had already been circumcised. The *Bundu* leaders were arrested and charged with the crime of wounding a small girl. Afterwards the Section Chief of the Gandohun area and the Town Chief complained in writing to Paramount Chief Sam Nyandemoquee III about the anti-social attitude of God is Our Light Church:

This church has stood against our ancient Poro and Bondo Societies. The Protestant Church, RC and the Muslim religion all accept these societies and respect them from the beginning of the World. We cannot accept any Church who will stand against these societies hence we say that we no longer want this church in this town and in the chieftdom as a whole.

The members of this church are guilty of adultery, fornication and all evils. They keep girls below age as wives. e.g. S. D. Kongomanyi the Leader of this Church at one time kept one little girl as wife, (had sexual connection with her) explained the Poro Society to her and also explained the Bondo Society to that little girl.³⁷

Nyandemoquee wrote a letter, dated 24th February, to all Paramount Chiefs, the District Officer, Chief Police Officer, and all Court Presidents. It was headed, "DEGRADING OF DIGNITY OF NATIVE TRADITION AND CUSTOM" and read:

My Good Friends,

With regret to appeal to you all that the imported Local "(GOD IS OUR LIGHT CHURCH") introduced in the Kono District have disgraced our traditional Native Custom i.e. That they went to the Bondo Bush and took off a newly initiated Bondo girl with the assistance of the police without consulting me as a Paramount Chief of the Chieftdom. This initiated girl was taken away by them on the day she was initiated and stayed with them for 5 days at Tankoro Police Station which by our tradition no man is allowed to see such sacred people until they are released by the initiators (Sokor).

I therefore appeal to you all the Chiefs to advice me as what to do as the case is now committed to the Magistrate Court for hearing on the 6th of March, 1964.

This tradition has been our Old (Custom) I therefore put it before you the Chiefs to advise what to do.

Your Good Friend.
*P. C. Nyandemoquee III.*³⁸

George W. Mani, the regional Member of Parliament, complained to the Chief Police Officer of Kono District about the "disgraceful" action of his officers:

A certain faction or group of persons belonging to an unrecognised church with the assistance of some police officers from Tankoro police post ... much to the dismay and disgust of the inhabitants of Komende village and without prior consultation of the Paramount Chief and Tribal Authorities of Gbane Chiefdom, pounced upon, ransacked a bondo society bush and carried out a newly initiated girl.... I intend to take this matter up in constitutional way and also to inform the Prime Minister and all other Authorities concerned.³⁹

Because of insufficient evidence the magistrate dismissed the case, ordering that it be locally and peacefully settled. Such was the scandal involved that neither child, mother, or the *Bundu* women, would make a case either in prosecution or defence. Despite the ruling, Nyandemoquee and his chiefs stirred up trouble for the "imported" church, and from all over Gbane chiefdom complaints were lodged against them with the District Officer.

The accusations were in the main that the church members contravened *Poro* and *Bundu* rules which were condoned by the established churches. They revealed society secrets to uninitiated boys and girls. They laughed at society activities, calling them the work of Satan. They refused to offer traditional sacrifices to the ancestors, and the spirits of the mountains, rivers and forests, and were thus the cause of low yields from the rice farms. They rejected all medicines, traditional and modern, and this contributed to the high mortality rate in the area. Not all these accusations were false or groundless. Certain immorality accusations levelled against the church leader Kongomanyi turned out to be true. His reputation for sexual immorality severely tarnished the reputation of the Kono church. In the late 60s this champion of Pentecostal-evangelicalism in the Gbane chiefdom, and crusader against many indigenous practices, abandoned his Christian faith. He died a miserable drunkard and beggar.⁴⁰ Despite all their persecutions and troubles, by 1978 more than twenty God is Our Light branches were established, making Gbane Chiefdom the "stronghold of the church".⁴¹ At this time, the external persecutions having subsided, bitter infighting began over control,

finances, and the ownership of church buildings. This has seriously hindered subsequent growth and development in the Kono church. The internal conflicts continued throughout the 70s and only began to be resolved after 1983. It was not until 1988 that these acrimonious disputes finally ceased. The more recent expansion of God is Our Light in the provinces has not matched that of the Spiritual churches, Church of the Lord (Aladura) and Church of Salvation, nor the Pentecostal-evangelical AOG churches. Two of the present Kono leaders are Pa Kanje and Tamba Bockarie. The elderly Kanje has been a highly successful itinerating evangelist, but is now confined to the Koangor church in Gbane. Bockarie was an illiterate motor mechanic. He prayed that God would teach him to read and preach the Bible. Before long he was able to read. It is claimed he received lessons in dreams. He left his job and became a very popular itinerant preacher, Bible teacher and Gospel singer. Jacob Kajor is another popular itinerant preacher. None of them receive a salary from the church.

In Freetown, the death in 1963 of Mami Johnson, who owned the Macdonald Street property, heralded a time of troubles. Her son ordered the church out of the compound. The church fragmented with small groups meeting in different homes. Members began to drift away to other Pentecostal churches. Prime Minister Albert Margai came to their rescue and they were granted a lease on Government land at Mereweather Street (Jomo Kenyatta Road) on which to build a church. The building was completed in 1968 and is the only God is Our Light church in the Western Area. Attempts were made to establish branches at Goderich and Waterloo, but without success. In 1978 a split took place when Deputy National Overseer Sesay, supported by Brother Hastings his assistant, accused the National Overseer and founder, James Kajue, of condoning the misappropriation of church funds by the treasurer K. M. Mattia. They also accused Kajue of adultery by taking as wife another man's wife. The Sesay faction broke away to found the Christ Redemption Church. Three years later Brother Hazely broke away to start a small church on Fergusson Lane called Redemption Church. Neither of these churches were listed in the 1990 Freetown Church Survey. A God is Our Light branch was started at Mount Aureol (Harry Sawyerr Hill) on the FBC campus in 1982 by

Joseph Kanu, a lecturer in the Engineering Department. This branch survived until Kanu left for further studies in Britain in 1985. Following his return to FBC in 1991, the group was resuscitated as a prayer fellowship. The lack of expansion by the Freetown God is Our Light Church has been attributed, among other causes, to the conservative and defensive attitude of the Freetown leadership. One of the early revelations which encouraged inwardness in the Freetown congregation was, "Don't mingle with the rest of the world."⁴² This developed into an entrenched attitude of "if you are not for us you must be against us". The Mende are reputedly a naturally inward group and especially so in Freetown.⁴³ The 1990 membership was given as 300. On average around 250 attend Sunday morning service, the majority being Mende from the lower income groups. Some Kono, Krio, Loko and Limba also attend. The language used is mainly Krio with some Mende translation. Sometimes Ghanaian songs are sung. Like the Spiritual churches, God is Our Light have difficulties in retaining younger members. Visitors who attend seeking solutions to their problems through revelations from the prophet-elders, normally disappear when the problems, usually concerned with sickness, witchcraft and domestic difficulties, are solved.

While God is Our Light is contra-culture in respect of secret society practices, and society involvement is taboo for church members, in respect of sex and marriage they reinforce indigenous custom. Adultery, like society involvement, is taboo. Polygyny is preferable to monogamy with adulterous relationships. Those who cannot contain themselves with only one wife are encouraged to live within a plural wife system. While this may have contributed to a certain degree of social acceptance in Kono District, it has proved a source of embarrassment to the Freetown church in recent years, and is one of the main reasons for the church's ecumenical isolation. Much of this isolation has been self-imposed and defensive. Although the constitution of the church affirms belief in "the Christian marriage of one man, one wife", the leadership have always refused to make a formal commitment to monogamy. Kandeh, typical of the young leadership, wrestles with this problem:

In recent years the issue of polygyny has loomed large in every discussion of enlightened people of the church. It has constituted a problem in the church. How is polygyny to be discouraged when almost all the elders of the church are polygynists? Should it be accepted that these people divorce their extra wives? If accepted, will this not lead to another social crisis in the church?⁴⁴

For all important aspects of members' lives such as education, employment, and marriage, divine revelations are sought by the leaders through prayer and fasting, but not with the struggles, such as rolling, or the means, like candles, used by the Spiritual church prophets in their divine enquiries. In recent years the rule that marriages had to receive revelatory approval from Ghana has not been observed. This, however, has led to couples, whose proposed marriages have not received local leadership approval, ignoring the prohibition and accusing the church leaders of prejudice. As a result, the custom of making marriage enquiries is gradually dying out. Members' dreams and visions used to be written down and sent to Ghana for interpretation. This practice is now discontinued and Joseph Kai, one of the original Freetown converts, who is dumb, writes down his own revealed interpretations.

The church's attitude to medicines, indigenous and modern, corresponds to that of the Spirituals; both are prohibited, as are visits to medicine-men, fetish priests, *mori* and *alpha*. However, there is no substitution of traditional medicines and charms with holy water and holy Christian objects. According to Kandeh:

In sickness and any form of human affliction, the power of the Holy Spirit is relied on as the source of deliverance and consolation.... Faith in the power of God is the key to healing.⁴⁵

The early position was extreme. To take children to hospital was to display lack of faith. Several children died of measles, both in Freetown and the Provinces, and many branded the church as witches. Coomson came to Sierra Leone in the early 1970s to encourage the church to adopt a more rational approach to modern medicine. With the Spiritual prophets' use of "means" and animal sacrifices in mind, and aware that many associate God is Our Light Church with the Spiritual churches, Kandeh writes:

The Church further observes no form of sacrifice as it accepts Jesus Christ as the final and worthy sacrifice. The old covenant is obsolete (ref. Hebrews 8:12-13) and has been ratified by the new covenant which is sealed by the blood of Jesus Christ.

The use of incense and candles in worship is not accepted as there is no medium between man and the Lord Jesus Christ. In essence, worship is not ritualistic.⁴⁶

Kandeh makes no mention of the fact that many in the church continue to offer rice sacrifices to the ancestral spirits.

Shoes are removed on entering the church which, as in the Spiritual churches, is regarded as a holy temple. Painted on the altar wall is the Habakkuk 2:20 text, "But the Lord is in His Holy Temple, let all the earth keep silence before Him". Since, as in Freetown mosques and Spiritual churches, there is a problem of worshippers' shoes being stolen, most take their shoes into the church and put them under their seats. The sexes are segregated, women sit on the left and men on the right. Because of pressure for seating space, some women sit on the men's side at the front and the children sit with the women and around the sides. Most women wear simple head-squares - indicating the low income status of the congregation - and a good number of young women have their babies (*pikin*) strapped to their backs. Incense is burned, not just to drive away evil spirits, but to help the room, with 250 men, women and children squeezed in, to smell nice. A banner, "WELCOME JESUS LOVES YOU", displays the modern and evangelical faith of the church. On the altar wall are two paintings, one with Jesus on the Cross and the other with Jesus, arms outstretched, inviting all to come. The service begins with a Thanksgiving Prayer. Other spontaneous prayers follow, interspersed with singing, clapping, dancing, inspirational drumming and shegureh shaking. The prayers deal with obtaining spiritual power, forgiveness for sins, and help for the sick, the dying, pregnant women and the unemployed. They are punctuated with Pentecostal interjections of "Hallelujah!" and "Praise the Lord!" A popular prayer, since the Bonnke Crusade, is for a "Stadium revival" with signs and wonders. Another is for the confusion of *Poro* societies, Hunting societies, and Masonic Lodges, all of which are "evil".

Popular Charismatic Movement choruses are sung in English; for example "Who is like unto Thee, among the gods who is like unto Thee", "I'm glad I belong to Jesus", "There is joy, joy, joy, in the presence of the Lord", and "I've got my liberty". Some of Sankey's **Sacred Songs**

and Solos lie around, but are never used. The few Krio choruses and local compositions are popular. The drumming and shegureh shaking increase in tempo as the worship progresses, becoming intoxicatingly rhythmic and loud. In the heady atmosphere people begin to dance and move around, and some women begin to mildly convulsive - a sign of possession common in the Spiritual churches. Some release high pitched shrieks. During a fairly typical service one large lady danced into the elders' box and convulsed while the prayer leader, unperturbed, prayed for "the country", "multi-party system", and "the education system". Eventually, as the inspired lady flailed about in the box and several elders attempted to calm her down, an exhorter called on the congregation to "speak in tongues" as this was the Last Days outpouring of the Holy Spirit and, "The power of God is moving!"

As the worship session intensifies, dancing and the infilling of the Spirit become the primary concerns. An elder selects the ladies who are being filled with the Spirit for dancing in the front area. Young men come out and dance in a warrior ring around the dancing women. Some of the inspired women make their way into the elders' box, lay hands on the elders and prophesy over them. After this somewhat turbulent period of seeking and experiencing the Holy Spirit, the worship reverts once more to happy chorus singing; "Let's forget about ourselves and worship Him", "Sing to the Father", "Darling Jesus, you are a wonderful man", and the highly popular "Jehovah Rapha". At this point the men regain the dominant role, and like victorious warriors they dance energetically with arms raised and hands waving. One old man prances forward with his hands stretched in front, fingers twitching, smiling benignly. Another grunts and bellows spontaneously, and while laying on of hands, shouts out in sudden bursts, "Hurri ri ri!", "Burri ri ri!", or merely, "Hurri!", or "Burri!". Another walks up and down with an exaggerated seaman's gait. A woman, with arms extended by her head like the horns of a cow, walks into the elders' box, circles around, then returns to her place and kneels in prayer in the aisle. These manifestations appear more like earlier pneumatic experiences being re-enacted than presently inspired actions; pneumatic responses which have become the individual's spiritual trade-mark. The rest of the service proceeds more or

less according to plan. The offering, mainly crumpled low currency notes, is cheerfully given by dancing up to the front and depositing the money into baskets. £10 constitutes a very large collection. The announcements follow. Such is the volatile nature of the pneumatic worship, however, that uncontrollable spirit possession can occur at any time, even during the announcements. Young women may shriek and shake violently. At this stage some older ladies will usher them into the vestry to calm them down. The sermon is normally in Krio, but is sometimes translated into Mende for the old women who cannot speak Krio. Frequently some entertainment is provided such as singing, poetry or a Bible drama. The service ends with another bout of praise worship, dancing and arm waving. There is no set time to stop. The service ends when the Holy Spirit has been fully experienced and all the business of the day has been concluded.

There is a growing belief, especially among the more educated members, that the Holy Spirit is gentle and peaceful and that when people collapse in the service it is evidence that an evil spirit, a witch spirit or a *jinna*, is trying to get out or is resisting expulsion.⁴⁷ Pa Kai increasingly exercises the *charisma* of discerning of spirits, and he confirms if a pneumatic experience is the Holy Spirit or not. If a witch-spirit is discerned the possessed must first confess or the exorcism prayer will not be effective. Ancestral spirits are believed not to be harmful and many continue to offer rice sacrifices to them if they are commanded to do so in a dream. According to Dr. Kanu "the enlightened few" are teaching that this is un-Scriptural and the trend towards abandoning the practice altogether is "going on and growing".⁴⁸ Despite the firm line taken against indigenous societies, especially in the early period, most members, because of family ties, find it impossible to make a total break with society association and involvement. However, the power of indigenous societies and the ancestor cult to control the lives of church members is now gradually weakening.

One of the major hindrances to church growth has been the leadership's own dependence on divine revelations before any action or innovation can be initiated. However, in God is Our

Light, seeking revelations and outworking their instructions is a much more restrained and restricted exercise than in the Spiritual churches as there is a serious attempt to test all revelations by Scripture. Progressive action was further limited by the practice of sending all major revelations and initiatives to Ghana for Primate Coomson's judgement. By the time mail reached Coomson, and he received his own revelation from God and replied, the issues had often cooled off and circumstances had changed. Thus the church in Freetown had, despite its Pentecostal dynamism in worship, a gravitational pull towards conservatism and stagnation which was absent from the practically autonomous Kono section of the church. Since Coomson's death in 1976 there has been less dependence on the Ghana HQ, but by this time the leadership had become complacent and set in its ways, with an entrenched resistance to any radical change. The authoritarianism of the elders inhibited the development of young, spiritually-minded, potential leaders. They were not allowed to hold prayer meetings in their homes and had always to approach the elders for spiritual enquiries before taking any actions. Initiative and innovation was stifled. One of the few younger men to overcome these difficulties was Daniel Josiah, a charismatic healing-evangelist who held healing revivals both in Freetown and the Provinces. Mainly through his efforts the church experienced some reviving during the 1980s.

While the church lays great emphasis on the Bible and the evangelical doctrines, the literacy level even among the leadership is generally low. Only recently have the elders realised that one could have both water baptism and the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Isolated from other churches, they believed a choice had to be made between one or the other, and they chose baptism in the Holy Spirit. According to Kandeh, "The God is Our Light Church depends entirely on the Bible as a source of authority, power and doctrines, without any reference to Church history and theology."⁴⁹ This is now changing in Freetown, where Dr. Kanu has returned to work at FBC, and Stephen Kandeh has completed an MA degree in history. However, these younger, literate leaders are experiencing frustration and conservative resistance in their attempts to move the church forward. Through the above shortcomings

this self-contained, Mende Pentecostal-evangelical church has not been able to expand and fulfil its dynamic potential even among the Freetown Mende. Presently, however, the church is bursting at the seams on Sunday mornings. Work on an extension has begun, the foundation has been laid, but progress is slow as the church is extremely poor and has to struggle with no outside support. As they can afford it, bags of cement and iron reinforcing rods are purchased, and the work is carried out by the church members. They at least obtain some satisfaction in the fact that it is all their own work.

THE NATIONAL PENTECOSTAL LIMBA CHURCH

The history of the Limba AOG Church has been recorded up to the break with AOG at the end of 1968 over the Daniel Konteh affair.⁵⁰ Rather than face disciplinary action by the AOG General Council in January 1969 over one illegitimate child and the rumour of another on the way, Konteh took his four Limba congregations out of AOG, and supported by AOG National Superintendent Simon Grant, who followed him with the Kru Church, he inaugurated the National Pentecostal Mission. The Kru Church returned to AOG following Grant's death in 1972. According to Pastor Jones, who was disappointed with Grant's handling of the Konteh affair, Grant had a good ministry early on, but latterly it had "not amounted to much",⁵¹ Konteh's major project after breaking with AOG was the construction of a new church on Circular Road for the Loko congregation who had also followed him. Daniel Konteh, the founding father of the Limba Pentecostals, died on 2nd April 1975 at the age of fifty, having successfully pioneered the Pentecostal-evangelical movement among his Limba people. He was buried on 6th April at Ascension Town Cemetery. The National Pentecostal Limba Church deliberately ignore the Konteh affair and explain the reason for their secession as AOG's unwillingness to fund a school building on the Fort Street compound.⁵² Konteh's decease was a severe blow to the National Pentecostal Mission who were now struggling without external support. The King Street Loko Pentecostals, whose church at Circular Road

had just been completed, now broke with the Limba administration and moved over to the Baptist Convention.⁵³ Daniel Konteh's place as head of the Limba Pentecostals and what remained of the National Pentecostal Mission was taken by his assistant Bankole Sesay, pastor of the Fourah Bay branch. The National Pentecostal Limba Church's own brief historical survey records:

After Daniel Konteh's death, we thought he left us at a time we needed him most, not knowing that God has a plan for us and ready to wipe away the tears from our eyes and to smooth our sorrows. Thus He sent us a man, a man who had made a name for himself, a man who puts his pastoral work first, a man who is gifted and loved by all in the mission, that man was pastor Bankole Sesay. He took control of the National Pentecostal Mission on 1st June, 1975. Since then, pastor Bankole Sesay did not leave a stone unturned. He pressed forward and moved to the challenges ahead with zeal and determination assisted by his deputy S. A. Kemoi. Thus they were able to succeed in life through their relentless efforts.

In 1976 Sampa Sesay of the AOG Limba, who met at the West African Methodist Church on Wellington Street, took the National Pentecostal Mission court over ownership of the church and land at Fort Street. Prime Minister C. A. Kamara-Taylor decided to intervene and put an end to the acrimonious dispute. He brought the matter to the attention of President Stevens who had attended the grand opening of the Fort Street church in 1963 and had been a friend of Daniel Konteh. In an audience with both parties Stevens advised them to withdraw the case from the courts and come to an amicable solution. He promised Sampa Sesay that his Limba faction would be given assistance to build their own church.⁵⁴ Work was begun on land at Bass Street and in 1983 the Faith AOG Church was opened, having a mainly Limba congregation. The National Pentecostal Limba Church continued to expand under Bankole Sesay's steady leadership and branches were opened at Nicol Terrace, Lumley, Malimba Town in Kissy, Wellington, Benguema, and Newton. Church buildings were erected with no outside help. In the Provinces, churches were built at Lungi, Makeni, Tongo Limba in Kambia, and also at Bo, Kenema and Kono where they attracted mainly Limba migrants, but also drew in some Mende, Kono, Mandinka and Fula.

While the Limba Pentecostal Church maintains the AOG prohibition on baptising polygamists and giving them a ministerial position in the church, under the paramount chief type of leadership exercised by Bankole Sesay polygamy is allowed.⁵⁵ According to Russ Tatro of the Freetown Bible Training Centre, there are great problems of adultery in the church, but they are starting to face up to the situation and trying to establish some order.⁵⁶ While they prohibit society devils, even the popular Limba devil *Matoma*, from coming out at church functions such as marriages and funerals, they are generally non-confrontational *vis a vis* traditional Limba culture. According to District Council Secretary T. A. Koroma:

Traditionally we do not really go against our traditional beliefs, but we try to preach according to the Bible that when once you become a born-again Christian you should put aside so many of these things.⁵⁷

This was not the case with the early Limba AOG Pentecostals. Daniel Konteh used to demand the public burning of charms and fetish before baptism services, but this practice has not been continued.⁵⁸ The church's greatest pastoral involvement lies in the areas of deliverance from witchcraft attacks, evil spirits and enemy curses. Its role as a dynamic community of protective power attracts many members. They reject the notion that they are a Spiritual church by pointing out that they do not burn candles or incense, use holy water or sacrifice, and they do not remove shoes before entering the church.⁵⁹ While they emphasise the importance of prayer, it is prayer in the normal evangelical tradition without the struggles of the Spiritual churches. However, they also stress the spiritual strength fasting generates. Every day there are meetings for prayer at the church. Each church has a Men's and a Women's Prayer Fellowship which meet separately each week and also meet together on Wednesdays. Being Pentecostal they strongly believe in and actively seek, through prayer and fasting, the Baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues.

Worship in the Limba Pentecostal church on Fort Street is lively, colourful; a blending of indigenous worship and their American AOG heritage. Men, dressed mostly in white shirts and blue or black slacks, sit on the right side and women, in colourful native dress, sit on the left. The American AOG influence is in evidence in various ways, from the official titles used

for the leaders to the black mortar-boards worn by the white robed choir, and the snow-capped, pine-forested Rocky Mountain painting on the alcove wall behind the pulpit. There is a very ornate altar rail and beautifully carved pulpit. The fatherly figure of Bankole Sesay, dressed in a scarlet robe with a sky-blue trim, sits as a paramount chief in a large throne-like chair. Limba versions of popular Pentecostal hymns such as "Amazing Grace", "Blessed Assurance" or "Showers of Blessing" are enthusiastically sung even though the words do not quite fit the tune. Even more lively worship breaks out when Limba songs are sung, accompanied by native drums, shegureh and clapping. The open prayer time produces strong, inspired praying, particularly from Mrs. Bankole Sesay whose prayers are full of references to Jesus of Nazareth and *Kanu Masala* (God). Limba and Krio are both spoken in the church. The message is usually in Krio and translated into Limba. While this helps non-Limba, it hinders inspiration and spontaneity and it is noticeable that the whole atmosphere lights up when only Limba is used and especially when Limba songs are sung. Many of the Limba songs were composed by Sampa Sesay. Sesay's songs are reputedly filled with the Spirit and touch the heart of every sinner. Many claim to have been converted to Christ through these Limba songs.⁶⁰ The congregation, more native and grass-roots than Bethel Temple, sways to the rhythm. Some of the more modern English choruses such as "My hands are blessed with the blessing of the Lord", in which people reach out and lay hands on each other, and "Jesus the man", are sung with obvious pleasure. Like Bethel Temple the congregation dances out to the altar with their contributions, but in this very low-income church, the various fund-raising offerings take well over half an hour and often become the longest single component of the service. This section appears to be essentially communal entertainment within the tribal society framework. Services last from four to five hours, and this can be easily sustained because Sunday worship is a communal socio-religious event.

The church gives a total membership figure of 10,250. Fort Street, 1,400; Fourah Bay Road, 850; Congo Cross, 850; Kissy, 840; Wellington, 820; Lumley, 630; Nicol Terrace, 600; Malimba, 150; Benguema, 250; Newton, 200; Makeni, 1,000; Lungi (2 branches), 1,000; Bo,

900; Kono (4 branches), 500; Kambia, 350. These are very rough estimates. The combined membership of the eight Freetown churches comes to 6,140. A better indicator of the numerical strength of the National Pentecostal Limba Church in their eight Freetown churches is obtained from the numbers attending Sunday morning divine service. This averages around 2,300. The Fort Street and Fourah Bay Road churches draw the largest congregations, both averaging around 500. In 1990 the National Pentecostal Limba Church was the largest Pentecostal group in Freetown. Although still growing, thanks to the evangelistic efforts of the youth and the present openness of Limba society to Pentecostal Christianity, the impetus given to AOG by both the Task Force Evangelism Crusade and the Bonnke Crusade has now pushed AOG ahead in the numbers and growth rate league. However, the National Pentecostal Limba Church is expanding only among the Limba. Here their growth rate is outstanding as is also their sense of Christian and ethnic solidarity.

The Limba have a strong sense of ethnic identity. They like to live together in Limba areas in the city. There has been little encouragement for non-Limba to join the church, even though the Limba and Krio languages are used in the services. Limba girls are actively dissuaded from marrying non-Limba.⁶¹ As the Limba income level is low, a major attraction of church membership is participation in the Death Benefit Fund. The church undertakes all funeral arrangements for paid-up members who have also kept up their tithe payments. The fund provides a coffin and wake-keeping and transport expenses. The youth organisation, Christ Ambassadors, invite non-Christians to their Thursday evening evangelistic meeting where the Salvation Youth Singers present the Gospel in song. Those who accept Christ are immediately enrolled into the Baptism class. Many Limba Muslim have been converted in this way and several hundred have been baptised at the Easter baptism services. Among the Limba, long resistant to Christianity and Islam, conversion and religious transfer is now fairly common. The church is presently attempting to broaden its ethnic base and draw in Temne, Loko, Mende and even Krio. Five Fula were baptised at a recent service. The church sees its major problem as finance, and would welcome international support for their

efforts to establish their own schools and clinics. They complain that although members of CCSL, and always asked to support seminars and crusades, they have not received any financial help. In 1992 their only full-time workers were the veterans Bankole Sesay, General Superintendent of the National Pentecostal Mission and pastor of Fort Street Church, and Siaka Kemoi, Deputy Superintendent and pastor of the Davies Street and Wellington churches. A new generation of Limba Pentecostal leaders is being trained at Theological Hall. The first to graduate was T. A. Koroma the District Council Secretary. The part-time pastors take evening classes at the Hall which is now close at hand since its move from Bishop's Court to Soldier Street in February 1990.⁶² The church anticipates continued expansion and a "bright future", particularly among the Limba.

CHRISTIANS IN ACTION

Christians in Action (CinA) is the church in Freetown that most closely resembles a Western Charismatic church. The first CinA missionary to Africa, David Hall from England, arrived in Freetown on 22nd January 1969. CinA, with HQ in Woodlake, California, was organised in September 1957 as a service for independent Pentecostal missionaries, latterly Charismatic, who needed home administrative support to remain on the field.⁶³ Like the first Pentecostal missionaries their original intention was to concentrate on personal evangelism, discipling believers and strengthening local churches.⁶⁴ They saw themselves as a para-church organisation. David Hall had worked for ten years in East Africa with the British-American Tobacco Company. After having a born-again experience of Christ in January 1965, he resigned from the Company and with a view to return to Africa, this time as a missionary, he entered the CinA training programme in London run by Elgin Taylor. Arriving in Freetown he was befriended by Methodist missionary Leslie Wallace who arranged for him to stay at a Methodist Church flat in the city centre. Here he met Brother Mattia, a leading elder in God is Our Light Church who was also working with the Methodists. Mattia partnered him in his

early street evangelism. After three months Hall rented a flat on the waterfront at Wallace Johnson Street and this became his base for personal evangelism, Bible studies and classes in evangelism. Two of the most loyal supporters of his ministry were Harold Deveneux and Violet Kissling of the Krio English-speaking Church. Meetings were held at Connaught Hospital and the Kissy Old People's Home. In January 1970, Philip Cheale arrived from London to help with the expanding ministry. Cheale became heavily involved in the Youth for Christ (YFC) Saturday evening rallies and in Scripture Union camps. CinA links with both these organisations have remained strong. The missionaries now moved to Murray Town.

In January 1971, in anticipation of a team of new missionaries arriving from America, a flat was rented at 15 Syke Street from Sir Ernest Morgan. The first American to arrive was Mrs. Caroline Rotz, a Black American in her sixties, who soon became known as "Aunti Caroline". She typified the CinA tradition of aggressive evangelism, making her first convert, Michael Ngaujah, in March. He in turn drew in Samuel Green. Hall and Cheale returned to England in April having laid the groundwork for the Americans. Cheale later returned to Freetown to manage the Christian Literature Crusade book-shop for eleven years. During this time the book-shop prospered and became a popular meeting place and mail collecting centre for up-country missionaries visiting Freetown.⁶⁵ Dorris Porter, a young Black-American with musical talent, arrived in August, and Donna Tolly, another single Black-American, came to Freetown two months later. Miss Porter continued Cheale's involvement with YFC, and organised and directed the highly popular YFC choir, the Gospel Youth Singers, which ministered in Freetown churches and beyond. The Saturday night YFC rallies at Zion Church, Wilberforce Street, attracted hundreds. The Gospel Youth Singers held their first Annual Musical in September 1972. Meantime, CinA continued with personal evangelism, discipling converts, and Bible studies. As the work developed the vision shifted towards church planting and leadership training. Sunday morning services were started at Syke Street in February 1972 in order to teach the growing number of Muslim converts. The preachers were usually Michael Ngaujah and Samuel Green, who were now attending Sierra

Leone Bible College (SLBC) at Jui, sponsored by Aunti Caroline. Another early CinA convert, through the preaching of Elgin Taylor and the discipling on Aunti Caroline, was Don Osman, a young Susu Muslim, who became active in evangelism and was a highly talented musician. He went on to study at SLBC (1975-78), then in America, before becoming National Director of Youth for Christ in 1986. Presently, Osman is YFC's West Africa director and a popular speaker and singer at Christian functions in the city. Abraham Sesay, also a Muslim, was another convert. In 1985 he became General Secretary of Scripture Union Sierra Leone. CinA influence and style has spread out through these men and their para-church organisations. Al Vescera arrived from America in March 1973 and in April the CinA National Training School was inaugurated offering a three months course in Basic Soul Winning. Sorie Kamara, who went on to pastor the large Wesleyan Church in Makeni until his untimely death in June 1981, and Abraham Sesay were among the first students. CinA have from the beginning exercised a much greater influence than their numbers would suggest. They have set high Christian standards and their highly motivated and well trained evangelists have gone on to work with other churches and para-church organisations.

A young men's singing group, Youth in Action, which included Don Osman and Sam Green, was formed in 1973. For three years they visited schools, churches and travelled on village evangelism. When New Life for All came to Sierra Leone late in 1973, CinA became heavily involved in a movement which was to become a vital force in the evangelisation of Freetown and other centres throughout 1974 and into 1975. Al Vescera was put in charge of personal evangelism training and Dorris Porter conducted the massed choir. 15 Syke Street became the centre for the production and distribution of literature. Early in 1974, as a result of a Gospel Youth Singers concert in Marampa, a CinA branch was started there. Jacob Amara and Moses Kanu were chosen to lead the work. Unfortunately the mines closed in 1975 and the community scattered. Some church members joined the Ebenezer Baptist Church in nearby Lunsar. Moses Kanu later became a Baptist minister. In August 1974, two more Black-American missionaries, Bertha Williams and Daisy Russell, arrived in Freetown. In

October, the Jamaican Brenda Browne joined the team. Miss Browne began a Children in Action ministry. A Bible correspondence course was developed and 15 Syke Street became a training centre for SLBC's Theological Education by Extension programme. After graduating from SLBC, Ngaujah left for California in January 1975 to complete his training. In the summer he married Dorris Porter who was home on furlough. They did not return to the field. Al Vescera was reassigned to HQ. Early in 1976 Caroline Rotz went on furlough. CinA HQ were uncomfortable with Aunti Caroline's policy of having young male nationals living in her compound. She did not return to Freetown, but went to Buchanan, Liberia with the Voice of Africa Mission. Alan and Donna Goerz from Alberta, Canada arrived in April to help the struggling missionary ladies during a period of crisis. They were 25 and 21 years old; Alan had a Christian and Missionary Alliance background and Donna was a Mennonite. The National Training School now awarded international credentials to its graduates, giving them the same status as the missionaries. The CinA sponsored students at SLBC were asked to transfer to the National Training School, but Osman and Kamara declined and sought ministries elsewhere. Only two students were continuing in the National Training School. In August Samuel Green married Bertha Williams. Afterwards they joined Rotz in Liberia. In September 1977 Ron and Yvonne Wiebe, Mennonites from Canada, joined the missionary team, and in a drastic change in mission policy all the single women missionaries were reassigned to either London or International HQ, and a tighter control on the distribution of the mission's meagre resources was established.

The Goerzes and the Wiebes were able to lead the young church out of a difficult period. Numbers enrolling for the Training School increased, and on 10th December 1977 a Bible study group, that had been going on for about a year in Saint Michael's School at Kissy Low Cost Housing, held its first Sunday morning service. The Wiebes took on the oversight of the new church. In 1989, a church building was erected at Thunderhill, just above Low Cost Housing. A church was started in Bo in August 1980, as a result of evangelism by a team led by John Bona, a convert by Alan Goerz in May 1976. Bona continued on in Bo as the pastor

of the new church, which met first at 97 Tikonko Road and then moved to 26, 10th Street, Njagboima in May 1981. In 1980, John Bona became the first ordained minister of CinA Sierra Leone. In 1982 two Sunday morning services had to be held at the Syke Street church, one at 9 and the other at 10:45, to cope with the growing numbers, and it became obvious that a new building was required. That year Bona, Raymond Attawia and Issa Kargbo, who worked with Bona at Bo, received international appointments with CinA International. In June 1984, Attawia took on the position of Senior Pastor of the Syke Street church as the Goerzes left on a two years study leave. Abdul Pessima graduated from the National Training School in August 1983 and Yatta Samura, one of Bona's converts, completed the Discipleship Training Course. In the same month, Bona and Claudius Davies left for African Bible College (ABC), Yekepa, Liberia, leaving Kargbo in charge at Bo. ABC's American bias and style caused problems and after eighteen months Bona and Davies returned to Freetown. Davies joined Scripture Union as Travelling Secretary for Southern Province. Bona returned to Yekepa the following year.

A Congregational style constitution - influenced by the missionaries' Mennonite and CMA background - was drawn up in September 1985. The constitution made provision for a Sierra Leone Conference of CinA churches. On 28th September, 17 delegates representing the three CinA churches met at the YMCA Hostel on Fort Street to launch the National Conference of CinA Sierra Leone Churches. Issa Kargbo was elected National Superintendent, missionary Wiebe, Deputy Superintendent, Raymond Attawia, Secretary, and Abdul Pessima, Treasurer. Pessima was ordained on 24th November. The missionary dominated Field Board was relegated to a minor role in CinA operations in Sierra Leone, maintaining control only over the National Training School. From early on, CinA had apprehended the vision of bringing into being independent, indigenous, self-supporting, self-propagating churches, but they had not developed a policy on the transfer of power. The fact that everything went reasonably smoothly has been attributed to the calibre of the trained

national leadership and the style and *modus operandi* of the Canadian missionaries.⁶⁶

According to Raymond Attawia:

Relations with the missionaries were harmonious. They lived with us and among us. We rubbed shoulders with each other. Even though there was a difference materially, it didn't really matter. We had our problems, but we got to know each other. We grew until the missionaries realised that we could do it for ourselves. We praise God for the Goerzes and the Wiebes.⁶⁷

Grass-roots, church planting missionaries were no longer required by CinA Sierra Leone. The scope of missionaries was to be restricted to specialist ministries in the areas of education, health and agriculture. Missionaries would now come at the request of the national church and operate and minister under their authority.

In 1985, Joshua Cummings-Wray graduated from the National Training School and Yatta Samura began a three years Diploma of Theology course at SLBC. The Goerzes returned to Freetown in June 1986. Three town lots on a disused quarry site at Thunderhill were purchased in February 1987 and fund-raising for a Kissy church started. In September, Attawia also enrolled at SLBC and at the end of the year Bona returned from ABC, Liberia, with an honours BA in Bible. In January 1988, Cummings-Wray was appointed senior pastor at Syke Street. Samura, who planned to work full-time on completing his SLBC course in June, was made assistant pastor. At the April 1988 National Conference, Bona replaced Kargbo as National Superintendent. When Elgin Taylor visited Freetown in August, Abdul Pessima received CinA international appointment. At that time CinA Sierra Leone had seven full-time workers, all evangelicals and Biblically trained, and the major Charismatic church in the country had a solid base for future growth under its national leadership. During his visit, Taylor laid the cornerstone of the new Kissy church at Thunderhill. In August, Kargbo left for ABC, Liberia, on a four years degree programme sponsored by Tear Fund. Unfortunately, this was to be terminated in 1990 by the outbreak of civil war. January 1989 marked twenty years of CinA work in Sierra Leone, and was celebrated by the dedication of the Thunderhill church pastored by Pessima. A new branch was opened at Aberdeen Village in February 1989, begun in typical CinA fashion a year earlier by Bona and Samura. First a home cell

had been started. This became a regular Bible study group. Then a church was organised. Bona, responding to a rising tide of criticism, stepped down as National Superintendent in May and was replaced by his deputy, Abdul Pessima. Pessima was re-elected in April 1990. The church planting pattern was repeated at Wellington by Raymond Attawia while doing his final and residential year on campus at Jui. In December 1989, he was able to organise a Wellington branch out of the mainly Mende Bible study group he had started. In January 1990, on its twenty-first birthday, CinA Sierra Leone consisted of five organised churches and a home cell Bible study group at Regent. They had a nucleus of eight well trained full-time ministers. Their growth had been slow, but the foundations for future expansion were soundly laid. Their future goals include a new church building for the Syke Street congregation on a plot of land purchased in March 1992 at 101 Pademba Road, and new church planting outreaches at Makeni and Kenema.

Since 1988 the church has become involved in the less directly spiritual "development" ministries. One of the reasons CinA was founded in 1957 was the belief that many missions had allowed social concern to replace their evangelistic ministries. They saw their role as taking up what had fallen by the wayside in other missions, personal evangelism, discipleship, leadership training and church planting. Although aware that development projects badly operated could sap spiritual strength, Alan Goerz had this to say in its favour:

We are not pushing development. As the nationals work alongside their brothers and sisters in the Lord they realise the strains this country is experiencing economically. There is a deteriorating education system and a deteriorating health system. How can they ignore these things and basically say, "We are going to feed you spiritually, but we don't care what happens to you in the other areas of your life." The national church is working towards helping each other. There seems to be no other way to say you are really concerned about a person's needs unless you are willing to address these needs which are so high a priority for the majority of people.⁶⁸

The Kissy church has piloted a very successful literacy school using a Southern Baptist programme. A number of Fula are attending and showing an interest in Christianity. A nursery school has been started and is also stimulating good-will for the church in the area. Working with Christian Extension Services, an income generating scheme has been

operating where small loans and training are provided in order to begin small-scale businesses like soap making and tie-dye manufacture. Contacts have also been made with World Vision. Evangelical social action has had a profound effect on British society and the spread of evangelical Christianity in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The CinA missionaries hope that this will be the case also in Sierra Leone and believe that in CinA, because of the evangelistic foundations that have been laid, evangelism and church planting will remain a priority. "It is priority in the mind of the leaders, especially Abdul Pessima and Raymond Attawia. Their heartbeat is in evangelism and church planting," claimed Goerz.⁶⁹ The church has been well planted and is now maturing and expressing its Christianity in a synthesis of indigenous and Western forms and styles.

Church membership, because of the high standards demanded, is much smaller than numbers attending. In 1990, John Bona was suspended from the ministry and resigned as a result of discipline being rigorously applied. Membership in secret societies is officially prohibited and involvement in the ancestral cult is condemned. In 1990, the Syke Street membership was 91 while the Sunday morning attendance, combining both services, was around 200.⁷⁰ The Kissy church had 35 members and average attendances of 80. The Bo church had 20 members and 50 attending regularly. All three congregations were experiencing growth. Aberdeen and Wellington were just getting underway with attendances of around 30. CinA attract most ethnic groups with the Krio, at about 20%, in the majority. Next come Mende, then Temne, Limba, Loko, and recently some Fula have begun to attend. Mende are the majority in the Kissy and Bo churches. Over 20% of the members are converted Muslims. Since the formation of the National Conference in 1985, giving in the church, despite the economic hardships and suffering, has increased considerably. In 1987, the Syke Street church became fully autonomous financially, and at their own request the HQ subsidy was stopped and they took responsibility for the salaries of their two full-time pastors. The churches operate a non-compulsory tithing scheme and, encouraged by the

missionaries, the National Conference have developed their own overseas contacts. Project funds from overseas donors are received by the Conference via the CinA HQ in California.

Not many illiterates attend the Syke Street church. Most members have at least some Secondary school education. Several have University degrees. One member, Mrs. Irene John, is a lecturer in the Theology Department at FBC. While illiterates are welcomed into the church, with so much use of the Bible, hymn books, and overheads, in the services they are not comfortable, and drift away to churches where the worship is less cerebral. That is not to say the worship at Syke Street is not lively; on the contrary, the loud music, singing and clapping, which can be heard clearly by all passing along the street, probably attracted the illiterates in the first place. The Kissy branch has taken up the challenge of the illiterates. To date very few members have come from an indigenous religious background although this is now changing through the work in Kissy, Wellington and Bo. Many members are involved in para-Church organisations such as Scripture Union, Youth for Christ, Great Commission Movement, Full Gospel Businessmen's Association and Women Aglow.

Worship at Syke Street is more in the style of Western Charismatic churches than any other church in the city. The congregation is young and modern, at home with Western and African music, electric guitars and electronic equipment. In Freetown where the emphasis in the Pentecostal churches is so much on pneumatic experience and obtaining victory over witchcraft and evil spirits, CinA, while not abandoning experiential Christianity, seek to emphasise Bible teaching and evangelical doctrine. Their foundational doctrinal teaching is regeneration and the necessity of being "born again". The first requirement for church membership is, "A definite born-again experience and living faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord."⁷¹ The church officially adopts is high doctrine of Biblical inspiration. Their

Statement of Faith declares:

The Bible is the verbally inspired Word of God, without error as originally written. It is the complete revelation of God's will for men, and is the only standard of Christian faith and conduct, absolute in its authority.

The Sunday service is constructed in two distinct parts. Praise and worship with lively singing, loud musical accompaniment and clapping, interspersed with periods of spontaneous inspirational prayer, lasts forty-five minutes. After the offering comes the Bible teaching ministry. It is obvious that here the worship is not merely emotional and enthusiastic. As noted above, a fairly high level of literacy and education is assumed. Now that missionaries are not so involved, the teaching is moving more in the direction of inspirational preaching. The two parts of the services were fairly evenly balanced, but now the praise and prayer section is becoming the dominant part. Also, the spiritual battle against evil spirits is being more frequently expressed. African interests and priorities are asserting themselves.

The church adopts a fairly common Charismatic Movement position on the Baptism in the Holy Spirit which soft-peddles tongues. It seeks to accommodate advocates of the two stage and three stage Pentecostal experience. Section 6 of the CinA *Statement of Faith* reads:

It is the will of God that each believer should be filled with the Holy Spirit, and be sanctified wholly, thereby being separated from sin and the world and fully dedicated to the will of God, receiving power for holy living, effective service and fruitful witness. This is both a crisis and a progressive experience wrought in the life of the believer subsequent to conversion.

This crisis and progressive experience of the Holy Spirit need not be evidenced by speaking in tongues, other manifestations of the power of the Holy Spirit such as prophecy or other *charismata*, prayer and powerful witnessing unto Jesus, are accepted as signs of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit and being filled with the Holy Spirit. Under the influence of missionary discipline free unrestrained speaking in tongues, which is popular in most Pentecostal churches, has not been encouraged. Tongues messages must have interpretation. Neither is the bringing forth of dreams and visions encouraged. Healing has generally been confined to the special monthly prayer meeting when the sick are prayed for with laying on of hands. However, since the missionaries have relinquished control and the pneumatic dimension in the worship has increased, praying in tongues during the worship is heard more often and more messages in tongues and in prophecy are forthcoming. Prayer for the sick and those with other problems now takes place during the service and at the end. While not veering

away from their founding principles and evangelical doctrines, the newly independent African Charismatic church is becoming more indigenous, pneumatic and self-consciously Sierra Leonean. This should considerably increase its wider appeal and aid its future expansion.

CHRIST APOSTOLIC CHURCH

The history and distinctive beliefs and practices of the Christ Apostolic Church have already been covered in some detail.⁷² In 1970, Evangelist Jacob Olu Alokun was sent to Freetown after prophecies concerning outreaches from the Nigerian church to Sierra Leone had been received in an overnight prayer meeting. Alokun started a prayer group at his residence at 94 Campbell Street and conducted open-air evangelism. "God blessed his work and his righteous and faithful life."⁷³ When the room could no longer contain the growing numbers, the group moved to a house on Cole Street. When that proved inadequate, they procured an old wooden building on Priscilla Street, pulled it down and started work on a substantial church building which was dedicated in 1980. By this time a Christ Apostolic branch had been organised in Makeni. Alokun left Freetown for Home Mission shortly after the dedication. He was replaced by fellow Nigerian J. T. Oluwalade. In 1982 another branch was opened in Kissy, and about the same time two other Northern Province branches were started at Roceint, Bombali District, and Magburaka, Tonkolili District. After three years Oluwalade handed over control to Sierra Leonean, Henry A. E. Jenkins, who in 1983 became District Superintendent and Head of the Sierra Leonean church. According to Bishop Jenkins, "an evangelical fellow", financial difficulties have hindered continued growth:

We can't cope with the churches in the Provinces in the present economic situation. We couldn't pay the Makeni minister enough so he left us for another church. The group still meet in a house, but they have no pastor. We have no church buildings anyway except for Central. We get no help from Nigeria for any more buildings. With local funds and help from a friend in Germany we are building a church at Roceint. It is almost complete.⁷⁴

Other factors, however, were operating to make for the fairly slow growth and limited influence of the Christ Apostolic Church in Freetown during the 1980s. The church had developed out of the Anglican Church in Nigeria. Freetown had plenty Anglican churches of its own. While Christ Apostolic was traditionally Pentecostal, in its Freetown operations it was, "Evangelical, warm and friendly, open-minded and Biblical, but not Pentecostal or Charismatic."⁷⁵ In Freetown, the churches that were expanding during the 1980s were the Spiritual and Pentecostal-evangelical churches. Churches where the dynamic of the Holy Spirit was in evidence and healings and problem-solving ministries were operating. The main ethnic groups had their own Pentecostal churches, and the Krio who were moving in a Pentecostal direction had Bethel Temple and Evangel as well as Christians in Action to choose from. In 1992, while the membership stood at around 250, Sunday attendances at the Priscilla Street Central Church varied between 70 and 120, with over 120 children attending Sunday School.⁷⁶ According to Bishop Jenkins the church was "growing slowly" both numerically and spiritually. He still maintained the greatest problem was finance. "People like to worship in a decent place. Their houses might be poor, but they want to worship in a nice place."⁷⁷

Jenkins, in the Christ Apostolic Church's 1991 Report, noted that while evangelism had been "brisk" in the multi-ethnic area of Kissy, following a discipleship training programme run by the Great Commission Movement, "Evangelism is a very costly spiritual commodity in terms of preparation, travelling, equipment and materials." An account was opened for a church building fund-raising effort, but it would, in the present inflationary conditions, be extremely difficult to put up a chapel without outside support. An appeal was made to the Nigerian HQ:

We are in an appalling situation. Sierra Leone has been declared the poorest country in Africa, if not the world, and no one can ever afford a day's square meal. The basic income for an average worker is 5 US dollars per month. The economy is said to be undergoing structural adjustment by the IMF. Massive retrenchment is ahead. We must find sustainable ways to live and run the church until Christ returns. We are praying for faithful people to help mobilise, encourage and challenge us to do our work well. We are looking up to you and any partner who would help. There are several obstacles to our development for providing the basic economic needs of our ministers who are disgracefully low wage earners. We need generators to light the

churches as there is darkness all over the city for want of electricity supply. We need kerosene to light our lamps for evening worship services. Home Mission, please, please help us as other Missions are assisting their counterparts in Sierra Leone. How can we work adequately under such deplorable conditions to develop this District neglected so long under no financial support, no information-sharing, no visits, no encouragement. Please come over to Sierra Leone and help us grow.⁷⁸

One bright spot on the horizon for the Christ Apostolic Church was that their involvement with the Reinhard Bonnke Crusade in December 1991 - Bishop Jenkins, because of his position as Evangelism Director of CCSL, was vice-president of the Planning Committee - resulted in an influx of new members and the start of a new fellowship with around 50 members at Brookfields. Sixty-three new members were baptised:

A great number of them were Muslims and Fulas. The Muslims always go in for what they see. They go for miracles and once they see miracles happen they become convinced believers.⁷⁹

Perhaps, inspired by the spiritual dynamism of the Bonnke Crusade and its own Apostolic roots in the great 1930 revival under Babalola, the Christ Apostolic Church in Freetown could see an alternative way forward independent of outside support.

POST-1980 NON-AOG PENTECOSTAL-EVANGELICAL CHURCHES

In the 1980s, the Pentecostal-evangelical movement in Freetown took a quantitative leap forward as a result of the arrival of new churches, some as mission plantings from outside, many as indigenous initiatives. The proliferation of Pentecostal-evangelical churches from the mid-80s on has grown from a trickle into a flood. The largest and most influential churches of this new wave are New Testament Church, a Black-American transplant spearheaded by a Sierra Leonean; Deeper Life Bible Church, a Nigerian missionary church; and Jesus is Lord Ministry, an entirely indigenous development and presently the largest and fastest growing of all the Freetown churches. The study of Jesus is Lord Ministry, which is the most culturally significant and evangelistically expansionist church presently operating in Freetown, will be reserved for the following and concluding chapter.

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

William Hollima Kallon, New Testament Church missionary, arrived in Freetown from USA in October 1984 with the intention of planting a Holiness-Pentecostal church in his homeland. New Testament Church came to Brooklyn, New York, in the early 1980s as a branch of The Pentecostal Church which had been founded in Sri Lanka in 1920 by Sri Lankan Pentecostal minister Ernest Paul. It spread to India where it expanded greatly. A branch of The Pentecostal Church was established in Britain in the 1930s; there are now five branches, four in England and one in Wales. The movement has over 485 churches and one million members world-wide. It is part of the Holiness-Pentecostal Movement, fundamentalist, with a very strict code of conduct. This type of Pentecostal church with its emphasis on holy living and Christian behaviour is proving very attractive to African youth. Deeper Life Bible Church is another of the same type. Over 70,000 attend Sunday worship at William Kumuyi's Deeper Life Church in Lagos; the largest Christian congregation in Africa.⁸⁰

In Freetown, Kallon met Richard Shaka who introduced him to the AOG churches in the city. He preached at Faith Assembly, Evangel, and Central Assembly. He stayed for six months with a younger sister, Mrs. Sao Sesay, at Juba. She became his first convert after he prayed for three of her children who were suffering from malaria and they were instantly healed.⁸¹ He then met a Sierra Leonean acquaintance from Washington, Hector Turay of the Bo-Pujehun Project. The three prayed and worshipped together. Two more joined them. Mrs. Benjamin, Principal of the Technical Institute, Congo Cross, just off Main Motor Road, allowed the group of five to use a classroom. On 15th December the church was consecrated with American director, Don Hill, present. Kallon was joined in his single room at Juba by his wife Dorris and daughter Kadi. The church grew until 40 crowded the classroom and they had to move to a room that could hold 90. That soon became overcrowded and they moved into the Assembly Hall which could seat 400. In 1990, ten city lots were purchased at nearby College Road and work on an elegant building designed by

Marilius Garber, an architect and elder of the church, began July. By 1992 the Technical Institute hall was bursting at the seams. In August, the new church was ready for use and dedicated. Kallon claims his church is indigenous. "It is indigenous because I founded the church here in Sierra Leone. I brought it here."⁸²

Bill Kallon was born at Daru, Jawei Chiefdom, Kailahun District, on 8th January 1939, of Muslim Mende and Mandinka parents. His Islamic name was Mustapha Kallon. At the age of four he was sent to the Ahmadiyya Mission Primary School and the Jawei Ahmadiyya Secondary School at Pendembu. At this time his father became a teacher with the Methodist Mission and taught at their schools at Bandajuma, Bunumbu and Segbwema in the Kailahun District. According to Kallon, his parents became "nominal Christians". From 1952 until 1958, Kallon attended Bo Government Secondary School. He abandoned the remnants of his Islamic faith and began attending the Church of the Lord (Aladura) in Bo. He attended the Sierra Leone Grammar School in Freetown from 1958 to 1960, and in 1961 he went to the USA to study Business Administration and Economics at Hampton Institute, Virginia. He went on to George Washington University, Washington, DC, and graduated MA in Economics in 1968. That year he met and married Dorris Norman, a "nominal Methodist" from Calvert County, Maryland, who had just returned from a three months Cross Roads Africa programme at Mobai, three miles from Kallon's home at Daru in Kailahun. In 1971, Kallon was appointed Associate Professor in the Department of Politics and Public Administration Economics at Bowie State College, Bowie, Maryland. In 1974 he completed his PhD from George Washington University on inter-state economic relations in West Africa.⁸³ Meanwhile Mrs. Kallon taught Sociology and Psychology at Howard University. The Kallons had no interest in Christianity. In 1979, with marriage problems reaching the point of divorce, his wife, seeking prayer help, attended a New Testament church. There she experienced the new-birth. The dramatic transformation of "a very argumentative person" into a quiet wife who prayed and fasted, impressed Kallon. He began to attend the church and was "born again". The following year he was baptised in water and in the Holy Spirit.

All of a sudden my life changed. I started to get the call of God. After the Baptism in the Holy Spirit I started to get dreams and visions, and the Word of God also, over a period of two years, calling me to full-time ministry. When I was in the world I was a very worldly person. I liked entertainment and parties, to smoke and drink. When I got the Baptism in the Holy Spirit God delivered me from of all those things. I was so amazed with God's wonders in my life, the new life he gave me, the new direction. The Bible became so real to me. When God started to call me I had to obey.⁸⁴

In 1982, after fifty-two significant dreams, in which he heard portions of Scripture and his name called, he resigned as Professor of Political Science at Bowie State College, a position he had been appointed to earlier that year.

New Testament Church, despite its Holiness Code and rigorous moral and ethical demands, quickly became the fastest growing church in the city. The 1990 Freetown Survey recorded a membership of 350. In 1991 it was over 400.⁸⁵ Males, particularly young men, are in the majority. Over 50 are converted Muslims, about 40 came out of indigenous religion, and 30 are former Roman Catholics.⁸⁶ Although Kallon is a Mende, this is not a Mende church. All Sierra Leonean ethnic groups are represented, the Limba and Mende being the largest groups. Krio, Temne, and Loko also attend in good numbers, as do Nigerians and Ghanaians. The congregation, mostly lower to middle income level, is drawn mainly from the Congo Cross and Wilberforce areas. Having so diverse and heterogeneous a group, Krio and English are deliberately used as the main languages of communication so as to avoid any ethnic bias. In the early period there was a demand for Mende, Temne and Limba to be used, at least in the preaching, but this was opposed on the grounds that it would encourage ethnic division within the congregation. Because many illiterates attend the church, literacy classes have been started. Being an egalitarian Holiness-Pentecostal church, the leadership rejects ostentation in any form, including the robes of ecclesiastical hierarchy. Kallon and all the male leadership wear white shirts, blue neck-ties, blue trousers and black shoes. Mrs. Kallon and the female ministers wear white head-squares, white blouses, blue skirts and black shoes. The New Testament Church, while not a dictatorship, is hierarchical in structure rather than congregational, with the Holy Spirit supposedly in control and operating through appointed and anointed elders. Kallon keeps a firm control over the administration. The

members tithe. There is no collection, but a freewill-offering box stands at the entrance. Funding from the mother church in USA comes in the form of material assistance and equipment. The materials for the new church are provided by the American parent body while the labour must be paid for or provided by the Freetown congregation. The Kallons are not on salary, but operate a faith ministry with their basic finances supplied by the local church and also donations from supporters in USA.

Kallon's ministry strongly emphasises faith based on the Word of God, "repentance from dead works", confession of sin, and regeneration. Although the church is named New Testament Church, much of the preaching concerns the lives and exploits of the heroes of faith in the Old Testament, Moses, David, Elijah and Daniel in particular. The anointing presence of the Holy Spirit is sought after in the worship, and this presence is recognised in deliverances, healings, problem-solving, and joy. Divine healing and the avoidance of medicines is common in Holiness-Pentecostal churches where sickness and sin are very directly identified. Kallon claims that since 1982 his family have not used medicine, but have relied directly on God for health and cures from sickness. At one time they were all seriously ill with cerebral malaria. "Everybody thought we were finished, but the Lord pulled us out. A terrible thing. Very demonic."⁸⁷ While there is no legislation prohibiting the use of modern medicines, Kallon sees his family's stance as an example of faith, and an opportunity for God to demonstrate His healing power. While, according to Kallon, nobody has come on a stretcher, risen and walked home, many common ailments, such as headache and stomach-ache, are cured in the anointed healing atmosphere. Visions and dreams are highly regarded as a means of receiving divine revelations. Mrs. Kallon exercises a clear visionary and prophetic ministry. Fasting is part of the church's spiritual discipline. Special fasts are called to deal with emergencies in the church and political and economic crises in the country.

The church stresses holy living, particularly Mrs. Kallon through her powerful preaching and prophetic *charisma*. Pastor Kallon complains that much of Freetown Christianity has the

Word of God, but there is little change in the life of the people, as they hear it but do not obey it.⁸⁸ Comparing his church with the Spiritual churches, which he regards as seekers after "worldly material benefits", Kallon, an ex-Adejobi, comments, "The biggest difference between us and the Aladura is that there is absolutely no holiness in the Aladura."⁸⁹

I was involved in Adejobi for six years. What I learned there was all demonic. There was nothing godly about them whatever. There was a lot of animal sacrifice and washing with blood. The animal was held over your head and the blood fell over you. Their real Scriptures is not the Bible, but *The Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses* and de Lawrence's *The Great Book of Magical Arts* which is a book of Hindu magic and Indian occultism. The ministers get a supply of them from the de Lawrence Institute in Chicago, USA. There are chapters on clairvoyance and astrology. They use the books for power, revelations and to get ahead in the world.⁹⁰

Several of his female members have come out of the Spiritual churches with major anxiety problems and tormenting dreams. The most common of these is the "Night Husband" dream in which a boa-constrictor appears, transforms into a human and has sexual intercourse. The Kallons, with a pastoral team of three assistants, are involved in a demanding counselling ministry. This is one of the reasons why they not only gain members, but also retain them. The church is "strong" on discipline, the main areas of discipline being, "fornication, disobedience and after-baptism alcoholism".⁹¹ Punishment includes non-communication, banishment from the fellowship, and even excommunication. Discipline cases are "frequent". They believe in total victory over Satan, sin and the world, and seek a life of complete consecration: Mat. 5:48, Eph. 4:15, Col. 1:28. Their stance on polygamy, divorce and remarriage, is as strict as that of Bethel Temple. Polygamists are given a certain time to understand the teaching of the Bible and then have to make a choice between plural wives and church membership. Those intending marriage are counselled on the seriousness of the step. Taking the words of Jesus literally, divorce is not allowed and re-marriage is regarded as adultery. As with Bethel Temple, infidelity does not bring death into a marriage, and the innocent party is consigned to celibacy till physical death releases from the marriage vows.

Kallon is completely opposed to involvement with Masonic Lodges and Secret Societies. He himself was a member of *Poros* and also a Mason. While not actively crusading against *Poros*,

he does demand from members a cessation of society involvement. "If you are filled with the Holy Spirit you don't want to go into the 'bush' again."⁹² He sees society involvement as a great hindrance to the progress and development of Christianity in Sierra Leone.

Society is full of witchcraft. Some don't know it to be bad. They see it as a cultural thing, something which is woven into the very fabric of society. Their fathers and mothers gave it to them. It is "family wealth". It is only when they get deliverance that they know it has been a hindrance.⁹³

The New Testament Church's stance on the ancestral cult is equally uncompromising. Kallon claims it was one of the first things God challenged him about as a Christian. The ancestral cult, secret societies and witchcraft are the major problems facing the church in Freetown. When he returned to Sierra Leone in 1984 the family arranged a "big cook", an *awujoh* for his mother who had died during his time in USA. He refused to attend. The family did not speak to him for a year afterwards, but gradually they came back to him and sought his prayers.

You have to stand. This is our biggest problem. It is so woven into the culture. You have to take a stand for Jesus. Of course, it is demonic. It is demons who come in the form of the departed spirits. I don't believe in "cooking", devils or devil dancing. I am now against all these. They are not of God. Most of what I am doing is deliverance ministry as a result of these practices.⁹⁴

Divine worship on Sunday begins at 10 a.m. with a prolonged period of chorus and hymn singing, aided by an overhead projector efficiently operated by two girls. The band is modern with electric organ, accordion, guitars and drums, and the sacred songs are a mixture of traditional American Pentecostal revival hymns such as "Amazing grace", "The old rugged Cross" and "What a fellowship", and modern Charismatic choruses like "Lift Jesus higher", "I will enter His courts with thanksgiving in my heart" and "Thou art worthy". The content is generally highly devotional and heavily doctrinal. The congregation sings enthusiastically and claps loudly. Other bodily movements are quite restrained in this holiness church and restricted to a mild non-erotic swaying. Males sit on the right and females, most wearing head-scarves, on the left. Mothers with babies occupy the back rows. The normal Sunday morning attendance in 1991 was well over 400. Kallon periodically interrupts the praise worship to pray and exhort as he feels led by the Spirit. Sometimes he breaks out into

tongues; frequently he calls for a "clap for Jesus". This charges up the atmosphere and draws enthusiastic applause, cheers, whistles and shouts from the young men. Mrs. Kallon keeps the congregation's attention fixed on Jesus with devotional, Christo-centric exhortations. A period of testimonies to salvation, deliverance and healing follows. Usually one or two converted Muslims testify, to the great delight of the audience. The evangelisation of Muslims is a challenge the New Testament church, led by former Muslim Kallon, is enthusiastically taking up. Many testimonies relate dream and vision experiences. The testimony section is a vital part of the service, and one which the young and vibrant congregation obviously enjoys. Here is a fairly typical batch of testimonies. A man who was "in the Muslim way" was drawn to the church by the witness of an outreach group and became a Christian. A young lady who had been troubled by "Night Husband" dreams had been prayed for by Brother Bill. Afterwards when they came "they were not successful". For the last two months she has had no Night Husband dreams. A lady who had been abducted and dragged into the bush to be initiated (i.e. circumcised) managed to escape, but the traumatic experience had left her with a heart condition. Now the Lord is curing her and her health has greatly improved. A young man from a Muslim family was walking along Syke Street when he had a vision of light and saw "Jesus Christ is coming again" written in the sky. He found a verse in an English version of the Koran saying to trust in Christ or suffer punishment in this life and the next.⁹⁵ On another occasion, a very sick lady had used medicines and had had injections in hospital, but she remained unwell. She did not want to go to the Muslim *alpha* or to a native fetish priest, so she went to a Spiritual church and started using Holy Water, but her condition did not improve. She then moved to New Testament Church, put away her bottles of Holy Water and prayed to Jesus. She has since recovered and praises the Lord.⁹⁶ Pastor Kallon keeps a tight control on the testimonies, standing right beside the speakers, ready to interrupt whenever the speaker goes overtime or gets over-excited. The collection, which plays such an important part in the Spiritual churches and others, is conspicuously absent in this African faith-holiness church.

The preaching is shared by the Kallons and is mainly in English with Krio interpretation. Pastor Kallon is increasingly preaching in Krio, but still has his messages interpreted into "deep" Krio. Mrs. Kallon is an inspirational preacher who condemns the unholy spiritual adultery of Christians who only come to Christ to have their immediate needs met. Her preaching is American-Pentecostal, evangelistic, and holiness based with an emphasis on the *parousia* and Christ's imminent return. "Our goal is to go on to perfection and be ready for Jesus' coming. We need to be serious. Jesus is coming soon."⁹⁷ This is the day of the Latter Rain and Christ's ministers need the Baptism in the Holy Spirit to live holy lives, serve with power, and save souls. Pastor Kallon's more down-to-earth teaching, emphasises faith, obedience, separation from the world and the debilitating effects of compromise.

We separate from sin and corruption, but not from praying and speaking to them about Jesus. We separate from the worldly unclean ways of men which are contrary to God's Word and God's ways. We are different, we are peculiar. If we are not different, what are we? Come out from the evil generation. Touch not the unclean thing. He will be a Father to you and you will be a son or a daughter to Him. Separate from the evil ways of the world, not from the people.⁹⁸

His numerous Bible references are written down on note-books by the young literates, male and female, for home Bible study. He frequently challenges the congregation:

Has anyone heard of me stealing money? Do I owe money to anyone? Do I go with anyone's wife? Is there any boyfriend-girlfriend business you can accuse me of? Unless we are a holy people we will not be ready for the coming of Christ. We are not a dictatorship, but we want discipline under the whole counsel of God.⁹⁹

The Kallons, aware of the immoral lives of many church leaders in the city, Spiritual and denominational, seek to impress their holiness message by example. Holiness is understood as keeping the Biblical commandments, particularly the commandments of Jesus and the New Testament. The power needed to live a holy Christian life and to overcome the demons and witchcraft that is rampant in Freetown society comes from the Word of God and the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

We have great power through the Word. I was bound by a demon of alcohol. I wanted to stop, but couldn't. The power of God came over me and the power of sin was broken in my life. We have power, power over scorpions, snakes and all the power of the enemy. We have the mighty power of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. God came to set the captives free. God came to deliver the Hebrews from Egypt. He is here to deliver us. The Holy Spirit is here.¹⁰⁰

At a service for the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, candidates were exhorted to prepare their hearts by getting deliverance from evil spirits. The conditions for deliverance were to forgive others, get right with God, and "be desperate". Then, according to Kallon, "The Holy Spirit will come down from heaven to destroy any spirits in your life. Jesus Christ is here to deliver and set you free."¹⁰¹ He called everyone who wanted deliverance to come up to the front "in faith". Almost the entire congregation pressed forward. Only fifty remained seated. Kallon prayed over the crowd, but his voice was soon drowned by the praying, shouting and clapping of those "desperate" for deliverance and the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. Shouting over the mike, Kallon called for the chorus "Let the fire fall on me". One lady collapsed on the stage, shaking violently. Mrs. Kallon went calmly over to her, knelt and prayed into her ear. Gradually the lady calmed down. Kallon kept shouting, "Let the fire fall! Let the fire fall! The fire of God is falling!" Another lady collapsed in the aisle with arms waving. Mrs. Kallon, with calm composure and demonstrating loving pastoral care, prayed over her, kneeling down and holding her arms in a wrestling grip. Before long the lady got up and sat down. Mrs. Kallon's deliverance ministry is obviously highly effective, and appears much more successful than deliverance ministries who seek to exorcise demons by shouting "In the name of Jesus!" over the possessed or traumatised person. After this particular period of ministry, Kallon called for testimonies. One young man said he felt a spirit of anger leaving him. A lady began to shake and wave her arms during her testimony. Kallon removed the mike from her. Two others demonstrated physical symptoms during their testimonies. Obviously not fully cured, they were ushered from the platform. A girl testified to deliverance from another spirit of anger. The congregation, elated by this dynamic demonstration of the power of God, sang a Krio chorus of appreciation, "Tell Am tenki tell Am, Tell Papa God tenki." When asked what had taken place in the case of the ladies Mrs. Kallon had prayed over, a member and Civil Service officer declared:

It is conviction. They are so grateful to God for what He has done for them that they are overcome by strong feelings of gratitude to God. It is God's Spirit that makes her behave in this way.¹⁰²

When it was pointed out that the Gadarene demoniac convulsed in a demonised seizure before actual deliverance took place, and that it was only after deliverance that he sat down in his right mind, he was puzzled. To him all manifestations were demonstrations of the power of God and he left it at that. However, Mrs. Kallon did not see it that way. When she prayed over the women in seizure she was, in her own gentle, but firm way, not only praying, but exorcising evil spirits which the power of the Holy Spirit had exposed. Pastor Kallon maintains there are varieties of pneumatic experiences:

Some need deliverance from witchcraft and demons and bondages from the past. One really needs discernment. Some fall down, but God is not the author of confusion. Some cough, shriek and scream as the demons are forced out. When the experience is of the Holy Spirit there is joy, laughing, rejoicing. The people are on cloud nine, jumping and bubbling over. There is a manifestation of the joy of the Holy Spirit and the Bible becomes so alive.¹⁰³

The services generally conclude with a final praise worship session. This is a time when utterances in tongues and prophecies are given. Mrs. Kallon frequently gives prophetic messages. One example prophecy was:

Trust in me. Whatever your troubles, trust in me. The situation in the country is dark, but I will be your light. The whole world will get dark, very dark, but do not be afraid. There will be a light for you as you trust in me¹⁰⁴

These encouraging, exhorting, and edifying prophetic utterances, with their Biblical tone and atmosphere, are significantly different in nature and content from the fear-producing revelations of sickness and disaster of the Spiritual prophets. As is common practice in the Spiritual and Pentecostal churches in Freetown, after the service ends officially, the leaders counsel members having with problems - who crowd around them - and pray for the sick. Every week new members are added to the church.

New Testament Church was, for a period, the fastest growing church in Freetown, but this title has recently been taken over by Dora Dumbuya's Jesus is Lord Ministry. However, the church is still expanding. Only four new members were added through the Reinhard Bonnke Freetown Crusade in December 1991, although one hundred came along as referrals. Open-

air preaching, sometimes using Campus Crusade's "Jesus" film, and personal evangelism, are the church's most effective evangelistic methods. Kallon sees the major contribution of mass crusades as raising the level of Christ consciousness in the city, but for effecting deep repentance and "soul-winning", the power of God, working through consecrated holy lives at grass-roots level, is the strategy for the local church. Pastor Kallon and Pastor Jones at Bethel Temple - both are highly intelligent, Pentecostal, and emphasise the holiness doctrine - have become close friends. They exchange pulpits and have forged strong fellowship links between the two congregations. A preaching-point has been established at Dworzark Farm, a large slum area behind New England Ville, with about 30 attending regularly. A church building is planned. The church operates other preaching-points at Thompson's Bay and Congo Town. A tent of meeting has been erected along Lumley Road in Wilberforce Village, and another outreach meets in an army hall at Wilberforce Barracks. A branch church is in process of being formed in Bo where a group of about 50 meet in a house. There are plans to start another group in Kenema. In both these areas, Kallon has strong family connections. Bill Kallon sees the New Testament Church, having laid strong foundations and having also now established an impressive Headquarters church in Freetown, as being ready for a new phase of church growth, especially in the Wilberforce area and in the Mende and Kono districts. His strategy is to extend mainly along his own and the congregation's family and friends network lines. His vision is to plant new churches, appoint pastors and oversee an expanding, Bible-based, indigenous Holiness-Pentecostal movement throughout the country.

DEEPER LIFE BIBLE CHURCH

The growth and attraction of Holiness churches in West Africa is worth detailed investigation. The spiritual legalism of the Holiness Movement fits in well with the ritual nature of indigenous West African religions with their emphasis on purity, washings and salvation by

works. Deeper Life Bible Church is another expanding West African holiness church. It was founded in Lagos, Nigeria, in 1982. Missionary-evangelist Felix O. Akinola came to Freetown in January 1984. The church he planted has grown significantly, although not as rapidly as New Testament Church or as dramatically as Jesus is Lord Ministries, both of which are founded and led by indigenes and have a more distinctively Pentecostal flavour. Also, the Sierra Leone branch has not experienced anything like the growth rate of normally associated with Deeper Life Bible Church in Nigeria. Akinola seeks to reproduce a Kumuyi style Bible teaching and miracle healing ministry in Freetown, and a Deeper Life Bible Church modelled very closely on the highly successful Lagos pattern. According to Tyson:

... the person of William F. Kumuyi is crucial to a fuller understanding of Deeper Life Bible Church The man has created the ministry The doctrines that are taught reflect, sometimes to a high degree, the life experiences of the man. In fact, the historical precedent of Christian tradition and theology appear of secondary importance to the man's own interpretation. That this is the case is substantiated, in part, by the exclusivity of their publications.¹⁰⁵

Except for a four volume Sunday school outline, Kumuyi is the author of all Deeper Life Bible Church publications. It is therefore important to trace the origins, development and nature of Kumuyi's movement.

Kumuyi and the Nigerian Origins and Dramatic Growth of Deeper Life Bible Church

Deeper Life Bible Church, particularly at its upper leadership level, reflects the character and spiritual pilgrimage of its founding father, William Folorunso Kumuyi, "the GS" (General Superintendent) as he is affectionately called.¹⁰⁶ Kumuyi was born in the village of Orunwa in Ijebu province, Western Nigeria, on 6th June 1941. His father, a devout Anglican, imposed a strict regime of early morning Bible reading and regular church attendance on his family. Kumuyi attended Mayflower Secondary School in Ikenne where Dr. Tai Solarin, the founder and first principal, had abandoned Christianity and proclaimed a gospel of self-reliance. Influenced by Solarin, Kumuyi stopped attending church for a time, but he later visited various Aladura churches, of the Spiritual type, in the town. He completed secondary education in 1962 and taught primary school. In 1963 he came in contact with the

Pentecostal-Holiness Apostolic Faith Church in Ikenne; a branch of the Portland, Oregon, Apostolic Faith Mission. This movement, founded by Florence Crawford, was a 1907 breakaway from Seymour's Apostolic Faith at Azusa Street. According to Synan:

Crawford taught one of the strictest versions ever devised for the holiness lifestyle code. Her most controversial position was that no member of her church, lay or clergy, could ever remarry after divorce, regardless of the guilt or innocence of either party. Adhering strictly to the second-work theory of sanctification, as taught by Parham and Seymour, Crawford insisted on a strict code of outward holiness in dress, especially for women. Like Parham, she refused to take offerings for the support of her mission. Any group that compromised on these points was "disfellowshipped" from her movement.

After 1909, when the designation "Pentecostal" gained popular usage among tongues-speakers, her followers stoutly refused to use the label, thus distancing them from the broader movement. By 1990, the Apostolic Faith (Portland, Oregon) numbered only 45 churches around the world with some 4,500 members.

Although Crawford's movement never thrived in the United States, it did experience growth overseas. In a short time, the church had far more members in Africa than in its country of origin. Its major contribution to church growth was the fact that William Kumuyi of Nigeria was converted in an Apostolic Faith Mission congregation.¹⁰⁷

While attending the Apostolic Faith Church in Ikenne on 5th April 1964, Kumuyi experienced regeneration.

I understood the Gospel message, and was born again. I read John Wesley, Charles Finney, Spurgeon, and a lot of other books. I got involved with the Scripture Union, and I grew.¹⁰⁸

In *Our Place, Position and Power in Christ* he explains his conversion as a movement from ignorance to knowledge.

I used to think that, in those days when I was in the white-garment prayer houses, beating drums and burning candles, that that was what would give us victory over the devil and over witches and wizards That was lack of knowledge. I did not know that God answers prayer at 7 o'clock. I thought He only did at 9 a.m., 3 p.m. and midnight That was lack of knowledge. In those days ... I fasted only on Mondays or Wednesdays or Fridays: "My people perish because of lack of knowledge".¹⁰⁹

He abandoned all connection with the Spiritual churches, his Anglican roots having been severed earlier. The doctrines of Apostolic Faith Church have fundamentally influenced Kumuyi's understanding of the Gospel and in consequence have significantly moulded the style and practice of Deeper Life Bible Church.

Sponsored by Solarin, Kumuyi studied mathematics at Ibadan University, graduating in 1967 with first class honours. While at Ibadan he was active in the Apostolic Faith Church and the

campus Christian Union (CU), the university equivalent of SU. After graduating, Kumuyi returned to Ikenne to teach at Mayflower. He continued his involvement with SU and was patron of the school group. In 1971 he embarked on a post-graduate Diploma in Education at the University of Lagos. He still carried on his Apostolic Faith Church and SU commitments. In August 1973, he was appointed lecturer at the College of Education. Because of his SU involvements Kumuyi received many preaching engagements and became increasingly sought after as a counsellor. To meet this pastoral need he started a Monday evening fellowship at his campus flat with a group of fifteen. The intention was to search the Scriptures in Scripture Union Bible study style for answers to people's questions and solutions to their problems.

Within a short time Kumuyi was being invited as a guest speaker to other Universities in Nigeria, and was attracting a following from those who turned to Christ through his ministry, as well as members of various denominations who valued his teaching of straightforward Bible exposition. He called his work the "Deeper Christian Life Ministry".¹¹⁰

The dramatic growth of the fellowship is covered by Isaacson and Tyson. According to Ojo, a crisis developed in relations with Apostolic Faith Church which resulted in Kumuyi leaving them in late 1975; "The conservative doctrine of that church, which tenaciously prescribes that preaching is the job of a few ordained ones alone" was the reason for the split.¹¹¹ The elders disapproved of Kumuyi's activities in SU style evangelism - street witnessing and tract distribution - maintaining there was no need for this as people could obtain salvation by coming to church.¹¹² Deeper Christian Life Ministry fellowships were started at Ilesha and Osogbo (Oyo State) and Omoku (Rivers State) in 1976.

In 1977, the Deeper Christian Life Ministry really began to snowball, with fellowships formed across the south of the country - in Ogun and Bendel in the west, Imo and Anambra States in the east.¹¹³

The distribution of literature, especially SU style Bible study notes, became an increasing and essential part of the ministry. By 1979 Deeper Christian Life Ministry fellowships had been established in Ondo and Cross River States in the south, and Niger, Benue, Plateau, Gongola, Borno, Kaduna and Kanu States in the north.¹¹⁴ In 1979, the Deeper Life Campus Fellowship was launched with the vision of Deeper Christian Life Bible studies established in

every Nigerian university campus. CU and the Student Christian Movement (SCM), organisations who were then not particularly well disposed towards Pentecostalism, were alarmed at his holiness teaching which they perceived as sectarian.¹¹⁵ Deeper Life were accused of "sheep stealing", extremism and being a cult. Kumuyi maintained:

We are to come out from among people who will defile us. We should be separate. It is some years now since I came across this passage, that instructs me to come out from people that will defile me; from habits that destroy and defile.¹¹⁶

According to Isaacson:

In the early days of Deeper Life it was unacceptable for women to wear trousers, jewellery, or make-up, and they would always have their heads covered when in church or at prayer. Men were to wear simple clothes: unflared trousers (despite the fashion of the time) and plain shoes (acceptable heel heights were specified). Born again Christians would not watch television or drink minerals such as cola or lemonade, but only fruit juice. Marriage was not really acceptable for the truest disciple of Christ - although this teaching was modified after Kumuyi's marriage to sister Biodun in 1980! All this has led to charges of legalism, which are still made.¹¹⁷

Kumuyi admits his early zeal and legalism:

When we started the Bible study, for me it was strange - a woman wearing slacks and using jewellery and lipstick. So I would teach them that a born again Christian sister does not dress that way. Being born again affects everything that you do in life.¹¹⁸

In 1982, Kumuyi started holding Sunday services. Felix Akinola was among his first full-time workers. Deeper Life House Caring Fellowships, where Kumuyi's original discussion and problem-solving Bible studies could be conducted in small intimate cell groups, were organised in 1983. By 1988, over 5,000 had been formed and around 50,000 worshippers were regularly attending the five Sunday services held in the Lagos church at Gbagada.¹¹⁹

Isaacson describes a Sunday service:

Everything is conducted in English - the nation's official language and the language of education - but there are also "language classes" where you can sit and hear everything simultaneously translated into one of fifteen other languages. The Sunday worship begins with half an hour in Zonal groups in a "Search the Scriptures" study. All the members have a book to prepare the study for themselves, and their daily Bible readings have been leading up to the Sunday study. Certain people in the church are appointed "Search the Scriptures" leaders, and spend Saturday evening preparing together. Two people work full time ... preparing the "Search the Scriptures" books.... After that session, time is spent in prayer - maybe emotional, but controlled. The cue is given to pray, and everybody starts praying aloud at once, each person individually talking to God, simultaneously. Some have seen this as the mode of prayer described in Acts 4.24 ("they raised their voices together in prayer to God"). Your relationship to

God is your own responsibility and you have to speak to him. At the sound of a bell, or an announcement over the loudspeakers, people will end their prayers.¹²⁰

When Kumuyi comes to the pulpit, a hush descends on the congregation.

When he preaches, his message is clear, simple, and profound. Poor street traders who can barely read sit next to university professors, all equally captivated by the way Scripture becomes suddenly relevant to them.... Kumuyi is not tall, and does not have a larger-than-life character. He does not dominate, nor has he accrued power to himself.... He dresses simply, eats simply, lives in a small flat, and does not draw a salary from the ministry which has flourished under his leadership. He could have assumed titles to himself ... most people enjoy the trappings and regalia of status which followers gladly give. But he calls his followers "brothers and sisters", and treats them as colleagues.¹²¹

Before he preaches Kumuyi invites questions arising from the "Search the Scriptures".

Ushers take the mike to those who raise their hands during this fifteen minutes question and answer session. This is followed by hymn singing, testimonies and prayer requests. When the offering is made it is raised in the hand and prayed over before being collected by ushers. Newcomers are welcomed, asked to stand and then invited to sit in a special reserved area at the front where they can be greeted at the end of the service.

In 1983 the needs for healing through prayer for the largely poor membership led Kumuyi to change the Thursday Evangelism Training evening into "Miracle Revival Hour" healing crusades. The three sessions on Thursdays, each lasting two and a quarter hours, now attract as many as 70,000 people.¹²² Ojo sees this ministry as "an alternative to the inadequate health services in the country".¹²³ The teaching particularly emphasises healing, victory over Satan and evil powers, and the persistent faith that obtains miracles from God. Miracles are available from God, but it is according to your faith. When you have perfect or complete faith you will get your miracle. The time for receiving one's miracle comes at the conclusion of the sermon. Isaacson describes this part of a miracle-healing service:

Kumuyi stood at the pulpit, relaxed and unemotional, resting slightly on the pulpit, and looking around.

"Confess your sins ... and nothing will hinder the manifestation of a miracle. If there is anything between you and the Lord, settle it. Talk to the Lord.... Forgive them, Father. Receive them into the family of God. Now, whatever your problem, I believe a miracle is on the way."

The people prayed. The atmosphere was electric with expectation.

Sometimes Kumuyi will receive "words of knowledge" while he is praying. He will become aware of particular needs in the congregation.... The first word this evening

was: "There is a man here, thirty years old, who is still wetting the bed. Raise your hand and I will pray for you.... I command that demonic problem out, in Jesus' name," said Kumuyi ... there was a loud "AMEN!" from the other people present, with applause and a sense of celebration.

"There's a twelve-year-old girl. For two weeks now you have been involved with a familiar spirit. Your friends are pleading with you to come to the Lord for help. But these other people are still coming to you and threatening you. I want to bring deliverance to you. Raise up your hand.... All you spirits: come out, in Jesus' name. You will be delivered. When those people come again, I pray the power of the Holy Spirit will drive them away. In Jesus' name."

"AMEN!" and applause.

"There's a parent here who has lost a child."

A hand is raised.

"The Holy Spirit will recover that child. Lord, you have revealed it. You are going to do something about it. Bring back that child. Child, arise now, wherever you are, and come back home. In Jesus' name."

"AMEN!" and applause.

Kumuyi went on to mention a range of specific needs as people started praying for themselves and each other:

"The woman who is pregnant and has been bleeding: that bleeding has stopped." (Applause.) "Now, everybody, lift up your hands. You will get something tonight. Whatever your problem, lay your hand upon yourself. There is someone with cancer. There is a child who has run away from school and is frightened. There is a young woman here, and there is a curse that no woman in her family will get married. All sicknesses. All evil spirits. Someone here has a swollen abdomen. Someone has an infection in the private parts of their body. There are barren women who want children. Thank you, Father."

As Kumuyi finished and the buzz of prayer died down, he was turning to go, when he came back to the pulpit, "There is a woman here. She was carried in here very weak. That woman will walk back home. Those around her, raise up your hands. Put your hands on her. I rebuke that sickness and command it to leave, in Jesus' name."

Great whoops of delight and commotion arose from one part of the auditorium as Kumuyi left the pulpit; and that was the end of the service. He had been on his feet for an hour and a half. In a quarter of an hour he would come down to lead the third Miracle Revival Hour that evening, and do it all again.

I went over to a spot near me where there was some noise and activity. An older woman was singing, dancing and praising God, while a younger woman next to her seemed not very sure of what was going on. When they had calmed down a little, the older woman told me (through an interpreter) that she had travelled down from Kaduna to look for her daughter who had been missing for the past four months. The daughter was a Christian, and had run away from home because her father didn't approve and was tormenting her. She had even ended up in hospital once. When her mother got to Lagos, she heard of Deeper Life, and came to pray for a miracle When she heard the pastor's word of knowledge ... she somehow knew it was for her. She raised her hand, and the pastor prayed. When she opened her eyes, she saw her daughter sitting two rows in front of her! The girl had run to Lagos, and had been attending Deeper Life Bible Church for some weeks. ¹²⁴

Kumuyi claims that through faith and prayer, patients who could not be cured in the best hospitals in the country have been healed at Deeper Life.¹²⁵ He sees healing as an evangelistic operation, a manifestation and making real of Christ. Jesus is the healer.

Kumuyi's role is to release the healing power of Jesus through prayer and *charismata*.

Since I became born again, I have known the Jesus can heal. I know that God has the power to do all things. I also believe that if someone is sick, he or she can pray and be healed by God. But most of the healings that we witnessed at that time were gradual. You pray, and others pray for you, and eventually you are healed. I started studying the Bible. In October 1982 I attended a conference in Caister, in the UK. I saw others minister to the sick, and it was a little bit new to me. So as a result of my reading and praying, in February 1983, I mentioned someone's problem while praying in church. The Lord revealed it to me, I prayed, and the person was delivered, and came to give her testimony. The incident encouraged me to know that the gift was there but I needed to develop it. So eventually we started seeing some of these things in a little measure, and it has been growing since then.¹²⁶

Kumuyi's miracle and healing ministry is not as Tyson puts it, "an Africanised version of Hagin's prosperity gospel".¹²⁷ Clearly, American Neopentecostal teaching such as Hagin's "health and wealth" *rhema* doctrine of proclaim it and possess it, has affected Kumuyi's thinking. However, it is obvious Kumuyi's healing miracles, breaking witch curses, and demonic deliverances, spring primarily from his African background and literalist Biblical interpretations. Despite the various Western influences, Apostolic Faith, Scripture Union and the Charismatic Movement, Kumuyi's healing and revelatory ministry is outworked within the West African cosmological framework and the Yoruba soteriological context which are very different from the materialistic American background the Neopentecostal "prosperity Gospel" generally presumes.¹²⁸

Akinola and the Re-production of a Deeper Life Bible Church in Freetown

Felix Akinola was born of Yoruba parents at Tamale, Ghana, in 1949. His father, a Baptist - in Akinola's estimation "salvation I do not think he had" - was a trader-farmer from Oyo State, Nigeria, and his mother, also a trader, was from Abeokuta.¹²⁹ His father died in 1966. Akinola left Ghana for Nigeria in 1969 and worked as a machine operator in a Lagos factory. He left Lagos to work as an insurance agent in Oyo State. In 1974 he returned to Lagos to work in an office and train as a health officer at the College of Hygiene. His immediate younger brother was then studying in Lagos at the College of Technology and had become involved in Kumuyi's Deeper Christian Life Ministry. Shortly after starting his course, Akinola

became aware of a recruitment drive by the Nigerian Air Force and decided to undergo the training programme. During the two days car journey he twice dreamed that he saw "someone like an angel with face gleaming like fire" who commanded him to go back to Lagos.¹³⁰ Before the training started he returned to Lagos and resumed his work at the office. Akinola discovered his brother had been praying for his salvation and had arranged for friends to fast and pray that the Lord would bring him back from the training ground.

Although he had been involved with the Baptist church both in Ghana and Nigeria, and was a choirmaster in his Lagos church, he now decided to accept his brother's invitation to the Deeper Christian Life Monday evening Bible study in the car-park outside Kumuyi's flat. He was convicted by the holiness message. After the meeting he lit up a cigarette. A member of the group asked him if he was a Christian. When he replied that he was and that he had his Bible and Hymn book with him, he was told that he was not a Christian at all. Convinced he was still a sinner, he found he could not smoke his cigarette and dropped it into the gutter. He could not ride his bike, and pushed it all the way home. He realised he had to repent or go to Hell-fire. Weeping, he knelt in the room he shared with three friends, who were, like himself, drinkers, smokers and womanisers, and prayed. His friends laughed while he was praying, but during the prayer he obtained assurance that his sins were forgiven. He rose from his knees conscious he was saved and born again, and told the friends he was stopping all the drinking, smoking and womanising. Finding his office companions' rum drinking and visiting of beer parlours during office hours incompatible with his new Christian standards, he left his job and began a course in business administration and accounting. During the course, Akinola had a revelation that he would become a full-time worker with Deeper Christian Life Ministry. He did not tell Kumuyi as he wanted God to reveal this to him directly. When he completed the course in 1978, Kumuyi told him to pack his things and go to Ibadan where he should get a job and look after the fellowship there. He left Lagos three days later. In Ibadan he found twenty people meeting in a primary school. The group grew

and moved to Wesley College chapel. When he left in 1980 to become a full-time worker covering schools and colleges in Ondo and Kwara states, the Ibadan fellowship had grown to 700. In March 1982, he married Bose Palomoh, a Yoruba from Ora in Ondo State. She had been a nurse and ran a Deeper Christian Life Ministry fellowship in Oyo State, but had come to the Deeper Life Bible College in Lagos for training. She continued on as a teacher. After their marriage the Akinolas pastored a Deeper Life Bible Church in Akue, Ondo State, for over a year. At this time a Sierra Leonean "schools-inspector", burdened for his country, had been writing HQ asking them to send someone to Sierra Leone as it was "perishing". Kumuyi chose the Akinolas to meet the Macedonian call.

Akinola travelled alone to Freetown, his wife and new-born child were to follow later. He arrived on 8th January 1984, and was met at the airport by the inspector, who turned out to be an ordinary teacher from Kosso Town. He was taken to stay with a family in Lower Allen Town. Later Akinola discovered that the teacher had been telling lies, hoping to use Deeper Life Bible Church as a stepping stone *en route* to America. Before the discovery, Akinola had Deeper Life sponsored him for study at their Bible College in Lagos. He was expelled soon afterwards for stealing. A fellowship meeting was started in the house in Lower Allen Town and by the end of the month 30 people were attending. Another was started in Upper Allen Town which attracted around 50 members. Akinola claims God did lots of miracles in these house-meetings; spells cast on people's legs, causing terrible sores, were broken, some blind were healed, others suffering from demonic attacks were delivered, and a "terrible drinker" was instantly delivered from the habit when Akinola prayed for him.¹³¹ Akinola's standard Deeper Life strategy of personal evangelism and Bible study fellowships proved successful. However, he suffered some typical missionary discouragements:

At first I felt these people were close to God because they could sing choruses and everything, but after a few months I discovered that they were just religious people and didn't mean business. It was different here to Nigeria where Christianity is growing very fast. No matter how somebody pretends, character is like smoke, it

shoots out one day. I discovered that many who were worshipping were not sincere.¹³²

Akinola sees the besetting sin of Sierra Leonean Christians is lack of commitment. This came about because the early missionaries did not preach the real Word of God which exposes sin and transforms lives. "When the Word of God is not being truly preached, you just gather sinners, they come in as sinners and they remain as sinners."¹³³

Late in March, Akinola moved into Freetown and stayed with a Nigerian friend at 3 Fergusson Lane. A lady at 9 Fergusson Lane allowed him the use of her sitting-room for Bible studies. The group grew to fifty. Towards the end of the year they moved to a classroom at the Government Model School at Circular Road. In early 1985, a house was rented at 12 Rock Lane and Akinola was joined by his family. The church met in the sitting-room. Soon the dining-room, passage and veranda were being used to accommodate the growing church. In 1987, the church moved to E. B. Williams Municipal School on Jomo Kenyatta Road. They use the run-down nissan-hut auditorium. The church has experienced fairly steady growth. The membership in 1990 was around 300.¹³⁴ Akinola has plans to build once suitable land in the city becomes available. They intend to spread to the Provinces. Their rate of expansion, however, is limited by their rigorous holiness doctrine and practice, their lack of funds, and the fact that they are still generally regarded as a Nigerian import. Akinola sees the main obstacle to church growth being lack of commitment once problems have been solved.

Many want miracles, but once they get their miracle they no longer come to the church. People don't live a disciplined life. Going to church is fashionable. Krio, Mende, Limba - all groups love to go to church. The main problem is commitment. They don't seem to catch the vision as we want. They seem to like a low standard. Some, however, say our teaching is strong and that they like it. Anyone who practices it will not regret it.¹³⁵

Akinola claims Deeper Life is different from all the other churches, and has the only holiness teaching ministry in the city. He wants to avoid being labelled "Pentecostal" because of its

association with the "Adejobis" and other Pentecostal-evangelical churches whose members do not practice a Holiness lifestyle. Following the example of Florence Crawford, Apostolic Faith Church, and William Kumuyi, he prefers his movement to be called "Evangelical". Concerning the Spiritual churches he says:

I can't call them a church. They are not Christian. They are just spiritists. They came from Nigeria and are not a Christian church. The founder, Moses Orimolade, started well, he was a holiness preacher, but those who took over from him were not. They led astray the whole church.¹³⁶

Concerning the Deeper Life doctrine of sanctification Akinola claims:

We believe in total salvation, freedom from sin and the sanctification of believers. We believe in the Holy Spirit baptism and in three works of grace; sanctification especially. We are different from the other Gospel churches over sanctification. They questioned how can one live a holy life, etc. and opposed the doctrine.¹³⁷

The three works of grace are justification, sanctification and Holy Spirit baptism. Akinola takes his sanctification doctrine directly from Kumuyi who states that sanctification is, "the gracious work of the Holy Spirit whereby the believer is freed from sin, and exalted to holiness of heart and life."¹³⁸ At conversion "committed sins" are dealt with, but during the sanctification work of grace, "inbred sin" is purged and the heart purified. While only born-again believers can be sanctified, the regenerative experience in itself does not make one sanctified. One must consecrate oneself and pray with faith that God will sanctify in an instantaneous holiness experience. The evidence of sanctification is "perfect love, peace, inner victory and freedom, right motives and inner and outer holiness."¹³⁹ Kumuyi has defined his "Wesleyan" notion of sanctification" as:

... the enthronement of the supreme love for God and man in the heart of the believer. This is made possible by the removal of the adamic nature - selfishness, bitterness, pride, anger, greed, self-centredness - in the heart of man. Simply put, the adamic nature is anything that is contrary to the will, heart and mind of Christ. While this is removed, the pure love of God and man supremely reigns in the heart. It then becomes very easy to forgive, live and fellowship with everybody. Anger, bitterness, jealousy and other forms of filthiness of the spirit disappear.¹⁴⁰

Akinola, following Kumuyi's doctrine, describes sanctification as:

An experience after you are born again. When you are born again you are redeemed from outward sin, the actual sin you practice. Yet there exists the tendency to sin in the heart of somebody who is born again, you still have the tendency to sin. There will be battling with you wanting to sin. You won't be able to love freely. That is proof of the Adamic nature, the sin nature we inherited from Adam and Eve, which is dealt away with at sanctification. So when you are sanctified, the Adamic nature, that tendency to sin, the inability to love freely, is uprooted and you are now able to love and have the mind of Christ in you.¹⁴¹

The trouble with this Holiness Movement doctrine of sanctification is that once having attained sanctification one may lose it. This raises the question of can one be re-sanctified.

According to Ojo, Kumuyi maintains that:

... if one is indolent or impatient or selfish or too ambitious or speaking harshly or roughly or making any unkind criticism or having self-confidence, living luxuriously or yielding to temptation or making jokes, or laughing loudly, or making boisterous gestures. All these are regarded as likely to divert one's mind from divine things and are therefor possible causes for the loss of the sanctification experience.¹⁴²

Other possible ways of losing one's sanctification are; driving a vehicle that is not road-worthy, not possessing a valid driving licence, not being polite to other road users, owning a television which is "one of the things of the world", and dressing expensively. In *Deeper Life*, fear of witch curses motivates and encourages the striving after a holy sinless life. Kumuyi in

Cures and Curses (1990) claims:

A curse cannot be inflicted on a family or on an individual without a cause. Whatever way we see it, calamity, disease, sickness, problems and misery are offshoots of a curse.... You can ride on a crest of victory throughout your pilgrimage on earth. But everything depends on you. If you invite a curse it will come. How? By disobeying the Lord If you fail to hearken to the word of God a curse will come upon you. If you commit sin, you are building a bridge on which the devil will walk to inflict a curse upon you.¹⁴³

Believers' lives become open to the Devil, or more directly, witch-spirits and destroying spirits, through "contacts with the occult or secret societies" and the possession of "objects, or articles that link you with the occult".¹⁴⁴

After the sanctification experience comes the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, another crisis experience which is consummated by speaking in tongues. This three stage salvation

process fits well into the West African indigenous pneumatological background where the initiation rite of circumcision is followed by ritual washing which in turn is followed by sacrifice, oath taking and the disclosure of society secrets, one of which is often a secret language. Kurnuyi differentiates between the two experiences:

Sanctification is for purity while the Holy Ghost baptism and its accompanying evidence of speaking in tongues is to help us in God's service.... Sanctification purifies the heart and cleanses from the defilements of the spirit. It is after sanctification that we can go ahead and pray to be baptised in the Holy Ghost. The initial evidence that we have been baptised is when we speak in a new tongue.¹⁴⁵

Akinola testifies to his own baptism in the Holy Spirit:

It took a long time, years, before I was convinced of such an experience, because of my Baptist background. The day I got this baptism in the Holy Spirit I could preach it and people would receive the Holy Spirit baptism. The day I got baptised in the Holy Spirit I was ministering to students at the Carew Teachers' College. The hall was full and that subject was given to me to treat. Many people were actually baptised and some even received gifts of the Spirit, prophecy, word of knowledge and different types of gifts. That day as they were receiving, because it was so wonderful how everything happened, I also desired it. As I was praying for them, and equally claiming for myself, it was then the miracle just took place and I saw myself speaking in tongues without anybody teaching me how. It just took place because I desired it in my heart and I was claiming it by faith. Therefore God released His promise unto me and I was being filled with the Holy Ghost. It became a wonderful experience. So from that day till now I know the reality of these things. It just happened. It was another language totally. It automatically happened like that because the Bible says in Acts chapter one, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you", and equally it says you shall speak in another tongue you never knew before. That was how it happened.

I knew that now the Holy Spirit had come upon me. It didn't shake me. It didn't hit me to the ground. No! He is a gentle dove. He just comes in like that to perform His operation. That is how I spoke in tongues. It brought power into me because from the day I got baptised in the Holy Ghost my preaching changed, everything changed. My preaching is now much more lively and powerful than it was, and equally has a more powerful effect in the hearts of the hearers than when I was not baptised in the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost baptism is power. Miracles are now taking place which were not taking place in my life before. I started asking for the gifts of the Spirit; word of knowledge, healing, miracles, discernment of spirits and prophecy. By the grace of God the Lord has been able to give me some of them, because I claimed from the Lord and the Lord fulfilled His promise.¹⁴⁶

While Akinola emphasises miracles and his miracle-working ministry, it is the *charisma* of healings that is predominantly in focus in his ministry and that attracts people to the church. Deeper Life's emphasis on healing developed gradually from the late 70s, but became the

dominant aspect of Kumuyi's ministry, according to Ojo, in the 1980s. Since then, Kumuyi's image has become that of a "miracle worker", and Deeper Life Bible Church is perceived as a "a place where God answers great prayers".¹⁴⁷ During this period the Pentecostal elements in Kumuyi's background, encouraged by his exposure to the Charismatic Movement and Neopentecostalism, have transcended those of Scripture Union in Kumuyi's evangelism and ministry. This has in turn influenced the approach and style of his ministers, including Pastor Akinola in Freetown. Testimonies to healings and other miracles are now the church's most powerful evangelistic weapon in its programme of expansion. The operation of the *charismata* have superseded personal evangelism and tract distribution as the movement's major evangelistic thrust. According to Kumuyi:

Miracles, casting out of devils, miracles of *changed lives* and other manifestations of God's miraculous power always attest to the calling and gift of God upon a real evangelist. Men of God in the Bible like Elijah, Elisha, David, Isaiah, Moses, Abraham, Jacob, Joshua, Daniel, etc. all had supernatural experiences in their lives and ministries. The ministry of an evangelist can not be separated from the ministry of working miracles.¹⁴⁸

Within the present West African context, a "signs and wonders" evangelism which can produce some testimony to its efficacy, has an almost irresistible drawing power and an inbred self-generating force for expansion. The larger the crowd, the more numerous and dramatic the testimonies in word and print. This in turn draws even greater crowds and more dramatic miracles of healing. An "evangelism explosion" through *charismata*, has taken place in Kumuyi's Lagos congregation since 1982. This is also the case in the mass healing campaigns of German Pentecostal evangelist Reinhard Bonnke. His Freetown Crusade in 1991 will be looked at shortly.

Akinola uses standard Deeper Life advertising. A typical flyer heading invites people to come for, ANOINTED TEACHINGS, TRANSFORMATION OF SOULS, DELIVERANCE FROM EVIL SPIRITS, BAD LUCK FEAR AND WORRY. SIGNS WONDERS, AND PROSPERITY FOR ALL. The school auditorium is in a derelict condition, dirty and badly

needing painting. Several missing sheets of hard-board expose the corrugated-iron exterior. All the panes are missing from the windows and most of the window-frames are damaged. However, most of the lights and fans work when there is an electricity supply. The congregation, mainly low-income females, several with their babies strapped on their backs, sit on simple, back-less wooden benches. Adult Sunday school starts at 9:30 and lasts for about fifty minutes. They use the church's *Search the Scriptures* notes and split into two groups. The larger group of over 70 is led by Bose Akinola, the other, numbering around 40, is led by an assistant after the style of the Pastor. The expository Bible teaching emphasises the importance of sound doctrine, sanctification, obeying Bible instructions to the letter, and the person of Christ. According to Mrs. Akinola, "You don't need to sprinkle water, or kill lambs, or roll. You only need Jesus."¹⁴⁹ A major feature of her teaching is exposing what she sees as the errors of the Spiritual churches, which she declares, "are not of Christ". She condemns their animal sacrifices and gives an example of a woman who went to a Spiritual church, was told she was going to die unless she got a goat and put it into the sea. The woman did not sacrifice the goat and did not die.¹⁵⁰ During the question and answer session which follows, the most popular questions are variations on, "How can a human being live a perfect holy life in this world?" The invariable answer, using Titus 2:12 as a proof text, is that one can live a sinless life "through the grace of God". The session ends with Mrs. Akinola exhorting all to have personal faith in a miracle:

If you have personal faith everyday will be a bundle of miracles. Personal faith says, "I must get to Deeper Life and there I know that I will be healed or receive my miracle."¹⁵¹

At this point, with people coming in for the main service and children moving around, Mrs. Akinola has to shout to make herself heard.

Mrs. Akinola usually leads the first part of the service, a warm-up with hymn and chorus accompanied by a fairly stylised and regular hand-clapping. Individuals improvise as the

atmosphere livens up. The hymns are mainly Pentecostal and Holiness Movement favourites. In Deeper Life there is no dancing. The cheerful abandon of churches like Bethel Temple and Jesus is Lord Ministry is replaced by a disciplined and somewhat Spartan self-control. The Nigerian holiness type of worship seems to inhibit the Sierra Leoneans' natural spontaneity in worship. In the open prayer time everyone prays individually and fervently, and the noise level rises to a crescendo. When Mrs. Akinola calls out loudly, "In Jesus' name we pray!" the congregation respond with a loud, "Amen!" and calms down immediately. Pastor Akinola, in suit and tie, comes forward, shouts "Praise the Lord!" several times and prays. He heavily emphasises and intones the phrase "In Jesus' name!" and repeats it frequently. The phrase "In Jesus' name!" is perceived by speaker and hearers alike as words of power which bring into operation the power of God and guarantee an answer to each particular prayer request. Provided, of course, that the person being prayed for has confessed and forsaken all sin and has "absolute trust in Jesus". The collection, in typical Deeper Life fashion, is raised above the head and blessed by Akinola before being uplifted by the ushers. The ever popular chorus, "We bring a sacrifice of praise into the house of the Lord", is sung. Despite the obvious poverty of many, the giving is a cheerful act of worship. As this part of the service ends, newcomers are welcomed. They are invited to sit at the front in order to be greeted personally after the service, prayed for, and invited to come back.

Before preaching, Akinola binds and drives out all evil spirits, having already done the same in his earlier prayer. The message is in English. An interpreter translates into Krio for a group of around 30 seated at the back. Sin, which causes the loss of one's sanctification and prevents one receiving one's miracle and blessing, is the theme of most sermons. The Holiness emphasis eclipses the Pentecostal in Akinola's preaching. Akinola downplays speaking in tongues. He declares:

The power of God is here today! Those who open up, not cover up, obtain that power and miracles. Some think speaking in tongues will get them to heaven. When there is tongues or dancing they say, "The Spirit moved today!" Are they Spirit filled just

because they speak in tongues and dance before God? They deceive themselves. God is omniscient. A holy life, not tongues or dancing, is what obtains God's power.¹⁵²

He fiercely attacks immorality, particularly adultery, fornication, wife-beating and desertion, and "Reverends who drink beer, have girlfriends, and indulge in traditional religious practices".¹⁵³

You will not see many Reverends or pastors in the Kingdom of God. They end in the fire where there is no water. Proverbs 14:12 says, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Psalm 9:17 says, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, shall inherit the Kingdom of God. Fornicators, sorcerers, witches and wizards, will go to the lake of fire. Bring your Bibles and see for yourselves.¹⁵⁴

Every fetish and talisman must be destroyed. Witchcraft, medicine-men and traditional healers are denounced, so is secret society involvement. On secret societies:

These are devilish people. We don't entertain them at all. We preach against their practices. So many are involved. If you are not willing to abandon these societies you will not find community in this church. There is no day when we don't pray against these things.¹⁵⁵

As for communicating with the ancestors, he maintains:

The person who contacts ancestors ends in destruction. Those who invoke dead spirits will go to destruction. That is what we call necromancy and it is contrary to God's Word. It is sin. Anybody who does it sins. We preach against it. We do tell them it is sinful and idolatry as well.¹⁵⁶

There is joy, peace and assurance in going along the narrow way because Jesus is in the heart. An inward decision to turn from sin and follow Christ is necessary for salvation. One must strive and struggle determinedly to enter in. Each point in the sermon is pressed home with a string of Biblical texts. Anyone falling asleep during Akinola's very loud, hour-long delivery, is prodded awake by the ushers who walk up and down the aisle keeping a watchful eye on the congregation. The emphasis on Jesus Christ is also strong and pervasive and Akinola powerfully presents Him as the one who solves all our problems whether sickness, demons, barrenness, marriage or joblessness. Christ - not the fetish priest, or the Spiritual prophet who asks for money, candles and chicken sacrifices - is the only one to go to for help

and victory. Marriage and finding Biblical solutions to marital problems are also popular preaching themes. Barrenness can be removed through prayer and faith; this is a great miracle and demonstration of the power of God. Numerous texts from all over the Bible are referred to, and there is no doubt that the Bible, literally interpreted, is the supreme authority in the church and that Akinola and his wife handle it sincerely and enthusiastically.

During the prayer ministry which follows the sermon, those needing a miracle gather at the front. The claiming of their miracle is noisy, somewhat frenzied, with lots of shouting as Satan and his works are attacked. Akinola, using the mike, shouts above them all. There is not much tongues speaking, but lots of crying out, "In Jesus name!" The point of contact with the supernatural power of God occurs when Akinola, the man of God, authoritatively intones in his own distinctive way, "In Jesus' name we pray!" Whenever this is heard a temporary hush descends. Akinola, like Kumuyi, seems influenced by the Hagin's word(*rhema*)-faith technique for answered prayers; name it and claim it. However, the perception that if the performance is correct God is obligated to act is indigenous. He frequently exhorts, "Claim it, believe, and God will give you what you want!" The sick - around 80% of those seeking a miracle cure are women - are told to put one hand on the sick part and raise the other to the Lord. Akinola clearly ministers as a man of prayer and spiritual power with a very loud delivery and this encourages the congregation to shout loudly during the prayer ministry session. Those showing signs of frenzy and loss of control are quickly led away by the ever alert ushers. Most of the testimonies given afterwards concern deliverance from headache, stomach and other bodily pains. At one meeting, a lady testified to being touched by God, shaking and feeling heat in her stomach.¹⁵⁷ A very large woman declared a large boil on her leg had been healed as a cool breeze passed over her body. Several testified to having placed their hands on their problem areas and their pains disappearing. One man claimed to have been healed of an eye problem and being able to see much more clearly. People rejoice and are uplifted by these testimonies. Shouts of "Praise the Lord!" and "Hallelujah!"

ring out. Some of those healed testify to a sensation of heat and a feeling like electricity touching their bodies. While clear-cut miracles are rare, more general therapeutic healings certainly do take place. Being cured of the curse of barrenness is the most common major healing miracle. Deliverance from demons is a vital part of the prayer ministry. According to Akinola, the most powerful demon he confronts is "*Mami Wata* Spirit" or "Night Husband":

It is so rampant. It is a terrible demon that appears to women and has affairs with them. It does a lot of evil. It makes them barren. When they give birth to children, the children die after two or three years. If they have another one it dies too. Some women don't realise it is evil, they think it comes because of bad luck. It is a very terrible demon that draws women away from their husbands and causes havoc. It breaks homes. Such a demon is found in riverine areas. It is encouraged by the immorality and lust of the people. This demon causes serious abdominal pains. You get rid of it by confessing, repenting and giving your life to Jesus. I've helped more than two-hundred. One woman had the demon for thirty-eight years, but she is now a strong member of the church. Another lady had a more terrible demon for eight years. It would have affairs with her even in the daytime. "Night Wives" have affairs with men.¹⁵⁸

There are so many people who are in such need. Praise God there is the power of Christ to save, heal and deliver. People need help. They come here for help, for salvation, for healing, for deliverance, for something. Praise God, He is present to save, heal, deliver, and meet the needs of His own and the poor.¹⁵⁹

After a period of impressive growth, the rate of expansion has slowed down. There are now more indigenous and culturally compatible Pentecostal-evangelical alternatives in the city. Deeper Life Bible Church, with its emphasis on a holy Christian lifestyle, strongly challenged Sierra Leone Christians to avoid moral laxness and live holy lives. While more African in background and style than Christians in Action, they are unlikely to attract Sierra Leoneans *en masse* because of their particular Nigerian style of the worship, their legalism, and their restraint on native spontaneity, dance, music, rhythm, and bodily expression. However, both Akinolas exercise dynamic ministries and minister powerfully in preaching and prayer. Their propaganda, which unashamedly promises healings, success and miracles, attracts many poor, especially women who are barren or fear the possibility. In an attempt to attract the upper echelons of society, monthly Thursday night International Friendship League (IFL) meetings were held in the Miatta Conference Hall in 1988, and advertised as:

A Christian Organisation reaching out, under the auspices of the Deeper Life Bible Church, to all men and women especially those in upper classes of the society. God wants great men to attain true greatness. IFL offers you a world of possibilities. Come up higher. The sky is your limit. The best of your potential is yet to emerge.

There was some early success, mainly due to the heavy advertising and the attraction of having prayer ministry for miracle healing and "to mount up higher in the ladder of success, victory and satisfaction in life". Some months over 500 attended. However, the meetings became increasingly irregular, for one reason or another, and petered out after a year, having done little to change the low income constituency of the congregation. At Deeper Life Bible Church there is no doubt that in the power charged atmosphere of the ministry time healings do take place. Many find relief from deep emotional and psychological traumas, problems are solved, and the Gospel, in a very forceful and undiluted form is preached to the poor. Yet the church's legalism in life-style and worship, while attractive to some, inhibits growth on a large scale in Sierra Leone. Jesus is Lord Ministry, which is presently experiencing phenomenal grass-roots expansion, and will be studied in the following chapter, was founded by a former member of Deeper Life Bible Church, and has developed as an independent, indigenous, and highly attractive, extension of that Nigerian Holiness-Pentecostal church. This church will be studied within the context of the recent explosion of dynamic independent grass-roots Pentecostal-evangelical churches in Freetown, and the expansion of Pentecostal-evangelicalism which has entered a new and highly significant phase following the 1990 AOG Task Force Evangelism Crusade and the 1991 Reinhard Bonnke Freetown Crusade.

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- 1 Recorded interview held with Ruth Heflin at K22, FBC, Freetown, on 10/5/90.
 - 2 This was the first of three visits by Pastor Jones to Virginia.
 - 3 Jones, *ibid.*
 - 4 Recorded interview held with Rev. M. E. Renner-Lewis at K22, FBC, Freetown, on 7/3/90.
 - 5 Ruth Heflin, *ibid.*
 - 6 Numbers attending the Institute in 1987 dropped to six. Much of the blame was placed on the economic situation and the difficulties of transport. With the Bible College of Sierra Leone at Jui and Evangel Bible College at Murray Town, it was a very competitive field.
 - 7 Recorded interview held with Mrs. Irene Chinsman at Bethel Temple, Tower Hill, Freetown, on 14/5/90.
 - 8 The Missionette Club has a hierarchy of Daisies (5-6), Primroses (7-8), Junior Missionettes (9-12), and Senior Missionettes (13-16).
 - 9 Jones, *ibid.*
 - 10 Elizabeth A. Musa, *Religious Groups - a Case Study of Bethel Temple and the Church of the Lord (Aladura)*, a dissertation submitted to the Department of History, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1985.
 - 11 Jones, *ibid.*
 - 12 *Ibid.*
 - 13 Personal conversation with Professor Fashole-Luke.
 - 14 Extract is taken from the teachers' instruction sheets for water baptism classes.
 - 15 Jones, *ibid.*
 - 16 *Ibid.*
 - 17 *Ibid.*
 - 18 Hollenweger, *ibid.*, p.133. For Hollenweger's study of Nicholas Bhengu, who became known as the "black Billy Graham" see, *ibid.*, pp.126-39.
 - 19 Jones, *ibid.*
 - 20 This definition of salvation is found in the teachers' instruction sheets for water baptism classes.
 - 21 Jones, *ibid.*
 - 22 Article 8, section 5, sub-sections a (1) and (2), of the Revised By-laws adopted by the 35th AOG General Council in Miami in 1973.
 - 23 Jones, *ibid.*
 - 24 *Ibid.*
 - 25 *Ibid.*
 - 26 *Ibid.*
 - 27 *Ibid.*
 - 28 *Ibid.*
 - 29 Comment made in 1992 by Jehu Hanciles, a former student at Evangel, now in Edinburgh writing up a doctoral thesis on the Sierra Leone Native Pastorate.
 - 30 Task Force Evangelism was launched in Paraguay in 1981. It was the vision of Loren Triplett, AOG Field Director in Paraguay, the other AOG missionaries and the national ministers. "We chose the name 'Task Force' because we believe that as Christians we are the army of the Lord and that a spiritual invasion was called for," said Triplett. The goal was to plant fifteen new churches in a country where church growth was static. Yellow and white tents were set up in various urban centres. Miracles of healing drew large crowds, new congregations were formed and church buildings constructed. Twenty-five new churches were established within a couple of years. Another Task Force was organised for Chile in 1986. Fifteen churches were planted. Afterwards Task Forces visited Uruguay and Argentina. Sierra Leone was targeted for Task Force evangelism in 1989.
 - 31 Conversation held with Leslie Shyllon Jr. at FBC, Freetown, on 1/6/90.
 - 32 Most of the historical background is taken from Stephen Kandeh, *God is Our Light*, a dissertation submitted to the Department of History, Fourah Bay College, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1991.

- 33 Joyce B. Musa, *God is Our Light Church, Jomo Kenyatta Road, Freetown*, an essay submitted to the Department of Sociology, Fourah Bay College, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, March 1991, p.2.
- 34 For more details of the legal proceedings see, Kandeh, *ibid.*
- 35 Robert T. Parsons, (1964), p.232.
- 36 *Ibid.*
- 37 Kandeh, *ibid.*, p.67.
- 38 *Ibid.*, p.68.
- 39 *Ibid.*, p.15. File No. P/62. Ministry of the Interior - District Office, Kono. 28/2/64.
- 40 *Ibid.*, p.17.
- 41 *Ibid.*
- 42 Interview held with Dr. Kanu at his home at H10, Kortright, Freetown, on 9/6/92.
- 43 *Ibid.*
- 44 Kandeh, *ibid.*, p.61.
- 45 *Ibid.*, p.ii.
- 46 *Ibid.*
- 47 Kanu, *ibid.*
- 48 *Ibid.*
- 49 Kandeh, *ibid.*, p.i.
- 50 Ref, pp.458-62, 481-3, above.
- 51 Jones, *ibid.*
- 52 Recorded interview held with General Superintendent Bankole Sesay and District Secretary T. A. Koroma at 85 Fort Street, Freetown, on 28/6/90.
- 53 Ref. pp.462-5, above.
- 54 David L. Kallay, *A Study of the National Pentecostal Limba Church, Fort Street, Freetown*, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, Fourah Bay College, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1991, p.4-5.
- 55 Interview held with Rev. Morie S. Ngobeh at 42 Fort Street, Freetown, on 10/5/92.
- 56 Interview held with Russ Tatro of Rhema Bible Church and the Freetown Bible Training Centre at K22, Kortright, Freetown on 4/4/92.
- 57 Recorded interview held with Rev. T. A. Koroma at 85 Fort Street, Freetown, on 28/6/90.
- 58 *Ibid.*
- 59 *Ibid.*
- 60 Kallay, *ibid.*, p.9.
- 61 Bankole Sesay and T. A. Koroma, *ibid.*
- 62 The Theological Hall and Church Training Centre was founded in 1975 by the joint efforts of Anglican Bishop Scott, the prime mover, Rev. S. L. Wallace, President of the Methodist Church of Sierra Leone, and Bishop B. A. Carew of the United Methodist Church. The premises at Bishop's Court were badly damaged by the fall of a huge cotton tree and rendered unfit for further use. The old Methodist Boys' High School at Soldier Street was refurbished and made into the new home for the Hall.
- 63 The first president of Christians in Action, Rev. Lee Shelley, began a missionary training programme in 1958 with two candidates, one of whom was Elgin Taylor who is now president of Christians in Action Missions International which, in 1990, had missionaries in twenty-one countries.
- 64 Much of the information on CinA was obtained in conversations with missionary Rev. Alan Goerz. Most is recorded on tapes of an interview held at K22, Kortright, Freetown, on 20/3/90.
- 65 Cheale moved on from there to pastor SIM's International Church at ELWA Camp in Monrovia.
- 66 Goerz, *ibid.*
- 67 Conversation held with Raymond Attawia, National Superintendent of Christians in Action Sierra Leone, at the CLC Bookshop, Circular Road, Freetown, on 7/7/92.

- 68 Goerz, *ibid.*
- 69 *ibid.*
- 70 EFSL/YWAM 1990 Greater Freetown Church Survey.
- 71 Church pamphlet entitled **Christians in Action Church Membership Standards**, p.1.
- 72 Ref. pp.217-21, 225-32, 236-9 above.
- 73 Larty-Baker, *ibid.*
- 74 Recorded interview held with Bishop Jenkins of the Christ Apostolic Church in Sierra Leone at 3 Ferguson Lane, Freetown, on 6/7/92.
- 75 Larty-Baker, *ibid.* Larty-Baker is a personal friend of Bishop Thompson. They studied together at the Christ Apostolic college in Nigeria.
- 76 Bishop Jenkins, *ibid.*
- 77 *ibid.*
- 78 Christ Apostolic Church's 1991 Report.
- 79 Bishop Jenkins, *ibid.*
- 80 Synan, (1992), p.16.
- 81 Recorded interview held with Bill Kallon at his residence at 1a, Old Railway Line, Tengbe Town, Freetown, on 25/5/90.
- 82 Conversation held with Bill Kallon at his home at 16 King Street, Freetown, on 15/6/92.
- 83 Kallon, 25/5/90.
- 84 *ibid.*
- 85 Ibrahim Sannoh, **A Study of the New Testament Church**, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, Fourah Bay College, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1991, p.5.
- 86 Recorded conversation held with Bill Kallon at his residence at 1a, Old Railway Line, Wilberforce, Freetown, on 25/5/90.
- 87 Kallon, *ibid.*
- 88 *ibid.*
- 89 *ibid.*
- 90 Kallon, 15/6/92.
- 91 Kallon, 25/5/90.
- 92 *ibid.*
- 93 *ibid.*
- 94 *ibid.*
- 95 New Testament Church service attended at the Technical Institute on 14/5/90.
- 96 New Testament Church service attended at the Technical Institute on 7/6/92.
- 97 New Testament Church service attended at the Technical Institute on 14/1/90.
- 98 New Testament Church service attended at the Technical Institute on 14/5/90.
- 99 New Testament Church service attended at the Technical Institute on 19/4/92.
- 100 New Testament Church service attended at the Technical Institute on 7/6/92.
- 101 *ibid.*
- 102 Conversation held with a Mr. Macaulay at the Technical Institute on 7/6/92.
- 103 Kallon, 15/6/92.
- 104 New Testament Church service attended at the Technical Institute on 3/12/89.
- 105 A. Elizabeth Dodge Tyson, **An Analysis of Neopentecostal Mission Theology, 1960-1990: Four Case Studies**, (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 1993), pp.41-42.
- 106 For the history and theological assessment of Deeper Life Bible Church see, Tyson, *ibid.*, pp.31-42; Alan Isaacson, **Deeper Life: the Extraordinary Growth of the Deeper Life Bible Church**, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1990); Matthews A. Ojo, "Deeper Life Ministry: a Case Study of the Charismatic Movements in Western Nigeria" in **Journal of Religion in Africa**, 8, 1988, pp.141-62.
- 107 Synan, *ibid.*, pp.34-35.
- 108 Isaacson, *ibid.*, p.60.
- 109 Ojo, *ibid.*, p.145.
- 110 Isaacson, *ibid.*, p.94.
- 111 Ojo, *ibid.*, p.146.

- 112 Recorded interview held with Pastor Felix Akinola of Deeper Life Bible Church, Freetown, at his residence at 7A Cannon Street, Freetown, on 29/5/90.
- 113 Isaacson, *ibid.*, p.97.
- 114 *ibid.*, p.100.
- 115 Ojo, *ibid.*, p.149. For more details see Matthew A. Ojo, *The Growth of Campus Christianity and the Charismatic Movements in Western Nigeria*, (PhD diss., University of London, 1986).
- 116 Ojo, *ibid.*, p.155, quoting from Kumuyi's publication *Holiness Made Easy*, p.5..
- 117 Isaacson, *ibid.*, p.105.
- 118 *ibid.*
- 119 The 1990 *Almanac of the Christian World* gives a Sunday worship attendance of 70,000 making it the third largest single congregation in the world and the largest in Africa. Synan, *ibid.*, p.16.
- Some of the provincial congregations number 8,000 to 10,000 members. The present overall membership of Deeper Life Bible Church exceeds 200,000. There are over 1,000 congregations, mostly in Nigeria, but with mission churches established in Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, the Philippines, USA and Britain.
- While Kumuyi is a Yoruba and the Yoruba constitute the largest single grouping in the church, because of the Western and universal features of the worship, Deeper Life Bible Church has had a much wider international appeal than Church of the Lord (Aladura) which was limited by its distinctively Yoruba style. While the modern Westernised features of the worship and ministry are helpful in attracting the educated youth of Nigeria, and while Kumuyi's Yoruba organising and administrative talent is vital, the main reason for the phenomenal growth of Deeper Life Bible Church, in an area of Africa where the present movement towards Christianity must be seen against the background of inexorable Islamic advances, is that from Kumuyi down, it genuinely and sincerely seeks to meet the felt-needs of African people through a Holy Spirit dynamism whose intention is to harmonise evangelical Bible teaching with an authentic and practically outworked Christian lifestyle.
- 120 Isaacson, *ibid.*, pp.57f.
- 121 *ibid.*
- 122 Isaacson, *ibid.*, pp.67-68.
- 123 Ojo, (1988), p.156.
- 124 Isaacson, *ibid.*, pp.71-73.
- 125 Ojo, *ibid.*, pp.156-7.
- 126 Isaacson, *ibid.*, p.112.
- 127 Tyson, *ibid.*, p.36.
- 128 For a perceptive treatment of Hagin's teaching and the growth of the Rhema movement which emphasises health and success as part of the present Christian inheritance which is to be claimed and possessed now, see Tyson, *ibid.*, pp.22-31.
- 129 Akinola, *ibid.*
- 130 *ibid.*
- 131 *ibid.*
- 132 *ibid.*
- 133 *ibid.*
- 134 EFSL/YWAM 1990 Greater Freetown Church Survey.
- 135 Akinola, *ibid.*
- 136 *ibid.*
- 137 *ibid.*
- 138 Ojo, *ibid.*, p.155, quoting from Kumuyi's *Complete Bible Study Series*, p.76.
- 139 Ojo, *ibid.*
- 140 Tyson, *ibid.*, pp.35-36, quoting from Kumuyi's *Essentials of Christian Living*, (Lagos: 1985), p.17.
- 141 Akinola, *ibid.*
- 142 Ojo, *ibid.*

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- 143 *Ibid.*, quoting from Kumuyi, *Curses and Cures*, (Lagos: 1990), pp.5-7.
- 144 *Ibid.*, quoting from Kumuyi, *ibid.*, pp.28-30.
- 145 William F. Kumuyi, "The Counsellor" in *Deeper Life*, 1(3), October 1989, pp.4-5.
- 146 Akinola, *ibid.*
- 147 Ojo, *ibid.*, p.156.
- 148 William F. Kumuyi, "The Portrait of a New Testament Evangelist" in *Deeper Life World Missions*, July/August 1986, p.5.
- 149 Teaching given on 15/10/89.
- 150 Teaching given on 27/5/90.
- 151 Quoting from a sermon delivered on 5/11/89.
- 152 Quoting from a sermon delivered on 29/3/92.
- 153 Quoting from a sermon delivered on 27/11/89.
- 154 *Ibid.*
- 155 Akinola, *ibid.*
- 156 *Ibid.*
- 157 Meeting attended on 27/10/89.
- 158 Akinola, *ibid.*
- 159 Quoting from a sermon delivered on 27/11/89.

CHAPTER NINE

RECENT FREETOWN MASS EVANGELISM CRUSADES AND THE PRESENT STATE OF THE PENTECOSTAL-EVANGELICAL CHURCHES

THE AOG 1990 TASK-FORCE EVANGELISM CRUSADE

Because of the obvious need for an evangelistic thrust, and the fact that AOG felt their oldest Africa field had been comparatively unfruitful, Sierra Leone was targeted for Task-Force Evangelism in 1988.¹ Following the main campaign at the Freetown stadium, ongoing tent crusades were to be held in Freetown and up-country, until churches with national pastors were established on the tent sites. Jimmy Swaggart was to come to Freetown at the end of February 1988 and five new churches were to be established in the city.² AOG were disappointed with their growth rate in Sierra Leone, a field where they have had missionaries for seventy years. Comparisons were made with Burkina Faso where the AOG church is "growing by leaps and bounds".³ It was admitted that in the Muslim areas, "we have been working with dedicated people, but have had very little results".⁴ Comparison was also made with Cote d'Ivoire where work was begun about thirty years ago by the French AOG and American AOG arrived fifteen years later. In 1987 there were 325 AOG churches and some 40,000 believers in Cote d'Ivoire. According to Africa Area representative Jim Bryant:

Ivory Coast is an exciting place where things are happening. The biggest problem we face there is that the organisational and financial structure of the church has not developed with its growth. We have a big church with many officials and churches, but the leadership and organisational aspects have not been preparing to move along with its growth.... Ivory Coast is a positive place. We can talk about what God is doing there. But we cannot talk about what is happening in Sierra Leone. We can only talk about the things we have planned.... We are trusting God to give the breakthrough.⁵

Concerning Sierra Leone, Bryant stated:

We have had missionaries in Sierra Leone for 70 years, almost since the beginning of the Assemblies of God. But for some reason, we have never really gotten the handle

on things in Sierra Leone, as a mission. There are not many results of our labours that we can point to. Statistics show that we have about 50 churches with 8,000 believers, which is not much to show after 70 years of ministry. In other countries where we have been for 25 or 30 years, there are up to 80, 000 believers. I don't know the reason; we have had some good missionaries there.... We don't know why the work in one place grows, while the work in another seems to stand still. We have no victory stories to tell about Sierra Leone. It has been very frustrating, especially for the missionaries who minister there.⁶

Bryant went on to outline a new approach which looked rather like a larger and more determined version of the old. The new features were investment in tents and determination to stay with the tent crusades until churches were planted.

We have planned tent evangelism and crusades for January, February and March (1988) in Freetown, the capital city.... Jimmy Swaggart has a crusade planned for Freetown in February or March. We have bought 5 tents to have a great evangelistic thrust to spark something in the capital city, hoping that if we can do this in an effective, powerful way, it will spread throughout the country. Until now, we haven't anything to brag about in Sierra Leone, no success stories to tell.⁷

Bryant's success oriented approach failed to recognise the social, cultural, economic, political, ethnic and religious complexities of the Sierra Leone situation, and the plethora of particular factors which have hindered church growth in the past, not least of which has been missionary ethnocentrism, a criticism that is frequently voiced against AOG missionaries by their own national pastors and also by evangelical church leaders such as Donald Osman and Crispin Cole of EFSL. Little account was taken of the power of indigenous societies and the pervasive expansion of Islam through its generally non-confrontational approach. Neither was mention made of the difficulties involved in planting a Pentecostal church in Freetown where Anglicanism and Methodism dominated the Christian scene from the founding of the colony. Bryant did not seem aware of the impressive growth of Pentecostalism among the Limba and Loko in Freetown since they broke with AOG in 1969, and the fact that had they remained within AOG, the statistics would have presented a much rosier picture.

The growth which had taken place in AOG, being accompanied by the founding of two Bible schools and the expansion of a body of trained evangelists and pastors, had been soundly based, despite the element of foreignness almost inevitably introduced by the American missionaries. Thus the AOG churches in Freetown, and in Sierra Leone generally, were

reasonably well prepared for a positive forward thrust when Task-Force Evangelism did eventually get underway in January 1990. While Task-Force Evangelism did produce some good results and an encouraging expansion of AOG work in Freetown in particular, it was the Reinhard Bonnke Crusade of December 1991 which finally brought the Freetown churches, including AOG, into the area of "breakthrough". It has, however, become obvious that while mass evangelism crusades do provide a stimulus to church growth, make some permanent converts - although only a fraction of those multitudes who make decisions continue - and dramatically advertise the Christian cause, in themselves they are not, as Pastor King of Evangel Church maintained, the answer to the problems of church planting and expansion in Sierra Leone. Soundly based AOG and Pentecostal-evangelical expansion depends mainly on the solid foundations already laid by the founding fathers of the churches and the calibre of their trained leadership. AOG Sierra Leone, and Pentecostal-evangelical churches generally, have entered a period of significant expansion. AOG has an important role to perform in this revival movement and along with several other major players such as Bethel Temple, Deeper Life, New Testament Church, National Pentecostal Church, and Jesus is Lord Ministries, put their own distinctive stamp on its direction and character.

A Survey of Church Growth based on the YWAM/EFSL 1990 Greater Freetown Survey Statistics

The 1990 Greater Freetown Church Survey was initially conceived by Scott Morey of Youth with a Mission (YWAM) as part of the YWAM's evangelistic strategy for Freetown and Sierra Leone. The work, hampered by transport difficulties, over-stretched the small research team. They handed their Freetown results over to the Evangelism and Missions Department of the Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone (EFSL) who took on the project as part of its Target 2000 Evangelistic Research Programme for the whole of Sierra Leone. The Freetown research teams attempted to visit every organised church in the Greater Freetown area for at least one Sunday morning service and interview the pastors. This is not an in-depth survey

and caution must be exercised when analysing the statistics. On the findings of the Freetown Survey, Crispin Cole, General Secretary of EFSL, comments:

This area being considered in the report within the national missiological and church context is preconceived as being the most "Christianised" region in Sierra Leone. This conception is firmly held by a lot of clergy and laity within the older and more established denominations. The Survey however challenges these presuppositions bringing into focus the fact that a lot of migrational activities have been going on in Freetown, creating a metropolis consisting of a rich tribal influx and blend from the four corners of the country.

What this further reveals is that the older churches have concentrated their services among isolated tribes or groups who traditionally have embraced Christianity as a culture. At the same time we see that the newer, less formally structured churches who have opened up their services and programmes to all and sundry have scored great gains in the area of evangelised fruits. The report shows that a lot of transfer growth has been going on in the city eluding us from the ideal goal of winning genuine converts from the muslim and animistic population.⁸

The mainline denominations, particularly the Anglicans, suffered a chronic decline in church attendance during the 1970s and 80s. This may be contrasted with the continuous growth rates of AOG over the same period, despite losing the Limba and Loko churches in 1969 and Bethel Temple in 1983. While the Anglican Church claimed a membership of around 25,000 in the Western Area and 20,000 in Freetown, the 1990 Freetown Survey gave their average church attendance on Sunday as 2,569 (1,032 males; 960 females; 577 children). The Methodist Church of Sierra Leone had a baptised membership in 1990 of just over 17,000 for the Western Area, but with an average church attendance in Freetown of 2,274 (727 males; 767 females; 780 children). The United Methodist Church had 1,969 attending, (736 males; 698 females; 535 children). The West African Methodist Church had 1,230 attending (370 males; 440 females; 420 children). The Wesleyan Church of Sierra Leone and the African Methodist Episcopal Church had 715 and 566 respectively. This gave a combined attendance for the five Methodist denominations in Freetown of 6,754. The Roman Catholic Church under the indigenising policy of Archbishop Ganda, was growing slowly and steadily. In Freetown it had a regular attendance, at its eight branches, of 2,991 (1,277 males; 1,051 females; 663 children).⁹ The figure for the Spiritual churches was 3,943 (981 males; 1,783 females; 1,179 children). The largest Spiritual church was the Church of the Lord (Aladura)

with a total attendance, in its 8 Freetown branches, of 560 (160 males; 262 females; 158 children). The Spiritual churches were experiencing growth, but at a much slower rate than the Pentecostal-evangelicals. The total Pentecostal-evangelical figure for church attendance in Freetown in 1990 was 12,059 (4,030 males; 4,684 females; 3,345 children). AOG had a regular attendance of 1,343 (410 males; 537 females; 396 children). These figures indicate that in 1990 the total number of Pentecostal-evangelicals attending church in Freetown was just 255 persons short of the total number attending all the mainline churches, and 2,736 more than the combined Anglican and Methodist (all types) total.

While Anglican attendances continued in decline during the 1980s, and the Methodist churches, with the exception of the Wesleyans, remained fairly stagnant, the numbers attending Pentecostal-evangelical churches were expanding rapidly. In 1990, the mainline Protestant denominations, including the Baptists (9 congregations), Countess of Huntingdon Connection (4 congregations), and smaller evangelical missions like United Brethren in Christ (5 congregations), had 103 churches, with varying sizes of congregations, in the Greater Freetown area. The Anglicans had 18 congregations, the Methodist Church of Sierra Leone had 20 congregations, the West African Methodists had 12 congregations, the United Methodist Church had 12 congregations, the African Methodist Episcopal Church had 10 congregations, and the Wesleyans had 6 congregations. The Roman Catholics, with generally large congregations, had eight churches, including the Sacred Heart Cathedral. The Spirituals had 34 churches. However, the Pentecostal-evangelicals had planted 104 churches. During the 1980s, the mainline Protestant denominations and evangelical missions planted 27 new churches, the Roman Catholics one, and the Spirituals 18, a total of 46. During the same period, the Pentecostal-evangelicals pioneered 77 new churches. Presently, the Pentecostal-evangelicals are moving ahead of the field very strongly, and the gap is inexorably widening. The accelerating growth of the Pentecostal-evangelicals was given an appreciable boost by the AOG Crusade in January 1990, and more especially by the Reinhard Bonnke Freetown Crusade in December 1991. The completely independent,

indigenous, Pentecostal-evangelical churches have now begun to proliferate dramatically, and are the front-runners in the movement. There is an urgent need for another survey.

The Ben Tipton Crusade - January 1990

The Freetown Task-Force Crusade was held in a large marquee in the grounds of the Siaka Stevens Stadium. Each night the tent which housed around 2,000 was packed to overflowing. The Crusade slogan was "HAVE FAITH IN GOD". In the Gospel proclamation section, the major preaching themes were that God would supply one's needs through faith, and that as he had promised to pour out his Spirit on all flesh this was the time and place to receive the Holy Spirit. "Faith," declared AOG's American evangelist Ben Tipton, "is being sure of what you hope for. Faith is being sure, sure I will 'get well bodi'." The story of a man who was given a car as a present drew loud applause from the audience, most of whom were struggling in desperate poverty. "If you need a car desperately and have faith, God will give it to you.!" Healing and miracles were emphasised, but the preacher was at pains to impress that healing is more often gradual than instant. There was little reference to Christ and the Cross at this stage. This was kept for the sinner's prayer at the conclusion of the message when the congregation repeats after the preacher the sinner's confession and are thus "saved". Crispin Cole of EFSL has described this type of evangelism as being an American form of "Prosperity Gospel", and of a different variety to the problem-solving, victory-promising, evangelism of the Spiritual churches.¹⁰ At the end of the Gospel message came the appeal to accept Jesus, although Christ was not "clearly placarded" as crucified as in the evangelism of the Apostle Paul.¹¹ He was presented as a great healer, miracle worker and provider of material possessions. Those who wanted to be "saved" were asked to come forward. Several hundred needy people, who seriously, even desperately, wanted what was being offered, surged forward. On the third night, after the appeal was made, one of the Sierra Leonean pastors, ex-police inspector Dudley Juxon-Smith, took over the microphone to remonstrate with those who came forward for salvation "night after night".

After the Gospel section came the ministry session, the most dynamic and popular part of Pentecostal Gospel crusades. Here Tipton made a serious attempt to contextualise within the "Third Wave" framework of "Power Evangelism" and "Power Encounter". Tipton narrated a "power confrontation" he had with a "witch-doctor" in Ghana. The "witch-doctor" was able to make the lights in the hotel go on and off magically. This caused the residents great fear, but Tipton calmed them by saying, "I circle this area with the blood of Jesus, no evil spirits can enter this area now. All demons go!" The blood of Jesus is presented as a powerful medicine which can secure a safe area in an environment infested with hostile spirits. It parallels the ring of burning candles protecting the Spiritual prophets. An attempt to present Jesus as a super medicine-man fails because what is understood is that Tipton himself is a powerful medicine-man.¹² After the soloist sang "Jesus breaks every fetter", the audience were challenged to come out from Secret Societies and to abandon "juju business" which brings fear and torment. The people nodded their agreement. "You must let go the fetish and let God into your life!" Those who wanted to be free from Society and fetish power were asked to come forward. About five hundred, a quarter of the assembly, went forward to the platform. This time there was no doubt that the audience understood the message clearly and that their response expressed a profound existential reality. Tipton prayed and commanded the demons to go. There was no obvious evidence that they had gone, but what was evident was the desire of many to be free from the burdens and bondages of the fetish and magic system. AOG have from the beginning resolutely maintained a hostile stance against secret societies and the ancestral cult. The meeting concluded with the sick being asked to stand up for prayer. About two hundred arose. They were told to place their hands on the sick area of their bodies. The evangelist's prayer was highly charged and all sicknesses, blindness, deformed limbs, were rebuked in Jesus' Name and ordered to go. The soloist took over and in a fervent prayer claimed authority over all sickness in Jesus' Name. Those who received healing were asked to put up their hands and almost all hands in the tent were raised. It was obvious that two differing world-views, and different perceptions of what was involved in the event, were in operation.

The evening of the 18th concentrated on healing. The preaching emphasised the need for faith and that "according to your faith be it unto you". The audience were told not to come forward for prayer unless they believed Jesus would heal them. The sick were told "Jesus is going to heal you tonight!" As the soloist sang "Only believe" the evangelist called out:

Jesus is here! Jesus is moving through this place now. He is healing sick bodies. Withered hands people come to the front ... withered feet ... the cripples first!

About forty went forward while the crowd watched with mounting excitement. The evangelist called out, "Please be reverent!" Using the faith-action technique popularised by Hagin and the Rhema Movement, he commanded the cripples:

Act in faith! Move in Jesus' Name! Hallelujah! All believers pray now. Be healed right now. Shake your foot.

The music volume raised, the ushers moved among the group exhorting them to move and be healed. On the platform, missionary Lee recorded events with a cam-recorder. The evangelist, realising more was required than faith-action efforts, cried out, "Now pray the sinners' prayer!" After the sinners' prayer he called, "Now pray again for your healing!" He bent over a prostrating body on the platform, calling out, "In Jesus' Name! In Jesus' Name!" and spoke out in tongues. The audience sensed victory and applauded. They pushed forward to see what miracle had happened; many stood on the benches. The atmosphere was joyful and excited and the music played "Jesus breaks every fetter". A young man in blue denims jumped about on the platform. He took the mike and testified to a healing. He confidently called for the chorus "Higher Jesus higher, lower Satan lower", and led the singing himself. He appeared to be getting a lot of mileage out of his cure. A little boy was brought forward who testified that he could walk without pain. He limped along the platform. The evangelist said, "God can heal the boy's leg properly. Stretch out your hands and pray in Jesus' Name. Walk up and down, little boy." The boy walked up and down and then jumped up and down. The crowd applauded. However, the boy was still limping as he came down from the platform. One might be tempted to say that there was not a lot to show for the evening's healing campaign, but at least the audience seemed impressed, and ready to believe that the evangelist did have the power to heal through invoking the Name of Jesus.

Little attention was paid to a final call for "special" prayer for those who wanted to accept Jesus. The evangelist called, "Please be quiet! Respect God! Don't move!" However, amid a lot of noise and confusion, people started moving away. About forty stood before the platform for the final prayer.

Holy Ghost night, another of the pillars of Pentecostal-evangelical evangelism, followed the healing night. It is ironic that here, in their own special area, the baptism in the Holy Spirit, Pentecostal-evangelical evangelists should appear to be at their most ineffective. The historic circumstances which led to this theological anachronism have already been considered. There was no doubting the popular attraction of Holy Ghost power night. Well before the meeting started the tent was filled and hundreds stood around outside. After the chorus "Let the power fall on me, O Lord" was sung, and the leader called out, "We want to shake Sierra Leone!" The congregation became excitedly expectant. Evangelist Tipton declared, "I believe you all love Jesus!" This was quite an assumption of faith. His introduction emphasised demon possession and ju-ju bondages. The demon possessed and the tormented would be set free that night. Loud cheering and applause indicated that for many in the crowd, for one reason or another, there existed a real desire for deliverance.¹³

Indigenous religious practices were declared "worthless":

People say to you "keep your customs, preserve your customs, keep your culture". Hear me tonight, if your custom is contrary to God, forsake your custom, for Jesus has another plan for your life. God's custom is in the Word of God.

Attacks on "ju-jumen", often distrusted and feared, were received with good humour, as also were blows aimed at the secret societies, institutions whose weakening hold permits some criticism to be expressed. No direct attack was mounted against the ancestral cult, the foundation and core of the indigenous religious system in Sierra Leone. Whether this was deliberate policy or accident, it was fortunate, as not only would this have antagonised the audience, but very few could have conceived of the rituals involved in honouring the ancestors, communicating with them, and seeking their mediatorial help, as being contrary to God or an Old Testament anathema.

As the momentum towards Holy Spirit baptism built up the evangelist called out:

You wonder why God has not healed you? Get filled with the Holy Ghost and He will heal you! Get this Holy Ghost power and you will get healed. He will heal your bodies.

At this point sinners were asked to come forward and accept Jesus. Half the audience rushed forward, understanding this to be the first step towards attaining their real goals which were health and spiritual power. Anxiously trying to control the rush, and have the sinners understand the appeal, Tipton called out, "Listen! Listen! Return to your seats now! Go back and sit down!" Confusion followed. "Please, please, help us! Be quiet as you move and please don't talk. Only those who want to accept Jesus into their hearts come forward!" The people kept coming forward. Once again Juxon-Smith came to the rescue, grabbing the mike and shouting, "Dis na serious business. Be serious with God!" The crowd was then directed to the counselling tent. About 700 made their way there. Juxon-Smith took over the leading and introduced the chorus "My spirit magnifies the Lord". He led the singing loudly, then cried out, "Worship the Lord! Rise up on your feet and worship the Lord! Who have not received the baptism in the Holy Spirit and want it?" Some began to clap, others prayed aloud, some in tongues. As the noise level increased one woman burst out in tongues uncontrollably. Another followed. The crowd again surged forward to the platform. Again Juxon-Smith tried to control them, "Be quiet! Be reverent! Stop now! No one else! Ushers stop them! Ushers help us over here! Stop them!" This time even he had to abandon the attempt. He directed the counsellors to mix with the crowd and pray with them. The noise from those praying and attempting to speak in tongues rose to a crescendo. People clapped and waved their arms. Several ladies shrieked. Just as two different world-views intermingled without blending in the nineteenth century evangelisation of the Recaptives by the British evangelical missionaries, so also here, two, probably more, world-views were intermingling in this late twentieth century AOG Gospel event. For many needy people, many of them young mothers with babies strapped to their backs, their hopes of receiving healing and power from on high were not fulfilled. The service ended with a certain feeling of anti-climax. AOG claimed that for the whole Crusade around 3,000 had "accepted" Christ.

Following the Stadium crusade the main Task-Force team, headed by Tipton, moved to Kenema, Segbwema and Moyamba. Another tent crusade was started at Fort Street where an AOG group of about fifty, who had been meeting in the Jane Bloomer Church since 1987, had hired an open area from the Scouts. Over 500 attended nightly and there were 640 decisions for Christ. According to AOG evangelist Don Railey, "A great number of these people were also baptised in the Holy Spirit. A number of miracles of healing were seen as we prayed for the sick nightly."¹⁴ Before each meeting national leaders taught the converts, using International Christian Institute (ICI) courses, and materials printed by Africa Literature Ministries (ALM) in Togo. The tent remained at Fort Street while the evangelistic team moved over to Kissy, a predominantly Muslim area, on 1st February. By August 1990, the Fort Street congregation, called the New Evangelical AOG Church, led by Pastor Manfred Carew, had over 200 attending divine service.

At Kissy, a small AOG congregation of 20, mostly Mende, had been meeting for eight months at the Community Centre with Daniel Taylor as their pastor. They were the fruit of an evangelistic crusade held in May 1987 at the Community Centre by AOG Superintendent Richard Shaka and Daniel Taylor. Taylor had just returned from Lome after completing a BA in Bible and Theology at AOG's Togo seminary.¹⁵ Shaka himself had earlier taken a BA degree in Lome. The congregation at the Community Centre, called Glad Tidings Assembly, asked the AOG Task-Force to hold a tent crusade on the property they had just obtained, so that they could attain standing in the community. After one week, 550 decisions for Christ were made in this mainly Mende area. Muslim parents encouraged their children to attend. "What God accomplished in the 24 days we were there is merely the reaping of the efforts of many who have laboured there for years," observed Rev. Railey.¹⁶ Pastor Taylor taught ICI courses every Friday evening. By the end of the year the Kissy AOG Church had become one of the strongest AOG churches in Sierra Leone. They were self-supporting, had their own church building and an average attendance of around 250. In March 1991, they had 86 baptised members and 30 associate members, mostly Mende, but including Krio, Kono and

Temne. The usual AOG prohibitions were rigorously applied; no secret society participation, no fetish or charms, no indulgence in alcohol or tobacco. According to missionary Mary McGee, the sustained growth and strength of the Kissy church was mostly due to the ICI teaching and the discipleship training programme.

At least one completely new AOG church was planted as a direct result of local efforts inspired by the Crusade. Tamba John Stevens, pastor of the Kissi AOG Church at Short Street, started a tent mission among the Kissi at Kissy Brook. The "Tent Church" was initially organised with 26 members. In line with Task-Force strategy, land was bought and construction of a concrete building begun. After only a few months membership had risen to 80. The church was named Victory AOG Church. Stevens died tragically in November 1990 at the age of twenty-five. His assistant, John Sambaya, took over the work. At this time the Kissi congregation which had met at Short Street since 1965, moved over to join up with the new congregation at Kissy Brook. By March 1991 there were 172 registered members, 83 males and 89 females. Kissi and Mende make up the bulk of the congregation. The women wear colourful tribal dress. As at Bethel Temple, singing and dancing play a vital part in the worship. Krio and English are the languages used in the church. The leadership fear the use of the vernacular languages would cause a split along ethnic lines.

The results from the Task-Force Evangelism Crusade, while reasonably encouraging for the national leadership, did not live up to American AOG expectations. After the mass enthusiasm displayed at the Freetown meetings, the meagre reaping was a great disappointment. One year afterwards, evangelist Ben Tipton voiced his discouragement:

The nation as a whole has seen little church growth. The Holy Spirit is endeavouring to do a great work in Sierra Leone. Each time God manifests His Spirit, however, the enemy brings confusion.¹⁷

The Tipton Crusade, despite its failings, stimulated a vision for evangelism and encouraged the Christian community to be more confident in the "signs and wonders" dimension of the

Gospel. The evangelists claimed to have spiritual power, and while there was not much to show for it bar the shouting, there was some demonstration and a few had testified to being miraculously healed. It was to take the much more publicised and far more large-scale Reinhard Bonnke Crusade to bring the "major" breakthrough, aimed at by AOG, into being.

THE REINHARD BONNKE DECEMBER 1991 FREETOWN CRUSADE

The Christ for All Nations, (CfaN), team led by German evangelist Reinhard Bonnke came to Freetown after the cancellation of their October 1991 Kano Crusade.¹⁸ Muslim-Christian rioting broke out on the eve of the crusade. Hundreds of lives were lost and churches and mosques were burned. An already explosive situation was ignited by the refusal of the Government to allow Ahmed Deedat come from South Africa to address Muslims as a counter-event. Bonnke regularly addresses crowds of over 100,000 during his African crusades. In March 1990 an estimated quarter of a million attended a single meeting in Burkina Faso.¹⁹ In October 1990 Bonnke had held his most successful crusade ever, in the Muslim city of Kaduna. Miracles of healing were the major attraction and drew record crowds from all religions and levels of society.²⁰ The final evening meeting, held at Murtala Muhammad Square, drew Bonnke's largest audience to date, over half a million. The total attendance for the Crusade was 1,670,000 and 150,000 decision cards were signed and distributed to the 255 local churches which had sponsored the Crusade. The Muslim leaders were greatly alarmed that so many Muslims attended the Kaduna meetings and that so many converted to Christ. Bonnke's own opinion that the Christian Gospel must be aggressively presented in the face of Muslim opposition is not concealed. His vision is to hold a Crusade in Cairo before the end of the century and for Africa to be the most Christian continent in the world. Paul Gifford, in his appraisal of Bonnke Crusades, writes:

It has been estimated that the number of Africa's Christians increases by 16,000 a day. Even if this figure is wildly inflated there is no denying the rapid increase, and it is clear that CfaN already plays a significant role in this increase.²¹

While the 16,000 a day estimate is attributed to Barrett, Gifford notes that in January 1984, *New Blackfriars* gave 15,000 a day for increase in Africa, while observing that in Europe the number was decreasing by about 7,500 a day. Gifford comments, "In that case ... it seems that African Christianity will play a considerable role in determining the Christianity of the future."²² Thus Bonnke becomes a front-runner in setting the style of popular Christianity world-wide for the twenty-first century.

Bonnke, who uses the most modern advertising and communication techniques, predicts he will preach to an audience of over one million and have one million "converts" from one crusade. An amplifier system capable of addressing over 1,500,000 persons has been purchased. Bonnke calls this period in African Church history the "combine-harvester era". His popular slogans are, "plundering Hell to populate Heaven", "from the Cape to Cairo", and "Africa shall be saved".²³ With the Nigerian Crusade cancelled, Freetown was selected as a short-notice alternative venue. The CCSL gave their backing. Suzette Hattingh of CfaN arrived a week early to conduct pre-Crusade intercessory prayer meetings at three venues. At Bethel Temple chairs filled the aisles and the overflow crowd looked in the windows. Freetown was saturated with posters and five loudspeaker vans toured the city announcing the "miracles" and "healings" crusade. Bonnke's advertising, like that of other Pentecostal healing-evangelists, concentrates on miracles and healings; as observed earlier so does the publicity of Deeper Life Bible Church and some Spiritual churches, for example the Celestial Church of Christ. The "miracles" emphasis has been criticised by Gifford who quotes from a CfaN advertisement for the 1986 Harare Crusade which appeared in the *Herald* of 19th April:

The most immediate and striking characteristic of the CfaN crusade is its stress on miraculous cures. This is evident even from the big advertisement put in the local paper. The order of its wording is significant: "Come and see the power of God heal the cripples, heal the blind, heal the deaf. Jesus Christ is alive today to heal the cripples, heal the blind, heal the deaf, free you from fear, give you peace of mind, forgive sinners". Note that the more spiritual, intangible benefits are mentioned last.²⁴

Considering the normal African religious expectation and the problem-solving requirements of the poor, one wonders how better a large congregation, composed mainly of poor and

illiterates, could be attracted to such an event. The issue to be faced is whether the claims can be justified or not. With the visit coming so soon after the Nigerian disturbances, Freetown excitedly awaited the arrival of the world's most successful mass evangelist. Little children called out "Richard Bonki" when they saw a white man. Muslim leaders were nervously anxious and Muslims travelled from Nigeria to educate the Freetown community. Friday sermons in the mosques exhorted the faithful to stay away from the meetings. Bonnke was demon possessed, a magic-man and a communist, that is an atheist. In Kissy Street and around the Clock Tower - Muslim dominated areas - Bonnke posters were torn down; so also on the FBC campus. A huge crowd welcomed the evangelist when he arrived at Aberdeen by hover-craft on Saturday 1st December at 9 p.m. A candle-lit procession conducted him to the Cape Sierra Hotel. Thousands marched from Victoria Park to the Stadium on Sunday afternoon for dedicatory prayers.

Reinhard Willi Gotfried Bonnke was born in Konigserg, Germany, on 19th April 1940. Towards the end of the War, his father, a professional soldier, was captured and held in Kiel as a POW. His mother, a devout Christian, fled with her six children to Denmark in 1945 to escape the advancing Russian soldiers. The family were finally reunited in 1948. His father, who had been dramatically converted as a young soldier, following a divine healing from TB, became a minister of the German Free Pentecostal Churches. In 1950 a lady in their church had a vision in which she saw Bonnke breaking bread before thousands of black people.²⁵ From 1959 to 1961, Bonnke studied at the Bible College of Wales in Swansea, an institution founded by Rees Howells, with roots in the Welsh Revival and which emphasised holiness, prayer, and the life of faith.²⁶ On his way back to Germany, having completed the course, Bonnke had what he regards as a divinely ordained appointment in London with George Jeffreys, one of the pioneers of the Pentecostal Movement in Britain. Jeffreys prayed with him and passed on, in what Bonnke sees as a form of spiritual Apostolic succession, a mighty anointing of the Holy Spirit's power for the task of evangelism.²⁷ In 1964, after a

period of church planting and crusade evangelism, he married Anni Sulzle and took up a pastorate at Flensburg.

In 1966 Bonnke felt called to missionary work in South Africa with the Apostolic Faith Mission. The following year the Bonnkes travelled to Lesotho to pastor a congregation at Maseru, do church planting and run a Bible correspondence course which eventually enrolled 50,000 students. They held evangelistic crusades at the main bus terminal. Playing an accordion and singing gospel songs, they would attract a crowd and then preach to them.

Evangelism by Fire records:

Then, in 1972, Reinhard was gripped by a recurring vision. Night after night, he saw the vast continent of Africa being washed in the blood of Jesus. Over and over he heard the Holy Spirit whisper, "Africa shall be saved, Africa shall be saved". He dedicated his whole life to reaching all of Africa with the gospel, and so it was that "Christ for all Nations" came into being.

The vision of taking the saving message of Christ "from Cape to Cairo" still consumes Reinhard. He freely confesses, "I eat, sleep and drink the vision".²⁸

As a result of the vision, Bonnke invited a healing-evangelist hold a crusade at the Maseru church. The evangelist abandoned the campaign after the first day. He preached, but to the great disappointment of the congregation, he did not pray for the sick. Next day Bonnke took over, and as he preached:

An anointing of the Holy Spirit fell upon the people. Never before had he experienced the power of God with such intensity.... As he stood there he heard: "My words in your mouth are just as powerful as My words in My own mouth" ... the voice repeated the sentence. Then ... like a movie film he "saw" the power of the Word of God. God spoke and it happened.... "I suddenly realised that the power was not in the mouth - the power was in the Word."²⁹

Several miraculous healings took place.³⁰ From that time, Bonnke was convinced his ministry was that of a healing-evangelist. Since then he has never felt his preaching to be complete until he has prayed for the sick. He regards himself as a nurse working alongside Jesus Christ the Great Physician:

It is the duty of the doctor to diagnose the disease, and it is the duty of the doctor to prescribe the medicine, and all that I have to do is follow behind the doctor and carry the medicine. It just remains for me to administer it is prescribed - and then it works. The medicine is red in colour "... and by His stripes we are healed", the prescription says "... and they shall lay hands on the sick and the sick shall recover." So all I am is a nurse - and I'm very happy to be one for Jesus."³¹

Bonke's calling to healing evangelism was not well received by the Apostolic Faith Mission board, who concentrated on traditional missionary evangelism and disapproved of modern mass crusades. One day, while torn between his calling and mission policy, he desperately needed \$30 to pay his rent. After a day spent praying for the money, he was walking home:

Suddenly, in the middle of that road, the power of the Lord come upon me. I heard His voice clearly inside my heart, "Do you want me to give you one million dollars?".... tears began running from my eyes, and I cried, "No, Lord, don't give me one million dollars. I want more than that. Give me one million souls. One million souls less in hell and one million more in heaven - that shall be the purpose of my life."

Then the Holy Spirit quietly whispered into my very spirit words I had never heard before - "You will plunder hell and populate heaven for Calvary's sake." That day, a determination gripped me. I knew God had greater plans for my life, and I set out to fulfil them in progressive stages.³²

Parting company with the Apostolic Faith Mission, Bonke moved to Johannesburg in December 1974. The first CfaN crusade was held in Gaborone, Botswana, in April 1975. The audience on the first night was a meagre hundred persons in an eight-hundred seat auditorium. By the end of the week 2,000 were crowding into the hall. By the end of the crusade 10,000 filled the sports stadium.³³ A yellow tent seating 10,000 was purchased in 1977. This was replaced in 1983 by the largest Gospel tent ever built, which could seat 34,000 or house 70,000 standing. Gifford, whose distaste for American evangelicalism, fundamentalism, and Neopentecostals of the "prosperity gospel" variety, is freely expressed, notes that the finance for the tent (US \$800,000) came from Kenneth Copeland, the Rhema evangelist from Texas.³⁴ He also points out the increasing involvement of Rhema with CfaN, which was apparent at the third Zimbabwe crusade in May 1986, when a Fire Conference of evangelists from all over Africa was staged in conjunction with the crusade:

This Fire Conference drew 4,000 delegates from 41 African countries. The Christianity of both the crusade and the conference was American evangelicalism. This was obvious from the bookshop, where the following booklets were on sale: twelve titles by Jimmy Swaggart; eighteen by Kenneth E. Hagan [*sic.*], the founder of Rhema Bible Church; three by Ray McCauley, who founded Rhema in South Africa; eleven by Kenneth and Gloria Copeland, both promoters of the gospel of prosperity ... seven by Gordon Lindsay, the founder of Christ for The Nations in Dallas, Texas; five by Elijah Maswanganyi of South Africa; three by John Osteen of Lakewood International Outreach Church, Houston, Texas. Apart from these there were only another thirteen miscellaneous titles on sale.³⁵

Such has been the phenomenal growth of the movement that since 1986, the crusades have had to be held in large arenas, stadiums and open air venues. Before coming to Freetown Bonnke was brought to task by his supporting churches in Germany for his growing inclination to preach a "prosperity gospel". In his Freetown Crusade the American materialistic emphasis was noticeably absent. Spiritual prosperity and victory over spiritual enemies was to the fore. However, whether it was learned from Rhema or not, there was certainly a heavy emphasis on faith-action in order to obtain a miracle healing.

President Momoh officially opened the Freetown Crusade on 3rd December 1991. Practically all the national church leaders, including Anglican Bishop, E. S. Thompson, and Methodist Church of Sierra Leone Superintendent, Gershon Anderson, along with various civic dignitaries, made up the platform party each night. Gifford, in his somewhat Procrustean myth/ritual typology of Bonnke's crusade evangelism, views the platform party as a vital part of the religious ritual:

The platform, too, plays its part. The rows of seating are arranged around it. The platform is high, broad, brightly lit and attractively decorated. The ritual demands more than a lone speaker up there. It holds rows of chairs where are seated distinguished associates, supporters and wives. These appendages are conspicuously well dressed, successful, affluent and (especially) "great men of God". They provide support for the speaker, not only by their presence, but by their full participation. Their fixed attention, their compliance with the speaker's commands, their movements, their stereotyped gestures, all help ensure the audience's proper response.³⁶

The Freetown platform party, whatever the reasons for inviting them, were, to those who knew them, not the sort to be puppets on a string to anybody. The great tent, which Gifford also regards as "significant" in the myth/ritual performance, as "It also raises immediately the connotation of 'biblical', for a tent carries the biblical overtones of 'tabernacle'", was not used in Freetown, and has, as Gifford admits, been too small to contain the crusade audiences since 1986.³⁷ Gifford, unfortunately, allows his basic antipathy to Bonnke's fundamentalist-evangelical theology to colour his appraisal and analysis of the movement. He does, however, highlight the problems arising from Bonnke's association with leaders of the American "prosperity gospel" movement. This raises the question whether the Rhema

Movement, with their teachings on health and prosperity, is making it a deliberate policy to associate with and influence, through their literature and other material helps, successful African Pentecostal-evangelical movements. Rhema's association with the dynamic and expanding Jesus is Lord Ministries, and other indigenous churches, may well suggest that.

Conspicuous by their absence from what turned out to be the greatest single Gospel event in the history of evangelism in Sierra Leone's two hundred year history, was the non-Pentecostal-evangelical missionary community. Most boycotted the event, although their national brethren did not. They disagreed with the Pentecostal aspects of the crusade, particularly speaking in tongues, and some complained they had not been officially invited. It was the first time a head of state had opened a Reinhard Bonnke Crusade. The President assured the evangelist of his safety in a tolerant society where freedom of religion was written into the Constitution. "'Sierra Leone shall be saved' is a theme well chosen," declared the President, who was looking for a political if not a spiritual life-line for his inept leadership and corrupt APC administration. Earlier, he had intimated to Bonnke, "You could not have come at a more opportune time in the history of our country ... we are seeking divine guidance."³⁸ Lady Hannah Momoh, on hearing the radio report of the October riots in Kano, had prayed, "Oh, Lord, send that preacher to Sierra Leone."³⁹ Bonnke's reply to the President was boldly given in Messianic terms and constituted a declaration of intent:

Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Glory to God in the highest! Amen!

As a man of God and in Jesus' name I would like to say to you, Sierra Leone shall be saved by the precious blood of Jesus Christ. I am absolutely sure in my heart that before this very meeting is over, we, all of us, are going to see the manifestation of the power of Jesus Christ. I believe that many souls will find salvation in the name of Jesus, and I also believe that many sick will receive healing through the name of Jesus. Jesus said, "I have come to preach the Gospel to the poor. I have come to heal the broken-hearted. I have come to set the captives free. I have come to open the eyes of the blind". This shall happen here this week. This shall happen here today. Let's give a big hand for Jesus Christ! Hallelujah! Blessed be the name of the Lord.

In Sierra Leone life expectancy, according to 1987 American Government statistics, was thirty-six years, the lowest in the world. According to a 1987 UN report, mentioned on the TV

documentary "Trade Slaves", it was the least developed country in the world. This country, where healing and religion are practically synonymous, was fully ripe for a healing crusade. The struggling poor of Sierra Leone immediately took to their hearts the Hallelujah-shouting German evangelist. Bonnke trumpeted over the loudspeakers - echoed in Krio by an excellent interpreter who poured his own heart and soul into the interpretation and provided not only a translation, but also an impersonation - that the power of the Holy Spirit was "already moving out in all directions" and "anyone who opens his heart for the Gospel of Jesus Christ will come into contact with the power of God".⁴⁰ Bonnke carefully explained his strategy:

After the message of salvation I am going to pray for the sick people and as I know Jesus and as I see it happen all over, I expect tonight blind eyes to open, cripples to walk, and mysterious diseases to be healed in Jesus name. No matter what your disease is, the Bible says Jesus died for our sins and for our diseases. So he will forgive our sins and heal our diseases, now! Hallelujah!

He declared, obviously sincerely:

You are a wonderful people! I am so happy that you are here in front of me. I love to be as close to you as possible. I love you. You are just fantastic people. You are wonderful.

Bonnke's rapport with the audience was magnetic. A relationship of acceptance, trust, and even familiarity was immediately established. Paralleling his own mission to Freetown with Paul's mission to the Gentiles, Bonnke's first message was based on Acts 26:17-18:

I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.

With the loudspeakers and also his interpreter blasting his words out over the audience, he cried out with passion:

People of Freetown! God Almighty has sent me to you - Hallelujah! - to give you this message, "You will be set free tonight, you shall be saved tonight, by the power of Jesus Christ, on condition that you turn from the darkness of sin to the light of Jesus Christ". Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Eeeh! Amen!

Handling the huge crowd with complete confidence and obvious enjoyment, Bonnke took great pains to make each point in his message on repentance and salvation plain. He emphasised that Jesus Christ was the light of the world and he, Bonnke, was not the healer; Jesus was. Jesus was directly identified with the Holy Spirit who was all over the stadium.⁴¹

Jesus was the healer and no matter where the sick were in the stadium, Jesus would "pick you out". In line with the popular perception that much sickness is evidence of witchcraft and evil spirits at work, Bonnke announced:

If you are troubled by demon spirits: if you are suffering from fear by day and by night: if you are tormented by sexual bondage: if you are tormented by a spirit of adultery: hear the word of the Lord! All you need to do is this! Turn to Jesus! Hallelujah! People of Freetown, you cannot save yourself! You cannot deliver yourself from the bondage of sin. Jesus has not asked you to improve, because He knows you cannot save yourself, but He asks you to turn! People of Freetown, if you change your position by turning from the darkness to the light of Jesus Christ, then that moment your darkness will be no more in front of you, it will be behind you. Satan is behind me, God is before me. People of Freetown! Turn! Turn! Turn!

The teaching-evangelist told the crowd how simply and "practically" to turn. In the light of the impact of the Bonnke Crusade on Freetown and its positive ongoing results, and as a comparison with the 1990 AOG Task-Force Evangelism Crusade and other mass-evangelism campaigns, it is worth recording in detail how the most successful mass-evangelist of all time operated. He referred to Romans 10:13, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." "What is the name of the Lord?" he asked. A few called out, "Jesus Christ." "Shout it!", Bonnke cried. The crowd shouted, "Jesus Christ!" "Again!" Bonnke cried, "Again! Again!" The crowd roared, "Jesus Christ!"

You are a wonderful people! If I had time I would come and hug everyone of you. Tonight you are a VIP to Jesus. Say, "I am a VIP to Jesus!"

The crowd shouted, "I am a VIP to Jesus!" There was no frenzy or hysteria, rather, the huge crowd were plainly enjoying the event, the man, and his message. Bonnke led them in the "sinners' prayer", but unlike other crusades where the "sinners' prayer" is a salvation formula thrown in at the end, only tenuously connected to the message preached, he went to great pains to explain clearly and simply what was involved and the practical steps to be taken in turning from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God:

Now we will call on the name of the Lord in prayer. This is how you call on the name of the Lord and the light of Jesus will come inside your life. You call. You cry! "Jesus Christ, Son of God, save my soul now!" [He cries out his example prayer, loudly, and with intense feeling.] It is so simple. If it were not simple only professors would be saved. But Jesus loves you! Jesus died for you! He loves you! He loves you! He loves you! Call upon His name and you will be saved! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Eeeeh!

I can feel the presence of Jesus now! Now you know enough to be saved. All you need is to turn to Jesus because the Holy Spirit is here to do what Bonnke cannot, He will reveal Jesus to you. He will put on a light inside you. Jesus will walk with you and talk with you, and instead of the Devil chasing you, you are chasing the Devil. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! I want to help you to turn. I want to help you to call on the name of the Lord. God guarantees to save you, He will save you. Freetown people! are you happy? Now close your eyes. Who of you wants to turn from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God? Just lift your hand to Jesus Christ. No matter who you are Jesus loves you. We love you too. Repeat after me, loud and clear, and do it with faith in your heart, and Jesus will do a miracle of salvation in your heart. Pray after the interpreter.

Dear Lord Jesus Christ! I call upon your name! Forgive me all my sins. I now turn from darkness to light. Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, hear my call. Save now my soul. I now turn away from evil, away from sin. I repent of my sins. I turn to you Lord Jesus. Now I put my faith in you. I believe with my heart what I now speak with my mouth. The power of Satan is broken. The darkness is gone. The light of Jesus is shining. I am a child of God. I believe with my heart what I speak with my mouth. Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Jesus is my Saviour. I am a child of God. I believe it. I receive it. And I thank you for it. In the name of Jesus! Amen!

Put your hands down. How many of you now know that you have turned from darkness to the light of Jesus Christ? Are you happy? Shout "Hallelujah!" Shout "Hallelujah!" Shout "Hallelujah!" Let's give a big clap for Jesus. Oh! I am so happy! I want Hell to be empty and Heaven full. Are you happy? Hallelujah! Now you who have found Jesus, walk with Jesus. Go to church. Pray and see how God answers your prayers. How many of you feel the power of God all over the stadium? All who are serious about following Jesus, wave your hand. [The stadium turns into a sea of waving hands.] Oh! so many!

The inspirational evangelist's control over the huge crowd contrasted starkly with the unruly scenes at the AOG Crusade of January 1990. He had them, as it were, eating out of his hand, but seemed sincerely intent on leading them to a realistic commitment to Christ. Gifford notes Bonnke's emphasis on experiential Christianity, and that he sees this supposedly regenerative encounter as "the most important experience that will ever happen to you here on earth or in heaven".⁴² Counsellors with decision cards moved among the crowd. The organisers had refused the Spiritual churches permission to act as counsellors because of their "non-Christian practices" and their use of occult "books". They feared their intention was to catch people to their own churches. Despite the ban several Spiritual church members - particularly from Saint Anthony's Healing Church at Mountain Cut, which was founded in 1984 by Archdeacon Martin Jackson - were operating as counsellors. Another problem, that of freelance counsellors picking up the offering for themselves in hand-bags and carrier-bags, was guarded against after the first night.

Despite all Bonnke's attempts to make his message plain, there still remains the problem of salvation being perceived of as being obtained by the recitation of a formula rather than a spiritual submission to the Lordship of Christ and a consequent inward regenerative operation of the Holy Spirit. There is also, despite painstaking teaching, the problem of speaker and hearers understanding things from different world-view perspectives and within different soteriological, pneumatological and hermeneutical frameworks.⁴³ There are also problems - inherent in mass-evangelism generally - involved in offering personal salvation in an emotionally-charged atmosphere. Elements of mass-suggestion, mass-hypnosis, and even hysteria may stimulate a merely emotional transaction. Many, having come for entertainment and to see a miracle-worker, respond superficially to the various appeals. Despite all the difficulties, Bonnke's evangelism has produced more concrete results than any previous evangelist in the city. This may be accounted for in terms of scale, or Bonnke's unique charisma and almost hypnotic power over his audience, or his skilful use of expensive modern communication technology. Also evangelical terms like forgiveness of sin, salvation, Son of God, turning from darkness to light, the name of Jesus, the blood of Jesus Christ, and so on, are increasingly being understood by the general populace in their Christian sense. These were certainly contributory factors. However, the most obvious single reason for his success became apparent as the meeting moved into its second phase, the ministry time. This was the platform on which the power of Christ to heal was manifested, and the bold claims of the evangelist concerning the miracle healing power of the Gospel were put to the test, before an audience whose religious genius was spiritual power and to whom healing miracles were the unmistakable evidences of a supernatural intervention. Up to this point the evangelism has been predominantly evangelistic and evangelical, concentrating on the basic, evangelical, soteriological doctrines, with no undue attempt at being constantly contextual. Bonnke's Pentecostal-evangelicalism, with its own demonological dimension and emphasis on miracle healing, had no great cross-cultural leap to make while communicating the Gospel in Freetown and addressing the African religious realities in easily understandable terms.

The simple Gospel message having been preached, and painstakingly explained, and the sinners' prayer offered, the event moved into its climactic second half where the primary focus was on the prayers that would bring down miracles of healing to the sick. Around 500 sick and infirm stood and prostrated on the grass to the left of the platform. Bonnke moved into the prayer time with an awe-inspiring declaration:

This is a holy moment. I want you to listen carefully to what is going to happen. I want the attention of everyone. You are going to see the power of God in action. Say Amen! Hallelujah! I want to tell you why we pray for the sick. We pray for the sick because the Word of God tells us to do so. I don't pray for the sick because I think it is nice to do it. I pray for the sick because Jesus commands us to do it, and when we pray for the sick in the name of Jesus, then Jesus will heal the sick! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Psalm 103 says, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name. Who forgiveth *all* your sins ... " How many? [The crowd responds, "All!"] Shout it! [The crowd shouts, "All!"] "... and healeth *all* your diseases." How many? [The crowd responds, "All!"] Shout it! [They shout out, "All!"] God said it and He is not a man that He should lie. I believe it! I believe it! I believe that tonight blind eyes are going to open. Hallelujah!

The audience is hushed, wondering if the unequivocal claims will materialise, or will the healing-evangelist be publicly displayed, before the vast audience, as a false prophet. He asks how many have one or two blind eyes. Many hands wave. They are told that their location in the stadium does not matter, what is important is that, as the power of healing is released into the stadium through the prayer of faith, the blind must appropriate their own healing by faith. Their appropriating faith now becomes the critical factor. The healing-evangelist can release the healing power of Christ through his prayer of faith, but in the final analysis their miracle healing will be according to their own faith, and appropriating faith must be manifested by positive faith actions. At this point Bonnke stresses that he is not a miracle worker, a healer or a magician. He, as a mediator or intermediary, a man of spiritual power, will invoke the holy name of Jesus. From that point, one's miracle is a matter of individual, appropriating faith. The healing power of Jesus will be flowing following the prayer.

When I will now call on the name of Jesus to heal you, the healing power of Jesus will flow all over this stadium. Hallelujah! But you by faith must receive your healing! Amen! Some of the blind people that haven't seen for years, suddenly will see. When you know that they can now see through the power of Jesus Christ come with them to the platform as witness and we will give the glory to God, we will give the glory to Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God. Hallelujah!

Cripples, many of whom are lying on the grass beside the platform, are addressed in the same terms, and told that after Bonnke invokes the name of Jesus, "SOME" will "feel the power of Jesus shoot into your bodies and jump". After the prayer, cripples are to try and walk without crutches. Cancer growths, goitres and tumours will disappear. "You will look for it, but you will not find it! Hallelujah! Amen!" Bonnke declared that he was now ready to pray for the sick provided they were ready to put their faith in Jesus into action. He asked for a show of hands by those who were ready, then told them to listen carefully to his final instructions. If one eye is blind, one hand must be put on the blind eye. If both eyes are blind one hand must be put over both blind eyes. They are warned not to remove the hand until Bonnke tells them. The other hand is to be raised to Jesus Christ the healer. Provided every serious minded seeker after God and healing realises that Jesus, who is personally present in the person of the Holy Spirit, is The Healer, and is prepared to exercise appropriating faith in Him, Bonnke will now pray for them. He then made another astounding pronouncement which caused the crowd to gasp:

When I tell you to remove your hand from your blind eyes, *some* [italics mine] of the blind people will look up and they will see Bonnke on the platform! Hallelujah! I believe it! Jesus is here! The Holy Spirit is here! The same Jesus who saves your soul is the same Jesus who heals your body. Amen!

Mothers and fathers who had brought along a blind child were encouraged to believe in a miracle because Jesus loves to heal blind children. After the prayer parents should test their blind children. Deaf ears will also open, and dumb mouths will speak. The parents of blind children were told to place one hand on the blind eyes, and those with other diseases were to put their hand on their disease. Their other hand is to be raised to Jesus. Bonnke will ask Jesus to lay His nail-pierced hand on their hands. Everyone who can stand must stand and repeat the prayer after Bonnke:

Jesus has saved my soul... Jesus will heal my body... I believe it... I receive it... I expect it to happen now... Thank-you Jesus...

This simple prayer for healing over, Bonnke exhorts the sick to worship personally as he continues to pray above the sound of the crowd praying and worshipping:

Lord Jesus you are walking through this stadium. Thank-you Lord Jesus. You are mighty to save. You are mighty to heal. You are now here to break the power of the Devil. You forgive all sins. You heal all diseases.

At this point Bonnke's prayer goes into a higher pitch, volume and tone. He cries out:

In the name of Jesus Christ the Son of God I now come against every spirit of blindness! In the name of Jesus, blind eyes open now! Blind eyes open now! In the name of Jesus! Deaf ears open now! In the name of Jesus! Cripples rise up and walk! In the name of Jesus! I come against all heart diseases. I come against all lung diseases. I curse all cancer. In the name of Jesus be healed from cancer. Be healed from skin diseases. Be healed from sex diseases. Be healed from blood diseases. In the name of Jesus!

The healing prayer, the thank-you praise, and the assault on the spiritual forces and powers behind the diseases, being all completed, Bonnke addressed the sick:

Now the power of God is flowing from head downwards. The healing power of Jesus is flowing from head downwards. Through your whole body right to the sole of your foot. In the name of Jesus! By His stripes we are healed. By His stripes we are healed. By His stripes we are healed. I want you to say now, "Thank-you Jesus I am healed." Now do something you couldn't do before. Check your faith. Blind people take your hands from your blind eyes. Blind people remove your hands from your blind eyes. Those blind people that can now see Bonnke, you couldn't see Bonnke before, if you can see Bonnke now, wave your hands! If you couldn't see me before, but you can see Bonnke now, wave your hands! Check the blind people!

A silence of suspense hangs over the stadium for a moment or two. Bonnke shouts:

Here's a miracle! There a miracle! There are miracles all over! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Check yourself, check the sick person you brought! Those who know they are healed come to the platform!

Here and there throughout the stadium centres of attention come into existence, hands wave, people jump up and down, and small groups press through the crowd towards the platform with a healed person in their midst. The crowd initially dumb-struck with incredulity, now jump and wave in joyful excitement. Bonnke shouts:

Come to the platform! Give the glory to God! I want to shake your hand! Those with evidence of healing come forward! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Come! Come! Come! Jesus is still doing miracles, the power of Jesus is still moving! Those who know they were sick and now they are well push forward! Push forward! Ushers let them come through! Sing! Jesus is still healing! The power of God is in this stadium! Many miracles have happened! Many miracles have happened!

The band leads the crowd with the chorus "Jehovah Rapha, he is the Lord who healeth thee."

Eventually, a few make their way through the jubilant, excited, arm-waving crowd, to the

platform. The first to testify was a Mohammed Din, a worker at Siaka Stevens Stadium, who had been blind in his right eye, from burning, for two years. He testified:

I saw always dark when I worked, but now when he prayed for me I see all my way clearly when I close the one good eye. Today I sacrificed. I am a Muslim *pikin* [child], but I pray to any god, anybody who can serve you. Plenty people know me. This man is my personal friend. I see with both eyes! I praise the Lord!

His personal friend, and co-worker at the stadium, came up to confirm his testimony. Bonnke tests his sight in each eye by having him cover one eye and then chase the healing-evangelist around the platform. The crowd roars with exuberant joy at the showmanship and the miracle. "Who healed you?" Bonnke asks, pointing the microphone towards Mohammed. With obvious ingenuous simplicity the Muslim replied, "Jesus Christ healed my eye. Jesus Christ died for my sins." The next to testify was the father of a six years old girl. From her birth in 1986 till that evening she had never spoken or heard. When the father had checked her she had answered him and called his name. Bonnke, continuing to delight the crowd, called, "Do you want to hear this little girl talk?" They roared their assent. With a quavering voice, which grew in strength and clarity with each word, she repeated numbers one to six after the healing-evangelist. He turned on the father, "Who healed your child, mister?" "God healed her." "Say Jesus healed her!" The Muslim father, under pressure, muttered, "Jesus." Bonnke, with scant regard for the niceties of inter-faith dialogue, turned and addressed the crowd. "Who healed this child?" "Jesus," they responded. "Shout it!" he cried. "Jesus!" they roared. "Again!" he cried. "Jesus!" they roared again. Although Bonnke's control over the crowd had been evident from the beginning, he now claimed and used his authority on the basis of the miracles. On that basis, acquiescence to his demands was given. A man came to testify that he had been instantly cured of a bad skin disease. An old Muslim man who had been totally blind, still accompanied by his boy guide, testified to having his sight restored. A lady who had been blind for eighteen years brought along several witnesses. She walked down the steps unaided. Eight or nine testified before the meeting was brought to a close. As the crowds made their way home the most frequently heard word was "Wonderful!" It would appear that Bonnke's prediction that Freetown was going to be shaken

by the power of God had got off to a good start. Unfortunately not all the sick were healed. Many cripples made heroic attempts to rise and walk, only to slump back onto the ground. Many blind people still left the stadium led by their guides. Sadly, not much consideration was now flowing in the direction of those not healed. The suspicions and stigma of witchcraft or evil spirit collusion would continue to follow and to haunt those not healed, and perhaps even deepen. In practical terms one had to admit that for such a large crowd there were so few healed that if the money spent had been invested in mission or Government hospitals many more cures would have been effected. Also the seine-net method of mass-evangelism demanded a large-scale follow-up programme, but this was poorly organised, practically non-existent. However, the crowd, the majority young and apparently poor, departed, amazed at the miracles they had observed and aware that they had participated in a manifestation of spiritual power such as had never before been witnessed in Sierra Leone.

Each morning, Suzette Hattingh and Peter van den Berg held "faith-building" seminars for pastors and Christian workers at the Miata Conference Centre. Over two hundred attended daily. The evening meetings followed the same pattern throughout. A prolonged period of praise worship, which warmed up the ever growing crowds, was followed by a simple, dynamically proclaimed, situationally appropriate, Gospel message. The second evening the message was on protection from evil spirits and witchcraft through faith in the power of the blood of Jesus. However, all association with idols, charms, juju and secret societies must be abandoned and trust in them replaced with trust in Jesus. This brought a cheer from the crowd, indicating, as at the Tipton Crusade earlier, the strong desire many have to be free from the demands, regulations and expenses of the old protection system. Bonnke's attempt to exorcise the crowd seemed fairly ineffectual. When he asked how many felt evil powers leaving them, at first only a few hands were raised, slowly others followed suit. Eventually almost every hand was raised. The third message concentrated on the Cross and the power of the Cross to break the power of curses. Again, while the message was culturally relevant, it did not wander very far from the standard Pentecostal-evangelical doctrinal base. The

theme of the fourth Gospel message was righteousness and holy living with Zacchaeus the example. The moral was that one cannot enjoy stolen goods and the presence of Jesus at the same time. When Bonnke asked how many had stolen goods, even the policemen put their hands up. They were challenged to make restitution before the Baptism in the Holy Spirit service the following evening.

The "Baptism in the Holy Spirit" message correctly concentrated on the pre-conditions for receiving the experience; the first being regeneration, the second appropriating faith. The distinction was made between the faith that says God can do it and the faith that believes God will do it. To receive a promised gift you must take positive action and go and claim it. The two stage Pentecostal salvation doctrine was taught; neither a waiting period of sanctification nor a prior experience of sanctification was necessary as the Spirit has already been poured out on the Day of Pentecost. Pray, praise, be filled with the Spirit, and speak in tongues, the sign of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, out of the abundance of the heart. The crowd were encouraged to strive, not to force God to baptise, but to overcome unbelief. Struggling to obtain spiritual power from God and spirits is so deeply ingrained in the indigenous religious philosophy that the striving to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit turns out to be, for the vast majority, not a wrestling against unbelief, but a coercing of God to give the gift. The usual control and reverence of the meetings is for the first time abandoned in the struggling to be baptised in the Holy Spirit. For most this is a striving to speak in tongues. In all the bellowing and shouting, Holy Ghost night, as is now normal in Pentecostal mass-crusades, seems the night when the Holy Spirit is most conspicuously absent and human effort reigns. The final Gospel message was back to simple evangelism using the text, "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock" (Rev. 3:20). While the invitation to the Messianic banquet was issued, the message was that the Devil was inside the house of the sinner's heart and Jesus was present to drive him out and take possession of every room. Eschatology, as noted by Gifford, is a very low-profile doctrine in CfaN evangelism in

Africa.⁴⁴ What is most vital and consequential is the spiritual power that is operating in the here and now. Doctrinally, Bonnke and his audience were on the same wave-length.

Every evening the climax of the service and the main attraction was the prolonged ministry time when Bonnke prayed for the sick. Those who were healed were invariably poor, illiterates, Muslim, and children. On the Tuesday night, along with several others, a seven years old boy whose eyes had never opened was healed. As his Muslim father testified, the boy gazed with wide-eyed wonder. An old lady in simple African dress danced around the platform with hands upraised after being healed of total blindness. The following evening, among the usual eight or so who came up to testify were a lame Fula boy who danced around the platform, a blind Muslim, and a fat old lady who had been carried into the stadium. She too danced vigorously on the platform, raising her skirt to demonstrate her healed legs. To the delight of the crowd, an old Temne Muslim lady who had been deaf for ten years demonstrated she could hear by repeating clapping sounds made by Bonnke who crouched behind her. Perhaps the most dramatic healing of the campaign was that of a severely hunchbacked girl who had fallen from a bridge ten years before and been permanently injured. She declared that while Bonnke prayed the healing prayer, she felt a movement in her back as the Holy Spirit touched her and straightened her crooked spine. The large hump disappeared instantly. Many knew her. Rexina Rex-Johnson, the Assistant Commissioner of Police, ascended the platform to declare that she knew the girl, and that as recently as two days ago she had had the huge lump on her back. The crowd were spell-bound. On the Thursday night a very thin and weak lady claimed she had not walked for four months and had been carried to the meeting. She had felt the power of God in her body. A Muslim man wearing his white cap had been blind for two years. He happily testified that Jesus had healed him. A Mrs. Bangura testified that her dumb daughter could now speak. Another Muslim, in white cap and robe, walked down the steps after declaring Jesus had healed him of paralysis from a stroke. The most outstanding miracle on Friday night was the healing of the deaf and dumb Syl-Decker twins. Professor Kaloko of the FBC Geography

Department, testified to knowing the family and that the girls had never spoken till that night. The crowd were thrilled to hear them talk for the first time as, after Bonnke, they repeated the numbers one to ten in weak tremulous voices which increased in strength and clarity with each number. In the healing ministry of the last evening, a deaf and dumb boy from the Deaf and Dumb School heard and spoke. An old Muslim, called Saio, who had been totally blind in his right eye, testified to his sight having been restored. When asked, "Who healed you?" He quickly responded, "Na Jesus Christ!" A girl who had been blind for three years in one eye was healed. The mother leapt around the platform hugging her child and shouting, "I praise you, Lord! I praise you, Lord!"

The first night attracted a crowd of 80,000.⁴⁵ As the reports of the miracles of healing electrified the city the crowds swelled nightly. Mid-way through the campaign Bonnke was invited to address the House of Parliament. Many of the leading figures in the country indicated their desire to follow Jesus.⁴⁶ In fact, all the political leaders present, male and female, lined up for the ministry of prayer and laying on of hands. By the end of the six day campaign around 500,000 had attended the meetings in the Siaka Stevens Stadium and over 100,000 decision cards were filled out by those responding to the salvation message. The final night witnessed the largest gathering ever assembled in the history of Sierra Leone when 135,000 jammed into the stadium and spread out over all the playing areas. Thousands listened outside the stadium. According to the *Daily Mail*:

Many described the crusade as the "Mother of all crusades" as it mobilised the biggest crowd ever in the country with both Muslims and Christians in attendance.⁴⁷

Members of the local planning committee estimated that about half those attending were Muslims. John Darku, CfaN's West Africa Director, estimated that up to 90 percent of those who publicly testified to healing were Muslims. Many Muslims testified they had been healed by Jesus while others preferred to give the glory to God alone. BBC Africa correspondent Bill Wager reported that the Crusade not only brought salvation and healing to many, but that Muslims were the main beneficiaries. Crispin Cole, EFSL General Secretary and a member

of the board of advisors for the campaign, himself highly critical of the neo-colonial attitudes of Western missionaries, commented, "I never could have imagined that this stadium would be so full. The attendance is a miracle in itself."⁴⁸ Committee member Anne Marcus-Jones stated, "I've seen many Gospel meetings in Sierra Leone, but this has been a mighty, mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit in a magnitude never before witnessed in this land."⁴⁹ Rev. Amadu Kamara, General Secretary of the Council of Churches of Sierra Leone, declared:

It was certainly the most momentous event in the history of our country. The people have been deeply affected because not only was salvation preached, but it was demonstrated with healings. The long term effects in church growth will be phenomenal, not only in numbers, but in the lives of those who are truly convinced that Jesus is Lord.⁵⁰

Rev. Jenkins of Christ Apostolic Church, vice-chairman of the planning committee, stated:

I am overwhelmed with joy at this very last day. We will make this campaign an on-going process. Our follow-up will preserve the fruits so that they will remain.⁵¹

Sidney Davies of EFSL, however, maintained that the failure of the follow-up was the most disappointing aspect of the Crusade. He accused members of the committee of only being interested in seeing huge crowds turning up, and carelessly allowing thousands to slip through the net.⁵² On the Sunday morning following the campaign, the main market places were practically deserted and many of the market women attended church services.

As Reinhard Bonnke and the CfaN team left Freetown questions remained. Obviously here was no charlatan hypnotising the crowd and stirring up mass hysteria. On the other hand, multitudes of sick and disabled had not been cured despite their desire and efforts. Gifford, who hardly conceals his general dislike of the healing-evangelism phenomenon, comments:

It would seem that there is no need to be excessively sceptical and deny every claim to healing. Evidence for some healings, however they are explained, seems to be undeniable, as seems to be the case for Zambia's Archbishop Milingo, too. And the healing evangelists themselves are well aware that not all are cured; indeed, Oral Roberts, the high priest of the healing evangelists, has gone so far as to state, "No one in the whole world has prayed with more sick people who have not been healed than I have."⁵³

Either a new level of psychosomatic healings has now been reached as a result of large-crowd dynamics, modern mass communication technology, and the ultra-positive inspiration

of the charismatic Bonnke, or else a demonstration of the healing power of the risen Christ through His Holy Spirit had indeed taken place. These options are not mutually exclusive. Within the highly charged, euphoric and expectant atmosphere, forms of blindness, dumbness, and deafness, which have a basic psychological and emotional causative factor - a spirit element - may be cured through a profound awareness of the presence of God in the power of His Holy Spirit. Such healings are sometimes instantaneous and dramatic. There were, however, cases - for example the girl with the large hump-back - where the infirmities were clearly physical and psychological explanations within the present limits to knowledge are inadequate. The cured themselves perceived their healings as the direct intervention of God or Christ. Bonnke went to great pains to define the healing power as the Spirit of Christ, and to point to Jesus Christ personally as the healer. While it is still too early to assess the abiding and enduring fruit of the Freetown Crusade, the incontrovertible fact is that Freetown Christians themselves enthusiastically proclaim that the city witnessed its greatest ever demonstration of the power of God. The late Bishop Thompson declared at the conclusion of the Crusade that there had been a time when Freetown was a centre for mission work in West Africa, but in recent decades it had degenerated into:

... the profane sounds heard on the streets of any Western city. We have not lived up to the challenge. That is why this campaign brings such hope to us.... You have left us much to do! When you go, we shall have to take up where you stopped and continue the work to the glory of God.⁵⁴

From this point on Christians in Freetown have had a confidence in the power of the Gospel and a boldness to witness, especially to Muslims, that they have never had before.

Following on from the Bonnke Crusade, and conducted in similar style, English evangelist Eric Cowley of World-wide Harvest Ministries, sponsored by CCSL, held a crusade at the Coronation Grounds, Bo from 18th to 23rd February 1992. Over 20,000 attended on the first night. As in Freetown, miracles of healing took place. Here charms, idols and fetish were burned. The crowds rose to 60,000 and even reached 70,000 one night, the same population

as the town of Bo.⁵⁵ One may contrast this with the mere 30,000 who attended the Billy Graham Crusade in Edinburgh in 1991. A report in *The National* stated:

Thousands of people were held spellbound when the sick were miraculously healed, especially the blind, lame, deaf, and dumb who leapt for joy. Among those healed were Bib Boy Abu of Bo who was deaf and dumb since birth, Mama Marie Simbo, a seventy-two years old woman blind for twenty-five years, and Madam Mariatu Mansaray from Moyamba, lame for fifteen years. At one stage during the crusade Security Officers found it difficult to control the crowd who scrambled to touch Reverend Cowley.⁵⁶

The Bonnke Crusade inspired imitators, both good and bad. Private enterprise healers attracted crowds throughout the city for a time. One lady healer drew a large crowd around the Cotton Tree in the city centre by promising to produce "well bodi" for the sick through her prayers. After driving all demons into the wilderness she asked all to lay their hand on the sick parts. "Don't speak! No Amen! No Hallelujah till I finish praying!" After commanding backaches and malaria spirits to go, she commanded lame legs to walk, blind eyes to open, and dumb mouths to speak. In Bonnke style she ordered, "Do what you have never done before! Lame person, run round the Cotton Tree!" No one did, and the crowd began to drift away while her two assistants sang, "Jehovah Rapha, I am the Lord who healeth thee."⁵⁷

THE PRESENT STATE OF AOG IN SIERRA LEONE

The March 1991 rebel incursion from Liberia, sponsored by the Liberian National Patriotic Front, and the continuing civil war in the Eastern Province, seriously affected AOG churches in the Kailahun District. Forty churches and outreach stations were closed between Koindu and Segbwema. Most of the Christians fled to Guinea. In the refugee camps they organised church life and services. When Western District General Superintendent, Samuel Konteh, travelled to the camps in February 1992, with food and clothing donated by CfaN, he found:

Deplorable conditions. Some had died as there was no food or clothing for them. Some adults and children died of pneumonia. Now the United Nations is supplying food, but it is not reaching them in the quantities it is supposed to. We had to give the soldiers at each check-point a bag of rice as we had no money to pay the bribe.⁵⁸

However, in the rest of the country AOG churches were "doing well". Encouraged by the new churches started as a result of the Task-Force Evangelism team and the demonstration of the dynamic power of God at the Bonnke Crusade, AOG Sierra Leone themselves now believe that this is the time for a major expansion of AOG work in the country. The pastor at Sefadu in Kono District, inspired by the Bonnke Crusade, organised his own tent crusade at Small Sefadu, three miles away, with the intention of founding a new assembly and building a church.⁵⁹ Similarly at Makeni, pastor Tommy Bangura of Grace Assembly at Magburaka Road, has started three new AOG assemblies. In April 1992, one had completed their church building. Another was meeting in a thatched-roof hut on a plot of land bought for a future church building. The third was meeting in a house. AOG now have firmly in view the penetration of the Pentecostal-evangelical Gospel into the Muslim and mainly Temne Northern Province. However, they do not expect the evangelisation of the Temne to be easy in the light of a rising Islamic fundamentalism which gets encouragement from the Basharias in Freetown. According to Konteh:

They are beginning to become fanatical. Before now this was not so. Muslims would go to church for weddings and special occasions. They used to say, "We are all one". They would give their daughters in marriage to Christians and non-Muslim. The Ahmediyyas were here a long time and they were not antagonistic to Christianity, but now the Iranians have come and they are different. At the Bonnke Crusade they were going around giving out money for people not to attend.⁶⁰

In 1990, AOG Sierra Leone had 40 organised churches and a membership, which included full members and adherents, of 6,697. The 1980 membership was just under 3,000. AOG membership doubled in the 1980s. The number attending Sunday morning services is approximately the same as the membership. On average only one third of the total membership are Full Members because of AOG's rigorous moral and ethical demands. In 1990 there were 11 AOG churches in Freetown; Evangel Assembly (1981), Murray Town, pastor Bai Sesay, total membership 56, Sunday attendance 260; Glad Tidings Assembly (1987), Winter Street, Kissy, pastor Daniel Taylor, membership 52, attendance 156; Good News Assembly (1985), YMCA, Brookfields, pastor Samuel Konteh, membership 40,

attendance 94; Temne AOG Church (1945), Ambrose Street, pastor David Kargbo, membership 98, attendance 257; Joy Assembly (1988), Fort Street, pastor Morie Ngobeh, membership 46, attendance 65; Central Assembly (1984), Nurses' Training School, Lightfoot Boston Street, pastor C. A. Browne-Mark and assistant pastor Dudley Juxon-Smith, membership 36, attendance 75; New Evangelical Church (1987), Fort Street, pastor Manfred Carew, membership 27, attendance 101; Kru AOG Church (1924), Campbell Street, pastor D. G. Tuwlae, membership 340, attendance 54; Faith Assembly (1973), Bass Street, Brookfields, pastor Santigie Mansaray, membership 500, attendance 320; Limba AOG Church (1973), Cline Town, pastor Alie Konteh, membership 604, attendance 245; Short Street Assembly (1965), pastor John Steven, membership 86, attendance 126.⁶¹ The total AOG Freetown membership was 1,845 and the number attending divine service was 1,733. The full membership was around 600. The Hastings Assembly pastored by Andrew Kargbo had 38 members and 55 attending divine service, and the Masiaka Assembly pastored by Samuel Kamara had 9 members and 43 attending divine service.

In the decade from 1980 to 1990, AOG in Freetown doubled both membership and number of churches. The unusually high Kru Church membership figure as compared to the present low attendance, indicates both a decline from the great days of the past and a need to drastically revise the church roll downwards. The low membership for the old-established Temne Church is indicative of the Temne's strong Islamic background. Generally, membership of AOG churches is much lower than numbers attending and full members are much lower still. The 1973 founded Limba AOG Church and Faith Assembly, which was originally made up of Limba and Loko, but is now mainly Limba, have prospered. Among the Limba, Christianity has status. Having recently had a Limba President, Major General Momoh, who was also a West African Methodist lay preacher of sorts, has helped the growing social acceptability of Christianity among the Limba, although the leadership complain that Momoh visited only occasionally, and then "only gives an ordinary offering".⁶²

Some obviously become members for the social benefits, particularly the Death Benefit Fund, and, as with many ethnic churches, discipline is not too strictly exercised. Since these statistics were compiled, as a result of the enthusiasm for evangelism the two crusades inspired, even more dramatic AOG expansion has been taking place. With two Bible Schools and 47 students enrolled, AOG were well placed to take advantage of the new revival enthusiasm. According to District General Superintendent Korteh, AOG churches in Freetown which experienced encouraging growth from the Tipton Crusade, have doubled and trebled since the Bonnke Crusade. His own church, Good News Assembly at Brookfields, has seen the congregation grow from 100 to 250 as a direct result of the Bonnke Crusade.⁶³ Evangelistic enthusiasm has spread to all the AOG churches. While Crispin Cole, EFSL General Secretary, interprets the 1990 Freetown Church Survey statistics as, "a lot of transfer growth ... eluding us from the ideal goal of winning genuine converts from the Muslim and animistic population", from 1992 onwards there is ample evidence that large numbers of new converts, many of them Muslims, are being won by the Pentecostal-evangelical churches.⁶⁴ This is particularly so for the National Pentecostal Church in their mission to the Limba, the Loko Baptists - formerly the Loko Pentecostal Church - among the Loko, and the Jesus is Lord Ministry among Freetown women, especially Limba women. It also holds for the expanding AOG churches such as Evangel Church, Joy Assembly and New Evangelical Church.

Evangel AOG Church

AOG in Freetown and the Western District has, since the departure or expulsion of Bethel Temple, been predominantly a non-Krio movement, and even at Evangel the era of Krio dominance has now come to an end. The new pastor, Bai Sesay, is a Temne. The old core of Krio members had to swallow their pride graciously and submit to a Temne Bai's authority. Sesay's vision is to make the church grow, extend its outreach programme and oversee the church building project. In May 1990 home-cell Bible-study groups incorporating prayer,

ministry and fellowship were begun. One started in a Primary School classroom at the nearby Murray Town Barracks with around twenty attending. Thus, despite King's departure, Evangel has, along with others, experienced significant growth.⁶⁵ According to one member:

There are greater outpourings of the Spirit than before. Great things are happening. There are always testimonies to healings and miracles and the attendance is increasing. One of our major goals now is a new church building.⁶⁶

The order of Divine Service is similar to Bethel Temple except that Evangel Church, in the confined space of the Bible College hall, hold an 8 a.m. service for those who want to avoid the crush of the later meeting. The early service was started as a direct result of the Bonnye Crusade.⁶⁷ Sunday School, attended by adults, youths and children, begins at 10 a.m. and ends at 10:45. By May 1992 there were around 200 attending Sunday School. Because of pressure for space, some meet in a tent in the compound and others under a tree. It is normal procedure to commence the main service at 10:45 with a prayer which confronts all evil spirits and witchcraft and expels them. With so many young men from the Bible College present, the atmosphere is dynamic and energetic and provides a certain contrast with the devotional maturity of Bethel Temple with whom they have just now caught up numerically. Their further growth is presently being hindered by lack of space and not having a church building of their own. As at Bethel Temple, the role of the exhorters is of great importance as they stir up the souls of the worshippers and raise the spiritual temperature. Also, as at Bethel Temple, they mix popular hymns like "The Old Rugged Cross" and "Amazing Grace" with modern choruses such as "The Holy Spirit is moving in this place" and "I am a winner". At the open worship time there is a rising crescendo of prayer and praise in which many speak out in tongues, not with messages for interpretation, but in "mysteries" speaking to God. Shouts of, "Mountains are going to bow before us", "Sickness is going to bow before us", "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit", are heard above the general clamour and the beating of the modern drum set. While there is a definite evangelical doctrinal base to the worship there is also an emphatic proclamation of victory over sickness, demons and witchcraft. Unlike at Bethel Temple, there is as yet no dancing as such, but there is rhythmic

swaying by the women and some restrained jumping about by the men. The exhorter drives the congregation on in worship and calls from time to time for the inevitable "Clap for Jesus!" When the emotional and spiritual needs seem satisfied, there is a discernible calming down. While the spiritual heat generated nowadays reaches levels higher than at the time of greater missionary control and also Krio control, ecstatic overpowering possession manifestations, such as are common in the Spiritual churches, only rarely take place.

In the calmer atmosphere that follows the praise and worship session, the Bible passage is read and the sermon preached. This is normally in English. The service ends with ministry to the sick and problem-solving prayers. During a visit in May 1992, the pastor prayed for the anointing to fall and then cried out three times, "Touch the anointing of the Lord!" That was the signal for those seeking spiritual encounter to stir themselves up emotionally. Some ladies begin to demonstrate a build up of emotional pressure. The pastor shouted, "Receive! Receive!" At this one lady shouted and another laughed. "He's coming down! He's coming down!" shouted the pastor who had now abandoned the role of the Americanised, educated AOG preacher and was operating as a charismatic mediator of spiritual power. The laughing lady was now grimacing as if ready to vomit, in the style of convulsing possession common in the Spiritual churches. However, at Evangel Church the spiritual overpowering did not result in collapse, complete loss of self control, or even hallucinatory trance. Adopting the role of revelatory prophet, the pastor called out, "Man out there in the tent! You are confused. Come in I want to pray for you. You are confused, confused, confused." As he then cried out, "Be set loose! Be set loose!" several ladies broke out into shrill screaming, "Eee, eee, eee, la, la, la, la, eee, eee, eee ... " For many this was obviously the time of power encounter and the main attraction, and the similarities with the Spiritual churches, and God is Our Light, were apparent. The emphasis on dynamic spiritual encounters and infillings of the Spirit to the level of near possession has been a fairly recent development at the previously conservative Pentecostal Evangel Church, and indicates the increased level of accommodation to the indigenous pneumatology which has taken place since Pastor

King's departure. However, Pastor Sesay stops manifestations going beyond what he himself feels able to control. The meeting ends with most participants feeling they had experienced some measure of spiritual power encounter with the Holy Spirit, although not to the degree of total abandon and possession common to the Spiritual churches. A female FBC student, who used to attend College Chapel, the prestigious Methodist church on Rawdon Street, commented while leaving, "I go there to be filled with the Holy Spirit every week. I need to have that."

Joy AOG Assembly

Morie S. Ngobeh was born into a ruling house in Kailahun, Eastern District, on 4th May 1938. He had a strict Islamic upbringing and attended a Koranic school run by the family *alpha*, a Fula. The *alpha* supplied the family with *lasmani* which they sprinkled on their bodies or drunk, while reciting appropriate Suras and even Psalms, in order to protect from witchcraft and procure health. Ngobeh attended Secondary School in Bo. While living on Fourah Bay Road in Freetown in the 1960s, he, "a fanatical Muslim", looked out the window to mock an Adejobi street evangelist.

I was a Muslim, but this man called, "Anyone who wants help, please come, we can pray for you free". This struck me as an unusual thing. The *alpha* did not pray free. I went with my brother to his house at Bombay Street. He said, "Take off your shoes", then he took us to a sandy walled around area and made us roll from one end to the other. My brother had charms in his pocket. The prophet started predicting, "One of you is playing with ju-ju and has it in his pocket". My brother started to shake. He had three! Later, he threw two away and kept one. I went for prayers for my exams. The prophet refused money. The *alpha* always looked for something. He said if successful to come back. This amazed and challenged me and I started seeking here and there. I started reading the Word of God. I didn't get saved till 1969 when I was listening to a young European "New Life for All" evangelist preaching in the street. Later I was followed up by Philip Cheale of Christians in Action and attended Zion Fellowship. I never went back to the mosque. My uncle rejected me, but after a year he called for me. He saw my transformed life. He blessed me before he died.

I went to Bo and started to attend Church of Salvation with a cousin. I had a van and used it to carry people and animals to the church. God inspired me to study His Word. I started a Bible Study group in the church. We studied Hebrews. Our eyes started opening to the adultery, fornication and rituals. It was like a spell, we knew it was wrong, but we couldn't get out. We were called the "Divisionist Group". The Primate came to investigate. He supported the Bible Study. I was asked to take charge at Edward Lane as minister-in-charge. T. K. Davies was the Bishop.

When it was necessary to do the sacrifices I was in a dilemma. What is going on in Church of Salvation is not of God. Immorality is unchecked right from the Head down. Salvation is limited to driving out witches; why not deliver them? Animal sacrifice was the worst, as it makes the blood of Christ meaningless. What the Head says goes, he has greater authority than the Word of God. If the Head changes, the whole thing can change. For example Mrs. Senesie, she was at the top. You can't change by remaining, you make a compromise. T. K. Davies has not changed. His sister, Mary Ganda, left his church a month ago. I trained Bishop Browne. He is very sincere, but sincerely wrong. He thinks his revelations are coming from God, but they are from spirits of darkness. I wanted to leave Church of Salvation. I couldn't do sacrifices anymore. The Primate came down to deal with the problem. He was so furious! "Let him go! This is what we have been doing. We are not going to change. God is blessing us. Let him go!" A load left me and the splendour of peace came into my life. I was so happy. I wanted to study the Word of God and enrolled at Evangel Bible College in 1981.⁶⁸

In his first year at Evangel Bible College, Ngobeh felt moved by the Holy Spirit to begin an outreach to jobless youths, drug addicts and vagrants in the city centre. Missionaries Welch, Savage and McGee encouraged him to organise "Mission Possible" as a college project. When Ngobeh graduated in 1983 the project was discontinued. After visiting Singapore for advanced leadership training in 1985, Ngobeh resuscitated Mission Possible. He renamed it Deliverance Ministry and started holding open-air services at Sewa Grounds and Parade Grounds. Several youths responded and a fellowship was begun at Ngobeh's home at 42 Fort Street. They moved to Boncelie Nursery School on Fort Street in 1988 and began to hold Sunday services as Joy AOG Assembly. By 1990 they had 46 members. In December 1990, Joy Assembly took over the vacant and derelict building on Short Street - formerly Spa Fields Countess of Huntingdon Church - vacated by the Kissi AOG Church when they moved to Kissy Brook. According to Pastor Ngobeh, "When they moved out we moved in." In 1992, Joy Assembly had over a hundred regularly attending divine service and the prospects for further growth were bright. In his dynamic preaching ministry Pastor Ngobeh emphasises faith in the Word of God and trusting God for healing. Ngobeh personally refuses to take medicine of any kind to cure sickness, although this is not binding on the church. His stand on healing derives from his Church of Salvation days and his own personal experiences of divine healing. Ngobeh openly denounces the practices of the Spiritual churches and publicly rebukes Christians for continuing with the custom of pouring libations to the dead.

"This is against the Word of God. My life is in the hands of Jesus," he declares.⁶⁹ Pastor Ngobeh has become an extremely popular speaker at evangelical conventions, conferences and evangelistic campaigns. The church have ambitious plans to construct a complex containing a church, a rehabilitation home for drug addicts, and a centre for evangelism, but are dependent of outside financial support being forthcoming for such an impressive project.

New Evangelical AOG Church

On Sunday 3rd May 1992, 300 worshippers from the New Evangelical AOG Church tent on Fort Street marched in procession to their impressive new church at 81 Wellington Street. Samuel Konteh, standing in for President Momoh who was ousted five days previously in the military coup led by Captain Strasser, cut the ribbon declaring:

This is a house of salvation. This is a house of healing. Healing of the spirit, healing of the soul and healing of the body.

Inside, about 1,000 packed the beautifully decorated and furnished white and cream painted building, while around 600 stood outside on the street. The dedication sermon was to have been preached by AOG missionary Glen Smith, but as the American missionaries were evacuating Sierra Leone that week-end, in the US Embassy's withdrawal of American citizens, Pastor Carew stepped into the breach at the last minute. With the missionary's seat conspicuously empty, Manfred Carew preached a fiery message in which he railed against white missionaries who did not show solidarity with their Sierra Leonean Christian brothers. He also criticised traditional beliefs and old Krio attitudes:

This building is just an ordinary building when we are not in it. We are the Church - this is just a building. Many make a mistake. There is nothing holy about the building when we are out of it - it is just a building. The Church in Sierra Leone has often been a group who pushed people out and drove them away. This is a church for the poor, for souls. This institution should be an institution of life, vitality and power. We don't depend on Americans! We don't depend on whites! We depend on God! Whites are leaving the country. We don't depend for our defence on the whites.

The smouldering resentment against American AOG missionaries, who were now seemingly abandoning them just after Momoh's highly unpopular and corrupt Government had been toppled, could not be suppressed.

AOG missionary and national relations had reached an all time low. Bai Sesay, the new Assistant Superintendent of the Western District Council, offered the dedicatory prayer. Moses Fayiah, the Pentecostal pioneer from Koindu, now General Secretary of AOG Sierra Leone, closed in prayer and gave the benediction. The American evacuation seriously affected all missionary relationships in Sierra Leone. The Baptists complained the American missionaries not only left without consulting the national church leaders, but also broke a fundamental tenet of Baptist faith by putting state authority above ecclesiastical. Superintendent Konteh expressed his disquiet over the Americans' precipitate departure:

Now we have become suspicious and apprehensive. If something more serious comes up, then what? If we work together we should sit together. They left without even talking to us. In Liberia the missionaries left, but there was not one ticket for a national pastor. It is very significant, and in our eyes the missionaries have dropped in status. We don't have to depend on foreigners for finance.⁷⁰

Obviously missionary and national leadership relationships have entered another stage of maturity where the missionary presence is seen by the nationals as increasingly irrelevant.

TWO RECENTLY FOUNDED NON-AOG PENTECOSTAL-EVANGELICAL CHURCHES

The closing years of the 1980s witnessed a proliferation of new independent Pentecostal-evangelical and Charismatic churches in Freetown, two of the more significant of which are Glory Ministries and Flaming Evangelical Ministries.

Glory Ministries

Glory Ministries - full title "Unto the Glory of God's Son Ministries" - held its first Sunday service at Cathedral Girls' School, Howe Street, near Sewa Grounds on 9th September 1988 with 32 present including children. As already recorded, this was a breakaway from Bethel Temple.⁷¹ The church sought to evangelise the noisy, crowded area, the territory of hundreds of petty traders, many drug-addicts and destitute. A rehabilitation department was set up to reach the drop-outs, addicts and delinquents, and literacy classes were started. In

1989 attendances were averaging around 70. By the time of the 1990 Freetown Church Survey the congregation had grown to 108, with 74 adults and 34 children. The inspirational ministries of Sidney and Irene Davies were producing fruit despite the church's run-down surroundings. Sidney Davies also held the position of Evangelism Director of EFSL. By 1992 there were 45 full members who had been baptised by immersion. The growth is slow and steady because of the strong doctrinal emphasis on regeneration, and the stringent demands for complete surrender to Christ and holy living. Full members must:

- 1) **Be BORN AGAIN BELIEVERS separated from the world - 2 Cor. 6:14ff**
- 2) **Have had the experience of Water Baptism by Immersion**
- 3) **Be committed to the Great Commission as stated in Matthew 28:18ff**
- 4) **Live a meaningful prayer life**
- 5) **Have perfect respect and obedience for leadership**
- 6) **Demonstrate absolute love and unity among others**
- 7) **Avoid all backbiting, gossiping and slandering**
- 8) **Live holy and dedicated lives**
- 9) **Have perfect hate for sin and the things of the world**
- 10) **Be conscious of heaven and the spiritual warfare the Church is involved in**
- 11) **Be determined to be like Jesus.**

Baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues is sought after and praying for the sick is a prominent ministry. According to Davies:

We do pray for the sick as and when the need arises. James chapter 5 exhorts us to pray for the sick anointing them with oil. So much commercial harm has been done with this passage, leading people to believe in the oil rather than Jesus the healer. We pray for the sick without the anointing oil, and many have received their healing. We discourage the practices of Spiritual churches that use olive oil mixed with Florida Water for the healing of the sick. We encourage and teach the congregation that faith in Christ heals the sick.

The style of worship is Pentecostal, similar to Bethel Temple, but much less sophisticated and poorer. However, a ten person choir, wearing purple robes with white collars and well trained by the musically talented Irene Davies, has been constituted. Impassioned exhortations to holy living are given by both the pastor and his wife, with emphasis on the Word of God and the Holy Spirit. The gifts of utterances in tongues with interpretation and also prophecy are given prominence. Davies maintains:

We always make room for the interference of the Holy Spirit in our programmes. We believe in making melody in our hearts to the Lord, shouting for joy, clapping of hands, raising of hands, weeping and speaking in tongues when under the influence

of the Holy Spirit. In short we utilise the principles of worship outlined in Ps. 100, and Ps. 150. We make use of praise worship including popular hymns and choruses. Although the instruments (an electric organ and a set of drums) are a bit western, yet our presentation is African in that there is much clapping and raising of the hands. Shegurehs and shake-shake also form part of the musical instruments. Music forms an integral part of worship. Music contributes to the spiritual climate and prepares the hearts and minds of people for real communion with God.

The church's strong stand against witchcraft, charms, and the ancestor cult, including participation in *awujoh*, is clearly outlined in its **Constitution and Bylaws**:

We hold very strong opposition against the practices involved in these secret societies and awujohs, embracing spiritism and talking to the dead, which is all against Scriptures. It is an abomination and a stench in the nostrils of God.

Masonic Lodges are classified as secret societies and a cult having no Biblical endorsement. Members are permitted to worship in the church, but cannot be either associate or full members. The church are against polygamy, but "saved" polygamists may be associate members provided they abandon sexual relations with all except the first wife. While both English and Krio were used in the beginning, the tendency is now to concentrate on Krio "in order to get the message across in its simplicity". Davies sees the most pressing need of the church is to have a building of its own as the present accommodation "is becoming too small and provides inadequate seating facilities". They are hindered in their development plans - which include a training school for drop-outs and a pre-primary school providing Christian education - by lack of finance and operate on a shoe-string as a poor church in a poor area of the city. A "Love, Care, Share" project operates every first Sunday. Members bring surplus food like rice, gari, onions, also clothes and books, to give to the most needy in the congregation. Sometimes bags of rice are purchased and shared. Many at Bethel Temple see Glory Ministries as an extension of Bethel Temple and hope that Sidney and Irene Davies will come back soon and take over from Pastor Jones when he retires.

Flaming Evangelical Ministries

In 1986, Frederick Abu Koroma, a twenty-five years old student living at Ascension Town Road and studying Political Science and Biblical and Religious Studies at FBC, "Got the

impression and leading from the Holy Spirit to start an indigenous work.⁷² A Mandinka-Temne, Koroma was born on 26th January 1961 at Congo Cross of Muslim parents who had migrated to Freetown from Kambia District in the Northern Province. While attending Sierra Leone Grammar School, Koroma was involved in alcohol and drug-taking and was sent to complete his Fifth Form at Magburaka Government School. He completed in 1979 and taught primary school until he entered FBC in 1984. In December 1979 he became a Christian through the witness of his elder brother Benjamin Koroma who had come into a dramatic "born-again" conversion experience. Abu Koroma joined the Holiness Pentecostal Church at Congo Cross and served as Sunday School Superintendent and Assistant Pastor. At FBC he was a member of the Bible Study Union, but held no office. However, he shared his growing vision with a group of five friends. On 1st January 1987 they went to Aberdeen Bridge to fast and pray and from this Flaming Evangelical Ministries was born. For the next six months the group set aside time for fasting and praying every week. They had a revelation to establish the church at Kingtom. From 13th to 16th June 1987, they held a crusade at the Police Grounds in Kingtom. There were ten converts. The first service in Kingtom was held the following Sunday. Koroma graduated from FBC in 1988 and immediately became full-time President of Flaming Evangelical Ministries. The 1990 Freetown Church Survey recorded a congregation, which met in the Prince of Wales School Hall, of 265; 90 males, 110 females, 65 children. All the indicators were pointing to continued growth and expansion. The goals of Flaming Evangelical Ministries were to reach all of Sierra Leone with the Gospel, plant churches and home-cells, disciple converts, establish a Bible School teaching practical as well as Biblical subjects, set up a Rehabilitation Centre where drug addicts and straying youths could be helped, and deliver those under demonic influences.⁷³ Crusades were held in partnership with other churches at Aberdeen, Lumley, Parade Ground, Kingtom, Dworzark Farm and outside Siaka Stevens Stadium. Crusades were also held at Lungi, Makeni, Magburaka, Port Loko, Lunsar, in the Northern Province, and Bo and Koidu in the east. By June 1992, branches had been started at Aberdeen, Brookfields, Grafton Police Barracks, Dworzark Farm and Allen Town, and a Bo

branch was about to be opened. There were 18 Home Bible Study Cells operating in various zonal areas in Freetown and an office was rented at 51 Waterloo Street. Well attended healing and deliverance services were being held twice monthly on Sunday evenings at the Freetown Youth Centre.⁷⁴ In 1994, the Bible School, which had been opened in 1989, had 369 students participating in their two year programme. A School of Deliverance was also inaugurated and a London branch established at Brixton Town Hall.

The services at the Prince of Wales School start with a prolonged session of Charismatic chorus singing, backed by tambourine players and congregational clapping. Popular choruses are; "Tell an tenki, tell am, tell Papa God tenki", "Jesus I never forget what you done for me", "The Holy Ghost power is keeping me alive". The exhorter then shouts:

The Holy Ghost is here! The power is here! The power of the Holy Ghost is here this morning! Let us praise Him! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!⁷⁵

A period of open prayer and praise ensues and this is followed by more chorus singing during which some holy dancing is enjoyed. The energetic ministry team on the platform are very smartly dressed. Abu Koroma wears a suit and tie; sometimes a red bow-tie. The language of communication is Krio. These are very intelligent and confident modern Sierra Leonean Christians, sure of themselves and their calling from God. There is no hint of the existence of any identity crisis, or religio-cultural dichotomy, among this generation of Freetown Christians worshipping in this Pentecostal and Charismatic fashion. This session becomes progressively noisier. Loud prayers are offered up and many pray and sing in tongues. The lady leading the praise sings out over the orderly commotion of this the most naturally Western Charismatic of the indigenous Pentecostal churches, "We bless you Lord! We praise your name! We worship you!" Gradually a silence descends. A regular Pentecostal hymn, "There shall be showers of blessing" is sung, but it lacks the vitality of the earlier chorus singing. The Scripture lesson is read, and the sermon, which covers a wide area of the Biblical literature for confirmation texts, is delivered. The sound system is loud and of poor quality, reflecting the financial difficulties Flaming Evangelical Ministries are

experiencing. When the noisy generator expires, the sound system dies with it. The worship improves considerably as a result. There are similarities with New Testament Church, but Flaming Evangelical Ministries operates more along the lines of a Team Ministry. The leadership input is more diverse and consequently less intense. This is a new approach to ministry in Freetown, although husband and wife team ministries are very common.

While this progressive young church, which combines spiritual depth and a diversity of ministries, is struggling financially, it is dynamic, clear-sighted, modern African and indigenous. Speaking in 1992, theology student Leslie Shyllon Jr. predicted, "This is a beautiful ministry. Ten years from now it will be a mighty ministry. A sort of Oral Roberts Ministries of Sierra Leone." The ministry emphasises deliverance. Abu Koroma explained:

I read books, written by prominent Nigerians, concerning deliverance, and I had seen the need because there were people who were dying prematurely because of oppression, people whom the doctors could not help out of their problems. Doctors usually say, "Dis nar blak man sik" (i.e. the cause of the illness goes beyond the natural). I believed there was a need to address this important matter. Some people were dedicated to spirits during their naming ceremonies. Some because of occultic background become members of secret societies. Many, when they have problems, go to the "white-garment churches" where they are taken to the beach and there they contact water spirits. Some go to the medicine-men. Names have meanings. If you answer to a particular name, the spirit behind that name has the legal right to attack you. Children see demons, they perceive these spirits. We have what we call the "Third eye", the "Psychic eye". If you are conversant with Indians, they usually have a spot on their foreheads which symbolises the "Third eye". If a child is in its mother's womb and that mother consults spirits, the spirit has legal rights to the life of that child. If any of the parents are engaged in witchcraft, the children become vulnerable for initiation into witchcraft.

Secret societies expose you to demons. There are some secrets which you have to maintain in a secret society. To maintain those secrets, you have to take oaths. Initiation may include blood covenant. Satan understands the implications of a blood covenant. Once that covenant is established he has a legal right to oppress you and put you in bondage. Behind every secret society are powerful demonic spirits. In many secret societies, people are given marks during initiation. Marks may be on the back, or the hand. Some receive marks for protection, or for the acquiring of wealth. Once the spirits take up the duty of protecting you they have the legal right to oppress your life.⁷⁶

Construction of a church seating about 2,500 was begun in 1994 and Shyllon's predictions were in process of being fulfilled. In his Freetown crusades, Koroma, who emphasises deliverance by Christ from evil spirits, regularly attracts crowds of over six thousand.

JESUS IS LORD MINISTRY

Mrs. Dora Dumbuya, founder of Jesus is Lord Ministry and wife of the late Lt. Col. Kawuta Dumbuya who was accused of plotting against the military government and executed in December 1992, is very reserved and reticent about giving out information concerning herself. She is a Limba from Kamakwie in the Bombali District, born around 1945 into a Muslim family which was "deep in ju-ju and other crafty practices".⁷⁷ After moving to Freetown she worked as a secretary at the Fish Industries Limited and the Mano River Union. From 1971, through a friendship with the late Mrs. Alma Kanu, she began to attend Bethel Temple. When her husband went to England for military training in the early 1980s, Mrs. Dumbuya accompanied him and undertook an intensive course in Secretarial Studies. On her return from the United Kingdom:

I became a petrol dealer for BP and Shell at Kissy Road, (opposite Kissy Road Cemetery). By the side of the Gas Station, I was operating a Bar where people used to fight and get wounded just for liquor. This made me disgusted with petrol and beer selling. I prayed to the almighty God to find me another job that would make me more helpful to humanity.⁷⁸

Possibly uncomfortable at Bethel Temple because of her involvement in the sale of liquor, Mrs. Dumbuya moved to the predominantly Limba and Loko Faith AOG Church in Brookfields. In 1986 she joined Deeper Life Bible Church and became a part-time church worker and leader of a home-cell which met in her Wilberforce Barracks home. In 1988, while still attending Deeper Life, Dora Dumbuya had a vision:

I dreamt I was wearing a brown flowing dress with a veil on my head and palms right in front of me made into a cross. I dreamt I was walking on green carpeted grass. I also dreamt I was walking home from a worship service when I came across three women, one resembled me so much. She asked where I was coming from, and I replied, I am just from worshipping the Lord.... I sincerely believed the almighty God was preparing me for a special purpose.⁷⁹

She believed God was calling her to develop her own independent ministry. The Bible-study group became the nucleus of an embryonic church, the Wilberforce Fellowship, which met on the veranda of her Wilberforce Barracks home:

The Lord performed wonderful miracles. People got healed from all manner of diseases through the power of Jesus Christ. I am just an instrument of Jesus Christ who not only heals people's bodies, but also their minds, souls and spirits.⁸⁰

By early 1989 the house could no longer contain the crowds who flocked to the new salvation-healing ministry and the church moved into Saint Luke's Garrison Church. Problems arose, and in April 1989 she procured the use of a large empty hall at the barracks from the Military Transport Authority. Three years later, with their name changed to Jesus is Lord Ministries, attendances of over 2,000 were filling the transport hall to overflowing. The present Head of State, Captain Valentine Strasser, then a young officer, attended a meeting in 1990 - prior to being posted to Liberia to serve with the West African peace-keeping forces - and afterwards made a Christian profession. Over 10,000 were attending the Wednesday afternoon monthly Men and Women Fellowship service, the vast majority being unable to get inside the hall. Some of the cures recorded were dramatic, a lady with cancer in the womb was healed and another was cured of cancer in the throat.⁸¹ One woman was rebuked in the meeting and before the meeting was over she died. Freetown was aware a powerful prayer woman had been raised up among them. Comparisons were made with the late Euphemia Jones. The rate of growth in Sierra Leone was proportionately equivalent to the phenomenal growth of Kumuyi's Lagos congregation. At least 80% of the congregation are women and the church is sometimes disparagingly referred to as the "Women's Church". Mrs. Dumbuya is perceived as an African Deborah, one of the new breed of Christian women who are leading African women out from under male domination and sometimes even tyranny.

Mrs. Dumbuya is a small serious lady whose face can suddenly light up with a flashing smile. She refuses to wear a white robe, claiming, "It is not the immaculate white dress or uniform

that makes a preacher powerful. Power is not in the clothes, but in the power of Jesus Christ."⁸² She ministers wearing an ordinary dress and a simple, coloured head covering. Her story-telling ability, and fiery, whole-hearted, down-to-earth preaching, punctuated with humorous anecdotes and homely illustrations, make her a powerful communicator of the Gospel to the grass-roots and the illiterates. According to *New Star*:

What is unique about this church is that Sister Dumbuya only prays for you, and your illness is cured, "through the power of Jesus Christ" without using candles, incense or Psalms. This is why the church continues to attract crowds of different denominations with their problems. The Military Transport Hall (MTH) at Wilberforce Barracks has become the biggest crowd puller where paralysed patients walk again, women with cancer are healed.⁸³

The ministry developed by Mrs. Dumbuya and Jesus is Lord Ministry combines the Holiness-Pentecostalism and miracle healing of Deeper Life Bible Church, the joyful freedom in worship of Bethel Temple, and the down-to-earth simplicity and pneumatic enthusiasm of the Limba Pentecostals. Overarching all that is a zeal for proclamation of the Word of God. The Bible is an inspired book containing divine words of power which are dynamically applicable in the present situation. In addition, her own native ingenuousness and talent makes this a church which attracts not only the poor, but also a broad spectrum of Freetown society. The congregation is distinctively non-Krio. Many of the converts, as at the Limba National Pentecostal Church, are Muslim. Contacts have been made with the Zwemer Institute in USA with a view to teams coming out to instruct the hundreds of Muslim converts. Holiness is emphasised, but in a less pronounced and milder form than at Deeper Life. The predominant emphasis is on Pentecostal power and the triumph of Christ over demons, witchcraft, sickness and misfortune. As in Deeper Life, the Bible is the acknowledged supreme source of authority and a particular teaching theme is marriage and developing a genuine Christian family life. Assisting Mrs. Dumbuya are Frances Boiro, the AOG Western District Deputy Superintendent, and Major George of the Army Chaplaincy. There is a Monday evening prayer meeting, and on Wednesday afternoon, except when the monthly Fellowship is held, there is a Bible study and prayer meeting where "the Word of God is

taught so that God will use you and the truth will set you free".⁸⁴ The Friday morning Revival and Miracle Hour attracts over 1,000 seeking for healing and problem-solving prayers.

The main Sunday service starts at 10 a.m. with enthusiastic praise choruses, most of which focus on power; "Powa, powa, Pentecostal powa", "All power in heaven and earth", "Jesus powa na supa supa powa, Mami Wata powa na lessa lessa powa", "Tiday, tiday, Jesus go answer me O, tiday, tiday". Occasionally a chorus in Limba is sung. Krio favourites like "When peace like a river" and "I surrender all" are sung, but in a slow ponderous funereal fashion which dampens the joy and enthusiasm and cause several worshippers yawn. On the other hand modern Charismatic choruses like "All over the world the Spirit is moving", and "Who is like unto Thee, among the gods who is like unto Thee", are very popular. The congregation of 2,000, mostly ladies and including some obviously quite wealthy, is colourfully dressed in native African fashion. Already over 600 have sat through the adult Sunday school, a Bible study which divides into Krio and English groups. A banner at the front has a picture of an open Bible and the words WELCOME TO JESUS IS LORD MINISTRY. EXPECT A MIRACLE. Jesus is Lord Ministry resembles Deeper Life Bible Church in many ways, but fully indigenised, spontaneously noisy, joyfully relaxed and comfortably at home on its native soil, and more open to spontaneous Holy Spirit inspiration and worship. The congregation, blissfully oblivious of their drab spartan surroundings in the barracks transport hall, clap and sway rhythmically. The prayer time opens with Satan being bound, demons rebuked and the name of Jesus uplifted by a lady in a white dress and black beret, the uniform of the nine member choir. Then follows spontaneous corporate prayer which is loud and interspersed with waves of applause, claps for Jesus. This in turn leads into spontaneous corporate worship and singing. Jesus is extolled as healer, helper and problem-solver, the one and only solution to the Sierra Leone dilemma. However, "strong faith" is needed to receive from God. Despite the recent contacts with the Rhema Bible Church team running the Saturday Freetown Bible Training Centre at Congo Cross, and their

obvious support for the new indigenous Pentecostal-evangelical church, there is little trace of the greedy materialism of the "Prosperity Gospel" of the West. What is sought here is an experiential encounter with the power of God and the release of that power into all the difficult circumstances of life in a struggling West African state. Prosperity is seen in terms of God's blessing on the life. According to Mrs. Dumbuya:

When you do garden, first you pray, then you work. You sweat. Then God will make it grow and bless you. No force can take it away from you. You need give no money to the medicine-man. No compromise. Stand for the truth for ever and ever.⁸⁵

The existential priorities are victory over witchcraft and evil spirits, prosperity of soul, "plenti pikin" (lots of children), and "well bodi" (good health). However, it does not stop there. Mrs. Dumbuya believes part of the "special purpose" God called her into her ministry was to be involved in the End Times Gospel harvests:

Use the cutlas to reap the harvest. The Holy Spirit is the cutlass. Use your cutlass! Where do you reap? Look at Sierra Leone, it is ripe unto harvest *naya* (here). *Tok bot Jesus na poda poda, na mekit, na office* (Tell about Jesus in the mini-bus taxi, in the market, in the office). God will do great things through you. This is the time of harvest. I bring the Good News *bot Jesus* to you! I invite you to come!

Unlike at Deeper Life, there is no restraint on tongues speaking during the worship time. Tongues with interpretation and prophecies are uttered over the general commotion. Exhortations to lead holy lives and to "ask God to make you whiter than snow" are frequently given. A fairly typical prophecy by prophetess Boiro is:

Feel the power of God in your life. Feel free and liberated and go home different. The Holy Ghost wants to break chains this morning. Pray for the Holy Ghost to take control of you this morning. [An ecstatic utterance in tongues] Hallelujah! The Lord is here already, the power is here now! The power will reach you this morning. Look up to your king this morning, the Lord Jesus Christ who will break your chains and set the captives free. [Another ecstatic utterance in tongues] I am the God who forgives. I am the God who restores. I am the God who washes white as snow. Put your lives right this morning so you can worship in spirit and in truth. You have followed other gods. The Lord, He is the only God. He is the only one you are to worship. Stop bowing down to false gods. Worship Him who made the heavens and the earth. He alone is God.⁸⁶

The mainly female congregation, longing for spiritual power in their lives, pour out their hearts in prayer. They worship earnestly and passionately with hands raised up in the air. Although there is much noise and bodily movement, and a few begin to manifest possession symptoms, there is no hint of the meeting getting out of control. From the prayers and the joyful expressions on the faces the primary focus of attention is evidently Jesus Christ. This section, as in Deeper Life, is brought to an end with the leader calling out, "In Jesus name we pray!" The talented choir sing "Country and Western" style hymns which are greatly enjoyed by the congregation who loudly applaud in appreciation.

A Bible-teaching message with lots of Bible references to support each point follows. The teachers are usually Mrs. Boiro and Major George. Teaching on the Holy Spirit is popular. His person and character are well delineated from Scripture. He regenerates, comforts, and is identified with the Spirit of Christ. His power in Holy Spirit baptism, which is "the gateway to miracles and liberty in the Lord", is necessary for the evangelisation of the world. Tongues accompany the baptism in the Holy Spirit which can be received by faith right now because "the Spirit is moving right in this place as the prophet said it would be". It is pointed out plainly that this is not a Spiritual church, but a "Spirit of Pentecost church", a "church of the Holy Spirit's power". "We do not burn candles, use water or do exchange of life sacrifice, we study the Word." Holy Ghost power is "the secret of living the victorious Christian life". The congregation are exhorted to, "Open your heart to Jesus Christ. He is the answer to all your problems." There is no need for the expensive sacrifices and ritual struggles of the Spiritual prophets. Rather, a sanctified life is the necessary prerequisite for experiencing victory. One must come as a clean vessel to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Testimony time follows. One lady claimed healing from an eight years ailment. Another had suffered ten years of pain. A man was cured of a severe hiccup. A lady cured of a belly problem shouted loudly

into the mike. A woman who lived a bad life had changed and had stopped having boyfriends. Five more similar testimonies followed.⁸⁷

Mrs. Dumbuya prays before she preaches. She grips the lectern as she prays and almost immediately starts to shake. The rattling of the lectern is picked up by the hand mike she is holding. The congregation perceive this as the anointing of the Holy Spirit descending on His servant to empower her. In her prayer Mrs. Dumbuya assails Satan and demons and claims authority over them. "I command all principalities and powers of Satan to go. I come against all familiar spirits." Her praying invariably includes the sentence:

I pray that I decrease for ever, and You increase for ever and ever. That people will be changed and lives transformed by Your power.

Her uncompromising preaching, in a mild form of Krio, is similar to that of Pastor Akinola. The Word of God to her at the start of her ministry was, "No compromise!"⁸⁸ Salvation, regeneration, consecration and the power of the Holy Spirit are her major and habitual preaching themes. The Gospel is powerful and offers a powerful salvation. She demands respect for God in His house, even although His house was at that time a derelict army transport hall. The presence of the Holy Spirit makes it holy ground. False ministers who lead unholy lives are ridiculed and unbiblical Spiritual church practices exposed:

Nicodemus knew the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, but he was not born again. He didn't have the Holy Spirit. So many ministers are like Nicodemus. Others use Holy Water, but are not born again. You need a ticket to get to America. You need to be born again to get into God's Kingdom. Unless you are born again you don't get the power of God.⁸⁹

The effete Reverends of the historic denominations are particularly mocked for their vanity and powerlessness. They were blacks who tried to be whites and lost their spiritual power. The prophets of the Spiritual churches are also attacked, especially their exchange-of-life sacrifices and money-making practices. Their fasting demands are criticised, "You may do blue, red, white, dry, wet fasting, but unless you are washed in the blood of Jesus you are

suffering for nothing."⁹⁰ However, there is a grudging recognition of their power. Her strongest tirades are directed against the powerless ministers who lack both blackman and whiteman power. Her condemnation of false professors is made mainly in parable-like stories and jokes at their expense, which contrast their vanity, dishonesty and hypocrisy with the life of goodness, honesty and power set forth in the Gospel for believers. These stories with their caricatures, delight, entertain, and also instruct the audience. Unlike Akinola and other missionaries, white and black, her criticisms are made as an insider, a native who fully understands the audience and effectively uses indigenous communication techniques. Mrs. Dumbuya is a "fire-brand" preacher with bold positive faith whose sermons are delivered at full volume. "I preach the Word of God," she declares, "My appointment comes from heaven. That is why I preach as I preach."⁹¹ "I break the Word down small and give it to the people."⁹² Her sermons are reasonably brief. The aim is to move quickly into ministry time. She normally concludes with a list of texts for the congregation to meditate upon at home.

The ministry time begins with an exhortation to receive the anointing and blessing of the Holy Spirit. She then leads the congregation in participatory intercessory prayer, encouraging them to turn loose in prayer and lay hold on God themselves for what they want. The 2,000 worshippers pour body and soul into the communal praying. As the anointing comes upon her she shakes violently for about half a minute before gathering herself together and launching into impassioned prayer. Holding the mike in her left hand and stretching out her right hand over the congregation she extends over them the anointing, blessing and the revelations she herself received while under the power. She commands sick people to put their hand on the sickness and prays:

I preached your Word, now send signs and wonders! I command every sickness to go in Jesus' name! I destroy all cancers, I dry them up! I destroy all burning sicknesses, all secret sicknesses. Holy Spirit touch them! Heal them! In Jesus name I pray!⁹³

She lets fly at all demons, expelling them from the place. The noise level rises to fever pitch. Ladies shriek, some cry, some shout out in tongues. Several Sierra Leonean "Quakers" begin to shake uncontrollably. Ushers, keeping a watchful eye on the proceedings, move in to calm them down. Mrs. Dumbuya shouts above it all, exhorting the congregation to receive the Holy Spirit and claim victory over all demons and all diseases. "Pray for your problems! Pray to Jesus! Pray for your healing! Pray to Jesus!" Some ladies collapse overcome by the power. Major George sometimes interrupts to calm things down by calling for a chorus or praying for something in particular. The phrase "In Jesus name!" is shouted frequently. Mrs. Dumbuya continues to manifest spasms of violent shaking while praying. She shakes and quakes six or seven times, her face displaying pained intensity as she struggles to bring her emotions under control and fights to regain composure. One wonders how much of this is really beyond her control and how much it is being used to demonstrate that she is being powerfully inspired. To the congregation it is clear evidence of mighty anointings of the power of the Holy Spirit on a specially chosen vessel. The operations of the Holy Spirit are perceived primarily in the indigenous possession infilling fashion and this is exemplified and encouraged by Mrs. Dumbuya. However, she controls her pneumatic encounter, she gets on top of it and turns it around into prevailing prayer, prophetic utterances and powerful words of blessing. This individual and communal participation in spiritual power is unquestionably the meeting's main attraction. Here evangelical Christianity becomes indigenised down to its Sierra Leonean grass-roots level. As with other Pentecostal-evangelical churches who are operating in this area of being infilled by the Holy Spirit and physically experiencing supernatural powers, the major problems to be faced lie in the area of discerning of spirits and understanding what among all the commotion and frenzy is in reality the presence and power of the Holy Spirit of Christ. As already observed, the major weakness of the Spiritual churches is that they exercise very little spiritual discernment in this area of spiritual dynamism and human psychology. The Kallons at New Testament Church are using Biblical criteria to deal with the infilling

phenomenon in cases where there is loss of self-control, fainting and convulsions. At Jesus is Lord Ministries, where the congregation is normally five times greater than at New Testament Church, sometimes much more than that, Mrs. Dumbuya positively encourages the congregation to receive an instantaneous infilling experience and they gladly respond. However, as the church is maturing and increasingly applying Bible teaching on the person of the Holy Spirit to their experience of spiritual power, it is now common to hear in Mrs. Boiro and Major George's teaching, instructions like, "The Holy Spirit makes you shake, but the spirit that makes you fall down is an evil spirit."⁹⁴ Also:

An evil spirit go make you shake and holler. The Holy Spirit noto shame you. He noto draw attention to youself. He glorifies Jesus. Amen!⁹⁵

While there is no question but that it is the Holy Spirit who is shaking Mrs. Dumbuya, for others it may be demons and witch-spirits which are causing the possession manifestations, as for example one lady who, shaking violently, was yelling, "I am the way! I am the Lord! I am the Lord!"⁹⁶ It is not the shaking *per se*, but the lack of self-control and therefore divine influence which is the decisive factor. According to Mrs. Dumbuya:

You can't control the anointing of God when it comes. God is in control. The power just comes. When it stops it stops. But God's Spirit is calm and does not cause confusion. He is a Holy Spirit. He will not disgrace you. It is a big force, a strong power, the power of God, but since it is the Holy Spirit I know I will not fall down or be disgraced.⁹⁷

The anointing must outwork according to the Biblical pattern. To keep the anointing, holiness and implicit obedience to the commands of the Word of God are demanded.

While Jesus is Lord Ministry, the front-runner in Sierra Leone's Pentecostal-evangelical revival, is experiencing spiritual power in the form and terms clearly understood by ordinary Sierra Leoneans during the last decade of the twentieth century, it is, nevertheless, a church which is aware of its place in evangelical Christianity, the Holiness-Pentecostal movement, and the modern Neopentecostal and Charismatic movements. At present, it is gradually and

cautiously advancing its understanding of the person and work of the Holy Spirit to a New Testament and universal Pentecostal-evangelical position, and seeking to confine and subdue the unruly and uncontrollable elements of the indigenous and ecstatic pneumatology. Its worship still remains distinctively Sierra Leonean in form and style. In this fusion of the human and divine natures, where Jesus Christ and His church are more fully than ever before incarnated into Sierra Leonean life and culture, the teaching ministries of Mrs. Boiro and Major George, as well as the charisma and dynamism of Mrs. Dumbuya, play a vital role. However, the tremendous expansion of Jesus is Lord Ministry is directly related to the person and ministry of Mrs. Dumbuya, a 1990s Limba woman of spiritual power. She has brought New Testament pneumatology into the experience of Freetown women during a period of extreme economic hardship, political disillusionment and great social and cultural change. She inspires through her uncompromising and direct preaching of the Word of God. She provides an example of the anointed servant of God filled with Holy Ghost power. She leads the people into a personal participation in the power of the Holy Spirit where they can themselves work out their own salvation. By so doing she avoids being perceived as a "miracle worker" and is primarily regarded as a powerful woman of prayer and a channel of the healing power of the Spirit.

While she condemns all use of fetish and contacts with medicine-men and diviners, Mrs. Dumbuya has not yet crusaded against the ancestor cult and treads carefully in dealing with this deep-rooted and highly sensitive area, realising that to do so would greatly diminish her popular appeal. Associated with this, unlike Akinola at Deeper Life and also Abu Koroma at Flaming Evangelical Ministries, is a soft-peddling on society membership. On the question of pouring libations to the dead she states:

I used to do it and make offerings to my ancestors. It is not a thing that the Holy Spirit is wanting. I will be against it as God's Spirit directs me.⁹⁸

The impression one receives is that Mrs. Dumbuya, a revivalist not a reformer, is presently unwilling to crusade against this sacred family bonding and the most deeply ingrained cultural practice. Her special evangelistic ministry with its popular and grass-roots appeal is aimed at attracting people to the Gospel and she is not willing to cut herself off from her cultural roots until she receives a very clear direct command from the Holy Spirit to do so. Presently she is wisely avoiding a policy which will inhibit the momentum of her movement during these early days of extraordinary expansion. At the dedication of a new church on the Allen Town Hills, overlooking Calaba Town, on 5th April 1992, Mrs. Dumbuya testified:

I started this church with a small number of worshippers and the Lord performed wonderful miracles. People got healed of all manner of diseases through the power of Jesus Christ. I am just an instrument of Jesus Christ who not only heals people's bodies but also their mind souls and spirits. This is taken from Isaiah Chapter 61, verse 1, which says "The Spirit is the Sovereign Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for prisoners or the blind." What God did over 2,000 years ago, he can still do. He is the same yesterday, today and forevermore.⁹⁹

In early 1994, Jesus is Lord ministries, moved from the drab transport hall at Wilberforce Barracks to their new and immensely impressive "Cathedral" church at Tower Hill.

1 Ref. p.526, f/n. 30.

2 This was about the time, 21st February 1988, when, at his Family Worship Centre in Louisiana, Swaggart confessed to "specific incidents of moral failure", and was suspended by the Louisiana District Presbytery of AOG.

3 Africa Area representative Jim Bryant - AOG School of Missions, 1987. Paper on the Sierra Leone situation prior to the proposed 1988 Task Force Evangelism campaign.

4 *Ibid.*

5 *Ibid.*

6 *Ibid.*

7 *Ibid.*

8 Crispin Cole, *Target 2000 Evangelistic and Church Survey Research Programme: Greater Freetown Area*, p.1.

9 Although the Roman Catholics had only eight churches, their average attendance was 374 per church. The particular features of the Mass play a significant part in the worship pattern and church attendance of Roman Catholics.

10 Recorded interview held with Crispin Cole, General Secretary of EFSL, at K22, FBC, Freetown, on 3/6/90.

11 Galatians 3:1; 1 Cor. 2:1-5.

12 See M. Schoffeleers, "Christ as the Medicine-man and the Medicine-man as Christ" in *Man and Life*, 8, (1-2), January - June 1982, pp.11-28.

13 On the subject of what is involved in Christian conversion in the African context from the sociological perspective see, Robin Horton, "African Conversion" in *Africa*, 41(2), April 1971, pp.85-108; "On the Rationality of Conversion" in *Africa*, 45(3), 1975, pp.219-35; "On the Rationality of Conversion - Part 2" in *Africa*, 45(3), 1975, pp.373-99. For a critique of Horton's nineteenth century philosophical presuppositions and an alternative point of view based on Black Muslims' three stage conversion process - quarantine, mixing and reform - see, Humphrey J. Fisher, "Conversion Reconsidered: Some Historical Aspects of Religious Conversion in Black Africa" in *Africa*, 43, 1973, pp.27-40. The quarantine stage consists of new commers into the new religion. The mixing stage is where pre-Islamic beliefs and practices combine with those of the new. The reform stage comes after the influence of Islam has deepened and its devotees seek to eradicate all that is incompatible with Islam in the indigenous religious practice. For conversion as a shift from a weaker to a stronger source of spiritual power see, Cyril C. Okorochoa, *The Meaning on Religious Conversion in Africa: the Case of the Igbo of Nigeria*, (Avebury, Aldershot: 1987). For Grant's analysis of Recaptive conversion in which she examines the positions of Roben Horton and Humphrey Fisher in the conversion debate see, Grant, *ibid.* pp.210-17.

14 *Mountain Movers*, June 1990, p.14.

15 Daniel Taylor was born at Waterloo on 15th April 1960. His father was a Krio and his mother a Mandingo. He undertook a three years course at the Medical School of Hygiene and Communicable Diseases in Freetown and Bo completing in 1981. While at Bo he was converted to Christ at a mission conducted by Richard Shaka. From 1982 to 1985 he attended Evangel Bible College, and from 1985 to 1987 he attended West Africa Advanced School of Theology in Lome, Togo.

16 *Mountain Movers*, June 1990, p.14.

17 *Ibid.*, March 1990, p.17.

18 Christ for All Nations was founded in 1974 by Reinhard Bonnke as a Pentecostal or "Full Gospel" mass evangelism missionary society. It has its main office in Frankfurt, Germany, and organising offices in East and West Africa, England and USA. For background and theological assessment, see Tyson, *ibid.*, pp.50-58; Reinhard Bonnke, *Evangelism by Fire: an Initiative for Revival*, (Eastbourne: Kingsway Publications, 1989); Paul Gifford, "'Africa shall be saved'. An Appraisal of Reinhard Bonnke's Pan-African Crusade" in *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 17(1), 1987, pp.63-92.

19 Tyson, *ibid.*, p.50.

20 Synan, *ibid.*, p.17.

21 Gifford, *ibid.*, p.63.

²² *Ibid.*, p.90.

²³ Synan, *ibid.*, pp.17-18.

²⁴ Gifford, *ibid.*, p.68.

²⁵ Tyson, *ibid.*, p.50.

²⁶ For the story of Rees Howells and the Bible College of Wales, and their emphasis on faith, prayer and holy living, see Norman P. Grubb, *Rees Howells Intercessor*, (London: Lutterworth Press, 1973).

²⁷ **My train was not due to leave until the evening. I just walked as my feet took me, without a plan, and somehow wandered south of the River Thames into the pleasant avenues of Clapham.**

Then, at a certain corner, behind a high wooden fence, I saw a name on a panel - "George Jeffreys". I has just read a book by this evangelist, and could hardly imagine that I had chanced upon the very house where the same man might be. George Jeffreys came out of the Welsh revival and, with his brother Stephen ... had introduced the pentecostal message publicly to the people of Britain. His work shook cities, and tens of thousands witnessed mighty miracles. Eagerly I ventured through the gate and up the path, ringing the doorbell. A lady appeared and I asked, "Is this the George Jeffreys whom God used so mightily?" She affirmed it was so, to my great delight. I asked, hopefully, "Could I please see Mr. Jeffreys?" The reply was firm. "No, that is not possible."

But then a deep, musical Welsh voice, that is said to have held thousands spellbound with its authority, spoke from inside. "Let him come in." Thrilled, I entered, and there he was. He was seventy-two, but looked to me like a man of ninety.

"What do you want?" were his words to me. I introduced myself, and then we talked about the work of God. Suddenly, the great man fell on his knees, pulling me down with him, and started to bless me. The power of the Holy Spirit entered that room. The anointing began to flow, and, like Aaron's oil, seemed to run over my head and "down to the skirts of my robes", so to speak.

I left that house dazed. Four weeks later, like Elijah, George Jeffreys had been translated to glory. I had been led to see him just before he died. But I knew that I had picked up something from this former Holy Ghost, firebrand evangelist. The Lord, I am sure, had arranged that meeting. How else would it have been possible for me to stumble upon this one house in a city of ten million people? Bonnke, *ibid.*, pp.72-73.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.224.

²⁹ Tyson, *ibid.*, p.52, quoting from R. Steele, *Plundering Hell: the Reinhard Bonnke Story*, (Ravenmoor, South Africa: Sceptre Publications, 1984), pp.48-49.

³⁰ Tyson, *ibid.*, p.52.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp.52-53, quoting from Steele, *ibid.*, p.82.

³² Bonnke, *ibid.*, p.88.

³³ Tyson, *ibid.*, p.53.

³⁴ Gifford, *ibid.*, p.64. For Gifford's scathing critique of "The American Religious Right" see, *The New Crusaders*, (London: Pluto Press, 1991, revised edition), pp.1-25. For his criticism of the "Prosperity Gospel" and the Rhema Movement who are closely identified with it see, *ibid.*, pp.19-20.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.64-65.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.66.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Revival Report*, A/92 E, p.3.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Tyson quotes the editor of a "mainline evangelical magazine" who heard Bonnke preaching in Melbourne, Australia:

Reinhard Bonnke's preaching style wouldn't suit a normal parish pulpit. It wouldn't be big enough. Bonnke likes to stride around the stage, bend down low, throw his arms into the air like a triumphant boxer. He's celebrating victory - the victory of

- Jesus.... His thickly accented German-English has a penetrating quality Shout he does Bonnke leaves even the most enthusiastic American evangelist for dead.**
Tyson, *ibid.*, p.55.
- 41 Gifford notes Hollenweger's comment:
This modalist doctrine of the Trinity ... is more in accordance with the religious feeling and practice of Pentecostalism than a doctrine of the Trinity taken over without understanding from the traditional churches. Gifford, *ibid.*, p.72, quoting from Hollenweger, *ibid.*, pp.311f.
- 42 Gifford, *ibid.*
- 43 On the issues involved in language and cross-cultural translation of the Gospel from the period of the Early Church to the present, with an instructive comparative chapter on Islamic mission, see Lamin O Sanneh, *Translating the Message: the Missionary Impact on Culture*, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1989).
- 44 Gifford, *ibid.*, pp.75-76.
- 45 *Daily Mail*, 14/12/91, p.1.
- 46 *Revival Report*, A/92 E, p.4.
- 47 *Daily Mail*, 14/12/91, p.8.
- 48 *Revival Report*, A/92 E, p.3.
- 49 *ibid.*
- 50 *ibid.*, p.8.
- 51 *ibid.*
- 52 Recorded interview held with Sidney Davies at EFSL office, Circular Road, Freetown, on 13/3/92.
- 53 Gifford, *ibid.*, pp.88-89.
- 54 *Revival Report*, A/92 E, p.3.
- 55 Conversation held with Eric Cowley of World-wide Harvest Ministries at Crown Bakeries, Freetown, on 10/3/92.
- 56 *The National*, 27/2/92, p.1.
- 57 Incident witnessed by writer on 1/4/92.
- 58 Conversation held with Superintendent Samuel Konteh at AOG HQ at 97A Main Motor Road, Congo Cross, Freetown, on 8/7/92.
- 59 *ibid.*
- 60 *ibid.*
- 61 The membership and attendance statistics were obtained from the 1990 Greater Freetown Church Survey.
- 62 Recorded interview held with T. A. Koroma held at 85 Fort Street, Freetown, on 28/6/90.
- 63 Samuel Konteh, *ibid.*
- 64 Ref. p.596 above for full quotation by Crispin Cole.
- 65 Ref. pp.524-7 above for details of Evangel Church under Pastor King.
- 66 Conversation held with Leslie Shyllon Jr. at FBC, Freetown, on 1/6/90.
- 67 Conversation held with Superintendent Samuel Konteh at AOG HQ at 97A Main Motor Road, Congo Cross, Freetown, on 8/7/92.
- 68 Ngobeh, *ibid.*
- 69 Joy Assembly visited on 3/5/92.
- 70 Samuel Konteh, *ibid.*
- 71 Ref. p.513 above.
- 72 Abu Koroma in an interview recorded in *The Catalyst*, July-September 1994, p.7.
- 73 Sylvanus Decker, *Flaming Bible Church*, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Sociology, Fourah Bay College, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, 1992, p.3.
- 74 *ibid.*, p.4.
- 75 Service attended at the Prince of Wales School on 5/7/92.
- 76 Abu Koroma, *ibid.*, pp.7-8.
- 77 Information received from Canon Emerson Thomas in a correspondence dated 3/6/94.

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- 78 **New Star**, 15-28th May 1992, pp.5-6. The paper contained a report on the dedication of the new Jesus is Lord Church at Calaba Town on 5th April 1992.
- 79 **ibid.**
- 80 **ibid.**
- 81 **ibid.**
- 82 **ibid.**
- 83 **ibid.**, p.6.
- 84 Mrs. Boiro addressing the congregation on 25/3/92.
- 85 Meeting attended at Wilberforce Barracks, Freetown, on 5/7/92.
- 86 **ibid.**, 22/3/92.
- 87 **ibid.**, 25/3/92.
- 88 **ibid.**, 10/5/92.
- 89 **ibid.**, 25/3/92.
- 90 **ibid.**, 10/5/92.
- 91 **ibid.**, 19/4/92.
- 92 Interview held with Mrs. Dora Dumbuya at Wilberforce Barracks, Freetown, on 5/7/92.
- 93 Meeting attended at Wilberforce Barracks, Freetown, on 10/5/92.
- 94 Major George addressing the congregation on 25/3/92.
- 95 Frances Boiro addressing the congregation on 24/6/92.
- 96 Meeting attended at Wilberforce Barracks, Freetown, on 10/5/92.
- 97 Mrs. Dumbuya, **ibid.**
- 98 **ibid.**
- 99 **New Star**, 15-28th May 1992, p.5.

CONCLUSION

The Spiritual and Pentecostal-evangelical churches of Freetown have emerged out of a complex ecclesiastical matrix and a Christianity which was deep-rooted in the history of the settlement of Freetown, which was itself deep-rooted in the Great Evangelical Awakening of the eighteenth century in both Britain and the Americas. Even before the Methodist and CMS missionaries arrived in Freetown, the Nova Scotian Black Loyalists had, on their arrival in 1792, founded the first independent evangelical black Christian community in modern tropical Africa. The Black Loyalists had arrived in Nova Scotia during a period of religious awakening or revival. Several had already been exposed to the revivals of the Great Evangelical Awakening while slaves on the Southern plantations. They included David George, John Marrant, Moses Wilkinson and Boston King. Revival enthusiasm - unlike European Christianity generally, where emotionalism in religion was equated with fanaticism, antinomianism and political revolution - was entirely compatible with the black population's inherited understanding of appropriate religious behaviour. In revivalistic Christianity, the Nova Scotian Black Loyalists found a door of escape from white tyranny and exploitation, and the grinding poverty of their situation. The present Pentecostal-evangelical revival in Sierra Leone is also taking place against the back-drop of economic collapse, social disintegration, political ineptitude and the exploitation of the masses.

The Christianity adopted by the Nova Scotians was evangelical in doctrine and enthusiastic in expression. Its basically Anglican-Methodist order could be easily set aside whenever there was evidence of people being born-again or coming "under the power" of the Spirit. At such times emotions ran high and congregations would sing, clap and shout. Frequently members would shake and collapse in trance-like states and fits. Segregated and forced into separate Christian development by the Nova Scotian whites, an independent spirit which resented white rule was forged. The strong emphasis in the preaching of David George and others on the themes of bondage and slavery inspired a desire to escape from the social

injustices endured at the hands of the whites in Nova Scotia. Here their dreams of a land of freedom and golden opportunity had painfully failed to materialise. The vast majority of free blacks who could leave Nova Scotia and sail for Sierra Leone did so on January 15th 1792. The Nova Scotians were basically African in outlook and temperament. Their form of independent, revivalistic, evangelical Christianity, did not destroy that identity; rather it functioned as the vehicle through which they pre-eminently expressed their distinctive African spirituality. Despite the outward assimilation of colonial America's culture and style, and the trappings of contemporary English religion, Black Loyalist Christianity was essentially African Christianity, evangelical, emotional, enthusiastic and free.

When in 1816, CMS turned their missionary attentions to evangelising the thousands of Recaptives who were being released by the British Navy at Freetown from 1807 until 1863 - an estimated total of 50,000 - a different style of evangelical Christianity was planted in the Colony. The Recaptives, out of necessity and gratitude, provided willing, but dependent congregations. The missionaries, distrustful of emotionalism in religion, emphasised the doctrinal aspects of the faith, but neglected the pneumatological. They described the Freetown Nova Scotians, with their pneumatic brand of worship, as "Ranters". To sever the Recaptives from their "heathen" past, which they believed was entirely demonic, they concentrated their evangelistic efforts on educating the younger generation. The churches they formed were replicas of British churches. Their congregations were led by a rising educated elite who were taught to admire and emulate British social graces, civilization, and Christianity. As the Recaptive groups merged with the Nova Scotians, Maroons, and with each other, to produce the Krio community, the white missionary controlled churches, with their prestige, power and finance gradually dominated the ecclesiastical scene. In the scramble to emulate the British and obtain material support, the Nova Scotian founded chapels went into decline and eventually surrendered their proud independence to missionary control. From 1860 until around 1980, the Anglicans became and remained the largest and most prestigious denomination the Colony.

Evangelical Christianity in its various Victorian forms, Anglican, Methodist, Baptist, Countess of Huntingdon and Roman Catholic, became the traditional religion of the Christian Krio, who in fact made up just under half of the Krio population. The less educated and privileged larger half were the Muslim Aku concentrated at Fourah Bay and Fula Town. The foreign, orderly and non-pneumatic Victorian Christianity adopted by the Christian Krio created an existential power vacuum. Their need for spiritual power - the *sine qua non* of indigenous religions - to face and overcome difficulties, problems and enemies, human and spiritual, in a universe inhabited by spirits, many of them evil with witch-spirits being the most evil of all, continued to be met from their traditional power sources. As Christian Krio society developed, certain practices declined and were abandoned. However, the ancestor cult, which focused on feasting the deceased at *awujoh* celebrations and communicating with the departed during graveside libations, remained the bed-rock of Krio belief and religious practice. The missionaries, who eradicated emotionalism and religious enthusiasm from their churches, and crusaded against the overt forms of indigenous religious practice, were unable to overcome the spiritual power of the dead. Krio Christianity developed as a generally, but not totally, external and ostentatious form of public worship which many successful and educated Krio used as a platform for demonstrating their worldly achievements. Membership of Saint George's Cathedral was the ultimate status symbol. Pockets of African evangelical revivalism - the Nova Scotian Christian legacy - which found emotional support and problem-solving power in an enthusiastic form of Christian worship, continued to exist into the twentieth century in Krio society, mainly in female prayer and support fellowships. The most important of the twentieth century revivalistic prayer groups were the Martha Davies Confidential Benevolent Association (Jane Bloomer Church) and the Mami Pinkney Band.

Because of the evangelical foundations of Krio Christianity, the social cohesion and institutional strength of Creolehood, and the high levels of education and literacy among the Krio, the arrival of the Spiritual church, Church of the Lord (Aladura) in 1947, led by missionary prophet Emmanuel Adeleke Adejobi, challenged, but did not attract large

numbers of Krio, although Krio did make up the core of the foundational members and some wealthy Krio provided materially in the early days. The appeal of the "Adejobis" was mostly to the illiterate, non-Krio population, which since the turn of the century were the majority of the city's population. The Adejobis particularly attracted women, who went after the Spiritual prophets for their healing prayers and fortune-telling revelations. Their most powerful healing techniques had close affinities with indigenous healing methods. These included consecrated holy water for washing and drinking, the recitation of powerful Psalms, fasting, and spiritual struggles such as mercy ground and beach rolling. Healing, pastoral care and the indigenising of Christian worship were the main positive contributions of the Spiritual churches. Their methods of procuring spiritual power in order to effect cures, discern witches and predict the future, which included seeking information from powerful indigenous spirits, mediatory angels, and the **Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses**, laid them open to charges of dabbling in the occult. Although their lively, African-flavoured Christian worship is highly attractive, the main appeal of the Spiritual churches lies in their healing, predicting and witch protecting ministries. In an underdeveloped, exploited and impoverished country such as Sierra Leone, where the health care that exists is beyond the means of the poor majority, they provide an alternative health service to both the indigenous, Government, and private medical practitioners. Fear and anxiety in Freetown's insecure and threatening environment drive many to seek healing and fortune-telling revelations from the Spiritual prophets.

Idowu regarded the Spiritual churches as syncretists making the best of two worlds, appealing to the "neglected hungry sheep" who flock to where they find promises of nourishment. They were, he claimed:

... a church whose characteristics are frothy, ecstatic ritual, seeing visions and dreaming dreams, making predictions and prescriptions, mass hysteria which gives birth to babbling of incoherent things as symptoms of possession by the Spirit.¹

Harry Sawyerr saw the Devil and the Holy Spirit mixing in the Spiritual churches.² Turner, in his foreword to Hackett's ***New Religious Movements in Nigeria***, published in 1987, observes that the Spiritual churches "can no longer be understood simply in terms of a one

dimensional interaction between primal and universal religious traditions". He points out that, "There is a great range of what the editor sums up in the term 'spiritual science', with emphasis upon powerful semi secret knowledge of how to acquire and use mystic spiritual powers", and notes the "affinity with the complex world of 'spiritism' now widespread in Brazil and the Philippines".³ However, despite their indigenous bias, their reputation for sexual immorality - the Achilles heel of the prophets and Spiritual Heads - and the tendency of some prophets to involve themselves in questionable magical and occultic practices, the Spiritual churches of Freetown are being challenged, both from without and from within, to bring all their beliefs and practices under the practical authority of Scripture and into line with the general practice of the Church universal. As far as working out their salvation in socially relevant and culturally appropriate ways they have much to teach the other churches. This has always been their particular genius.

Turner admits that while the Church of the Lord (Aladura) wants to be a Christian church, and finds a place for Christ in its declarations, his person and work in the structure of belief is "peripheral rather than central" and it "cannot place him at the heart of its faith about salvation". Confession of Christ "is primarily a formal test for church membership."⁴ However, to dismiss the Spiritual churches as a new form of indigenous religion, or a post-Christian phenomenon, would be to deny the very real distance these churches have travelled from their original indigenous traditions, and also underestimate the transforming power of the Word of God and the Spirit of God, both of which plainly have a place in the liturgy and confessions of these churches. Further progress in a catholic and ecumenical direction will, however, entail a serious attempt by the Spiritual churches to line their practice up with basic New Testament teaching. Turner, whose benevolent attitude towards the Adejobis has already been noted, observed in 1979:

It is, however, plain that dealings with the Spirit are not sufficiently related to and tested by the Christ of the Scriptures.... Divorced from the Christ of the Scriptures, they can readily assume pagan forms. It is possible for these experiences to become the vehicle for other spirits, evil and lying spirits which degrade men, destroying character and responsibility instead of

developing the strength and beauty of Christ which the Holy Spirit of God seeks to create. This may be evident in an alleged revelation bidding the taking of another man's wife or encouraging a semi-literate man of limited talents in his unrealistic ambitions of personal advancement to power and greatness.

Others may seek these spirit-revelations for the pagan purpose of divination, for information extracted from the spirit-world to serve our human purposes. Here consultation of prophets has degenerated to the level of fortune-telling, often semi-commercialised and quite divorced from a pastoral context....

Emphasis on the Spirit means, therefore, that many of the independent churches are in a dangerous position, especially among their illiterate members who cannot read the Scriptures.⁵

At present, EFSL would not be prepared to accept the Spiritual churches as being part of the body of Christ. They view them as cults operating in an indigenous and Old Testament ethos. According to Rev. Sidney Davies, EFSL Director of Evangelism and a former Church of the Lord (Aladura) prophet:

The New Testament sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ does nowhere appeal to them. They are very isolated and closed. They have built around themselves an Old Testament practice and no one is able to take them out of that. They have been established a long time and I don't think they are open for any change. They are very fixed on what they do and what they believe and they believe they are on the right path. They are growing, but it is encouraging to know that there are many who are coming out because they are dissatisfied with their immoral practices, especially those who want to maintain a high standard of living and want to maintain a reputation.⁶

Claudius Davies, editor of *The Catalyst* - published by Christian Literature Crusade Sierra Leone - and Communications Director of Scripture Union, also a former prophet, maintains:

The attention is not made to focus on the Cross and see Christ as the source of their salvation. Basically the movement causes people to see the man behind it all as the source of salvation. Adejobi is seen as that man of power, the source. Surely when you go to Adejobi's church you receive your healing.⁷

This contrasts with the more optimistic opinion of the ecumenically minded Bishop Jenkins of Christ Apostolic Church and CCSL Director of Evangelism:

Some of their practices are dissolving. I am encouraged. They are changing. They will definitely change. In the next five to ten years they will have changed completely in Freetown.⁸

Doctrinal and liturgical changes are indeed in progress, but the transformation process is complex and uneven. In the breakaway Saint Peter's Healing Church Bishop Mayers has personally distanced himself from the slaughtering of animals. Christ Pentecostal Church

and Saint Philip's Healing and Evangelistic Mission are, to all appearances, moving cautiously in the Pentecostal-evangelical direction. Church of Salvation, under Primate Fofana, is continuing with its indigenous Sierra Leonean brand of Spiritual Christianity with exchange-of-life animal sacrifices still the main feature of the worship. There are indications that changes will take place after Primate Fofana relinquishes control or dies. According to Bishop T. K. Davies, who broke away in 1983 to found his own Christ Pentecostal Church:

After the death of their leader there will be a split. There may be two or three churches. The split will come because of some of these practices. There are young ones there who do not believe in it. There are those who, once he is removed, will have second thoughts.⁹

In Saint Peter's Healing Temple, presently thriving under the powerful revelatory ministry of Vidal Walters, animal sacrifices are still central to the life of the church. The Celestial Church of Christ, which arrived in Freetown in 1987 with a particularly strong emphasis on revelations and animal sacrifices, is attracting new members, mainly women, and growing fast. The Church of the Lord (Aladura) is in a difficult position due to its low profile position on public animal sacrifices and its CCSL association.

The choice facing the leadership of Freetown's "Mother" Spiritual church, which has always retained its own original distinctiveness and as a result, despite its African character, has remained essentially a foreign transplant, are to move towards the new Pentecostal-evangelicalism for which, because of their CCSL association, they are well placed, or to further institutionalise as an established denomination and seek to maintain their present position in the face of strong opposition from the expanding Pentecostal-evangelicals. Going by their early adamant refusal to adapt to Krio culture, and the Freetown address given by their third Primate, The Most Reverend Apostle G. O. Oshitelu, on 3rd December 1991, the latter option seems the more likely:

The Lord our God be with us as he was with our founding fathers. Let him not leave us nor forsake us. Oh, that he may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in all his ways and to keep his commandments which he commanded our fathers. May he help us through our course to fight the good fight of faith, laying hold on eternal life. May the Lord uphold his Church and defend it against enemies within and without for the glory of his name.¹⁰

Apostle Oshitelu demonstrated, as Adejobi did before him, his unswerving commitment to the traditional practices of his church and its founding father, especially to the use of holy water:

A strong pillar on which this church was founded is the Holy Water or Blessed Water, a ministry which was given to our founding father, Dr. J. O. Oshitelu when the voice said to him on the 31st August 1926 thus: "If they repent and turn back to you, you shall give them the Holy Water". In the early days of this church the Holy Water was used to wrought many miracles and combat the national plague at that time. The common name for the church at that time was *Olomi Iye*, or *Olomi Tu*, meaning in Ijebu language, "The people of Holy Water" or "The cold water people". The Holy Water is still working miracles in our midst and outside our church. There is an adage that you do not change a winning horse. A Yoruba proverb also says, *Ti ogun enia ba da a logu, nse li a fi ngbari*, meaning, "If one's medicinal formula is effective one can proclaim it anywhere". I like to uphold and preach the efficacy of Blessed Water or Holy Water for divine healing and for deliverance from the powers of the evil forces and principalities. Hence I have adopted the words of Christ in John 4: 14 for my ministry, "Whosoever drinks of the water I shall give him shall never thirst, the water shall become a spring of water welling up to eternal life."¹¹

The strong administrative structure, laid down by Adejobi and carried on by his Nigerian successors, hinders breakaways, but also inhibits change and is geared to maintaining the *status quo*. For the Church of the Lord (Aladura) to change in any radical form would deprive them of their historic, Yoruba distinctiveness, and their very *raison d'être*. However, a spiritual pressure is building up which must be faced and seriously addressed.

To be fully accepted by both the historic denominations and the new Pentecostal-evangelicals, the prophetic inspiration of the Spiritual churches must come under the control of Scriptural teachings. The revelations of Scripture and the words of Christ and the Apostles must take pre-eminence and precedence over the words of prophets who claim to be exceptionally indwelt by God's Holy Spirit and to be his spokesmen uttering his words now in the present. It is no easy task to move in this direction in congregations where the literacy levels are low and the decision to change must rest in the hands of Primates, bishops, and prophets, who may be unwilling to relinquish their hold on power, prestige and even prosperity. Also, as the Spiritual churches institutionalise their own systems of salvation and methods of accessing God's power, and as their early radicalism slides into conservatism, there is a tendency for a resistance towards any new and different style of worship to develop. The future of the Spiritual churches, in the final analysis, lies in the hands of their

own leaders, their men and women of spiritual power. The danger here is that in the Spiritual churches the charismatic leaders tend to be given such authority that a spiritual dictatorship is easily established where the leader is granted almost Papal infallibility in spiritual matters. Such men do not easily give up their power base and adopt the Servant role for leadership.

Following a period of proliferation in the latter half of the 1980s, a slowing down and levelling off in the growth of the Spiritual churches in Freetown has been observed.¹² However, the Spiritual churches will always have a problem-solving role to play while poverty, insecurity and illiteracy stalk the country, and there is no viable pneumatic Christian alternative. While there is now in the Pentecostal-evangelical movement, a viable pneumatic Christian alternative, poverty, insecurity and illiteracy - which is actually on the increase - certainly do exist in Sierra Leone and in Freetown at the present time. Exacerbating the economic collapse of the 1980s, and the political confusion of the 1990s, is the civil war which broke out in the Eastern Province on 31st March 1991. By 1994, rebel activity had spread throughout the interior and even into the Northern Province. The situation has degenerated into banditry and blood-letting, causing a "spectre of anarchy" to haunt Sierra Leoneans.¹³ Freetown, already overcrowded, and with the present and previous Governments unable to adequately provide for its citizens' needs, is now flooded with displaced peoples. In these circumstances the ministries which the Spiritual churches provide will continue to be in demand. Above all else, the Spiritual churches will have an significant social function to perform as long as witchcraft fears continue to plague Freetown and Sierra Leonean society, and holy water, candle-prayers, and mercy-ground rolling, are perceived to effect cures for sicknesses which have a witch-spirit component; also while exchange-of-life animal sacrifices are perceived to have the power to propitiate the witch and avenging spirits. Further, their fortune-telling predictions and revelations concerning present as well as future circumstances will always attract the superstitious.

There is a need to strike a balance between the indigenous pneumatology, with all its exuberance and dynamism, and Biblical revelation. The indigenous religious spirit, which has many affinities with the primal "nabihism" of the Ancient Near East which strongly influenced Israelite prophecy, must come under the authority of the Word and the control of the Holy Spirit. Its wildness must be tamed by the divine imperatives and its darkness must retreat before the light of Christ. The evangelical mission churches of the nineteenth century, and the now nationalised institutions they produced, have failed to give sufficient scope to this basic indigenous spirituality. On the other hand, the Spiritual churches, while making considerable progress in this direction, have failed as yet to allow evangelical teaching and apostolic doctrine the existential penetration which transforms the basic indigenous spiritual perceptions of the nature and character of God and the methods and modes of operation of his Holy Spirit. This being the case, the implications of the incarnation and the atonement of Jesus Christ, God in human form, and the power of the Cross event, have not been fully appreciated. Following on from that, the claims of Jesus Christ to lordship and His call to discipleship have not been given with anything like a certain sound. Culture, rather than the Word of God, has dominated their theological agenda. The end result has been a church which has been so rooted in its native soil that although many of the old methods of channelling divine power, healing and salvation have been discarded or replaced with Christian alternatives such as the wooden cross and the iron rod, the basic principles of spirit mediumship and the role of intermediary spirits, objects, words, and men and women of spiritual power, have experienced little transformation. For example, while officially opposing the ancestral cult and secret societies - some attempts in that direction were made by Adejobi and the early Nigerian prophets who were in fact aliens to Sierra Leonean culture - the indigenous Spiritual churches have ignored their own official doctrinal statements and refused to adopt a contra-cultural stance on these issues. Presently the main catalyst for change in the Spiritual churches are the younger, literate members who are having contact with the Pentecostal-evangelical revival and are declaring their intention to move in what is being increasingly perceived as a progressive and socially attractive

direction. It is now popular among Freetown's younger generation of Christians to be a "born again". Where they are not being listened to, they are voting with their feet, just as members of the historic denominations did when they forsook their conservative churches for the pneumatic, healing and problem-solving Spirituals. For many, particularly Muslims, the Spiritual churches are becoming not so much a spiritual home as a half-way-house in a spiritual pilgrimage leading them out of Islam into Pentecostal-evangelicalism.

A "viable pneumatic Christian alternative" to the Spiritual churches did exist in Freetown long before the arrival of the Adejobis in 1947. The Martha Davies Confidential Benevolent Association and the Mami Pinkney Band were that, but only to a limited extent as their ministry was in the main confined to women, and particularly women members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the body that had taken over the Nova Scotian Countess of Huntingdon Connection's Zion Chapel on Wilberforce Street in 1887. While they did seek and "fen the Spirit", there was no particular operation of the ministry of healing. However, another pneumatic alternative did exist in Freetown. The first Pentecostal-evangelical witness in Freetown of which there is a record, was established by two American ladies in 1905. The work was taken over by AOG in 1920. Shortly afterwards the Kru AOG Pentecostal Church was organised. A church building was erected on Campbell Street and dedicated in 1926. In the Kru AOG Church worship was pneumatic with a typical Pentecostal focus on the operation and gifts of the Holy Spirit, particularly tongues speaking and healing. Many healings through prayer took place and many were baptised in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues. However, Pentecostal-evangelicalism made little impression on the Krio as the work was confined mainly to the low status Kru community. At this time the bond with Britain was still strong, especially in the Anglican Church, and the Pentecostal work was for the most part an American rather than a British initiative. When AOG mission extended to the Temne, Limba and Loko in the post-World War Two period, particularly through the efforts of missionaries Kennedy, Hemminger and the Limba Daniel

Aribo Konteh, the Krio as a community, who were the custodians of evangelical Christianity in the city, still remained aloof, unimpressed and unaffected.

Pentecostal-evangelicalism first began to impress the Krio Christian community in a significant way in 1959 with the Peter Scothem revival meetings which emphasised the charismatic gift of healing. However, the break-through did not come until the AOG Good News Crusade at the Recreation Grounds, Brookfields, in November 1966, led by healing-evangelist Paul Olson. John Davies, a Kru, interpreted into Krio. At every service the sick were prayed for and healings were reported. Simon Grant, the pastor of the Kru Pentecostal Church, wrote afterwards:

Several hundreds received divine healing. Many hundreds received the baptism of the Holy Ghost, among whom were most of the prominent citizens of the country.¹⁴

Among those healed, and who also received the baptism in the Holy Spirit, was Euphemia Jones. She had been suffering from severe stomach pains. While one of the meetings was in progress, she "felt something happen and she had the inner witness that she was healed".¹⁵ The most significant outcome of the Olson crusade was the organising of a Krio Pentecostal church called the "English-speaking Church". The name was later changed to Bethel Temple. Mrs. Jones' husband, Ade Jones, who was a leading Civil Servant, joined the group later. The Joneses gave the Krio Pentecostals spiritual dynamism - Euphemia Jones soon gained a reputation for being a powerful woman of prayer - and also status - both the Joneses came from eminent Krio families and Ade Jones had worked in the diplomatic service in Washington and London. Through Ade and Euphemia Jones and the witness of Bethel Temple, Pentecostal-evangelicalism gained a firm foothold in Krio society. Meantime, trouble over the birth of an illegitimate son to Daniel Konteh, led to the Limba Pentecostals breaking away from AOG in 1968 and developing their own distinctively Limba style of Pentecostal-evangelicalism. Independent African revivalistic evangelicalism, similar in many ways to that of the Nova Scotians, but with the modern Pentecostal dimension, had returned to Freetown. Bethel Temple did not claim its independence until 1983.

As Bethel Temple grew and the ministries of Ade and Euphemia Jones developed, especially after moving into their new building on Tower Hill, tensions appeared in the relationships between the American missionaries and the Krio Pentecostal leadership. The situation deteriorated dangerously after Jones was elected General Superintendent of AOG Sierra Leone in January 1979 and asked for the use of a car and access to the mission files. Both requests were turned down. The actual break did not come until 1983. The "dancing ministry" taken up by Bethel Temple as a result of their contacts with the Mount Zion Fellowship in Jerusalem, was what brought the worsening situation to breaking point. The deeper underlying cause of the secession was the question of missionary control. While there were by then other Pentecostal-evangelical churches in the city - particularly God is Our Light, the National Limba Pentecostal Church, the Kru AOG Church, Christians in Action, and since 1981 there was Evangel AOG Church at Murray Town formed by the AOG missionaries with a core of former Bethel Temple Krio - the influence of Bethel Temple in enhancing the status of Pentecostal-evangelicalism in Freetown, and latterly setting its independent indigenous pneumatic style and theological agenda, has been of supreme importance. Bethel Temple became, to a great extent, the model which later independent Pentecostal-evangelicals were to emulate. The death of Euphemia Jones in August 1985 was a blow from which Bethel Temple, despite the completion of its massive church extension project in May 1990, has hardly yet recovered, but through which much was learned concerning the place of suffering and the Cross in the life of the Christian Church.

Worship at Bethel Temple is joyful and religious emotions are freely expressed. While occasional manifestations of being filled with the Spirit which border on the frenzied do take place, there is nothing like the incitement to spirit possession which dominates worship in the Spiritual churches. Spontaneous expressions of joy and dancing before the Lord feature prominently in the worship, but there is also evidence of self-control and restraint which subdues the wild and unruly in the indigenous pneumatology when it does make an appearance and channels its dynamism into African Pentecostal-evangelical praise, prayer

and worship. The credit for this must in great measure go to the steadying influence of the Joneses and their evangelical Krio heritage, as well as the doctrinal foundations established by AOG missionaries.

During the second half of the 1980s other Pentecostal-evangelical churches were founded in Freetown, took root, and grew. The most important were Deeper Life Bible Church pioneered by Nigerian missionary Felix Akinola who arrived in January 1984, and New Testament Church spearheaded by Sierra Leonean Bill Kallon who returned to Sierra Leone from USA in October 1984. Pentecostalism in Sierra Leone had, until the 1980s, been in the main dominated by the American version established by the AOG missionaries. Christians in Action was an American Charismatic Movement para-church outreach. They came to Freetown in 1969, but soon organised themselves into a church which met in rented premises on Syke Street. New Testament Church had a decidedly Black American flavour to its Charismatic style of worship. However, the American Pentecostal styles began to undergo a process of transformation as independent indigenous Pentecostal-evangelical churches began to proliferate, and the process of indigenisation accelerate, throughout the second half of the 1980s. At this time, a significant expansion of Pentecostal-evangelicalism took place with Deeper Life and particularly New Testament Church as the front-runners. During the 1980s, AOG was steadily expanding. They doubled their membership and the number of churches over the decade. The Limba Pentecostals, who had developed a distinctively indigenous and Limba community flavour to their Pentecostal worship since their break with AOG in 1969, were also experiencing significant growth, as were the Loko Pentecostals who had joined the Baptist Convention of Sierra Leone in January 1985. While much of the growth was, as noted by Crispin Cole in the 1990 Greater Freetown Church Survey, transfer growth, as an exodus of young people from the mainline denominations got underway, it was much more than that. Converts were being made from among the non-Krio population, particularly the Limba and Loko, and many of the converts were Muslims. At this time Christianity in Freetown became a predominantly and ever increasingly non-Krio

phenomenon. What is particularly significant in this is that the Pentecostal-evangelical movement in Freetown has developed not only a decidedly pneumatic and experience oriented emphasis as the churches have become more indigenous and less under Krio and missionary control, but their Pentecostalism has demonstrated a particularly strong holiness dimension. Both tendencies are, of course, perfectly understandable in the light of the place of spirit possession in indigenous religion, and also the place of ritual washings and purity for the elimination of witchcraft pollutions. The influence of the Islamic background must also be taken into account.

In the early 1990s, Pentecostal-evangelicalism took a quantitative leap forward as a result of two miracle-healing Stadium crusades. The January 1990 Ben Tipton AOG Task Force Evangelism Crusade was a much smaller scale event than the December 1991 Reinhard Bonnke Freetown Crusade. The Task Force Crusade plainly demonstrated some of the problems involved when two differing world-views confront seemingly similar issues using seemingly mutually understandable terminology. The enthusiastic responses followed by comparatively few permanent converts disappointed the American organisers. However, AOG Sierra Leone were encouraged, the power of the Holy Spirit to heal and deliver had been confidently proclaimed, and a handful of new AOG churches were organised. The Reinhard Bonnke Crusade took all aspects of Pentecostal healing evangelism into another dimension. As far as numbers attending a public event, and also the scale of miracles of healing that took place during week-long demonstration of the Holy Spirit and power, nothing like it had ever before been witnessed in Sierra Leone. While the number of immediate permanent converts was disappointing, AOG who were now well placed to receive new converts, reported significant increases in membership in almost all their Freetown churches. Perhaps, however, the greatest effects of the miracle-healing crusade were its impact on the Muslim population, and the boost it gave to the confidence of the Pentecostal-evangelical churches which were now clearly seen as the places where the real power of God resided and where miracles and healings were to be experienced. Healing and miracle *charismata*,

which were now seen as the prerogative of the Pentecostal-evangelicals, as distinct from the therapeutic cures of the Spiritual churches, were much simpler, requiring only prayer and faith, and were much cheaper, there were no extra expenditures on candles, Florida water, oils, rams, or even fees for the struggling prophets. Western evangelical academics like James Packer have expressed anxiety over the use of "signs and wonders" in evangelism, claiming, "It is irrational to expect that persons not convinced of the Bible's narratives of miracles will be any more impressed by unusual occurrences under their own noses".¹⁶ To this Tyson, while aware of "potential excesses", and presumably with an eye on the illiterate masses of the Third World, responds:

That signs and wonders have not been effective implements for working spiritual soil cannot be cogently argued by Packer or anyone else. Seeing *is* believing. The use of signs and wonders *has* convinced hundreds of thousands of people that there is a God with more power than any other deity. Splendid displays of supernatural power *have* healed individuals and resulted in entire families and even villages switching their spiritual allegiances.¹⁷

She goes on to point out that healing was not a mere "side-show", but was an "integral part of Jesus' ministry".¹⁸ Tyson concludes her consideration of the issue with a comment which could easily have arisen from an observation of the two Freetown crusades mentioned above and from much of what goes on in the signs and wonders ministry of many in Freetown who are now jumping onto the miracle-healing bandwagon:

There appears to be a thin line separating the proper and improper evangelistic use of charismata. On the one hand, signs and wonders are a powerful constituent of the gospel message. They were regular features of the gospel preached by Jesus and the early Church and they are regular features of the contemporary neopentecostal movement. Many people have come to embrace Christianity through a miraculous healing or sign. On the other hand, signs and wonders can be disproportionately featured, displacing other, less dramatic, but equally important teachings of the Christian faith. One of the dangers of stressing the miraculous in evangelism is the human fall-out which occurs when people don't receive the supernatural gift or healing which they have come to believe is normative for a Christian. Therefore, it is important for those who employ the charismata for evangelistic purposes to avoid the sensationalistic temptation to promise people more than Christ has promised to deliver.¹⁹

Despite the mixed nature of the results, the Bonnke Crusade gave Freetown's Pentecostal-evangelicals a shot in the arm and a boost in confidence which has outworked in an enthusiasm for evangelism, particularly Muslim evangelism, and dramatic church growth.

The origins of Dora Dumbuya's Jesus is Lord Ministry, which began in 1988, antedated the two Stadium crusades, but its period of greatest expansion coincided with them and their aftermath. By 1992, over 2,000 were attending the Sunday morning service at Wilberforce Barracks, and the monthly Men and Women's Fellowship was attracting over 10,000. Jesus is Lord Ministry, the present front-runner in Sierra Leone's Pentecostal-evangelical revival, exemplifies the spiritual dynamics operating at the interactive stage where the river of Pentecostal-evangelicalism meets the sea of Sierra Leone's indigenous religious pneumatology and also Sierra Leonean Islam. Here under the enlightenment of the Gospel, indigenous culture becomes most liberated, and here also the Word of God in the Gospel is at its most life-giving and regenerative. At such a point, the Church is most turbulent, noisy, exuberant and messy. Emotions are unrestrainedly expressed and sometimes strange manifestations of spirit possession take place. However, as evidence that the pneumatic experience is an encounter with the Holy Spirit and not some other spirit, and to subdue and overcome the destructive and negative influences and aspects of these pneumatic encounters, the self-control of the Holy Spirit must - according to Mrs. Dumbuya and Jesus is Lord Ministries - be imposed, and - according to the Kallons at New Testament Church - the fruit of the Holy Spirit must be manifested in the experience. The Freetown Pentecostal-evangelicals are developing their own particular criteria for judging pneumatic encounters and manifestations. It is when the Gospel and indigenous culture interact at this dynamic and volatile level that significant grass-roots expansion takes place. The Pentecostal-evangelicals are in this position at the present time. Further dynamic activity should outflow into the social and political arenas to affect the education system the medical services and the progress towards the emancipation of women. While it is difficult to see advancement yet in terms of specific philanthropic organisations, due in large part to the difficult and confused state of Sierra Leone society at the present time, there is concern and commitment towards the poor and the displaced peoples who are moving into Freetown to escape the anarchy in the interior. The overthrow of President Momoh and the APC Government was

generally interpreted as the answer to the prayers that the revival fervour had generated, as was also the thwarting of the progressive Muslim take-over of the Government and the formation of an Islamic state of Sierra Leone. All that can be said at the moment is that without the revived Christian community in Freetown, the situation could easily have degenerated into utter chaos. In March 1992, *New Shaft* complained about living conditions in Freetown:

What hardship has the average Sierra Leonean not faced these six years? The price of rice has risen twenty-fold, the roads have trenches four-feet deep, malaria is rife because the streets are filthy, no light, the rebel incursion rages on, armed robbers roam the street daily, people have gone without salaries for months - in the face of all these calamities people have survived.²⁰

While the prospect of an Islamic state has certainly receded, the 1994 situation in Freetown has improved only marginally since the 1992 military take-over, while in the interior the war zone has spread even into the Northern Province. In such desperate circumstances, the pneumatic, power Christianity of the Pentecostal-evangelicals provides support, comfort and hope for many in the beleaguered capital.

Pentecostalism in Sierra Leone was, until the 1980s, modelled after the American AOG pattern. This changed as Bethel Temple flexed its muscles and claimed its right to dictate its own spiritual, theological and ecclesiastical agenda, and is changing even more now as independent Pentecostal-evangelical churches proliferate and the process of indigenisation accelerates in the face of the declining missionary influence. Change is also taking place within the AOG churches as missionary control fades away. The evangelical Christian Krio factor is now becoming an important stabilising influence within the wider Pentecostal Movement in Freetown. Krio church leaders who have experienced the pneumatic dimension of Christianity in the power of the Holy Spirit, are in a unique position, because of their history and the evangelical foundations of Krio culture, to contribute significantly to the present Pentecostal-evangelical revival in Sierra Leone as teachers of Christian doctrine within the African pneumatological and soteriological framework. Throughout its twenty-five

year history Bethel Temple has been an example and an inspiration. It has survived independence, sorrow and trauma, and has become, directly and indirectly, the church most independent Pentecostal-evangelical churches in Freetown model themselves after. Glory Ministries is a breakaway from Bethel Temple. Both Abu Koroma of Flaming Evangelical Ministries and Dora Dumbuya of Jesus is Lord Ministries have spent time in association with Bethel Temple. Not only has Bethel Temple set a pattern for worship in pneumatic exuberance and dance, but it has also set a high standard of holiness in Christian living and also a commitment to prayer which particularly includes those in authority. To counterbalance excessive emotionalism and the total possession objectives of indigenous worship, while at the same time enjoying free, pneumatic, inspirational and evangelical, Holy Spirit worship, Bethel Temple's example is important. Here, the Holy Spirit has been, in Pentecostal fashion, very closely identified with the Spirit of Christ, and the ultimate power of God is plainly declared to be the power of the Cross. It is at the Cross that evil principalities and powers were disarmed and triumphed over through self-surrender to God's will and sacrificial love to the fellow men. Bethel Temple, by gaining insight into the profound truth that a *theologia crucis* is the ultimate manifestation of a *theologia pneumatica*, has an immense contribution to make to the spiritual and theological advancement of the exuberant young Pentecostal-evangelical churches of Freetown. Churches whose expansion into the Provinces has been hindered by the war situation, but who are well placed to make significant advances once the period of anarchy gives way to a time of peace.

Several points are worth noting in conclusion. First, the operation of the New Testament *charismata*, particularly the gift of healings which was so powerfully and convincingly demonstrated through the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke, has had a profound effect on the attitude of the whole population towards Christianity, especially the Muslim population who had prided themselves on being in possession of the most powerful charms and healing medicines. While it has driven some reactionary Muslims into the growing fundamentalist

movements, many more have been attracted to this pneumatic "signs and wonders" Christianity and have become converts. Whether this will lead to future religious strife in Sierra Leone remains to be seen. The boundary line between positive constructive dialogue and aggressive confrontational proselytisation can easily be crossed, particularly as the Church in Sierra Leone is now having to contend with a rising tide of Islamic fundamentalism. Christian power needs to be softened and controlled by Christian grace to avoid future confrontation in a society which formerly prided itself on its religious tolerance.

Second, as far as indigenous culture is concerned, Christians are now more prepared than ever to confront what they regard as the negative elements in their culture. This especially concerns the use of charms, membership of secret societies, and participation in the rites of the ancestor cult. Some of the confident Pentecostal-evangelicals now regard themselves as the front wave of a new radical Bible-based Christianity sweeping Sierra Leone. Because of their Bible studies on the question of the ancestral cult they are seriously addressing the issue, which is top of Freetown's theological agenda, and are increasingly taking a stand against the practices of graveside libations, the *awujoh* and the *nyole*. While there is the danger of iconoclastic enthusiasm generating a hostile reaction and producing negative results, to date there is little evidence of this taking place. The more vocal in their condemnation of society rituals and communicating with the dead are generally those from a Muslim background, as for example Rev. Ngobeh of Joy AOG Assembly. Dora Dumbuya, while she disapproves of Christian involvement and has herself abandoned these practices, feels the time is not yet ripe for her to take a strong public stance. She is waiting on the Holy Spirit's time. Outsiders, such as Pastor Akinola at Deeper Life, condemn the practices vociferously, but that is accepted as the prerogative of the outsider. In their counter-culture stance on these particular practices, the Pentecostal-evangelicals find common cause with the Basharia Movement and other Islamic fundamentalist groups. Both are in fact moving against a national trend. In the independence era the ancestors have been gradually incorporated into the public life of the nation and libations are poured out at most national

events. At the 1987 celebrations for the "Bi-centenary of the Founding of the Colony of Sierra Leone" an *Awujoh* was conducted by the City Council at Portuguese Steps and King Jimmy Market, and the *Nyoleh* took place at the Cotton Tree. Ancestral rituals are also gradually intruding into mainline church rites connected with death, burial, memorial services, births, marriages, and holy days in the Church's calendar. The role of the ancestors and the secret societies among the Krio has already been investigated. The Roman Catholics, under their first Sierra Leonean Archbishop, Joseph H. Ganda, are moving even more swiftly in this direction than the Anglicans and Methodists.²¹ While the Krio Catholics at Sacred Heart Cathedral and Saint Anthony's are very conservative and resisting some of Ganda's innovations, accommodation to native culture is going on apace in outlying parishes like Holy Cross, Kissy, and in the Provinces, especially at Saint Francis Xavarian Church, Makeni. According to Michael Jusu of the History Department at FBC, himself a Roman Catholic, Saint Francis "is moving into traditional culture more than any". The church is decorated with local paintings. Mass weddings in native costume and having the same reception are conducted to cut down costs. Prayers are made in the vernacular languages. Priests and servers wear *gara* dress. Less emphasis is laid on polygamy than in the Krio congregations. Priests turn a blind eye. When youths become polygamists Archbishop Ganda has instructed priests to leave that as the private domain, but to continue with the Biblical teaching. Jusu claims, "At first, priests tried to be rigid, but now they have slackened off a lot." On the ancestor cult he states:

The ancestors are part of the indigenous tradition and they feel they cannot stop it, it is too big to tackle. If they go against it the people will turn to Islam. At first they called it "demon worship" and the people started moving away. So they had to change. Neither do the priests discourage or interfere with *Poro*. Priests have gone into the sacred bush to perform the last rites. In Saint Francis Parish, Bo, the Church of the Immaculate Heart was built on sacred ground, the sacred bush of the *Poro* in that area. The elders said "No", but the priests insisted. They agreed not to cut down the sacred tree. It is still there. No ceremonies take place, but the elders keep looking at it. No one is allowed to touch it. You don't hit culture, you come to a working arrangement. The white clergy hit the culture, but to the black clergy it doesn't matter. The white clergy didn't understand and got themselves into trouble.

Holy Cross, Kissy, is a branch of Saint Francis, Makeni. Only in the fundamentalist Islamic sects and among the Pentecostal-evangelicals, is the trend moving in the opposite direction.

Among many Freetown Christians, however, Christ has still to oust the ancestors in order to assert his lordship over the living and the dead. In Israelite religion the Yahwists rejected the ancestral cult, the "shades", the *raphaim* and the *teraphim*. They also rejected its sophisticated development in the gods and pantheons of the great powers of the Ancient Near East. The prophets depict Yahweh stripping the ancestors of their power and confining them to Sheol, the wilderness, or at least beyond the boundaries and outwith the lives of covenant Israel. Bediako interprets Christ's descent into Hades as his exercising lordship over the spirits of the dead. Unfortunately, in his apologetic he seems to consign Christ to dwell in that realm, rather than passing through it triumphantly on his way to the Father.

He has now returned to the realm of spirit and therefor of power. From the standpoint of Akan traditional beliefs, Jesus has gone to the realm of the ancestor spirits and the "gods". We already know that the power and resources for living are believed to come from there, but the terrors and misfortunes which could threaten and destroy life come from there also. But if Jesus has gone to the realm of the "spirits and the gods", so to speak, he has gone there as Lord over them in much the same way that he is Lord over us. He is therefore Lord over the living and the dead, and over the "living-dead".²²

While his contention that Jesus is Lord over the living and the dead and the "living-dead" can find solid Biblical support, his argument that Christ is dwelling with the "living-dead" in the place from whence both "power and resources" and "terrors and misfortunes" come is unsustainable and makes Christ into another ancestor. However, his earlier proposal that Africans should lay down the ancestor power lines and come into direct relationship and dependence on Christ alone is something the Pentecostal-evangelicals are both seeing and doing at the present time in Freetown, because in the dynamic of the Holy Spirit they have found a superior alternative power source.²³

Third, Dora Dumbuya, who has pioneered Jesus is Lord Ministry - the "Women's Church" - is seen by Limba women, and others, as a modern African Deborah who is leading them into a new age of Christian liberty and womanhood. These women, struggling to maintain families and homes during a period of severe economic hardships, find joy and liberty in the supportive atmosphere of the worship and in Gospel messages which are culturally relevant

and communicated in fervent, unpretentious style. There they receive a pneumatic infilling which encourages them to face their domestic problems, the discouragements of the present socio-political situation, and a seemingly bleak future. Along with these fairly unmeasurable benefits, the embryonic women's rights cause among non-Krio women is at least receiving some grass-roots stimulus and vision.

Lastly, the Pentecostal-evangelical revival is affecting the historic denominations. The late Bishop Thompson was well aware that without a breath of revival blowing through the antiquated structures of the Anglican Church its days of significance in the Christian life of Sierra Leone were numbered.²⁴ His desires for change have been resisted by an influential group of the senior Krio clergy, who, according to one progressive minister, are opposed to the Bishop and have more interest in their Masonic Lodges than in advancing the cause of Christ. However, according to Clare Hockey, CMS missionary involved in development:

There is an irresistible grass-roots wave. It has got the Bishop's approval and support. Two years ago we started choruses and Krio Bible readings in the services, but it was a grinding sort of acceptance. But now, given the chance, the people enter into it enthusiastically. Recently we went to Kosso Town and in our part of the service we introduced the more open form of worship, choruses and Krio readings. We went to Kent and did the same. Here there was even some moving of the body. The people loved it and want it regularly. At the end of the service the Reverend kneeled in prayer with the rest. There is a new openness. It was so different two years ago. There is some resistance. The Dean is not so keen on it all, but the people are for it and the youth are definitely pushing on in this way. However, this is in-church reformation. There are no significant ingatherings yet from outside, but a necessary foundational change and restructuring of liturgy. Unless we move in this way we will stagnate. The elders are more conservative, but the people want to move in this direction and the Bishop is giving encouragement.²⁵

Other denominations are also being affected. Rev. Emerson Kargbo of Jordan West African Methodist Church, possibly unaware of the revival period in his own denomination's history, declared, after the Bonnke revival had sent a pneumatological ripple through his church:

We used to be afraid of having evangelicals in our pulpits, they used to beat us with the Word. Now we even have clapping, choruses and so on, such things as we have never had before in our church. We need the Pentecostal fire to fire us. We need to become more evangelical and more Pentecostal.²⁶

General Superintendent M. S. Pratt, complains that only about 20% of the members attend and the youth are drifting away to the Pentecostal churches. He started up a chorus at

Tabernacle in June 1992 and clapped. The congregation and choir joined in. Afterwards an old lady came up and said, "I want to thank you. It is forbidden to clap in this church."²⁷

These are small steps to take compared to the "signs and wonders" ministries, the healings, exorcisms, prophecies and such like which are being performed, or at least optimistically attempted, in the burgeoning Pentecostal-evangelical movement with its increasing variety of types; AOG, Western Charismatic, Holiness-Pentecostal and independent indigenous African Pentecostal. However, they do indicate that there is an inspirational overflow from the revival into the older denominations and that they must open to the dynamic of the Holy Spirit or suffer decline and perhaps extinction in the harsh realities of Sierra Leone's post-Colonial and independence periods. If they respond positively to the pneumatological flow, they have the history, structures and evangelical foundations to prosper the cause of dynamic Christianity in Sierra Leone, and channel its pneumatic energies into long-neglected evangelism, social development and political change. The spiritual resources which can meet the existential and problem-solving needs of the nation are seemingly available in understandable and highly acceptable form. As always, the choice of direction lies in the hands of the professional leadership who may have vested interests in maintaining the *status quo*. Meantime, the Pentecostal-evangelical movement in Freetown, in its ever increasing diversity, and its incarnation of the pneumatological Gospel into the lives of ordinary people, keeps on growing. It may don "country cloth" among the Limba, Loko, Temne and Mende. It may dress in suit and tie among the Krio. Always it wears what Mulago has called "un visage Africain".²⁸ There is no excruciating identity crisis involved in this form of dynamic Christianity, although there are sometimes family and community tensions to overcome. Like the Nova Scotian Settlers who disembarked at Saint George's Bay in 1792 singing the Isaac Watts hymn, "Awake and sing the song of Moses and the Lamb", the Pentecostal-evangelicals represent, with all their weaknesses, needs, imperfections, and also their exuberance, the Church of Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit in Freetown today.

- 1 Idowu, *ibid.*, pp.211-2.
- 2 Sankoh-Cole, *ibid.* According to Rev. Sankoh-Cole, Canon Sawyerr advised him to abandon the practices of the Spiritual churches entirely and become an Anglican.
- 3 Hackett, (1987), pp.ix-x.
- 4 Turner, (1967-b), p.335.
- 5 Turner, (1979), p.169.
- 6 Sidney Davies, *ibid.*
- 7 Claudius Davies, *ibid.*
- 8 Bishop Jenkins, *ibid.*
- 9 T. K. Davies, *ibid.*
- 10 Quoted by Ibrahim Sankoh-Cole in *Healing and Deliverance*, an essay submitted to the Theology Department, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of L. Div., 1992.
- 11 *ibid.*
- 12 Ref. p.337 above. Recorded interview held with Donald Osman, President of EFSL and West Africa Area Director of Youth for Christ, at the Aqua Sports Club, Aberdeen, Freetown, on 26/6/90.
- 13 *West Africa*, 31 October - 6 November 1994, pp.1862-4.
- 14 Ref. pp.473-3 above.
- 15 Recorded conversation held with Mrs. Princess James on 15/2/90. Mrs. James claimed the information had been passed on to her personally by Mrs. Jones who was her sister.
- 16 James Packer, "The Means of Conversion" in *Crux*, December 1989, pp.14-22.
- 17 Tyson, *ibid.*, p.121.
- 18 *ibid.*
- 19 *ibid.*
- 20 *New Shaft*, 10-16th March 1992, p.8.
- 21 Archbishop Joseph H. Ganda, born March 22nd 1932 in Serabu, Bo District, was ordained to the secular priesthood on April 9, 1961. He was the first Sierra Leonean to be ordained a diocesan priest. In February 1971, he became Sierra Leone's first native bishop when he was consecrated Bishop of the newly organised Kenema Diocese. In September 1980 he was consecrated Archbishop of Freetown and Bo following the resignation of Archbishop Brosnahan. For the early period of Catholic mission in Sierra Leone see A. P. Kup, "Jesuit and Capuchin Missions of the 17th Century" in *SLBR*, 5(1), June 1963, pp.27-34. For a more comprehensive history see Jebbeh E. Forster, *A History of the Catholic Mission in Sierra Leone: the Diocese of Freetown and Bo, 1864-1961*, a thesis submitted to the Department of History, the University of Sierra Leone, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, 1988.
- 22 Kwame Bediako, *Jesus in African Culture: a Ghanaian Perspective*, (Accra: Asempa Publishers, 1990), p.18-19.
- 23 Bediako, (1983-b), pp.81-121.
- 24 Conversation held with Bishop Thompson, at Bishop's Court, Freetown, on 25/6/92. The Bishop intimated that while some Anglican churches were growing, such as Saint Philip's, Kline Town and Bishop Crowther Memorial in the East End, where Krio was increasingly being used in the services, the general decline was a very serious problem. However, while he wanted the Pentecostal revival to come into the church, he wanted it to go deeper than mere emotionalism - "Sierra Leoneans have a childish gullibility and are easily taken in by outward appearances" - and to outwork from the basic Apostles' doctrines into Christian ethics, evangelism and social action. He also wanted it to empower the church to speak into the political situation.
- 25 Interview held with Clare Hockey at Bishop's Court, Freetown, on 29/6/92.
- 26 Conversation held with Rev. Emerson Kargbo, Jordan WAM Church, at Evangel Bible College, on 23/6/92.
- 27 Interview held with General Superintendent M. S. Pratt at WAM Church offices on Wellington Street on 6/7/92.
- 28 Bediako, (1983-a), p.431.

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INTERVIEWS:

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 Conversation held with Raymond Attawia, National Superintendent of CinA Sierra Leone, at the CLC Bookshop, Circular Road, Freetown, on 7/7/92.
 Interviews held with Bishop Browne at 13 Edward Lane, Freetown, on 8/4/92 and 26/4/92.
 Recorded interview held with Mrs. Irene Chinsman at Bethel Temple, Tower Hill, Freetown, on 14/5/90.
 Recorded interview held with Crispin Cole, General Secretary of EFSL, at K22, FBC, Freetown, on 3/6/90.
 Conversation held with Eric Cowley of World-wide Harvest Ministries at Crown Bakeries, Freetown, on 10/3/92.
 Recorded interview held with Claudius Davies, Communications Director of SU Sierra Leone, at K22, FBC, on 16/5/90.

Recorded interview held with Rev. Sidney Davies, Director of Evangelism, Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone, at their office on Circular Road, Freetown, on 13/3/92.

Recorded interview held with Bishop T. K. Davies at Christ Pentecostal Church, Henneson Street, New England, Freetown on 17/3/92.

Interview held with Mrs. Dora Dumbuya at Wilberforce Barracks, Freetown, on 5/7/92.

Recorded interview held with Professor Edward W. Fashole-Luke, at his residence at K8, FBC, Freetown, on 5/6/90.

Recorded interview held with Rev. Alan Goerz of CinA at K22, FBC, Freetown, on 20/3/90.

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Interview held with Clare Hockey, CMS missionary, at Bishop's Court, Freetown, on 29/6/92.

Recorded interview held with Mrs. Princess James at her Spur View residence on 15/2/90.

Recorded interview held with Bishop Jenkins of the Christ Apostolic Church in Sierra Leone at 3 Ferguson Lane, Freetown, on 6/7/92.

Recorded interviews held with Pastor Ade Jones at K22, FBC, Freetown, during February, March and April 1990.

Recorded interview held with Anne Marcus Jones, a member of Bethel Temple and close friend of Sister Jones, at K22, FBC, Freetown, on 10/5/90.

Recorded interview held with Bill Kallon at his residence at 1a, Old Railway Line, Tengbe Town, Freetown, on 25/5/90.

Conversation held with Bill Kallon at his home at 16 King Street, Freetown, on 15/6/92.

Interview held with Dr. Kanu at his home at H10, FBC, Freetown, on 9/6/92.

Conversation held with Rev. Emerson Kargbo, Jordan WAM Church, at Evangel Bible College, on 23/6/92.

Interview held with Superintendent Samuel Konteh at AOG HQ at 97A Main Motor Road, Congo Cross, Freetown, on 8/7/92.

Recorded interview held with Rev. T. A. Koroma at 85 Fort Street, Freetown, on 28/6/90.

Recorded interviews held with Rev. Prince Larty-Baker at the Aqua Sports Club, Aberdeen, Freetown, on 26/2/90, 5/3/90, and 12/3/90.

Interview held with the Venerable Archdeacon S. O. D. Macarthy, Dip. Th., at the Church of the Lord (Aladura) Cathedral, 17 O'Neil Street, Freetown, on 17/5/92.

Interviews held with Rev. Ngobeh of Joy Assembly, AOG, Freetown, at 42 Fort Street, Freetown, on 10/5/92, 18/5/92 and 1/7/92.

Recorded interview held with Donald Osman, President of EFSL and West Africa Area Director of Youth for Christ, at the Aqua Sports Club, Aberdeen, Freetown, on 26/6/90.

Conversation held with General Superintendent M. S. Pratt, at WAM Church offices on Wellington Street, on 6/7/92.

Recorded interview held with Rev. M. E. Renner-Lewis at K22, FBC, Freetown, on 7/3/90.

Interviews held with Rev. Ibrahim Sankoh-Cole of Bathurst and Charlotte, while attending FBC during the 1991-92 session.

Conversation held with Mrs. Annie Senesie at 30 Pratt Street, New England Ville, on 2/7/92.

Recorded interview held with Abraham Sesay, General Secretary of Scripture Union Sierra Leone, at the Aqua Sports Club, Aberdeen, Freetown, on 16/5/90.

Recorded interview held with Bankole Sesay at his manse at 85 Fort Street, Freetown, on 28/6/90.

Conversation held with Leslie Shyllon Jr. at FBC, Freetown, on 1/6/90.

Interview held with Rev. Speck, Evangelism Secretary, Christian Council of Sierra Leone, at CSSL offices, King Harman Road, Freetown, on 8/7/92.

Conversation held with Mrs. Sonya Spenser, lecturer in Education at Njala University, at K22, FBC, Freetown, on 4/4/90.

Interview held with Russ Tatro of Rhema Bible Church and the Freetown Bible Training Centre at K22, Kortright, Freetown, on 4/4/92.

Recorded interviews held with Bishop Prince Thompson, at Bishops Court, Freetown, on 12/6/90 and 16/6/90.

Recorded interview held with Rev. Valcarcel, Christian Education Director for the Baptist Church, at the Baptist offices, Youth Centre, Garrison Street, Freetown, on 27/6/90.