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(ii)

DECLARATION

I DECLARE THAT THE THESIS HEREBY SUBMITTED BY ME FOR A DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF THEOLOGY HAS NOT PREVIOUSLY BEEN SUBMITTED BY ME FOR A DEGREE AT THIS OR ANY OTHER UNIVERSITY, AND THAT THIS IS MY OWN WORK IN DESIGN AND IN EXECUTION, AND THAT ALL MATERIAL CONTAINED THEREIN HAS BEEN DULY ACKNOWLEDGED.


MORIBE SIMON

(iii)

DEDICATION

THIS THESIS IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED TO MY LATE FATHER,
LEDIMANE AND MY MOTHER NKOLA.

CONTENTS

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	viii
SUMMARY.....	ix - x
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	xi - xii
INTRODUCTION.....	xiii - xv
CHAPTER 1.....	1
1. Background of the Zion Christian Church.....	1 - 8
1.1. The rise of the Zionist Movement.....	8 - 16
1.2. The call of Engenas Lekganyane.....	16 - 22
1.3. The successors of Engenas Lekganyane.....	22 - 29
1.4. Taboos and holiness in the Zion Christian Church.....	30 - 47
1.5. The headquarters of the Zion Christian Church.....	48 - 49
CHAPTER 2.....	50
2. Organisation.....	50 - 58
2.1. The holy week conference.....	59

2.1.1.	Powers and duties of the conference....	60 - 65
2.2.	September conference.....	65 - 68
2.3.	Christmas conference.....	68 - 69
2.4.	The role of women.....	69 - 76
2.5.	The main characteristics of the Zion Christian Church.....	76
2.5.1.	Healing.....	76 - 90
2.5.2.	Prophecy.....	90 - 93
2.5.3.	Music.....	93 - 102
2.6.	Motto of the Zion Christian Church.....	102 - 106
2.7.	Membership.....	106 - 111
CHAPTER 3.....		112
3.	Community Development.....	112 - 118
3.1.	Sharing and service.....	119 - 122
3.1.1.	Sharing.....	122 - 132
3.2.	The Zion Christian Church funeral benefit assurance... fund.....	133 - 134

3.2.1.	The Zion Christian Church burial benefit trust fund: Mission statement.....	134 - 136
3.3	The Bishop Edward Lekganyane bursary fund....	136 - 138
3.4.	Involvement of the African Initiated Churches in politics.....	138 - 148
3.4.1.	Involvement of the Zion Christian Church in business.....	148 - 150
CHAPTER: 4.....		151
4.	The management of the Zion Christian Church..	151 - 164
4.1.	Theological education.....	164 - 167
4.2.	African Christian Theology.....	167 - 176
4.3.	Contextual Theology.....	176 - 179
4.4	Apostolicum for the Zion Christian Church....	179 - 180
4.4.	The road ahead.....	180 - 187
NOTES:.....		188 - 189
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....		190 - 215

CONSTITUTION OF THE ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH, 1946...	216 - 226
THE ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH CONSTITUTION (EDWARD GROUP), 1954.....	227 - 237
SAINT ENGENAS ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH CONSTITUTION (JOSEPH'S GROUP), 1972.....	238 - 253

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The general principles of the historical method will be applied in the research. Use will be made of written and printed documents - both general and local.

Classification of Research: Descriptive.

Methodological Approach: The participatory action approach.

Research Process: Historical.

Aim of Study: The study intends to investigate the following aspects:

- The background and establishment of the Zion Christian Church.
- The form of church government.
- Community development.

SUMMARY

The Study of the African Initiated Churches has become vital for the understanding of the rich variety of forms in which Christianity manifest itself on this continent. In 1950 nearly 80% of black south African Christians adhered to the established churches and only 12% to the African Initiated Churches. Presently it is about 52% and below 40% respectively. At the end of the century the African Initiated Churches will be the main Church Movement in South Africa as the so called mainline churches are fast becoming sidelined (Oosthuizen December 1992: i)

The founder (Engenas Lekganyane 1885-1948) of the Zion Christian Church was an African, with roots in Africa. His church thus assimilated Christianity into the culture as espoused in this part of the continent. The church thus expresses Christianity in an African context. The leadership of the church has continued to be African, thereby entrenching the Africanness of the church. The membership of the Zion Christian Church is overwhelmingly African.

The African features of the Zion Christian Church are therefore, not expressed through the structures that closely mirror traditional society, but rather through a polity that continues the hierarchical system inherited both from the traditional society and from the mother church namely the

(x)

Apostolic Faith Mission, and modifies it by the addition of elements from the Methodist forms of government. It could be regarded as a mixed Western polity operating in a characteristically African way.

Since it is the Christian faith that the church wishes to communicate in African terms, the starting point is the source of the church's faith, I refer here to the Holy Scriptures, the foundation document of the church. African Christians are concerned to interpret essential Christian faith in authentic African language in the flux and turmoil of our time so that there may be genuine dialogue between Christian faith and African culture.

It should be noted that by looking at the Gospel message from an African perspective, African Christians are not simply thinking about themselves but are attempting to make their contribution, to the universal Christian theology.

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I should like to express my sincere thanks to Prof. J P Claasen, my predecessor in the department of Church History at the University of the North and also Prof.(Emeriti) H van der Merwe of the same University, for they were my source of inspiration.

A special word of thanks also goes to the persons who went through my manuscript, namely, Prof. G C Oosthuizen, Rev. S M S Mazizwa of Malawi, Prof H van der Merwe and Prof R T H Dolamo.

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(xii)

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Above all I want to thank God who gave me the necessary energy and strength to complete this study of work as a humble contribution to the wealth of theology.

INTRODUCTION

"How can we sing a song to the Lord in a foreign land" (Ps. 137: 4), in a foreign language and a foreign thought? This is a profound question which is being asked by the African Initiated Churches in particular, the Zion Christian Church. For nothing less than the future of the church - even more the Kingdom of God! - in Africa and in particular South Africa is at stake.

The common root of these churches is the Pentecostal Movement which originated at the turn of the 19th century. The Apostolic Faith Mission is the largest Pentecostal church in South Africa. There is however, a definite historical and theological link between the Pentecostal Churches and the African Initiated Churches, for example there is a connection between the Apostolic Faith Mission and the Zion Christian Church. Yes, there is a vast difference between these two types of movements, but the common historical and theological roots need to be recognised. Unfortunately the "Classical Pentecostals" are not fond of any such identification with the "Zionist". All these churches may be described as Pentecostal because of the emphasis they place on the working and activities of the Holy spirit.

The African Initiated Churches are reacting against over-Europeanised, over-institutionalised and over-intellectualised churches in Africa. These churches live from the injunctions of the Holy Spirit and they integrate the supernatural world of Christianity into that of their own (Oosthuizen 1979: 2). These Churches have been founded by

Africans themselves, the charismatic prophetic-healers who received a call through revelation in "voices", visions and dreams to proclaim messages of prayer and miraculous healing. Both the old and New Testaments are called upon to confirm their validity (Ngubane 1985: 70). To the African Zionist, the Old Testament is a source book of remembrance. Its atmosphere reminds them of their own traditional nomadic and pastoral life, their longing for offspring, their experience of seedtime and harvest, and their sense of the presence and activity of divine power here and now (Philips 1948: 6)

Leaders such as Daniel Nkonyane, Paul Mabiletsa, Elias Mahlangu, Titus Msibi, Edward Motaung and Engenas Lekganyane are sources of creative, religious and social change (Ray 1976: 111). They played a very significant role in giving the "Zionist Movement" in South Africa an African character, and have attempted to contextualise Christianity, making it relevant to every day life, especially through the use of practical ritual techniques which are not found in Western oriented churches. In fact, the Zionist movement in Southern Africa are the vanguard of establishing and indigenous expression of African Christianity.

My focal point is the organisation and management of the Zion Christian Church. I shall also pay much attention to the origin, belief, community development, history of the Zion Christian Church and the future of this church. This will hopefully be also a necessary contribution to the establishment and development of theology in Africa especially with reference to black people.

The African Initiated Churches, in particular the Zion Christian Church, have challenged the Western oriented churches in Africa and their governments, not as individuals but as a movement. Fortunately the Western oriented churches in Africa in particular South Africa have at long last recognised the challenge of the African Initiated Churches, in particular the Zion Christian Church. They have responded positively by recognising the African world view.

Why this church? It is because the Zion Christian Church is a major block among the African Initiated Churches in Southern Africa. Unfortunately most scholars have ignored the contribution of this church and this makes this research necessary and compelling. As a member of the African Initiated Churches, in particular the Reformed Apostolic Faith Mission in Africa, I have the privilege and moral obligation to research and write the history of the Zion Christian Church. Furthermore as a church historian, the aim should be to present, as far as possible, a complete history of the church in South Africa. This should therefore include the significant history of the African Initiated Churches, especially that of the Zion Christian Church.

ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

CHAPTER 1

1. BACKGROUND OF THE ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH

"Schism has been endemic in the Christian tradition. Christianity had no sooner triumphed in the Roman Empire than it began to break apart into Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Coptic and Donatist. During the Protestant Reformation separatist sects - Anglican, Presbyterian, Lutheran - broke away from the Roman Church. The new churches in turn produced even newer sects like the Methodist who separated from Anglicanism" (Webster 1977: 57). Nonetheless the eruption into the African religious arena of no fewer than six thousand religious movements in our present century, is a phenomenon enough to arouse curiosity (Shorter 1974: 206).

Christianity is a universal religion and cosmic faith. It was universalised on Calvary, and cosmicised on the first Easter Day. Our duty now is to localise this universality and cosmicity. Europe and America have Westernised it, the Orthodox Churches have Easternised it; here in Africa we must Africanise it. It belongs to the very nature of Christianity to be subject to localisation, otherwise its universality and cosmicity become meaningless (Mbiti 1970: 431). For too long the church in Africa has been content to live and act as though it were still in America

or Europe. But, we should remember that Christianity is not a European or an America religion. In fact, it first came to Africa before it could reach Europe or America.

Christianity in Africa is so old that it can be described as an indigenous, traditional and African religion. Long before the start of Islam in the seventh century, Christianity was well established all over North Africa, Egypt, part of Sudan and Ethiopia. It came to Africa shortly after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is believed in Egypt that it was brought there by Mark, one of the writers of the Bible, in the year 42 A D (Mbiti 1977: 182). It was a dynamic form of Christianity, producing great scholars and theologians like Tertullian, Origen, Clement of Alexandria and Augustine. African Christianity made a great contribution to Christendom through scholarship, participation in church Councils' defense of faith, movements like monasticism, Christian theology, translation and preservation of the Scriptures, martyrdom, the famous Catechetical School of Alexandria, liturgy and even heresies and controversies (Mbiti 1974: 229-230). Unfortunately Islam wiped out Christianity in North Africa with the exception of Egypt and Ethiopia. The ancient church in these countries kept its identity both as a universal faith and as an indigenous religion.

During the third century the Bible was being translated into the dialects of the indigenous Copt, with the subsequent emergence of a Coptic Christianity. Today 12% of Egyptians still belong to the Coptic Church. The reason for this, is mainly the ability of this form of Christianity to indigenise (Pillay and Hofmeyr 1991: 42 & 46).

In Africa Christianity became more than a religion: it is a way of life. But this cultural interpretation of the Gospel by white missionaries negated all indigenous values on the pretext they were "pagan practices". It is an accepted statement that the concept of a monotheistic deity in Africa did not arrive with Europeans. Substituting ancestral veneration remembrance for polytheism is a fallacy which arose from Western ethnological interpretations premised on the ethnocentric arrogance of white missionaries and their colonial colleagues. Christianity thus came to South Africa in particular as a religio-cultural movement, and more specifically as a religio-colonial movement (Oosthuizen 1986: 153).

The mission Christianity which was imported in South Africa was deeply rooted in Euro-American culture. This Christianity from the start, was not yet prepared to face a serious encounter with either the traditional religions and philosophy. It was also not prepared to understand the world-view of an African, in particular to find out how religious is an African.

In fact the traditional African religion covered every aspect of the black human life. An African knew no distinction between sacral and secular. The black man or woman believed in "the essential goodness" of human beings (Oosthuizen 1976: 64). Kraemer (1938: 102) says, "Non-Christian religions, however, are all-inclusive systems and theories of life, rooted in a religious basis and therefore, embrace a system of culture and civilisation and definite structure of society and state.

The white missionaries who came to Africa in particular South Africa failed to follow the examples of Jesus who, though brought up in Jewish culture of His days, inherited universality from His Father after he emptied Himself (*Kenosis*) of his divine privileges and identified Himself with all mankind. Furthermore they did not follow Paul and other early church leaders who did not simply condemn and jettison the Greek mystery religions and Greek philosophy. They allowed these to remain as the matrix for the theologising of the early church. This theologising was translated and communicated in Greek religious and philosophical frames of reference (Ngubane 1985: 69).

In their examination of the working of the Great Commission McGavran and Arn (1977: 38) draw attention to the significance of *ta ethne* in the phrase translated in most English versions as 'all nations', but rendered more accurately as 'all peoples' in the Good News Bible (Matt. 28: 19). They point out that *ethne* does not mean 'modern nation states'. But, *Ethne* means the castes, tribes, people, ethnic units of mankind. The Great Commission is not simply the spread of the Gospel outwards territorially but down through the cultural layers. For culture permeates the whole of life and has profound influence on the meaning which people attach to the message they hear, the way they make decisions and the social and institutional structures which they build around their creeds and values (Gibbs 1981: 91).

Samartha (1988: 388) views religion and culture as providing resources to strengthen a sense of the wholeness of life, and again religion is the substance of culture and culture is the form of religion. Religion is concerned with belonging, effectively and cognitively, individually and

probably corporately, to that which emerges within the whole transitory parade of experience as the ultimately-real. Therefore, religion is not about any or all of the bits and pieces of experience but about the whole of experience, or about a reality which may be distilled from that totality. Hence religion is the quest for the best (Cumpsty 1991: 55, 159, 435). While William James (1929: 31) defines religion as "the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider divine".

Hocking says that religion is the "mother of the arts" (Leuzinger 1960 24-29). Religion is an experience of inward power, whether felt to be born within us or to come from beyond us, by which we are lifted above routine living and achieve more than we can achieve by sheer effort. Over and over again in history religion has meant pre-eminently, inspiration, enthusiasm, newness of life (Lyman 1933: 56). For the primary functions of religion is to formulate rules and standard of social behaviour (Meek 1925: 20). Religion is the core of life. Thus new character is the result of the productive work of religion (Parsons 1964: 198).

Mutwa¹ (1966: 342) view religion as a means of solidarity, friendship, love and reverence for the forces and principles of the Almighty. He further says that, every race, nation community on earth, no matter how high or how low it stands on the ladder of 'civilization', clings to a belief, a philosophy and a religion. Ngubane (1985: 69) regard religion as a medium in which different cultures encounter and perceive one another most clearly, and it is in religion that they interact most intimately because religion provides the symbolic language in which they communicate.

Mbiti reminds us that African culture is not uniform. It has similarities, but there are also differences from time to time, from place to place, and from people to people. He further says some of our heritage originated on the African soil; and it is therefore, genuinely African and indigenous. But some developed through contact with other people of other countries and continents. This means that culture is not static but dynamic.

"How can we sing a song to the Lord in a foreign land" (Ps.137: 4), in a foreign language and a foreign thought? This is a fundamental question which is being asked by the leaders and members of the African Initiated Churches, for nothing less than the future of the church - even more the Kingdom of God!- in Africa and in particular South Africa is at stake.

These churches are reacting against over-Europeanised, over-institutionalised and over-intellectualised churches. These churches live from the injunctions of the Spirit and they integrated the supernatural world of Christianity into that of their own (Oosthuizen 1979: 2). The doctrine of the Spirit, or Pneumatology, occupies the central place in the majority of the African Initiated Churches, especially in South Africa, where their church members constitute up to 40% of the Black population, a very significant proportion (Anderson 1992: 1).

Janet K H Hodgson and Basil Holt suggest that Ntsikana, who died in 1818, may mark the beginning of "independence or indigenisation". They both admit readily that Ntsikana, officially, never became a member of the mission church,

however, he was acquainted with the Gospel. As a boy, Ntsikana heard the Rev. J Van der Kemp preach and as a result heard missionary preaching with some frequency. As a result of the two strange experiences on a particular day, Ntsikana inaugurated worship services in his home for a non-kinship group which consisted of singing the hymns Ntsikana composed, prayers in which the emphasis was on communion with God, and teaching concerning sin and repentance (Hodgson 1980: 36-37). Janet Hodgson judges that in the life and work of Ntsikana we see the first African, or indigenous expression of the Christian faith which is independent of the European mission movement although it results from the work of the European mission.

The first successful secession from the European mission is that of Nehemiah Tile, a Thembu who was ordained by the Wesleyan Church in 1868, who then broke away from the Wesleyan Church and established the Thembu Catholic Church. Nehemiah Tile's Thembu Church, was established because of the fact that blacks were not able to express themselves within the mission church as they felt they wanted to. This is true of many of the Indigenous Churches in Africa (Oosthuizen 1986: 231).

Inkeles (1974: 20-25) regard the African Initiated Churches as a modern movement. The word "modern" has in the West too often a "capitalistic". The definition of "modern" in Africa includes:

- (a) Openness to new experience;
- (b) Readiness for social change, such as accepting the authority of younger, better qualified persons, fuller opportunities for women, allowing freedom to young people to make their own decisions;
- (c) A high regard for efficiency;

- (d) Time valued as a commodity which can be utilised profitably - it is orientated more to the future than to the past;
- (e) Planning - associated with evaluation and efficiency - becomes more urgent, namely on a long term basis (and private affairs);
- (f) The old fatalism is superseded in the knowledge that the world is not uncontrollable but can be controlled and people can be relied upon;
- (g) Educational and occupational aspiration play a greater role in their lives;
- (i) Differences of opinion are accepted without considering this to be a threat.

1.1

THE RISE OF THE ZIONIST MOVEMENT

The beginnings of the African Zionist Movement have some links with Dowies' church and William Seymour, a black preacher at a black church in Azusa Street, Los Angeles, where the emphasis on the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" with the "initial evidence" of speaking in tongues was propagated. William Seymour was responsible for the world-wide Pentecostal movement. "The Azusa Street Revival" is commonly regarded as the beginning of the modern Pentecostal movement.

John Alexander Dowie (1847-1907) is founder of the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church in Zion in Chicago in 1896, Illinois, "Zion City", United States of America. In Chicago the City was to be a haven of purity from the sinful environment, signified in the Zion cosmology by "that most wicked city". Zion was the focus of physical and spiritual reunion, of pragmatic "cleansing and healing". Here the

habitual practices of everyday life were reformed and the social universe reclaimed and circumscribed by the church (Comaroff 1985: 178). This church drew the bulk of its following from the impoverished urban communities of the industrial Midwest: a population itself alienated from such experiences of self-determination and rational achievements as were celebrated in nineteenth-century American Protestant ideology (Comaroff 1985: 177).

The American Zionist Movement emerged in an urban milieu structured by the growth and considerable of industrial capital, by technological advance, and by the aggressive meliorism aptly embodied in the staging of the Chicago World's Fair. The dominant ideology of Protestant industriousness and utilitarian individualism resonated with the secular Emersonian myth of personal achievement, both ideology and myth implying a thoroughgoing division of spirit and matter, church and world (Comaroff 1985: 180-181).

The American Zion Movement was millennial in ideology: through the moral reformation of everyday life, the restoration of the "primitive" church, and the revival of Apostolic mediation, the second coming would be realized. This restoration implied a return to a shared image of "origin" residing in the re-unification of man and Spirit, and in a re-centered social world whose valuables, like cargo, would then lend themselves to control by the faithful. First, however, God must acquire again the direct material power denied him by the orthodox churches, a power which would revitalise the church of Zion and reverse the marginality and importance brought upon them by an evil world. Man's dualistic state, his divorce from Spirit, was

a fiction of modern human philosophy and ordinary Christianity (Harlan 1906: 96 & 151).

The Christian Catholic Apostolic Church in Zion claimed to stand for the "restoration" of an "original and native" church, one that had become corrupted by the evil and apostasy of the orthodox Protestant denominations. As Worsley (1968: 226) has noted, such irreverent, anti-authoritarian innovations are usually treated with the utmost suspicion by the religious establishment and the state. Dowie's Zion was a statement of estrangement from, and resistance to, the cultural hegemony of late nineteenth-century urban America. Black proletarians in early twentieth-century South Africa recognized a resonance in these Zionist forms, which seemed to model their own relationship to the forces of colonialism (Comaroff 1985: 213).

The fundamentalist interpretation of Dowie, removes the Bible from the discourses of bourgeois orthodoxy, replacing it in a universe of ritual pragmatism and apocalypse. It is primarily the metaphors of the Old Testament (Zion; Moses; Exodus; Prophecy; the proscriptions of Leviticus) which are incorporated into the Zionist *bricolage*, to be revalued, in turn, by being brought into relationship with other elements of a total scheme, itself motivated by the desire to subvert the forms of neo-colonial culture and society. In the hands of the Southern African movements, the Bible becomes a mandate for returning tangible coherence to a world that had been rendered alien (Comaroff 1985: 217).

Dowie was born in Scotland in 1847, and trained in Australia as a Congregationalist pastor. Earlier work there on behalf

of the poor through the Social Reform Party gave way to a conviction that he could provide more pragmatic relief with his own powers of divine healing (Harlan 1906: 29). He came to North America in 1888 and moved to Chicago in 1890, where he established the headquarters of his controversial church. His crusade, firmly centered on the power of divine healing, gathered great momentum at the time of the Chicago World's Fair in 1893. Mapping the entire city into "parishes", he organized an energetic evangelical mission, founding the Christian Catholic (later Apostolic) Church in Zion in 1896, with himself as "General Overseer" (Harlan 1906: 35). In 1899, he formed the Zion Land Investment Association and, largely on the basis of tithes from his followers, secured 6,500 acres on lake Michigan, 42 miles north of Chicago, on which he founded Zion City (Harlan 1906: 6). Within a year, the city boasted a population of several thousands, a bank, a brick-yard, and several stores and small factories. There were also schools and a printing press, all registered under the absolute ownership of Dowie himself (Harlan 1906: 9).

A number of things were entirely forbidden in the Zion City. Bill-boards at the cross streets caution one that swearing or smoking or bad language of any sort are not allowed. Zion City will tolerate no breweries, no saloons, no drug or tobacco stores, no physician's or surgeon office. No theaters, no gambling places, no dance halls, no secret lodge rooms, no keeping or selling of swine's flesh. These regulations have been rigidly enforced, in fact there has seldom been any attempt at infringement (Harlan 1906: 15-16).

Dowie strongly opposed the secularization of healing which he saw as undermining the power of a pragmatically conceived Holy Spirit. "The heathen(s) have sense enough to know that

the book in every page teaches divine healing... Your missionary boards send out your infernal lies, and your medicine chest, and your surgical knives, and tell the heathen Christ is not the same (i.e. as the miraculous healer of Biblical times)" (Harlan 1906: 89). Dowie's evangelists were indeed to find black migrant workers in Southern Africa very susceptible to his non-dualistic concept of healing. But the explicit stress upon bodily healing in the Zion movement was also a particular cultural manifestation of a more general symbolic process, one arising out of the universal role of the body in mediating between personal experience and the social and material context (Comaroff 1985: 182). Anthropologists have long insisted that physical disorder indexes social disruption, and that healing is a simultaneously individual and collective process (Turner 1967b: 359).

Divine healing sought to reintegrate body, soul, and spirit, to cast out "disease", the intrusive influence of Satan (Harlan 1906: 113). But the frequent parallel of healing and social cleansing in Dowie's rhetoric explicitly linked the personal and the social corpus. Thus the reintegrated self, referred to by Dowie as the "Temple of God" (Harlan 1906: 90), was focused on the inner presence of the Holy Spirit, its form a microcosm of the City of Zion which, in turn was centred upon the great Temple and the supreme human mediator of divine power.

Dowie furthermore founded a training College in "Zion City" to prepare missionaries for foreign work. One of his students, Daniel Bryant and his wife Emma were sent to South Africa. Daniel Bryant baptized the first group of twenty-seven Africans on May 8, 1904, in Johannesburg (Sundkler 1961:48). They left Johannesburg and went to Durban where

they met P L le Roux who left the Dutch Reformed Church with four hundred members and they joined the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church in Zion (*Leaves of Healing*, December 1905: 319). Bryant baptized one hundred and forty one in Snake River, Wakkerstroom (Sundkler 1976: 38). Black Zionist converts incorporated the Pentecostal theme with great readiness; it seemed to accord with indigenous notions of pragmatic spirit forces and to redress the depersonalization and powerlessness of the urban labour experience (Comaroff 1985: 186).

Johannes Büchler (1864-1944) a man of Swiss descent, and his family arrived in South Africa, and they settled at Kimberley diamond city, in 1870. But when gold was discovered in Johannesburg in 1886, he travelled alone to the golden city, in 1889. There with the help of the government, he started a school, reputed to be the first English-medium school in the Transvaal (Sundkler 1976: 28). He was later ordained as a pastor of the Congregational Union of South Africa. Doubt about the Biblical grounds for infant baptism made him break away from them and on 21 March 1895 he founded his own congregation, which he called the Zion Church.

He accepted Dowie's theocratic message with its fourfold Gospel of Jesus as a Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer and coming King. He felt that he had a "sixth sense", a capacity for "seeing" when people far away needed Him. It was thus that he saw, with the eyes of the Spirit, that a Salvation Army Captain by the name of Edgar Mahon, in Southern Natal, had fallen ill and needed him. He went there, prayed for him and Mahon was healed (Sundkler 1976: 29-30).

Edgar Mahon (1867-1936), was a pioneer for the Zion Movement in the Orange Free State and Lesotho (Basutoland). He was dismissed by his superiors in the Salvation Army in 1899, after he had been baptized by Johannes Büchler; for the Salvation Army does not recognise the need of ordinary sacrament. However, Mahon and his wife did have a gift of healing and thus they appealed to the needs of Africans and above-all, they were impressed by Mahon's worship, especially the part of drumming. One of Mahon's first convert was Edward Motaung (Lion), and he was also able to influence Chief Jonathan of Lesotho.

The actual African Zionist groups of churches have been founded by Africans themselves, by charismatic prophet-healers who received a call through revelation in "voices", visions and dreams to proclaim messages of prayer and miraculous healing. Both Old and New Testaments are called upon to confirm their validity (Ngubane 1985: 70).

These churches approach the Old Testament with reverence and a sense of relief. To them it speaks of a faith unlike that practiced by Western Christians. To the African Zionist, the Old Testament is a source book of remembrance. Its atmosphere reminds them of their own traditional nomadic and pastoral life, their longing for offspring, their experience of seedtime and harvest, and their sense of the presence and activity of divine power here and now (Phillips 1948: 6). It also appears to condone polygamy as an economic and social structure; it depicts a sacrificial system; it refers to sacred rites and ritual prohibition; it lists ritual objects like prophets' staffs, cymbals, drums, and trumpets; it describes feasts and rites of passage like circumcision. All of these have their parallel in the traditional African religious system (Hesselgrave 1978: 22-23). The Old

Testament thus forms the foundation of the beliefs of these groups.

Prophetic leaders such as Daniel Nkonyane, Paul Mabiletsa, Elias Mahlangu, Titus Msibi, Edward Motaung and Engenas Lekganyane are sources of creative, religious and social change (Ray 1976: 111). They played a very significant role in giving the "Zion Movement" in South Africa, an African character, and attempted to contextualise Christianity, making it relevant to every day life, especially through the use of practical ritual techniques which are not found in mission churches. It is also interesting to note that all these leaders were coming from the lower social strata, while their counter-parts in the Western oriented churches were coming from the 'middle class'. These leaders were able to initiate and developed, consciously and unconsciously, what today we call African Christian Theology. They also set an example of a simple life style, clothing and housing. Most of these leaders and their followers have simple and inexpensive uniforms, which they treat with great care.

They were also able to do so because of the following reasons: The vernacular translation of the Bible played a very significant role in order to enable the African leaders to compare and contrast the teaching of the Bible, and that of the Western oriented churches. Thus they were engaged in a massive attempt to synthesise the Apostolic teaching with authentic African insight and culture, based on Biblical criteria derived from the vernacular translation of the Scriptures. They attempted to address the fears and hopes of Africans, especially on problems of witchcraft, sorcery, and wholeness of life. They also elevated the position of African women, who later played a significant role as

Healers or Prophetesses in these churches. In fact, the Zionist movements in Southern Africa are the vanguard of establishing an indigenous expression of African Christianity.

1.2

THE CALL OF ENGENAS LEKGANYANE

In the eyes of an African, the cosmos does not constitute a fixed, cold and mute world. On the contrary, it is a world charged with meaning and laden with messages, a world which "speaks". Hence dreams and visions are playing a very significant role in the life of an African, especially among the Zionists. The book of Joel 2: 28-32: "Afterwards I will pour out my spirit on everyone: your sons and daughters will proclaim my message; your old men will have dreams, and your young men will see visions...". These promises were fulfilled for the Jewish people and the early church. The African Initiated Churches are also experiencing the same.

In this sense the world possesses an absolute value. Consequently, to know oneself it is necessary for one to know the messages which the universe continuously sends. It is through these messages that one can interpret one's own destiny. The African is the being most careful to "read" his future in the composition of things and is one for whom this sort of prognostication has always been a habitual activity. His or her apprehension and anxiety concerning travel and hazardous and perilous undertakings is well known. Hence the multiple precautions taken by the African before deciding to leave on a risky "venture": Consultation with a traditional healer is in order, to know the outcome is very crucial (Zahan 1979: 89-90).

According to Africans, the living dead also reveal their will to the living through visions, dreams, calamity, ecstasy and trance, possessions, prophets and prophetesses, divination and by reincarnation. Above all, dreams are the channels through which the ancestors extend the call to their elect to become a traditional healer. In this context it is the traditional healer (Ngaka) who holds the code which allows the decipherment of the various messages intended for man or woman, the society in which he or she lives and all else related to his or her destiny. He or she possess the skill of penetrating the universe of signs, which mediates between the world and the human being. He also possesses a significant social personality and plays a considerable role in African culture. By virtue of this, he or she is being considered by his fellow country men and women as the representative of the divinity.

Most white missionaries were humiliated and even scandalized because of the stress laid upon dreams by Africans. The Zionists believe that dreams are the very channel in which God reveals Himself. They also believe that, to dream is a gift, just as Paul in 1 Cor. 12 enumerates other gifts of the Spirit. The members of these churches, make it a point that they remembered their dreams because they have a function in the church. Prophets and prophetesses attached much value to dreams, because they have the authority and power to interpret dreams.

Engenas (1885-1948) is the son of Barnabas Matseleng Lekganyane, and his mother, Sefora, is the daughter of Marobathotha Raphela, a famous traditional healer (Ngaka). They are also believed to be of Swazi origin. He was born at Thabakgone in the area of Kgosi (Chief) Mamabolo, the

exact date of his birth is not known, but it is believed to have been in the 1880's. Kruger (1983: 9) gives the birth date as 1885. In 1918 Engenas married Salphina Rabodiba, and he later had two more wives (Lukhaimane 1980: 9 & 11).

Engenas Lekganyane was a man of considerable creative flair and insight, and was installed as chief mediator among mediators with the Holy Spirit (Comaroff 1985: 238). He received his call in 1910. He was in a deep sleep when he heard a "voice" speaking to him but, unfortunately he could not see the person. The voice said: "*Mohlanka wa Modimo, tloha mona o leng teng, o eo ipatlela kereke e tlang ho ba le matla a ho fodisa ba kulang, mmeleng le moeng le ho kolobetsa nokeng...*" (God's servant, move from this place, and go, look for yourself a church which can heal, and baptise in the river) (Mopedi 1972: 5). After Engenas Lekganyane had heard this voice, he was very worried, for he regarded this dream as a divine secret. Engenas did not even tell the elders of the Free Church of Scotland, to which he belonged.

Because of *taelo* (instruction), which he did not fulfill, he suffered from what seemed to be an incurable eye-disease. The incurable illness made him to leave his native place, relatives, and his father's home and went to the Reef in 1912 to fulfill his *taelo*. This incident is similar to the one of Abraham in Genesis Chapter twelve verse one. On the Reef he met Elias Mahlangu the founder of the Zion Apostolic Church of South Africa. He was then baptised, for the second time by Mahlangu in the river, and he was healed. The above event is being taken by the followers of Engenas as the first calling of him as a Christian and it is still being regarded as a milestone in his life (Lukhaimane 1980: 14).

Maaga² says, when Bishop Engenas Lekganyane appeared on the scene, the people asked about him, uncomprehending, and whispered among themselves: "What manner of man is this? and what hear-say is he preaching?" He was the voice in the wilderness, preaching a new religion, which they neither knew nor understood and which thereby threatened to upset the established order of the day. They little realised that the old order had to change and yield place to a new order. The old ways had to give way. The people were however, forced to take notice by the credentials which were presented, viz, the miracles he performed. The miracles were the clincher, indeed the Bible itself has a myriad examples that prove that "deeds speak louder than words"; for an example the epic of Moses and Jesus Christ Himself.

✓ Engenas Lekganyane was the pioneer of the Zion Apostolic Church in the Mamabolo area, though he was not yet ordained as a minister, but a powerful preacher. He was then ordained in about 1916, when he had a large following, unfortunately the relationship between Mahlangu and Lekganyane deteriorated because they differed fundamentally on the management of the church. It would seem that the main reason was power struggle within the church. Finally Engenas resigned from the Zion Apostolic Church of South Africa in 1917 and joined the Zion Apostolic Faith Mission of Edward Motaung in Lesotho.

Edward Motaung was famous, and known for his healing powers. Engenas was an important gain for Motaung's church in Northern Transvaal and he was ordained as a Bishop of Transvaal. The very reasons which separated Lekganyane and Mahlangu, revealed itself again in the Zion Apostolic Faith

Mission. Daneel (1971: 297) sees the main cause of schism between Lekganyane and Motaung as twofold: first from an administrative point of view, Edward's church had grown to proportions beyond his own immediate control. Lekganyane who had become the most influential leader in the Transvaal, sensed that reorganization of the Zion Apostolic Faith Mission Church was imminent, and he intended doing it himself. Secondly Lekganyane's relationship with Motaung had suffered because Lekganyane had breached the regulation of the Zion Apostolic Faith Mission constitution by taking a second wife. But these issues may very well have been secondary to the driving power struggle of the leadership ambitions between these two men.

In 1924 Engenas Lekganyane ended his relationship with the Zion Apostolic Faith Mission and he founded the powerful Zion Christian Church with its headquarters at Pietersburg. After several prayer meetings and discussion Engenas declared that the name of the church would be the "Zion Christian Church". And the constitution (1946: Section xx) describes the name as follows: "But ye are come unto Mount Zion, City of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem, innumerable company of angels general assembly and church of the first born of God, the Judge of all (Heb. 12: 22-23). And all are build upon foundations of the Apostles and Prophets Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone (Ephesians 2: 20)". The 'Zion' is no more a symbol of inferiority and ridicule but a symbol of mighty power in Christian worship, not only capable of healing people through faith and prayer physically, but also spiritually. It is said that Engenas refused to add such phrases as "South Africa" because the church would spread beyond the South African borders (Lukhaimane 1980:24-25). The influence of the American "Christian Catholic Apostolic

Church in Zion"and William Seymour of Los Angeles are however transparent in the Zion Christian Church.

The Founder of the Zion Christian Church was an African, with roots in Africa. His church thus assimilated Christianity into the culture as espoused in this part of the continent. The church thus expresses Christianity in an African context. The leadership of the church has continued to be African, thereby entrenching the Africanness of the church. The membership of the Zion Christian Church is overwhelmingly African. The Church, as a multi-ethnic movement, spread over a larger part of Southern Africa although it only gained official state recognition in September 1992 (Naudé 1995: 78)

Unlike the Western style churches, the Zion Christian Church has never demanded of its members that they jettison African culture in favour of Western cultures, as a precondition of acceptance into the church. Instead, it has encouraged its members to adhere to their culture and accept it as a normal way of life, to be cherished and enjoyed and respected. It has taught that contrary to the popular missionary teaching, African culture is not heathen. In the Zion Christian Church Conferences, traditional music is encouraged and given a hearing; church members are allowed to worship in traditional dress, with no one frowning on them.

By espousing African culture it has given its members an identity and a sense of belonging, to which they can relate all the time. This has had the effect of giving them a strong sense of direction and purpose in their lives, because there is no dichotomy in their lives as church

members and as members of the society. This has been an invaluable anchor in these times of change and uncertainty.

The African nature is further emphasised by the fact that it is a patriarchal church, in keeping with the idea of the man as the head of the family and leader of the clan. In its leadership, as well as at ceremonies and rituals, there is no question of ladies officiating. This practice is in keeping with African mores.

1.3 THE SUCCESSORS OF ENGENAS LEKGANYANE

Like chiefs and Kings, the leadership in the Zion Christian Church is hereditary, whereas the Zionists in Swaziland, reject inherited succession of leadership. The new Bishop in fact, must not be related to the deceased one. Following a traditional Swazi custom in which at the death of the King the royal residence is transferred to another locality, a new headquarters must be chosen when a Swazi Zionist leader dies. And one becomes a leader by election rather than by inheritance. The leadership in Swazi Zionist churches is likely to be more democratic or to practise "legal" authority (Oosthuizen 1986: 180; Weber 1947: 328).

In the Zion Christian Church, one has to be a member of the Lekganyane family to inherit the title of Bishop. Unfortunately from 1945 Engenas health deteriorated, and he began to spend most of his time at home. He carried on most his functions through his councillors. His younger brothers Adolph and Paulus were his right hand men at that time. Amongst his sons, Joseph (his fifth son), was his favourite. His second son Edward, was away from home, and working in

Natal, and before he went to Natal he had a dream that he should go to Natal and wait there until he is called back. "Tsoga o tloge o ye Natala, o dule gona go fihla ke tlilo go bitsa" (Motolla 1987: 1).

(NB) The crucial point was who would be the successor after the death of Engenas in 1948. However, the constitution laid down that "the conference (which was made of ordained ministers and lay preachers) shall then proceed to elect a Bishop who shall be for life (Constitution 1974: Section iii). To the ordinary members, the appointment of a successor, is Engenas' prerogative. The Zion Christian Church being a spiritual church, it was believed by the members that God would reveal to Engenas which of his sons would be his successor.

In 1933 an interesting event took place near the family of Engenas: At an open place a wild dove came and sat on Engenas head. Engenas caught the dove and pulled out the two hind feathers, and he put them in the cap which he used up to his death. Engenas told his men that the two feathers represented the two churches which would emerge from his church after his death. (NB)

Then, in 1934 Engenas visited Johannesburg and stayed in Alexander Township. He there then had an argument with his elders about the future of the church. Engenas then asked them to look for Maria Sefuthuma who was a prophetess. When she arrived they knelt down and prayed and the woman told them: "God says that the church will develop and grow. The church will be joined by all races in Africa. But, before long the church will split into two. The split will be temporary as the church will be one again" (Lukhaimane

1980: 89). The elders who were present at the prophecy, were surprised to find that the prophetess had told them what Engenas had already told them.

One evening in 1941 Engenas called his children, his family members and elders. He showed them two stars in the west; it was a big and a small star. The smaller one was situated above a bigger one. He told his group to watch the stars for several nights. To him (Engenas) the two stars symbolised the two churches which would emerge from his church after his death (Lukhaimane 1980: 92).

Unfortunately in 1948 Engenas passed away without appointing his successor and immediately after that, his first born son Barnabas also died. Now the power struggle of leadership of the church was between Edward the second son and Joseph the favourite (fifth born). The Zion Christian Church, as in many African Initiated Churches like that of Shembe, is a family bound church. They adopted in their succession procedure the traditional form of appointing leaders by virtue of their "royal" blood.

The church then split into two because Engenas did not openly present his successor. The family felt that Joseph should be the successor of his father while the ministers in Pretoria and Johannesburg felt that Edward should become the leader because he is senior to Joseph. Joseph and his few followers founded the Saint Engenas Zion Christian Church in 1949, and the dove is the most conspicuous token and emblem of this church. Edward took the leadership of the Zion Christian Church, and the silver star is now the most conspicuous token emblem used by the Zion Christian Church

(Lukhaimane 1980: 98-103). In 1951 Edward Lekganyane founded the Silver Brass Band.

When Edward Lekganyane was consecrated in 1967 as the Bishop of the Zion Christian Church, he asked this question to his followers, "Leboneng naa?" (What have you seen?), and he answered "Le lehlohonolo haeba le tlile mona ho latela Naledi ya Bochabela, Naledi ya meso e leng Jesu Krete" Batho ba heso, metswalle ya ka! Tsatsing lena, ha ke behwa setulong sa Bo-Bishop ba kereke ena e kholo, mehlaleng ya Ntate le bahalaledi ba bileng pele, pelo yaka e tletse thabo, ke thabile hobane ke na le le lona, matleng a Modimo, re bolokile tumelo ya Jesu Krete mme kereke ea hae ya hola. Lebitsong la Morena a le roriswe". (You are blessed if you have seen the Star of the East, which is Jesus Christ. Thank you very much for keeping the faith of Jesus Christ, let His name be praised) (Lekganyane 1985).

NB Barnabas Lekganyane (1993) the current Bishop, explains the star as follows: The star is representing or symbolises light and life and not darkness. Furthermore the light of the Zionist and his star, is for those who are enveloped by darkness and come to seek refuge; integrity and honesty, where all denominations, of all colours, of all political persuasions shall seek refuge when adversity comes.

The same incident also occurred in the Christian Catholic Apostolic Holy Spirit Church in Zion, of Daniel Nkonyane who started the Zionist movement in Swaziland. After his death in 1935 and the refusal of the Swazi to accept his son as successor, this Zionist church that so far had been the dominant one, split in several branches that were later

unified into the Swazi Christian Church in Zion (Oosthuizen 1986: 177).

In an endeavour to broaden the spiritual base of the Zion Christian Church, Edward Lekganyane deemed it fit to travel to the United States of America and the United Kingdom. The identity of the church was strengthened to such an extent that he later applied to the South African Government to grant fully-fledged church status. To ratify the application he attended the theological education at the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Teologiese Skool Stofberg, near the University of the North in Pietersburg. He completed his Higher Diploma in Theology in 1966. Having obtained his diploma and having discovered the power of education he created a Bursary Fund to enable his members to partake of tertiary education. He also built the Moria Primary School (Motolla 1990: 31).

After the death of Edward Lekganyane in 1967, the church leadership was vested in his eldest son Barnabas Edward who was then thirteen years old. The church was then run under the curatorship of church elders pending the completion of Barnabas' studies at the All Africa School of Theology in Witbank in 1974. In the following year Barnabas took his rightful place in the church. And Barnabas Lekganyane (1985) made the following announcement: "I as the leader of the Zion Christian Church feel proud to announce this that, my father, the late Bishop E E Lekganyane, my grandfather, the late Bishop E B Lekganyane had faith in God. This is proved by good works they did by founding and building Zion Christian Church up to this strength. Through faith, I will also follow their foot-paths for the good of the church".

Barnabas also shares the same concern, relative to the education of his congregation. For it is essential for us to "beg for knowledge ; plead for insight - look for it as hard as you would look for silver, or some hidden treasure. If you do you will know what it is to fear the Lord, and you will succeed in learning about God" (Proverbs 2: 3-5). To this end he has taken it upon himself to further the ideals of his father and has appointed a Bursary Board under the chair-person of Dr. J L Maaga and J R L Rafapa as a student representative on the Board, to ensure that education can be provided from a wider base. The Bursary Fund extends to primary, secondary and tertiary education, and is aimed at financing the education of children of the members of the congregation who have financial constraints; to eliminate illiteracy in the church; to raise the standard of literacy amongst church members; to raise the self-esteem of all church members and their pride in being members of the church and to institute any practice that shall be conducive to the achievement of the above aims. He has also deemed it fit to build the secondary school at Marobathotha which is a common sight adjacent to Zion City. The church has granted Bursaries for their students in the following Institutions: University of the North; University of Venda; University of Western Cape; University of the Witwatersrand; University of Swaziland; Fort Hare University; University of Boputhatswana; University of Transkei; University of Durban-Westville; Rhodes University; University of Zululand; University of South Africa and a number of Colleges of Education and Technical Colleges.

He has also established the Adult Literacy Campaign, which according to Dr J L Maaga is a ticket to respectability in the eyes of the black community. Because most often it is being quoted that the Zion Christian Church has a disproportionately huge illiterate membership. The whole

thrust of the Adult Literacy Campaign is to correct that situation. Today the Zion Christian Church can be proud to have qualified Medical doctors, Magistrates, Directors of Education, school teachers and principals and nurses, to name just a few.

In 1986 Barnabas Lekganyane launched the Zion Christian Church Chamber of Commerce (*Lekgotla la baipereki*). He furthermore launched the Zion Christian Church Funeral Benefit Fund in October 1990; which is being administered by Mar de la Harpe (Pty) Ltd and African Life Assurance Company. Because of the extensive growth of the church which is estimated to millions of members, Barnabas saw it fit to build an office block to house church staff and store the records of the church; and this office is manned by full-time personnel (Motolla 1990: 31). Apart from the strenuous schedule which is demanded from his position as the leader of the church, the Bishop is also the Managing Director of Barnabas Lekganyane Enterprise (Pty) Ltd, whose interests are diverse and include several general dealer shops, roller mills, butchers and restaurants. The Bishop has erected a number of church buildings for the Zion Christian Church, for example one in Meadowlands, Mamelodi, Atteridgeville and Tembisa to mention just a few.

In 1985 he invited the state President P W Botha to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the Zion Christian Church. In 1987 the Bishop went to the Royal Family of King Goodwill Zwelithini to pray with them. In 1992 he invited the then state President F W De Klerk, Nelson Mandela the current President of South Africa and of the African National Congress and Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi to pray for peace in South Africa. During the Easter Conference of 1994, most political leaders in South Africa, attended this important

conference to pray for peace and the forthcoming election in South Africa. The Bishop has also visited most of the prominent chiefs and Kings in South Africa.

Engenas, Edward and Barnabas Lekganyane saw themselves as representatives of their followers to God, and they have never regarded themselves as gods or Messiahs but, servants of God. The members of this church do not deify their leaders. But, they see their leaders as special messengers or, even as sort of mediators between God and their followers. Their members see their leaders as priests and prophets who receives their powers directly from God. Hence when they pray they say: "*Re rapela Modimo wa Engenas, Edward and Barnabas*" (we worship the God of Engenas, Edward and Barnabas).

The Zion Christian Church is a society of Christians who believe that Christ is the saviour and Son of God and that He died on the cross for our sins (Mukhondo 1992: 8). The Zion Christian Church is a daily church and not a Sunday church. It keeps in touch with its members throughout the week, through its various powerful structures, it cultivates in its members attitudes that prayer, God and peace are daily affairs, not just Sunday affairs. It reinforces the attitude that love for one's neighbour is a daily affair. The leadership of this church is charismatic in nature and hereditary.

1.4 TABOOS AND HOLINESS IN THE ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Taboo is a Polynesian word which literally means something marked out as forbidden. The concept of taboo is closely linked with the concept of *mana*³. *Mana* is a mysterious kind of supernatural power, a potential energy which people believe to be in and behind all men and things. This *mana* makes a thing, a human being or an animal that what they are. Everything can have *mana*, but if a thing is big or strong, or when a man has exceptional talents and when something or someone is powerful or dangerous, then it is believed that it or he or she has much *mana*. *Mana* is like an electric charge.

Mana can also be dangerous. This property of danger leads to the concept of taboo. A person or object that for some or other reason is taboo must not be touched. Foodstuffs that are taboo must not be eaten. Animals that are taboo must not be mentioned by their proper names or be eaten. On certain days it is taboo to work or to eat or drink or have sexual intercourse. Anything that has to do with death or the dead is often taboo. Priest, Kings and chieftains may often not be called by their proper names, or be touched, or spoken to by ordinary people, because of their being charged with *mana*.

All religions prescribe taboos. In the Old Testament, the idea of impurity which led to a number of laws about unclean animals and forbidden sexual relations is largely to be considered a taboo concept. Holy places are also taboo, such as graveyards, shrines, trees, groves or mountains where spirits or gods are believed to have taken their

abode. Taboo is a basic element of the religious experience and attitude of man. It originates from an instinctive fear of, or awe towards the mysterious 'other' world and its powers by which men feel themselves surrounded. This 'other' world is sacred or holy. The attitude which springs from taboo is one of being careful; it puts men and women on the guard (Bolink 1981: 12-18)

In the Bible "holiness" is related to the world of nature and of history, to the realm of human experience and conduct, to the election-covenant life of Israel, to the psycho-physical life of the individual, and even to the destiny of nations. There it is revelation of the holy presence which gives rise to the impulse to worship: where the Holy One manifests Himself in the *hieros logos* as in the theophanies, altars and sanctuaries are erected to bring the event and word to holy immediacy and realization. Wherever, God's presence is felt, there men encounter the wonder and mystery of holiness (Buttrick 1962: 616).

The African world is one of participation between what Western philosophy considers as two distinct and partly separated worlds. The world which falls under our senses is not merely a shadow of the sacred transcendental world as it would be for Plato. On the other hand the divine is not a dimension which is arrived at by rational abstractions from the empirical. It is experienced in the empirical: both are equally directly perceived and equally concrete (Omi and Anyanwu 1984: 121). Kwame Nkrumah (1964: 12) express this point as follows: In many African societies, the dialectical contradiction between 'inside' and 'outside' (the world) was reduced by making the visible world continuous with the invisible world. For them heaven was not outside the world, but inside it. These African

societies did not accept transcendentalism, and may indeed be regarded as having synthesized the dialectical opposites 'outside' and 'inside' by making them continuous, that is, by abolishing them.

Mbiti (1969: 57) puts it perhaps even more clearly: The invisible world is symbolised or manifested by the visible and concrete phenomena and objects of nature. The invisible world presses hard upon the visible: one speaks of the other, and the African people 'see' that invisible universe when they look at, hear or feel the visible and tangible world. This is one of the most fundamental religious heritages of African people. This religious universe is not an academic proposition: it is an empirical experience, which reaches its height in acts of worship.

An isolated human being in Africa is an anomaly: "I am only because we are, and since we are, therefore I am". Man is more than a mere social being; he is in intimate relationship with other forces in his environment which influence him and those around him (Tempels 1945: 28). At the apex is God who is omnipresent as a numinous force in creation (Kgame 1956: 67). The living again have this vital force according to their status in the community. This force is also in animals, plants and minerals. Everything is interrelated. Man is part of the many subjects in the world and he presupposes that all beings take part in it as he does. Man is a family, all are links in one chain of humanity, through which the world energy flows. Outside this life withers away (Oosthuizen 1986: 227).

African concepts of human person (*Motho - Umuntu*), as evident in daily contact and traffic, is that of a *dynamo*. African traditional conceptions of being, show a 'belief in a potency locked up in objects and beings' or an energy, a force which is immanent in all things; 'something' as tangible and all-pervasive as the other. It is everywhere, it flows through all things but it draws itself to a node or focus in conspicuous objects. Each human person becomes understood as one of those nodes or foci. Therefore '*Motho ke Modimo*' the Sotho-Tswana say: The human person is that energy or force, that is *Modimo* - Divinity.

Physically perceived the human person is like a live electric wire which is ever exuding force or energy in all directions. The force that is thus exuding is called '*Seriti - Isithunzi*'. *Seriti* has often been translated to mean dignity or personality. Actually, that only describes the end result of the phenomenon. It is derived from the same word stem '*riti*' - as '*moriti*' - '*umthunzi*' which means 'shadow', or 'shade'. It is a physical phenomenon which expresses itself externally to the human body in a dynamic manner. Above all force is God, Spirit and Creator. Traditional African understanding views the human person (*motho - umuntu*) as dynamic. The physical source of this dynamism is the blood. This dynamism expresses itself in the form of '*Seriti*' - '*Isithunzi*' (Setiloane 1986: 13-16).

Mutwa (1961: 461) says, when a child is born, he or she does possess a self, which is called *Ena*⁴. He says a self builds up slowly of the memories and thoughts and the experiences as it grows up into a man or a woman. This *Ena* is not flesh and blood - it is a ghost of transparent mist. The *Ena* is not immortal; it lives on some time after the death of the body, and can often be seen. It is this the high

traditional healers summon and consult, in times of trouble to pray to the gods for us.

"An *Ena* must eat to grow and live, the same as you must eat to grow and live. While you live you eat for both your body and for your *Ena*, but when you die your *Ena* will also die unless it can continue to eat. If we do not sacrifice cows and goats regularly so that the *Ena*'s of these animals can go to feed our ancestors' spirits, they will go into a state of non-existence. It is therefore, very important that we make these sacrifices regularly. Our ancestors' spirits must remain alive because we must take our problems and plead for us with the gods - just as the common people must have *Indunas* who can plead for them with their chiefs"

Malula⁵ says: The black people preserve in their heart the innate feeling of God and of their dependence on such a Supreme Being. Such a religious feeling is one of the African values of which we are proud and jealous. Thus, the African goes beyond the visible to an invisible world of the spirits, a world of faith, which is the crown of culture. So, for the African, God, Spirit, ancestor, universe, are living forces though they belong to different levels of the hierarchy of force. Anyanwu (1984: 164 & 169) says the African has faith in God because of the need to give meaning, purpose and value to existence or experience. The African God is not a purely logical or rational God but a God of the heart. He is active, Father-Mother, the God of life, the giver of rain and children, the one who punishes evil and rewards good, not an Idea-God, an abstract entity or a logical being.

According to Setiloane (1986: 25) African experience of God is something fearful weird, monstrous, terrible. The Ba-Tswana people said God is: '*Selo se se boitshegang*'. But all these are not derogatory words. Instead they convey as the word *boitshegang* does, numinousness, unapproachability, taboo and holiness. They certainly did not have a 'Person' in mind.

Mqhayi (1978: 73) confirms what Setiloane is saying by giving the following explanation: "God is so great and holy that we did not dare approach Him on our own. We had a sense of unworthiness. So we asked our ancestors (*Iminyanya, Badimo, Amadlozi and Midzimu*, etc.) to speak to God on our behalf. The ancestors served as mediators between us and God; and we pray to Him through them". The feeling of the divine presence and the personification of this divinity reinforces the African belief that everything is alive. Life, therefore, becomes the ultimate reality of existence in spite of death.

Pheko (1969: 20) says that what led the Africans to speak to God through their ancestors, was their realization that God is Holy and that only those who are pure can deal with Him. While Mbiti says, the dead are used as intermediaries because it is felt that they speak both the language of the invisible world and the language of human beings. For that reason the departed, whom we call the living dead, may be used as intermediaries. People also feel that they are approaching God through someone who is known to them, who is part of them and shares the concern and needs of people. Mutwa says a man or woman who attempt to live without ancestors is like a tree without roots, and that a man or woman who is ignored by his ancestors is a disgrace in the eyes of God. This belief that an African man or woman lives

solely to serve his ancestors is one of the most deep-rooted beliefs in the whole of Africa, and tribal unity is based on this. The tribe as a whole must keep the spirits of its founders alive; every tribe in Africa believes this. To cut an African man or woman completely away from the heritage that his or her ancestors left him or her, the mental and spiritual environment of his earlier years, would be to sever him or her from all that he or she hitherto held sacred (Willoughby W C 1928:xix). Willoughby further says that Jesus Christ came to fulfil, not to destroy, the best in every religion.

In many and various ways, African people respond to their spiritual world of which they are sharply aware. By the actions and interventions of the spirits in everyday life, the presence of the Divine was felt very strongly and this brought about a feeling of reverence wherever people came to worship (Setiloane 1967: 29). These acts may be formal or informal, regular or ex-tempore, communal or individual, ritual or uncereemonial, through word and deed. They vary from one society to another, and from one area to another. According to Mbiti an ontological balance must be struck between God and man, the spirits and man, the departed and the living. When this balance is upset, people experience misfortunes and sufferings, or fear that these will strike them (Mquayi 1974: 58-59).

The interaction of one's 'Seriti' (vital force) with those of other people in the community does not terminate with death. Even after death 'the vital participation' of the deceased is experienced in the community in general and in the home and clan circles in particular. In real African experience the ancestors are people rather than 'gods'. Therefore, when an African speaks about this experience of

contact with *Badimo*, it is about a person contact, not of a vision or an apparition. The words used (in Sotho) to relate the experience are: '*Ke bone Ntate*' - I have seen my father. It might even be added '*Ke bone mofu Ntate*' - I have seen my late father.

In Kono thought, the person does not cease to exist at death, hence there is a refusal to use the word "*fa*" (the verb "to die", used to express the death of plants or animals) when a person dies. Instead, the expression is "*A nii bo*" (His or her life went out). Therefore, there is a recognition of an immaterial part to a person which passes through a change at death and becomes more powerful in the spirit world. The "*nii*" is not used outlined in the consideration of the spirit world (Parson 1964: 24).

The Africans resent the suggestion that they 'worship' *Badimo*. They argue that the Europeans word 'worship' does not properly convey the same meaning as 'service' (*tirelo*) which they perform in relation to their ancestors. That 'service' which is rendered to *Badimo*, is in fact of the same quality and level as that rendered to one's parents while they are living. In Se-Tswana: '*Re direla Badimo*' We serve our ancestors with the necessities of life. But, *Re rapela Modimo*: We pray to God (*Modimo*). In our experience our ancestors do not vie or compete with *Modimo* (the ultimate reality). *Badimo* are not *Modimo* and yet they are 'of *Modimo*' in the same way as *Motho* (person) is 'of *Modimo*' (Setiloane 1986: 17-20).

They approach God through sacrifice, to perform rituals, to make offering and prayer. These things and actions are a means of renewing contact between people and God, or between

people and the invisible world; and it is also a means of creating harmony in the world of mankind.

The practice of making sacrifices and offerings is found all over Africa. By this practice, material or physical things are given to God and other spiritual beings. This act marks the point where the visible and invisible world meet (Mbiti 1977: 57-58). People make sacrifices and offerings of almost any animal or object. The making of sacrifices and offerings on the other hand, is also a psychological device to restore this balance. It is also an act and occasion of making and renewing contact between God and man, the spirits and man. When these acts are directed towards the living dead, they are symbols of fellowship, a recognition that the departed are still members of their human families.

This belief made the African people not only to recognise the importance of purity, but to believe that purity is power. Here is an instance which show how strongly the African people believed that purity is power: Commenting on a battle that was fought by the Bashoto (Basuto) against the English invaders in December 1852, an old warrior said, "At the Battle of Berea in 1852, we gave a thorough beating to 2,500 British soldiers trying to take our land from us by force. The invading soldiers were ordered to attack our country by George Cathcart. It is true that under the illustrious King Moshoeshoe, we had a well trained and disciplined army. But I think that there was a spiritual secret of defeating a British army fighting with weapons far superior to ours".

The old warrior continued, "The secret of our success lay in that fact that during the war with the British aggressors, we kept ourselves clean in spirit. You see," he explained, "in those days, when we were at war we observed the rules of purity. These rules demand that we should not have any pleasure even with our own wives. It was also a rule that while our men were in battle, our women should not have sexual relations with any men remaining at home".

"It was believed that when men and women were pure, the ancestors or God would be able to convey messages to them through dreams at night. These messages were for guidance and protection in the war. The messages through dreams would help them gain victory over their enemies. The people believed that these messages could be communicated to the nation only through clean men and women. God cannot speak to unclean people", concluded the old warrior (Pheko 1969: 20).

When there is no rain and grass as it is scarce, and cattle died like flies, as it is happening today in South Africa, and other parts of Africa, our forefathers used to speak to God in prayer. For it is the commonest act of approaching God. Prayer is also an act of pouring out the soul of the individual or community. In praying, people get as close as they can to God, since they speak to him directly. People may pray privately, as individuals, or as heads of their families. Other prayers are made communally, at public meetings and for public needs. Most of African prayers are ex-tempore and to the point. Names of the forefathers and living-dead are invoked, the people believing that such intermediaries will convey their prayers to God.

It is a widespread feeling among Africans that man should not, or cannot, approach God alone or directly, but that he must do so through the mediation of special persons or beings. The reason for this feeling and practice seem to derive mainly from the social and political life of the people concerned. For example, it is the custom among some societies for children speak to their fathers through their mothers or older brothers and sisters. In others, the subjects approach their chief or king only indirectly through those who are closer to him. This social and political pattern of behaviour is by no means found in all societies, but the concept of intermediaries is found almost everywhere (Mbiti 1974: 68).

The mode of prayer differed from tribe to tribe. But the most common thing to all the people of Africa is that they approached God through the blood of animals. Life is closely associated with blood. When blood is shed in making a sacrifice, it means that human or animal life is being given back to God who is in fact the ultimate source of all life. Therefore the purpose of such a sacrifice must be a very serious one. People feel that for important needs they should not approach God with empty hands, for they know that God will not literally eat or make use of their sacrifices. But they want to show their humbleness before Him, the seriousness of their need, perhaps even their desperation (Mbiti 1977: 59-60).

The kind of a situation which calls for a communal sacrifice may include drought, epidemics, war, raids, calamity, insect pests and destruction of floods. Africans will normally assemble at the king's place with the help of the traditional healer, as a specialist, and a bull will be carefully chosen to make sure that it is acceptable to God,

to be killed and used as a sacrifice to God. It is believed that to destroy the life of a bull or any other animal, will save the life of many people. Thus, the destruction of one becomes the protection of many.

Family needs may concern health, marriage problems, remembering the departed, or request for prosperity or success. Usually domestic animals such as sheep, goats, cattle and fowls are sacrificed either by the family head or by a specialist. For example, at birth the mother is confined to her hut for a period ranging from ten days to a month. There is taboo for men - including the husband and father - and some women to enter the hut. Only old women and girls who have not yet reached puberty may enter the hut. To indicate this taboo to those who may not be aware, a reed is placed across the entrance of the hut. The expression used is: *Ba ka mo letlakeng*, they are in or behind the reeds. So the coming of a child into the world is the occasion for an enactment of that first event of the coming of our "first parents" (Setiloane 1986: 5) and thus blood would be shed. When a girl gets a baby before marriage, a goat or a sheep is slaughtered for her. In other African societies a goat is mainly sacrificed for those who disobeyed the rules of the society while a sheep symbolized good fortune for those who kept the rules. It is believed that its blood had the power of cleansing her from disgrace; or when a woman lost her husband, she wore a mourning dress for six or twelve months. When mourning time is over, a beast is killed for her to cleanse her from ill-luck.

At the beginning of the colonial period, when the prison system was introduced by Europeans, Africans regarded any imprisoned lawbreaker as an "outcast". They restored those

"outcasts" on their discharge from jail by shedding animal blood. For instance, when Rolihlahla Nelson Mandela the President of South African and of the African National Congress, was released from prison a few oxen were slaughtered to restore him back into the community, so that he should be able to take his rightful place in the society. Even when our brothers and sisters came from exile, the same procedure was followed by different families.

Blood speaks great things in Africa. It is shed to "cleanse", to "restore", and to "appease" God. Blood also unites two different families in marriage. A goat or a sheep slaughtered after *lobola* agreement, is a symbol of oneness and completeness. That is the reason why our forefathers permitted no divorce and could not allow their daughters or sons to break a marriage promise. What had been sealed with blood could not be undone (Pheko 1969: 16-17). This is a basic teaching of the book of Leviticus in the Old Testament. While Hebrews 9: 22 says the following: "Indeed, according to the Law almost everything is purified by blood, and sins are forgiven only if blood is poured out".

In the Zionist case, the prescriptions and taboos of everyday life are part of an order of meaningful actions which seek to intervene in the contradictory relationship between local peoples and the larger system that contains them. As in many reformist movements, dietary prescriptions are important signifiers of the reconstructed life in Zion. Those of the Zion Christian Church stem almost unchanged from the instructions of Dowie and, through him, from Leviticus. Baptized members eat no pork, and no animals that have died of natural causes or have been killed in the hunt. They also do not smoke, drink alcohol or (in theory)

consult doctors, either native or Western (Comaroff 1985: 206 & 217). A dead body cannot be taken into a church building. Modesty in dress is required of women. The head must be kept covered. Contraception is also prohibited.

The taboo of pork, tobacco, and alcohol expresses the desire to exclude from Zion items that have become emblems of white colonial culture and bearers of its defiling substance to indigenous South African peoples; and they were very sensitive to the role of liquor vending in the subjugation and impoverishment of the black community (Van Onselen 1982: 44). Turner points out that breweries render the largest state income in a number of countries in Africa; that they are capital instead of labour intensive; they use advanced rather than intermediary technology and produce nothing except consumables. These products contribute more to the country's social and health problems than solving them - in fact, there is more illness in Africa than ever before. Turner adds that this type of industrialization is economically abnormal and morally indefensible in a developing country. Ramoroka (1987: 21) says, alcohol is considered as a drug medically and it was long prescribed as a tonic and a sedative. Ramoroka further says: "I look upon every member of the Zion Christian Church as an overseer and not to tarry long on wine, and to be blameless". The forbidding of it is found in Leviticus 10:8-11.

Sundkler (1976: 44) has also noted how abstinence from smoking among the first Zulu Zionists was perceived by Afrikaner farmers as an act of resistance against a labour system that used tobacco as a mode of payment. Lekganyane (1985) regard tobacco as poison. He cited Dr. M Orfilla the president of the Medical Academy of Paris as saying "Tobacco is the most subtle poison known to chemists except the daily

prussic acid". Bishop Barnabas Lekganyane (1985) was once invited by the Executive Committee of Atteridgeville/Saulsville, Society for the care of the aged; and his topic was on the danger of alcoholism and tobacco.

On 28 December 1951 Bishop Edward Lekganyane held a meeting with Council of the Zion Christian Church Ministers for the very first time since his holy enthronement. In reiterating the church laws that had earlier been declared by his father who had passed away on 1 June 1948, Bishop Edward's very opening pronouncement was that: "If a preacher, deacon or minister smokes or drinks, his certificate should be confiscated and he should cease his duties as an ordained leader forthwith" (Rafapa 1992: 8).

Engenas Lekganyane has also discarded the white long clothes, growing of long beards and no more taking off of shoes which was required when entering the place of worship, which are the main features of the Zionists in South Africa. The most basic serious prohibition forbids witchcraft, sorcery and fetish. It is at this point that the main breakthrough of the church, by the substitution of prayer and faith and its associated practices, has occurred, and almost all the members are satisfied and relieved to find a new way and they are confident of this virtue.

Here is an interesting incident which occurred at Tsomo Mission in Transkei. It was the first time that Bishop Barnabas Lekganyane visited this place officially in 1987, to unveil the tombstone. According to the tradition of the church, the green and yellow uniform may only be worn when going to church, and prayer-meetings for the women, but definitely not to the grave-yard. The Bishop dressed in

green and yellow led the congregation, resplendent in their green and yellow - brass -band and all - to the cemetery to dedicate a tombstone. At the gate, leading into the cemetery, the congregation wavered, unsure what to do: whether to enter, or not to enter. Knowing the tradition which governs the green and yellow uniform, the congregation skirted the gate, and assembled outside the cemetery fence, doubting the very truth that their eyes were conveying to them, that the Bishop had entered the cemetery in the green and yellow. When, the Bishop indicated that they should enter the cemetery, they readily did so: but with thousand questions in their minds, begging for an answer (Maaga 1987: 15).

The clothing and presentation of the body are also crucial dimensions of the Zionist scheme; uniforms assumed an important role in all South African churches from the start. The Zion Christian Church uniform, while sharing the underlying symbolic scheme of Zionist as a whole, shows several distinctive variations. Because the congregation is more directly engaged in the money economy than most groups, its uniform tends not to be worn outside the context of ritual performance. However, the icon of the spiritual power of the movement, a metal badge, is always pinned to the clothing of members during their working hours, prominently displaying the stamp of the church over any other apparel. The badge is a silver star on which the letters Z.C.C are inscribed, and it is attached to a contrasting strip of black cloth. Sometimes referred to as "the star of Lekganyane", it conflates Biblical and colloquial Western usage, and serves both expressive and pragmatic ends, usually being worn "over the heart" to proclaim incorporation in the ranks of Zion; but it may also sometimes be placed next to afflicted bodily parts to effect healing. The very notion of the badge is, of course,

associated with a particular Western identity marking: it is the product of a proliferated set of achievable "roles" and "status", which may be "pinned on" to the person through a composite of external signs rather than as intrinsic capacities of his or her being. The Zion Christian Church star is an emblem of commercial manufacture, but it represents a movement that seeks to retake dominant system in its own image. For in the star, signifier and signified are inseparable; the badge both represents Lekganyane's power and embodies it in tangible form. Attached prominently to the apparel of wage labour, it confers upon the wearer a more substantial, intrinsic identity.

Although the Zion Christian Church dress, particularly of women, makes little use of white, the men do wear conspicuous white boots, themselves an important emblem of the movement. The predominant material of male attire is khaki cotton, which emulates colonial and neo-colonial uniforms, both military and bureaucratic. The female Zion Christian Church uniform is a standard Zionist transformation of the Protestant model: a calf-length, straight skirt, a Victorian tunic with rounded collar and a neat headscarf. The tunic is daffodil-yellow and the skirt and head-scarf are bottle-green; the wives of office-bearers are distinguished by tunics of bright blue (Comaroff 1985: 219 & 242-243).

The minister of the Zion Christian Church has some strict rules of purification, for an example, he is not allowed to pray for a sick person if he had attended a funeral. He had to abstain for seven days, before he could perform his duties again. Again he is not supposed to eat food prepared by or living with a woman who had just given birth. The implication for this practice was that most of the ministers

became polygamists for this would enable them to stay with another wife while serving the church as well. These restrictions are based on the book of Leviticus 12: 1-5.

According to Mutwa (1961: 514), African men practised polygamy because of one of the African rules of menstruation and breast feeding, *"A man must have no relations with his wife during her periods of menstruation or during the entire period while she breast-feeds a baby"*. This law is one of the main reasons why Africans practice polygamy on principle. Opposition to the latter encourages extensive immorality and destruction of a family and traditions. He further says that, in the olden days, all wives were bound to leave a village during their periods of menstruation, to live in a kraal specifically set aside for this purpose. A high curse automatically would fall upon any man who dared to approach the kraal.

Bujo (1985: 230-232) says, African polygamy was not and is not an obligatory institution. Africans consider themselves free to be monogamous or polygamous. The positive side of polygamy is that, it guarantees that man will not die without progeny; indeed, the more children he has the more certain he is of being united with the community after death. One of the undisputed advantages of polygamy is the fact that it all but eliminates, and certainly minimises divorce. It also serves as a preventive against adultery and concubinage. Polygamy also protects African women against prostitution. One of the functions of polygamy is to provide solidarity with other families and clans.

1.5 THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The headquarters of the Zion Christian Church nestle on the Wolkberg range midway between Pietersburg city and the spectacular mountain splendour of Magoebaskloof and about 10 kilometers away from the University of the North and 40 kilometers away from the city of Pietersburg. It is located at the place called Boyne, in Moria, (Zion City). It is a re-establishment of the "original" Holy Place that had been eclipsed by the state Capital (Pretoria) and economic centre (Johannesburg). Moria is a graphic icon of the appropriation of the material and spiritual cargo of the neo-colonial system (Comaroff 1985: 239-240). The choice of the name is itself significant: Moria is a Biblical name for Jerusalem (2 Chron. 3: 1), the place where the Temple was built. This was an appropriation by the theocratic state of the name of the original cult centre at Mount Moria, somewhat to the north (Gen. 12: 6; 22: 2).

Moria is the new Jerusalem of the Zionist, where holidays, feasts, conferences are being held. The Zion Christian Church makes more use of the Biblical lexicon than do many smaller Zionist groups; the universalising properties of these symbols serve to unify micro-historical and cultural variation (Comaroff 1985: 247). NB

Its adherents called it the city of love and peace; like the psalmist (122: 6) who say "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: ...May there be peace inside your walls and safety in your place". Coincidental the name Morion is a synonym for helmet or head piece. Initially it was Maclean farm which

Engenas Lekganyane bought in 1913 (Motolla September 1990: 31); at the area of Kgosi (Chief) Mamabolo. In this city there is a mountain called *Thabakgone* (meaning the mountain where everything is possible). It is also where Engenas and Edward Lekganyane are buried. This mountain is normally called "Mount Zion". In many traditional religions of Africa mountains or hills are regarded with awe and this is reflected in a number of Afro-Christian religions utilising hills and mountains for special devotions and, above all, for some great pilgrimage or festivals (Turner 1967b: 62; Baëta 1962: 94; Sundkler 1961: 198; Weman 1960: 111; Parrinder 1953: 124). There is also a river, running through Moria, and it is called *Kwenane*, and it is where "Believers Baptism" takes place.

CHAPTER 2

2.

ORGANIZATION

For the body of Christ to grow, structure is equally important. Without adequate and expansible framework, the church will be in danger of an organisational overload leading to institutional collapse (Gibbs 1981: 182). David Wasdell⁶ emphasise this point by saying that, the church need structures of high motivation, maturation, education, training and pastoral care, together with a sense of belonging. However, when properly understood, applied and implemented, organisation can help a growing church to retain its emphasis on the importance of corporate relationships.

But the Bible is relatively silent regarding organizational and administrative patterns. But this is not without design, for nothing becomes obsolete so quickly as structural forms. They are but means to divine ends. Life is made up of so many variables and unpredicted events that creativity in this area must be constant. But the Bible does speak in this area, and when it does, its examples yield dynamic and powerful principles. Both the Old and the New Testaments' illustration of organization and administration reveal the same basic principles (Getz 1981: 130).

Getz further gives us the following four guidelines on the principles of organization: First, we organize to apply New

Testament principles and reach New Testament purposes. If the principles are applied, they will give us New Testament guidelines. Secondly, we should meet the needs or demands of the people. For an example, to feed the people in need or to solve some theological problems. Thirdly, we should keep our organization very simple. Complicated organizational patterns frequently become "ends" in themselves. Fourthly, we keep our organizational structures flexible, because Biblical leaders were never locked into organizational structures.

From the African perspective, tribal groups in general have the following structure: everyone has his or her own place, his or her own model, his or her own duties and obligations in relation to the rest of the group. There is also the consciousness that every member of the tribal group has the duty to keep "the harmony" of the group and this harmony is maintained in the relation everyone has with the spirits (the good and bad spirits). Whenever, a member of the group breaks that relation, that person must pay for all that he or she did wrong, in order to appease the spirits that are causing harm to the community. It could also be tribal offence, not just an individual offence. John Mbiti is right when he changes the Cartesian dictum to '*I belong, therefore I am*'. There is no person who does not belong. Belonging is the root and essence of being. Therefore the whole system of African society and the ordering thereof (law) is based on this. Everyone has someone he/she belongs to, who should reap the benefit of his/her life, or take on the responsibilities which arise out of that life.

Setiloane (1976: 20) sees African society consisting not only of men, women and children organised in hierarchical groupings. It consists also of '*Badimo*' (The living dead)

who are also hierarchically organised, like the society of the living. He also sees dying as going on a journey...home. So the grave is even expressed in an old Sesotho hymn as *thari e tla mpepang*... 'a vehicle that carries one away to after-life. The parting words are in fact, words of farewell to one who goes on a journey with the prospect of meeting there some old acquaintances: 'Remember us where you go!' - Ask them to send us rain and food and grain'.

Everyone in a tribe is responsible directly to the spirits. This is the reason why there is no priestly caste *per se* in the tribal system. A person can become possessed by the spirit and it is shown by certain signs. Being possessed is a sign that he or she has had a special call. That person becomes a candidate to receive special initiation in subjects such as healing, divination etc; and to serve the community spiritually and materially.

It is true that in building up new structures in African Initiated Churches, the leaders and their helpers, will eclectically borrow several elements from Western oriented churches and follow the basic pattern of organizing African communities. The development of organization in this direction is natural and inevitable, since in any case, there are as yet only relatively few people who are sufficiently conversant with Western patterns and ways to feel at home in them (Baëta 1962: 128-129).

The African Initiated Churches mirror something of this in the role people play in the church, everyone is responsible for being faithful to God in his or her duties and responsibilities. The church structure in most of these

churches operates the same way in that there is no priestly class, although some African Initiated Churches do have a hereditary caste that in many instances is now raising the problem of the succession of leadership. Some church heads inherited the leadership from parents or grandparents. This is the case, for instance, in Kenya (African Israel Church Nineveh), Ghana (Musama Disco Christo Church), Northern Transvaal, South Africa (Zion Christian Church), Zululand, South Africa (The Church of the Nazarites), Lesotho (The Berean Bible Readers Church). Other people in these churches say "we need elections", and divisions follow (Rosario and Battle 1986: 84-85). The term election is not found in the dictionary of these churches, especially with regard to the leadership of the church.

The Zion Christian Church represents a particular transformation of the Zionist order; one which resolves the inherent tension between charisma and routine by stressing the normative to a greater extent than any other Southern African group. In so doing it comes close to Dowie's original organization (Comaroff 1985: 238).

The Lekganyane descent group has integrated ritual and temporal power in the Zion Christian Church structure in a manner which echoes pre-colonial chiefly authority. A mark of this achievement is the fact that, in recent years, despite a major secession, the leadership has twice devolved in the direct Lekganyane line, the dynasty having overcome the notoriously difficult problem of establishing the hereditary legitimacy of charisma (Weber 1947: 365; Sundkler 1961: 117; West 1975: 61). Engenas Lekganyane was the Bishop of this church, followed by his descendants in turn. Local congregations are led by a cluster of men, a minister, a prophet, a secretary, and a treasurer. The effective

division of labour between charismatic and legal authority is the same here as in most Zionist groups, except that the proliferation of offices reflects the Zion Christian Church's extensive scale and hierarchical structure, its organizational forms are moulded, to a greater degree than those of other Zionists, upon the bureaucratic structures of the colonial order. In fact, the balance within the Zion Christian Church between local-level autonomy and centripetal power is its particular genius. Secession has been relatively contained and the proportion of men in its ranks is higher than in most black Southern African churches. Women do not hold office in their own right but as the spouses of male leaders (Comaroff 1985: 241).

The organization of the Zion Christian Church is simple and flexible. It resembles a tribal form of organisation. All these are described in great detail in the official Constitution of the church. Much of this represent aspiration rather than achievements. The African features of this church are expressed through the structures that closely mirror traditional society through their hierarchical system inherited from traditional society.

When a lot of people come together hungry to meet God, a *special* kind of worship experience can occur. That experience Wagner (1976: 97) calls "celebration" This is a level of corporate religious experience. This celebration expresses identity. The individual believer must be able to feel himself or herself a part of the larger corporate unity of the people of God (Snyder 1975: 106).

The people of God in the Old Testament preserved their identity not simply through their distinctive way of life,

but through their sense of 'belonging', heightened through regular pilgrimages. In March/April as many as could make the journey went to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover (Exodus 12: 1-28). Seven weeks later the crowds gathered once more for Pentecost (Acts 2: 1-42), which marked the end of grain harvest. September/October was heralded with fanfare marking the Jewish New Year (Leviticus 23: 23-25; Numbers 29: 1-8). Special celebrations were followed by the solemn Day of Atonement (Leviticus 23:26-32; Numbers 29: 7-11), when the nation confessed their sins and asked for cleansing. A few days later the people observed the Festival of Shelters (Leviticus 23: 33-44; Numbers 29: 12-40) a national camp-out, when they built shelters of branches to remind themselves of their wandering in the desert and God's provision for his people. This came at the end of the olive and grape harvest. Then, there was the Harvest Festival (Leviticus 23: 15-22; Numbers 28: 26-31) which was held seven weeks after they have brought sheaves of corn to the Lord. Israel was a nation of pilgrims. They loved to congregate to express their identity. For, corporate worship is based upon the divine command (Ex. 34: 14; 2 Kings 17: 36; Acts 2: 43) and it rests upon human instincts for fellowship - *Koinonia*. It edifies and builds up the faith of the people of God. Corporate worship has a great measure of excitement and spontaneity (Ndyabahika 1991: 61-62).

Celebration provides inspiration. It is a moving experience to be part of an enormous crowd. When crowds are converged in any place there is a sense of occasion and expectations are heightened. Celebration also restores confidence. Furthermore celebration establishes visibility. Crowds also attract the attention of the media, for publicity.

In African Religion we have innumerable rituals and ceremonies. Some rituals are personal, agricultural, health, homestead, professional and festivals. Africans celebrate life just like the Jewish people. Therefore, they celebrate their religion, they dance it, they sing it and they act it. A lot of the visible demonstration of African religion occurs in rituals and festivals. These embody what people believe, what they value and what they wish to apply in daily life. Through rituals, people not only act their religion but communicate it to the younger generation.

Through festivals the life of the community is renewed. People are entertained, and their tensions find an outlet. Festivals also bring together the people as a group, thus strengthening their unity and cohesion. Religious and social values are repeated and renewed through communal festivals. Artistic talents are utilized to the full, in the form of art, music and oral communication. People on such occasions do solicit blessings from God or the departed, and there is a general feeling that the visible and the invisible worlds coexist for the benefit of man or woman, who is at their centre. Rituals and festivals are religious ways of implementing the values and beliefs of society. Without them the African life is dull (Mbiti 1977: 126-140).

Unfortunately in the modern world of an African, most of these rituals and festivals are being abandoned especially in the urban areas while in the rural areas there is still room for some traditional festivals in which everyone can participate wholeheartedly, spontaneously and naturally. Because of this problem in the urban areas, fortunately the African Initiated Churches are also filling up this vacuum as nature does not allow any vacuum. The Zion Christian

Church in particular has adopted most if not all traditional rituals and festivals including the Jewish Traditions, and Christianize all these rituals and festivals. All the annual festivals or conferences of the Zion Christian Church are held at the Headquarters in Boyne, Pietersburg.

We should note that holding of conferences by the Zion Christian Church, was not initiated by Engenas Lekganyane, the founder of the church, but it was a general practice in the Zion Apostolic Church and the Zion Apostolic Faith Mission of which Engenas Lekganyane had been a member before 1924. It is time for different congregations to meet at a common place where they would learn some of the procedures in the church. It means solidarity amongst the followers. They could share ideas, reflect on problems and perform traditional dances. On such occasions members feel strengthened by meeting the multitudes and old members of the church.

Conferences are taken as a pilgrimage, for the sole purpose of prayer, and it is during these conferences that the Bishop's authority and dignity is felt. His appearance before the people is highly appreciated. Members would render praise poems and rally around the Bishop. Some of the staunch members even fear to look at the Bishop while fortune seekers and the sick would roll on the ground where the Bishop had passed believing that they would get his blessings.

As a way of greeting and praying for the people the Bishop would lead his brass band and march in front with his walking stick. During such occasions people would climb on trees and the tops of vehicles to be able to see the Bishop.

Many members who were baptised but without knowing the Bishop in person would struggle to use the opportunity to see him. Even the ministers in their preparations for their Moria Conferences, emphasize this by saying: "a re yeng re yo bona Mong wa rena, re ye go kwa seo a se bolelago" (Let us go and see our leader, let us go and listen to what he will say). They are like the psalmist (122: 1) who says " I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the Lord's house". The Bishop is the central figure during these conferences, and he is a source of attraction.

On Sundays during these conferences, people would make it a point to assemble for service in time. They will also be eager to hear the Bishop preach or sing. The service normally start late in the afternoon, at 15h00. The Bishop would come accompanied by his elders in the church together with some of the members of his family, and the brass band will lead them into the church. On his arrival they will all pray and he will ask some of his ministers to preach. These ministers are often very brief and to the point. They will emphasis that members should always listen and follow what the Bishop would say, if you want to live in peace, you should unconditionally respect and obey the Bishop, for then you will be respecting the church in turn. After the ministers have completed their short sermons, the Bishop will then deliver his main sermon of the conference. At the end of the service the members would be satisfied that they had come to Moria for something worthwhile, for they had seen and heard their leader preach or sing (Lukhaimane 1980: 59-62).

2.1

THE HOLY WEEK CONFERENCE

In terms of the constitution of the Zion Christian Church of 1954 section 1, the church regards the holy week conference as the Annual Conference. The greatest expression of the unity and visibility of this church in Christ takes place each year at Easter time when all the communities or congregations all over Southern Africa come together at the Head-Quarters, Boyne, in Pietersburg to celebrate the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is a spectacular gathering and its members regard it as a moving experience. The celebration again restores confidence among its members. This is indeed the most outstanding activity of church life.

The last week in Lent has long been observed in both the Eastern and Western Churches as a commemoration of the death and burial of Christ. It is variously called by early writers the Great Week, the Holy Week, the Week of the Holy Passion and the Week of Forgiveness. In the East, the Holy Week was distinguished from the rest of Lent by the extreme strictness of the fast.

Originally Holy Week seems to have begun with the last Sunday in Lent, but when this became Palm Sunday, the week began with the Monday. The various traditional rites, and particular those on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday, probably evolved at Jerusalem during the fourth century, when access to the city by pilgrims became easier, and Christians were able to express their devotion to the passion of Christ in ceremonial enactments (Cowie and Gummer 1974:70-71).

2.1.1

POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE CONFERENCE

In terms of section two, of the Zion Christian Church constitution of 1954, the Annual Conference shall consist of all ordained ministers; all lay preachers and two delegates elected out of the ministers, lay preachers or office bearers of the church, by each congregation of not less than twenty-five (25) members. In fact in practice, it is not so, because we know for sure that the Annual Conference is a general one whereby, each and every member is eager to attend if possible.

ELECTIONS: Section three of the Constitution of 1954, stipulates that the Annual Conference shall first elect a Bishop who shall hold office for one (1) year; while section three of the Constitution of 1946 says that the Bishop shall hold office for life. However, we know that this is not the real situation within the church; because we have seen that this issue has split the church into two; because of the nature and character of the church. First and foremost the Annual Conference does not have any power or authority whatsoever to elect the Bishop. But, it is the prerogative of the founder and the family, and the Bishop is for life and not one year as it is been stated in section three of 1954.

Section fourteen of the Constitution of 1972, of the Saint Engenas Zion Christian Church, states it categorically that the election of the Bishop is the prerogative of the family, but, the current Bishop is the one who has the powers to elect his successor while he is still alive. The

constitution furthermore emphasizes that the Bishop shall be a descendant, in the male line, of Bishop Joseph Engenas Lekganyane. Hence the current spiritual leader of the church is Ignatius (Engenas) Lekganyane, the son of Joseph Lekganyane.

The Bishop shall preside at the Annual Conference to maintain law and order when the conference is in session. The Bishop shall also submit a Bishop's address to the annual conference, and shall be recognised as the head of the church, its executive officer and the legal representative of the conference and shall act in all matters on behalf of the church and shall be chair-person of all committees of the church. "The conference shall then proceed to elect a General Secretary who shall hold office until the conference decides to terminate such an appointment" (Constitution 1954: section 3).

APPOINTMENTS: Appointments in this church depend on a number of factors. These include personal spiritual growth, obedience, efficiency, pioneering of new branches, length of service, age, marital status, gender, good character and general leadership qualities. The candidates must be willing to serve, meet the needs of the people and equip their members. But, above all he must please God and not the people.

In African society it is generally necessary to be married to achieve full adult status irrespective of age. But, age is very important in conferring status in this church. Seniority continues to play a major part with the result that there is a marked preference for middle aged and older people in position of authority. The ideal leader should be

a male. Women do not hold office in the formal structure of the Zion Christian Church. However, it should be pointed out that while women are not in a position of direct authority except in their women's league, their influence is considerable.

The attitude of the church towards women must be seen against the background of the African tradition of superiority and privilege of the male, and this has been reinforced by the exclusion of women from the ministry by almost all older churches. The teaching of the Apostolic Church and the practice of the Ante--Nicene Church confirmed that women received a new status in the church that they had rarely enjoyed in the ancient world. Even with this recognition of equality with men, however, restriction was placed on women because of the Apostolic understanding of the order of male and female in creation and the fall of man. Women were not allowed to serve in position of spiritual authority over men in the life of the church. This included the public proclamation of Scriptures to men and Sacramental functions such as the Holy Communion and Baptism (House 1989: 41).

In saying the former, there is no implication that women were not gifted equally with men, even having the same gift of teaching. They were, however, restricted to the teaching of the children (A higher calling contrary to some modern thinking), and to some other women (Titus 2: 1-5), to men in private, Priscilla setting forth the way of Christ more accurately to Apollos (Acts 18: 26). In the Zion Christian Church women are allowed to be prophetesses, a powerful office in the eyes of the members of the African Initiated Churches.

In terms of section three of the Constitution item four, of the Constitution of 1946: "The conference shall appoint twelve (12) ministers of the church who shall be styled the "Pillars of the church" and whose appointment may be terminated by resolution of the conference at any time". I would like to regard these twelve pillars as the Executive of the church or Council.

STANDING COMMITTEES: "The conference shall appoint an Ecclesiastical, Lay and Finance Standing Committee to deal with church matters when conference is not in session. Each of such committees shall be presided over by the Bishop, who shall ex-officio be a member of all such committees, or in his unavoidable absence, by the eldest presiding Elder" (Constitution 1954: Section 6).

"Ecclesiastical Standing Committee shall consist of not less than three (3) ordained ministers, and shall deal with and decide ecclesiastical matters and disputed matters of church discipline and matters relating to the spiritual and moral welfare of the members of the church. This committee shall have powers to suspend any minister or lay preacher and to confirm the suspension of any other officer from office pending the sitting of the next Annual Conference" (Constitution 1946: Section VII).

The Finance Committee shall consist of not less than five (5) members to be elected annually by the conference, and the General Secretary of the conference shall be the secretary of this committee. The Finance Committee shall deal with all financial matters of the church, and no

payment shall be made on behalf of the church except with the consent and authority of this committee.

"The committee shall further scrutinize all accounts submitted on Quarterly Meetings, and shall report annually to the conference regarding all matters dealt with during the previous year. All payments or claims of payment made by this committee shall be subject to confirmation at the Annual Conference" (Constitution 1954: Section 8).

Above the Financial Committee, there is the auditing team, which sees to it that the money and property of the church are utilized properly. Section forty eight of the Constitution of 1972 of the Saint Engenas Zion Christian Church has the office of a treasurer, who keeps and maintain a record of all church financial transactions. After the close of the financial year he presents his report together with the income and expenditure account and balance sheet of the church, which accounts shall be audited and countersigned by an auditor nominated by the Executive Committee.

"Lay Standing Committee shall consist of the General Secretary, and not less than four (4) Class Leaders. It shall deal with all matters of the church which do not fall within the province of the Ecclesiastical Committee or Finance Committee" (Constitution 1954: Section 9).

Each of the above mentioned committees shall appoint a secretary to whom all communications regarding the respective committees shall be addressed. The committees shall keep proper records of all matters submitted to them

and of their findings therein, and shall in due course report all such matters at the Annual Conference.

"Each committee shall have full control of matters submitted to it respectively, and their decisions therein shall be binding upon all parties, so that any person or persons feeling themselves to have been aggrieved by the finding of any committee may appeal to the conference for its decision in the matter. The conference shall have the right and power to confirm, vary, amend, reverse or veto any of the decisions of any of the above committees, and the action of the conference herein shall be final and binding upon any member and adherent of the church" (Constitution 1954: Section 10 & 11).

2.2

SEPTEMBER CONFERENCE

The Annual Conference of September is the second in importance, to the one of Easter, and again is a general one. This conference of the Zion Christian Church is being regarded as the New Year Festival and simultaneously being the celebration of the Harvest and Thanksgiving. In many ways some notions of the African Traditional first fruit ceremonies seem to have been passed on to this practice. What increases the associations with traditional practices is the fact that the service invariably takes place in the Spring, and sometimes is known as Seed Cleansing ritual (*Go Tlhatswa Peo*).

In Lesotho, and the whole South Sotho belt along the Caledon river, comprising the Eastern Orange Free State and the Northern Cape on the East, there is prevalent in the life of

the church, a custom called '*Dilopotsiya*'. The practice goes back to the early days of the French missionaries and has a particular strong hold in '*Kereke ya Lesotho*', which has come out of their mission work. The custom has spread to other denominations such as the Methodist, Anglicans, the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian in Malawi and the African Initiated Churches, in particular the Zion Christian Church and it is now the feature of the church life.

By this custom, or practice of '*Dilopotsiya*', on completion of the harvest, when all has been brought in and winnowing done, each household brings a portion of the harvest to the church as gift. The amount is not determined but, is usually quite sizeable. It can be anything that their land has produced that year - pumpkins, beans, maize, corn or money. One principal Sunday Service is set aside in the Methodist, the Anglican Church and the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian in Malawi, while the Zion Christian Church meet on the first Weekend of September - when all these gifts have been fully gathered - for blessing of the gifts.

Some people will not start making use of their newly harvested grain for food until the service of '*Dilopotsiya*' has been performed in their church for that year. The service is a very important one and must be conducted by the ordained minister and in the Zion Christian Church by the Bishop himself. The Bishop's thanksgiving and the invocation of God's blessing over the gathered '*Dilopotsiya*' is understood to be effective on the whole harvest gathered in that year and ensures the presence of and participation of the "Force Vitale" in the seed that is taken out of it. The chiefs who are around Northern Transvaal do attend this service, even if they are not members of the Zion Christian

Church. No portion of the harvest brought and blessed in the 'Dilopotsiya' service is returned to the owners. It is being regarded as their gift to the Lord and these gifts becomes the property of the church (Setiloane 1976: 197-201).

Numbers 29: 1-6, is being regarded by Maarsingh as a "Day of Shouting", while Snaith regards it as a day of "Holy Convocation", and Elwell, the editor of the Evangelical Commentary on the Bible regards Numbers 29:1-6 as the "Annual Feast of Trumpets", whereby twice the number of offerings prescribed for the first day of the seventh month are to be brought.

The first day of the seventh month had a particular festive character, as indicated by the larger than usual offerings prescribed for it. There were, first of all, the continual offerings to God's majesty in the morning and at twilight, along with the appropriate "homage" offerings and drink offerings. Next to be added were all the offerings to be brought on the day of the new moon. And finally, there were the offerings to be brought on the first day of the seventh month. They were the same offerings to God's majesty, human offerings, and drink offerings that were brought at the preceding feast days except that only one bull was required, not two. A male goat was again required as a sin offering.

Why the abundance of prescribed offerings on this day of the new moon? Or was this the Israelite New Year's day in the period prior to the adoption of the Babylonian calendar around 600 B C? We know that the day came in the fall, after the whole harvest was in. It is possible that the significance of this date as time for giving thanks might

have been enriched by the addition of elements from the Babylonian tradition. The Babylonians used their New Year's day to celebrate the enthronement of their gods Marduk and Nabû and to petition them for assurance regarding the coming year. The Israelites might have shifted this emphasis, celebrating the enthronement of the Lord as their supreme ruler and expressing their trust in Him as the basis for sufficient assurance regarding the year to come. The abundant offerings would have been in keeping with such an emphasis. Leviticus 23:23-24 shows the same line of thought. The Targum Pseudo-Jonathan says that the shouting drove away the Satan who came to accuse Israel (Maarsingh 1987: 102-103).

2.3

CHRISTMAS CONFERENCE

No tradition about the date of the birth of Jesus Christ has survived, and even the year remains doubtful. There is not even a definite date for the beginning of the custom of celebrating Christmas, and it does not seem to have been general until late in the fourth century. Moreover, the early church had no fixed date for Christmas. The earliest mention of the observance of Christmas on 25 December is in a list of Roman Bishops compiled in 354, which describes this date as 'the day Christ was born in Bethlehem of Judea'. Then the coming of Christ into the world was commemorated, this day now sets forth the meaning of the coming for mankind (Cowie and Gummer 1974: 21 & 29).

Robert Louis Stevenson says the following about Christmas: But Christmas is not only the mile-stone mark of another year, moving us to thoughts of self-examination - it is a season, from all its associations, whether domestic or

religious, suggesting thoughts of joy. A man dissatisfied with his endeavour is a man tempted to sadness. And in the midst of winter, when his life runs lowest and he is reminded of the empty chairs of his beloved, it is well that he should be condemned to this fashion of the smiling face (Lockyer 1981: 21).

The Christmas Conference of the Zion Christian, is the less important conference in the church. It is more of a social gathering. Above all, the members of this church do come and thank the God of Engenas, Edward and Barnabas for protecting them and guiding them for the past eleven months and further asking for guidance and blessings for the coming new year.

2.4

THE ROLE OF WOMEN

One of the major challenges facing the church today is undoubtedly maintaining a healthy relationship between its men and women, and women are very much involved in church work, especially in terms of quality and quantity.

What is it you women want? This is a basic question which is generally asked by men. And the natural answer coming from women is, the church is part of the community and women form the sizeable part of this community. One African woman said "The women are very much concerned about the church but, the church is not so much concerned about women. This blunt statement underlies the existence of a powerful Christian women's association within specific churches and also in the ecumenical circles.

FEMINIST THEOLOGY: For every Esther in the world today, there are many Hagers: chattel, virtually bought and sold at the whim of men, cut out of politics, cut out of economic profits, cut out of religious leadership opportunities, without channels for redress. "Maybe you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this", Esther was told. Today we are supposed to pour our energies out for Christ and his Kingdom, that his kingdom may come, that God's will may be done on earth as it is heaven. Esther was conscious of what she had come to the Kingdom for. Are Christian women today equally conscious? (Adeney 1987: 327 & 335).

Feminist theology arises from awareness of and opposition to woman's dehumanizing, second-rate status in society and church. Feminist theology is a perspective on theology as a whole. It delineates a fresh approach to Bible and tradition. The Bible identifies woman with her subordinate status. Feminist theology aims at woman's full emancipation-judged by and under the thrust of the Good News. It is a movement rather than a doctrinal system (Herman-Emiel Mertens 1982: 103-104).

Amba Oduyoye (1982: 1930) was shocked when she was confronted with a French word '*christianisme*'. She said it was unfair, because she thought Christianity is not an *ism*, far from being a partial view or an obsession, it is *the one wholesome* view of human life as lived before God. The warning bell rang - '*wannko bi a wose yannko*' (those who are not involved in a battle are always synical about the dangers of the front). She (1986: 120-121) further says, feminism implies an anthropology, a particular way of addressing itself to what it means to be human. Feminism is another perspective surfacing for the Christian as part of

God's project of bringing us full humanity. It has become the shorthand for the proclamation that women's experience should become an integral part of what goes into the definition of being human. It highlights the woman's world and her world-view as she struggles side by side with man to realize her full potential as a human being. It emphasizes the wholeness of the community as made of male and female beings.

The uniqueness of Feminist Theology lies in its use of women's experience. The use of women's experience in Feminist Theology explodes as a critical force, exposing classical theology - including its codified traditions, based on male experience rather than on universal human experience. Feminist Theology makes the sociology of theological knowledge visible, no longer hidden behind mysterious statements about and allusions to objectified divine and universal authority (Mosala 1990: 130).

Feminist theologians (Aquino O'Neill) have criticized three models: 1, difference-and-complementarity of the sexes, 2, "androgynous" model-differences are purely biological; 3, unisexism. In practice, this last assimilates women to men. And, in the first, "anatomy is destiny" (Anne Carr). And "androgynism" slights the importance of the bodily (Merman-Emiel Mertens 1982: 105)

Mia Brandel-Syrrier (1984:13-16) has acquainted the world with religious activities and organisations of African women in the church in Southern Africa. She says African women had little difficulty in making their presence felt. They speak with self-confidence and conviction - as women. They have expressed their wishes and imprinted their own point of

view almost from the earliest days. Generally, however, black women make their presence felt through the church women's organisations. African ministers admit frankly that they wouldn't know how to run their churches without the women's organisations. There is an African proverb that says: "African women knows no chief". The real source of this vigorous religious life goes back to the emphases which were laid when Christianity first came to these parts. It has been noticed how the first "hearers" of the missionaries' teaching were women. They were, therefore, also the first converts. Every time a missionary of the first few decades writes about a school, the pupils are women and youth. In fact until 1954 all primary education was still under the auspices of the churches and missions (the government only subsidizing it). This means that the pupils were exposed to Christian teaching. Most women in these areas received, therefore, more systematic teaching of Christianity than their menfolk.

The women read the Bible at home when men are gone to work and the children to school; they attend regularly the services in the local church, and uncomplainingly they bear the responsibility of teaching their children to pray at bedtime and at meal-time. Thus the role of an African woman resembles very much that of the devout Jewish woman. Indeed men are the heads of household, but women determine the lives of these households. They provide material and spiritual comforts and care and preserve the morale. Even in traditional times, before the advent of the mines and urban working centres - African men were always away from home for one reason or other - to inspect the cattle at their posts, to go off on a trading trip, or make war, so that the tone of home life always depended on the women. With the advent of Christianity this meant even the freedom

for the mother to determine the faith of her family (Setiloane 1976: 210-212).

It is alleged that women are more spiritual than men, but again it is difficult to justify it biblically. Ministry is the activity of the whole congregation with leadership responsibilities delegated to key persons. Kurt Marti said the following about the writing of the Bible: "Among the historical limitations of the Biblical writings is the fact that they were composed by men. What, for an example, might a history of Israel look like if portrayed and written from the perspective of wives and mothers, who were allowed neither to bear weapons nor to join in worship?"

No one can deny the fact that, the reason for this Christian community to exist is to represent Christ in the midst of the turmoil and complexity of everyday life. Thus women should not be denied to respond to this calling and service of the community. But, we should bear in mind that there are two factors which have a bearing on this situation, namely scriptural principles and cultural influences.

The Christian message is not a compendium of clear-cut beliefs and practices which may simply be adopted and carried through as a matter of routine. God chose to reveal Himself in the form of a human being who was born in a particular milieu - namely Middle Eastern society- and at a particular point of history. The life of Jesus communicates his message just as powerfully as His teachings. But to be understood, the life of Jesus must be reflected on and comprehended in the light of the culture in which He lived (Howe 1982: 18-19).

Witherington III (1991: 77-78) says Jesus' outright rejection of Rabbinic ideas of sin and sickness leading to ritual impurity or defilement allowed Him to relate to many women He might not have reached otherwise. The implicit rejection of the idea that blood flow in a woman caused her to be defiled or to be a source of defilement removed the Rabbinic basis for excluding women from synagogue worship and periodic feast and functions of the faith. This was perhaps one of the factors which paved the way for women to travel with Jesus and to be full-time followers of their Master without special restrictions.

The necessary and sufficient explanation of why Christianity differed from its religious mother, Judaism, in these matters is that Jesus broke with both Biblical and Rabbinic traditions that restricted women's role in religious practices, and that He rejected attempts to devalue the worth of a woman, or her word of witness. Thus, the community of Jesus, both before and after Easter, granted women together with men an equal right to participate fully in the family faith (Witherington III 1991: 127).

Since women have been equally gifted by the Spirit for the work of the ministry, the Zion Christian Church has appointed most women to the office of prophecy, and this is an important and powerful office in this church. Paul also exhorted women to exercise their gifts in a way that did not involve the violation of their husband's headship. Thus, there are two streams of authority in the church, that of men in the formal structure of the church and the women as prophetesses on the other side. There is enough evidence in the New Testament that Paul was assisted by women in the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ, and this is the role

being played by women in the Zion Christian Church. They are therefore, the backbone of the church.

Women in the Zion Christian Church hold office by virtue of the position of their husbands and some are elected to office and this is generally the position of most African Initiated Churches. Women services are held every Wednesday afternoon and this day was chosen by Engenas Lekganyane the founder of the church. While, all most all of the African Initiated Churches including the Western oriented churches hold their services every Thursday afternoon. Then, full uniform outfit is worn in these services and it is only worn by full members of the church. They teach and consult one another in the congregation. Women often care for one another better than male ministers. House visiting and personal Evangelism are areas of responsibility open for women in these churches.

It is interesting to note that, on a certain Wednesday the Mamabolo Women's Council arranged that all women would call at the chief's kraal to repair and renovate the houses together with the lapa. The day coincided with day of prayer, by women in the Zion Christian Church. Many women preferred to go to church. And their absence from the chief's kraal was conspicuous and the matter was reported to the chief who had no choice but to summon Engenas Lekganyane. At the chief's kraal tempers ran high and councillors accused Engenas Lekganyane of making himself chief or sub-chief when he did not have the right to such position. Engenas Lekganyane explained to the court that all the allegations were fabricated to spoil his name. He, however, gave them a parable saying: "Anyone who wants to block a river must do so in winter, but if he does it in

summer when the river is in flood, he is attempting the impossible" (Lukhaimane 1980: 31).

2.5 THE MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH

2.5.1

HEALING

A man or woman requires beliefs and spiritual rootedness in order to feel happy, beautiful and well, knowledge of and not some areas (of the human psyche) are important, and that some factors of health are rooted not in communication but in communion (Jayne 1962: xii).

Life in an African context must be viewed ontologically and therefore religiously. To be "alive", is to be healthy, to have power or strength, is to share in a totality of relationships (the physical world, the living community, the community of the living-dead, the Source of Being) which enables man to participate in the fullness of Being (Oosthuizen 1986: 88). According to African dogma, sickness and health are ultimately of supernatural origin (Oosthuizen 1979: 9).

Health is all-important in an African life. To be unhealthy is to be away from nature. Sickness is a matter of the whole community. No individual remains alone when sick. Even after hospitalisation thanksgiving takes place and such a person must be brought into a health environment (Oosthuizen 1979: 9). Thus health is a dynamic state of well-being of the individual and the society, of physical, mental, spiritual, economic, political and social well-

being, of being in harmony with each other, with the material environment and with God (Talbot 1984: 29). This view underscores the totality and interaction of health and hints at the impossibility of attaining optimal health. We human beings move along a continuum somewhere between imminent death and optimal health.

Health means salvation and peace, here and now. It is a term not applicable to things or processes below the level of the organic. Healing implies further that the becoming is actually a re-becoming, a restoration of a condition once obtaining but lost. It does not necessarily imply that the result of the healing will be the same in its particular as the condition that previously obtained, except for one characteristic of wholeness. Thus healing is to be understood as a process of restoring functional wholeness.

Traditional attitudes to disease and healing are based on both natural and supernatural, for an example, religious and magical beliefs. They are at present much more common throughout the world amongst all peoples than modern scientific beliefs (Murdock 1980: 17; 37-64). When a parent's child is ill, the parent wants to know why the child is ill (etiology), what sort of illness it is (diagnosis), how long the illness will last (prognosis) and how the child will get better (treatment). It is as psychologically understandable for a parent to take his/her child to a priest for religious healing, as it is to take the child to a physician for medical treatment, or both, however much their roles may differ (Oosthuizen 1986 90).

In African societies the traditional healer (*Herbalist*) or/ and diviners (*Isangoma*) are the greatest gift and the most

useful sources of help among Africans. These indigenous healers have their origin in the Shaman, an inspirational type of traditional healer or folk greatly respected, provider and perpetuator of cultural norms and accepted medium with the supernatural world (Oosthuizen 1986: 91).

Their attitude of confidence which must have a strong 'suggestive' influence on the patient is largely due to the fact that they have the help of the ancestors who are the real healers. In many instances, especially during divination, they act as the mouthpiece of the ancestors who have superior and esoteric wisdom. No treatment is embarked on except under the guidance of the ancestors who communicate with them through the medium of dreams, visions and omens (Oosthuizen 1986: 108).

Bembo and Parrinder believe that traditional healers are a vital force in South Africa, and their influence has extended from rural areas to urban townships and into the white suburbs. Despite widespread involvement in all areas of society and calls from World Health Organisation to incorporate traditional healers into primary health services, their work has not only remained unrecognized, but is officially deemed illegal by the South African Medical and Dental Council (Oosthuizen 1986: 97). The Association Health Service Professions Act (No. 63 of 1982), the Council of Associated Health Professions, a separate statutory body not affiliated to the Medical and Dental Council, has provided for the registration and control of traditional healers. The modern mental health, medical and paramedical professions in particular, have called for more integration of the health systems with the view that traditional healers have an important role to play, particularly in the fields of psychology and psychiatry (Pearce 1982: 1611-1617).

According to the traditional African view, healing is a thoroughly religious phenomenon (Staugard 1989: 46-47). In traditional African society it is not medicine that is the most important treatment of sickness, but the symbol - this accounts partly for the fact that medicine is so easily excluded in healing process and symbols such as water, holy staff, cords, flags, pieces of cloth and even the uniform is associated with healing (Oosthuizen 1979: 9). Bührmann and Cheetham have strongly criticized the Western model, although doctors may cure the symptoms of the illness they ignore the traditional belief system within which the patient is operating. Thus, they do not answer the critical question of why the illness occurred and so they do not meet their patient's expectations and thereby open the way for serious misunderstanding and misinterpretation. Traditional healers by contrast share their patient's world view and primarily address themselves to the question of why the illness occurred. Thus, they provide an interpretation and cure within the traditional belief system. Experience gained in a large specialist black hospital in Johannesburg indicated that despite medical treatment and the alleviation of all physical problems, many patients continue to feel that something has been left unattended and request leave to go home to consult their traditional healer (Oosthuizen 1986: 98-97).

Shortcomings in the prevailing South African mental health services have been pointed out by various South African Psychiatrists and Psychologists, who appealed that greater recognition be given to and a greater use made of the skills of traditional healers in treating persons who may benefit from their services (Le Roux 1973: 26). A two-way model of referral - to modern physicians for curative treatment

followed by indigenous healer for cultural explanations as to the cause of illness - has been suggested (Rappaport 1981: 774-781). In South Africa today, both specialist and general practitioners are found among traditional healers (Conco 1977: 283-322).

Torrey says, many traditional natural healing methods have been adopted by modern medicine. For example, reserpine the *pauwolfia* was introduced into modern western psychiatry in the 1950s as a major tranquillizer. At the same time it was recognized as having been in wide use in India and West Africa for centuries. Farrand says, modern medicine is almost exclusive and empirical in orientation, while African views are holistic and do not rigidly dichotomize the universe into natural and supernatural. Everything - ancestor, plant, dream and body - belong in an undivided world.

Distinction however, is made between those illnesses attributed to natural and supernatural causation respectively as in the *umkuhlane* and *ukufa kwabantu*, dichotomy noted by Ngubane (1977: 24) working among rural valley people. *Umkuhlane* usually means a common cold, but also has a broader connotation. It literally means "it just happens" and refers also to illness attributed to natural causation as for example in most cases of epilepsy or *isithuthwane*. Disorders attributed to supernatural causation are usually referred to as "*ukufa kwabantu*". The term literally means "disorders of human beings".

Traditional healers are specialists who have suffered most from European/ American writers and speakers who so often and wrongly call them 'witch-doctors' - a term which should

be buried and forgotten forever. First and foremost, traditional healers are concerned with sickness, disease and misfortune. Every village in Africa has a traditional healer within reach. He or she is accessible to everybody and at almost all times, and comes into picture at many points in individual and community life.

Traditional healers are expected to be trustworthy, upright morally, friendly, willing and ready to serve and be able to discern people's needs. They must also have knowledge in matters pertaining to: medical value, quality and use of different herbs, leaves, roots, fruits, barks, thorns, grasses, and various objects like minerals, needles, dead insects, bones, feathers, powders, smoke from different objects, excreta of animals and insects, shells and eggs. They should know the causes, cures and prevention of diseases and other forms of sufferings (such as barrenness, failure in undertakings, misfortunes, poor crop yield in the field); magic, witchcraft sorcery, and above all they should be able to handle the spirits and the living-dead. In short, the traditional healers symbolize the hopes of the society: hopes of good health, protection and security from evil forces, prosperity and good fortune, and ritual cleansing when harm or impurities have been contracted (Mbiti 1974: 166-171).

From the Christian point of view: Jesus Christ, is the life of the world, and also the Healer. In His earthly ministry, Jesus started a holistic mission. The four Gospels recorded even more healing than sermons of the Master, who commissioned His disciples to proclaim the Kingdom, to heal the sick, to raise the dead, to cleanse lepers and to cast out demons (Matt. 10: 7-8), (Becken 1984: 7). He healed with authority in His own name and that healing manifested

in many forms in the daily lives of God's people. He called His church to heal people. Coupled with the command to "Go...heal", is Jesus statement about the scope and intent of ministry: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind; to set free the oppressed, and to announce that the time has come when the Lord will save his people" (Luke 4:18-19). This classical statement identifies the task of the church as primarily one to bring wholeness to those in need, those "on the edge", the "least of these".

In the first instance Christ was firmly convinced of His Father's purpose for human wholeness and salvation (John 3:16; 10:10) and never supported the Old Testament concept of disease as a punishment sent by God. Jesus viewed the individual as a unity of body and mind (Matt. 8:17). The restoration of the sick people form part of the subsequent Apostolic practices in conforming with the expressed will of Christ. In the days immediately after Pentecost many healings took place at the homes of the Apostles (Acts 2:43; 5:12). Primitive Christians possessed miraculous powers including the gift of healing. The apostle Paul also mentions the gift of healing in his list of spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12: 9,28).

The advent of western missionaries in Africa came first with elementary medical treatment and later with mission hospitals and they brought a new hope and help in Africa. But there is an obvious fact that these medical services were inadequate in Africa, so the Zion Movement also came into being in Africa, to attempt and solve this major problem, and the patients who come to these churches are healed by the power of the Holy Spirit and by their absolute

faith and dependence upon God. It is the same Spirit that was promised by Jesus Christ, which not only transformed timid Apostles into new men imbued with new powers to preach the Gospel without fear but also gave them power to cure diseases and drive out demons and evil spirits by the name of Jesus Christ.

Dowie, whose use of Scripture had been eclectic and literalist, had placed much emphasis upon baptism as the practical route to healing and salvation (Harlan 1906: 165), and had also referred to himself as Elijah the Restorer (Harlan 1906: 4), thereby linking divine healing to an imminent millennium. In the Zionist church, baptism is the act that initiates members into a cult of perpetual healing and reintegration. Baptism brings the therapeutic immersions of Dowie to an Africanised Jordan, eclipsing Protestant notions of conversion and plugging the initiate into the restorative waters of the Zion "well". This Baptism lays great emphasis upon the dissolution of prior identity, the initiate vividly experiencing the death that is the cost of rebirth. Here we recall the dual metaphors of sacrifice and rejuvenation in pre-colonial circumcision rites, for as Sundkler (1961: 202) has stressed, baptism involved both terror and rejoicing.

Dlamini (1976) says, healing has always played a part in our churches. Faith healing in the Zionist churches can be divided into three categories:

a) Healing during church service. This the most common form of healing through prayer and the laying on of hands. This usually takes place in one of the two ways, either the patients are called up in front of the congregation, kneel and are prayed for, or they are placed in the centre of the

circle and prayed for, while members of the congregation walk around the perimeter.

(b) Healing by immersion. Phalatse D (1987: 29) confessed that her critically ill mother who was in her early 60's was fully healed after being baptized by the Zion Christian Church. And his father was immediately baptized and he was blessed.

(c) Healing through consultation with a prophet. The prophet's activities are exclusively concentrated on the problems of this world: the healing of the sick, the divining of the causes of misfortune, and prediction of future events.

The Zion Christian Church is well known for its healing and prophetic ministry, which is the major force which attracts millions of people to this church. Dr. J L Maaga says faith healing is by its very nature anecdotal. It cannot be directly subjected to the scientific method. Its success or failure depends on a number of factors which are not possible to control. He further says healing as practised in the Zion Christian Church, makes certain demands on its practitioners; commitment to prayer is of the essence. Prayer is the secret ingredient which endows the holy water, tea and coffee as used in the church, with the power to heal the disease. Consequently the laying on of hands on the sick works because of the accompanying prayer. Some people would go as far as not to touch the patient at all. Being a man of prayer, you must of necessity be a man of peace. For an example the founder of this church had healing and prophetic abilities or gifts. In 1943 the Station Commander of a residence near Pretoria then called Riverside, one day visited the local Zion Christian Church congregation. Though he was on duty to reprimand the worshippers for praying "roisterously", Bishop Engenas, who was then also visiting the members, perceived through prophetic powers

that the Station Commander's wife was ailing. Bishop Engenas then told Mr. Van Rooyen (the police officer) that if he allowed them, the Zion Christian Church priests would bless a packet of coffee and cook it for the white woman for three days. Thereafter, the woman would be healed. Mr. Van Rooyen gave consent and after three days the woman was indeed healed (Rafapa 1992: 6). Rafapa continues to say that the Bishop, treated the Afrikaner gentleman equally with Blacks and did not give in to racial prejudice that would otherwise impel him to discriminate against the white man. Through this practical example Engenas Lekganyane lived up to the Christian principle of "loving your neighbour as you love yourself" (Mark 12: 31). The motto of Engenas Lekganyane was: "A doctor does not look for patients, but the patients are the one's who are looking for a doctor".

Healing in the Zion Christian Church is one of the most dynamic experiences known to its members. In this church prayer is a highly ritualist sacred time of healing and care, and it is part of worship. Section twenty one of the 1946 constitution reads as follows, regarding the "order of prayer": We adopt the common prayers as the Apostles used when the Holy Ghost within them constraineth, or healing order, to lay hands on the sick, and to pray. Ye are the children of the Lord your God, ye shall not cut yourselves nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead (Deut. 14: 1). Is any sick among you? Let him call for the Elders of the church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord (James 5: 14).

The sick people are being healed, demons are driven out and depressed people find new courage to face life, above-all the Zion Christian Church can deal with witchcraft

accordingly. The healing that is referred to here, however, is not restricted to the curing of certain diseases. It is rather the holistic healing that brings not only complete health of mind and body to an individual but total well-being to them as well as to social body to which we belong. Salvation for them is not salvation of the soul but of the whole person.

The chief medicament in this church is water which is consecrated and used in the same way as the olive oil. Water is the seed of things, the universal mother. Water, the origin of living things, is a "simple" curative over against the complex medicines. Water is imbued with spirits and is thus powerful, most effectively demonstrated in the seashore breakers and running pools. Words are pronounced over it and this blessed water is especially effective in 'purifying' from sin and curing a person. It has in it both the power of the word spoken by one who has standing, and 'the power of the spirit' (Vilakazi 1962: 5.2) and in such mixed power is extremely powerful (Martin 1971: 223).

Blessed water is usually sprinkled on people or objects which are impure. The origin of sprinkling people with water as a means of purification is found in African tradition, especially after funerals. A prophet can also prescribe the type of water and the source from which it should be drawn. For an example a prophet or a prophetess could instruct his or her patient to draw from the Limpopo river or from the sea. The association of "spirit" and "water" is widespread in South African Zionism (Sundkler 1961: 205).

Moya is an indigenous term, for the spirit force practically incorporated in human life, standing in stark contrast to the transcendent God of Protestant orthodoxy. This contrast is reinforced by the linking of spirit and water, for the latter serves as the impersonal embodiment of spirit in this scheme. Spirit, breath, and water are all seen as essentially animating; they are substantial yet fluid, containable yet self-regulating, and they are capable of pervading space within and outside the body. The Zionist churches are sometimes referred to as *Didiba* ("wells"), an image which conflates Biblical vitalization with what was once the most dramatic innovations brought by the Methodist mission; in this drought-ridden landscape, it signifies the damming of quickening spirit, achieved through the force of encapsulating ritual and reformed habitual practice (Comaroff 1985: 200-201).

The rite of Zionist healing is an act of ritual consummation: the prophet or prophetesses mediates the culminating fusion of the Spirit force and its human recipients. The thirsty "drink from the well", the "oppressed" are "entered" and "filled". The water of the spirit "washes away" (*kgophola*) the defilement that has accumulated in the person through the social and material transactions with the outside world, quenching thirst and cooling the heated blood that is incapable of smooth flow (Comaroff 1985: 234).

Holy papers (Mohau) are cut into sizes, *khutane* (blue cloths on clothes) Acts 19: 12, copper wires, walking sticks not for fighting, and strings which people had to use as protection against mishaps or witchcraft. There is also a special tea and coffee which is labelled: *Tea ya Bophelo* (tea of life). Another method which is used in this church

is pricking. A special needle is being used for pricking and normally a senior prophet or prophetess is the one who prescribes this blessed needle. Pricking is normally performed on elderly people. Because of the terrible disease called Aids (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), the Bishop has recommended the following procedure in respect of pricking: Venue, 1, The procedure for blood letting shall only be done on the site of the church; 2, The date and time shall be arranged before-hand, so that the procedure is done in sessions, by a group of ministers; 3, There shall be a minister to take care of the needles during the sessions; 4, The needles shall now belong to the church branch and shall be kept at the church. *Precaution of the minister*, 1, The minister must make sure that he does not have a wound on the skin of the hands; 2, If the minister has a wound on the hands, he must not take part in this procedure; 3, The minister must avoid soiling with the patient's blood. *Procedure*, 1, The patient's legs and/or forearms shall be bathed in the holy water before the procedure is begun, and again when the procedure is completed; 2, The needles shall be washed in the holy water first; 3, The needles shall then be put into a pot of boiling water and left to boil for 10 to 15 minutes; 4, After they have boiled for 10 to 15 minutes, the needles shall then be removed from the pot and allowed to cool down, until they are cold; 5, Then the minister bathes the legs and/fore-arms of the patient with the holy water; 6, Then the minister uses the needle on the patient; 7, When the minister has finished with the particular patient, the needle which he was using on the that patient is washed with the holy water, and returned to the pot of boiling water; 8, the needle must again be allowed to boil for 10 to 15 minutes before it is removed from the pot and allowed to cool down. It can now be used again. Traditionally impure blood is being regarded as assurance of pain. In order to remove impure blood, a traditional healer usually cut an

artery or joints of the patient. This process is called go lomega (a method of sucking blood). Alongside with pricking is a small piece of wood (kotana) of about six centimeters long and one and-a-half centimeters thick, and it is used to slightly hit on the body especially on the places which are very painful (Lukhaimane 1980: 62-70). It is emphatically stated that confession of sins and faith in God is absolute, to render the use of these "medicines" meaningful.

Jung, writing about the attitude of the therapist and of the priest in connection with confession formulated it as follows: It consists in feeling with that person's psyche. Its a deep respect for the facts of the man who suffers from them and for the riddle of such a man's life ... an unprejudiced objectivity. The ability to listen and to share is therefore a primary attribute of all healing (Oosthuizen 1986: 108). Berglund (1974: 152) says, when a diviner finds that the cause of the illness is the anger of the ancestors the afflicted 'must confess everything, leaving nothing...only then will health be restored'. It is regarded as an outlet and hence an emptying of oneself of evil and creating space for goodness to enter.

The final word about the value of confession comes from Gnostic Gospel of Thomas. A saying of Jesus: If you bring forth what is within, what you bring forth will save you. If you do not bring forth what is within you, what you do not bring forth will destroy you.

The African Initiated Churches provide a new recourse particularly for the mentally not so tough in the various ills that afflict them as they try to adjust to the rapidly changing conditions and demands of modern economic and

social life. However, there is no confusion between physician and patient. In the opinion of Baëta (1962: 6) it would be very wide of the mark indeed to suppose that the people forming the core of these churches are persons suffering any psychological malaise, or extraordinary emotional strains and stress. Rather they appear to be perfectly normal, even 'relaxed' men and women, taking the new developments in their stride, coping with their ordinary human problems as best they know how, likewise taking in hand, with a quite practical outlook and a high degree of self-confidence, what they consider to be their job, namely healing as they understand it.

There seems little doubt that the healing ministry of the church is as necessary today in Africa as it ever was in the past. In the world where even many in the scientific medical profession are themselves taking such concepts as holistic medicine very seriously, the church can show concern for healing of the whole person, especially building caring communities and working for improvement of living conditions (Omi October 1989). *I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full* (John 10: 10).

2.5.2

PROPHECY:

The Hebrew word for "prophet" is a common noun appearing more than three hundred times in the Old Testament. It is applied to a remarkable range of characters appearing from Genesis (20: 7) to Malachi (4: 5), and to surprisingly disparate personalities from an Aaron (Exod. 7: 1) to an Elijah (I Kings 17-19; 21), from "true" to "false" (I Kings 22), from the relatively primitive (I Sam. 10) to the relatively sophisticated (Isaiahs), from the highly

visionary (Ezek. 1-2) to the concretely ethical (Amos; or Nathan in II Sam. 12; or Elijah in I Kings 21), from the seemingly objective perspective (of an Amos) to the intensely participating attitude (of a Jeremiah). The prophet speaks out of, and back into, a living tradition. If the prophet and his hearers do not share the same principles of belief there can be no prophecy. For prophecy to occur there must be both the conserver of the truth, the priest or pastor, and the one who breaks it out anew in the contemporary situation, the prophet (Cumpsty 1991: 64-65).

In the New Testament the term appears commonly in reference to the prophets of the Old Testament, and predominantly in Matthew and Luke-Acts. Both Jesus (Matt. 21: 11; 13: 57; Mark 6: 4; Luke 4: 24) and John the Baptist (Matt. 11: 7 ff) are regarded as prophets. Paul understands the continuation of the essential functions in the life of the church (I Cor 12; 14); Judas and Silas are subsequently interpreted in this role (Acts 15: 32); while the early Christian community at Antioch knows the presence of "prophets and teachers" (Acts 13: 1). The New Testament prophet has an essential function like that of the Old Testament: he conveys to them who will believe the divinely imparted meaning of history (Acts 21: 10) (Buttrick 1962: 896). We may say that the prophet is the one who is called to announce the purpose and activity of God, or the recipient of the announcement of God.

In the strict Biblical sense of the word *prophet* and the prophetic movement, there are no prophets in African traditional societies. The African Initiated Churches believe that their prophets and prophetesses are being called by the Spirit of God, and they dream dreams and see visions just like the prophets of the Bible. Visions may

occur in private meditation or prayer, or during any part of corporate worship, and members may be ready to relate what they saw during the sermon, prayer or hymn. The leaders and founders of these different churches are being inspired by the Holy Spirit to lead and govern these churches (Ngada 1984: 29). Although prophets do not usually have formal positions in the church hierarchy, they wield considerable authority and power through visions and predictions. However, most prophets are women, and this provides a convenient solution to the problem of status in the church. The presence of the women as prophetesses is usually not a threat to the established male hierarchy. This seems to have facilitated the development of the two streams of authority which is important for these churches.

Engenas Lekganyane is well known for his gift of prophecy, and this is one of the reasons, which made him to resign from the Zion Apostolic Church of South Africa. To indicate this point Mopedi (1972: 6) give us the following example of the disagreement between Engenas Lekganyane and Elias Mahlangu on the outcome of the first World War: "Mahlangu thought that the Germans will defeat the English people in the first World war while Lekganyane predicted very well that the English will win the war". This incident is well known among the Zion Christian Church members.

The majority of prophets in this church are men, and women are very few who have this gift. They are called *Mabone* (Lights), because they are able to interpret the will of God through the Holy Spirit, and also they are able to predict and heal. Hence they are the major force or the cornerstone of this church, and they are consulted on most of the important matters pertaining to the church. They also wield more influence and power in church affairs than many men in

the formal hierarchy. In each local congregation there is one or more prophets or prophetesses.

Besides consultation on different types of ailments, the prophets or prophetesses are often visited by clients in search of success in various types of ventures. For example, clients visit prophets or prophetesses for luck at their respective places of work, they are also consulted by people in search of work, clients wanting favourable judgements in court cases, students wanting success at examinations and another at studies in general, clients desiring success in their love life or looking for marriage, clients wanting success in acquiring drivers and business licences, sportsmen and women wanting success in their respective sports, clients wanting success in money matters and clients wanting generally success and health.

Prophets are generally operating within an autogenous cultural framework which is intrinsically meaningful to them as well as to their patients/clients. Their cosmological notions do not radically differ from the traditional healers.

2.5.3

MUSIC

Music is the finest of fine arts and sacred music ought to be the best of all. Hymn singing makes an enormous contribution to worship. The purpose of music in worship is the *intensification* of the truth, and it is a major part of worship. It will be appreciated that music was a very important feature of public worship in Israel. Music in fact played a significant part in Hebrew culture throughout

Biblical history; this is illustrated by the fact that when the Israelites went into foreign captivity, Kings were careful to preserve the Hebrew musicians, who enjoyed an international fame in the ancient Near East. Psalm 137 laments this sort of experience during the Babylonian captivity (Campbell 1980: 43). The fundamental criterion of Biblical music is thus *functionality*. Music is the handmaid of truth. It is not a "thing-in-itself"; rhythm, harmony and melody are all elements of one instrument - music (Campbell 1980: 46).

Paul said that every member of the congregation should play a part. "This is what I mean, my brothers. When you meet for worship, one person has a hymn, another a teaching, another the explanation of what is said. Everything must be of help to the church (I Cor. 14: 26). The parts played were determined by the Holy Spirit who reveals His presence through His gifts: His teaching, prophecy etc. When and if these gifts are suppressed or not given expression there is quenching of the Spirit (I Thess. 5: 19) leading to the decay of charisma.

The Western system of worship which was introduced in Africa, was entirely dead and unrelated to the African way of worship. This is still evident in the boring and monotonous order of worship in most of the older churches (Ndiokwere 1981: 277-278).

It is very interesting to note how much any form of dancing is a taboo among the Western oriented churches. But, during the mother's prayer meetings of these churches on Thursdays, and youth gatherings, singing and dancing is the order of their services. But, when it comes to their normal Sunday

service, formality is the order of their services. And when the African countries gain independence they cast off "European" modes, the staid and starchy attitudes to Christian worship. They break loose and relax, as they often say, they "allow the Spirit to have freedom". This is the clear proof that here, at the point of dance, these people have felt much more restrained and "imprisoned" than the bringers of Christianity have realised (Setiloane 1976: 156-157;205).

The religion of ancient Israel was without question a dancing one. Within the Old Testament itself there are a number of references to it, for an example "Let them praise His name with dancing" (Ps.149:3). What is essential to note is that dance is not an expression of thanks but, it is the thanksgiving itself. It is now time to recognize that this continuing negative approach to dance on the part of older churches is more of a product of western culture than Christianity per se. Dance is legitimate since dancing is a healthy exercise and a form of recreation. The church which is the body of Christ is also His bride. Just as a Jewish bride dances for her husband so it is right and proper that the church should dance for her Heavenly bridegroom.

Court Sacks recorded his conclusion on the *World History of Dance*, that Christianity is ever hostile to dance. Christians were prompted to ignore the dance because so many represented the legends of the gods and to witness them would have been tantamount to idolatry. Luther may have been spared to acknowledge that it was customary for young people to dance at weddings and that he could see no harm in it as long as modesty was preserved, while John Calvin was less accommodating and in an Ordinance of February 1547 banned dancing throughout Geneva (Davies 1957: 29).

African creativity is producing an African church music suited for Africans (Oosthuizen 1986: 206). The prophet uNtsikana - showed over one hundred and sixty years ago that an African Christianity with its own African church music is completely possible and in fact more effective than a mission Christianity (Hodgson 1984:32). Ntsikana's music has survived both within the African Initiated Churches and as a traditional music, including performances with the uHadi musical bow. Now this music has entered the Western oriented churches, in particular the Roman Catholic Church, promoted by the Lumko Music Department, Lady Frere, Transkei (Oosthuizen 1986: 206). The purpose of the Lumko Music Department is to bring the church to life through music: with local communities producing their own church music and so contributing to the church as a whole⁷.

Dargie says, an interesting process of musical change is presently taking place in the Roman Catholic Church. A conflict between long-established prejudices and intuitive understanding of what is appropriate and acceptable, it is a question of what is musically satisfying to the worshipper. Dargie in *Religion Alive* gives us the following example: "This morning (Sunday 13th January 1985) I took the Mass at a large former Roman Catholic Mission Hospital. The congregation numbered about fifty, including probably more than half non-Roman Catholics (mostly nurses and patients). For some years an elderly Roman Catholic lady has taken on herself music leadership at this Mass, so that whatever is sung (including plenty of Lumko music) is sung at a snail's pace with plenty of dragging. I tried very hard and with little success to brighten up the music, using part of Ntsikana's hymn in the Preface, and also trying very hard to use a well-known "Independent" church song to illustrate the

sermon. At the end of Mass, a typical mission hymn was gradually performed. At the end of this, as all began to leave the church, the nurses spontaneously broke into a lively "Zionist" hymn. As they moved out they tended to move in the song rhythm, and when they got outside, they formed a group, dancing, shaking hands, and smiling with joy that could not break through during the Mass. This was the first time I have experienced this at this hospital, after taking Mass there (in turn with the other Lumko priest) since 1979. When I returned to Lumko, people were leaving the church after the parish Mass, and again a group of ladies (members of the St. Anna's society in purple jackets) emerged singing "Zionist" hymns, with much jollification and clapping and rhythmic movement" (Oosthuizen 1986: 197-198).

Dargie further says, in many places "Zionist" music has all but penetrated worship in the church building, and in some places it has actually entered the church building: in some places during the Mass, more frequently for other services. Speculatively Dargie distinguish the following steps: 1, Roman Catholics hear and readily learn new songs at ecumenical gatherings - funerals, meetings, radio and the television.

2, These songs begin to be used for informal parts of meetings, or for *imijikelo* style money-raising, especially in the absence of clergy or censorious person.

3, The new songs penetrate to the fringes of Mass, being used after Mass, for moving to another building from the church.

4, The songs begin to be used for non-Eucharistic services in the church.

5, The songs enter the Mass, especially for events involving movements: processions, offertories and peace greetings.

6, Total removal of prejudice against the songs.

We should remember that during the period before the Second Vatican Council (1963-1965) Roman Catholic attitudes were traditionally very negative towards non-Roman Catholic Christianity, and therefore a *fortiori* even more negative towards non-Christian religions. Vatican II took important steps to change those attitudes, referring to non-Roman Catholics as "separated brethren"⁸, and proclaiming Roman Catholic respect for what is true and holy in Buddhism, Hinduism and other non-Christian religions (Abbot 1966: 2).

Naturally Africans have music that have rhythm and that they are particularly endowed with a very rich cultural heritage, with indigenous lyrics, idioms and proverbs. Singing comes naturally. In other words, every black person is a natural singer. If anyone starts singing, others follow naturally and fall into harmonic parts naturally. They are blessed by God with two gifts, laughter and singing. Laughter comes naturally to a black person. Blacks love singing at all times. It is not only when they are happy, but also in the midst of sorrow and trouble. Watch Blacks travelling by train or bus. They do not hide behind newspapers or books. They do not look outside to avoid other travellers. As they sit down, they greet those next to them. In no time, they are engaged in a conversation. Within a few minutes you hear laughter. Others are free to join the conversation. In sorrow, there is seriousness, interspersed with laughter. At funerals, hymns and choruses of gladness are sung. Almost every Black has a favourite hymn or chorus. This is sung over and over at the funeral of a person. At such times laughter is expressed in quiet movements or dancing. Sometimes in a rhythmic clapping of hands (Makhubu 1988: 71).

A song or hymn is the most useful and universally employed method of evangelisation. A song and dance, has always played a very important role in the life of an African. In the initiation school it is used as a very effective method of teaching. The initiates sing and in that way learn the principles of communal life in the society for which they are being prepared. At rituals of communal nature, chanting and singing have always played an important part. At work, lifting anything heavy, is done in song. When digging trenches, rhythm regulates the raising and falling of the pick or ploughing a field, also when women are grinding or pounding maize flour and also at political gatherings. Singing permeates the life of a black person. Simple instruments are made and used. The drum is used for the beat. When there is no drum, hand-clapping takes its place.

King (1990: 35) says throughout the history of Christianity and God's interaction with the human the race, music - mainly in the form of songs - has made a dynamic contribution in forwarding the work of the Kingdom of God. Martin Luther claimed that: "Next after theology, I give to music the highest place and the greatest honour. I would not exchange what little I know of music for something great (Bainton 1951: 346:)" Song is still a very important instrument in the Christian life of the Africans. Christian hymns are sung on all kinds of occasions - vigils for the dead, beer drinking parties, wedding, in moments of loneliness and need for consolation. There is hand-clapping to keep the rhythm intact, feet-stamping and a mild swaying to and fro to show that body, mind and soul are in unison.

Religious singing by Africans is often accompanied by clapping of hands and dancing which expresses people's

feeling of joy, sorrow or thanksgiving. Through Sacred Music and dancing they are able to participate emotionally in the act of worship and music and dancing penetrates into the every being of a person as he or she worships. It reaches deep into the innermost parts of an African and many things come to the surface under the musical inspiration which otherwise may not have been readily revealed. The sacred Black music gives outlet to the emotional expression of the religious life and is a powerful means of communication in African traditional life. It helps to unite the singing or dancing group and to express its fellowship and participation in life.

The chief purpose of dancing in the African Churches is to express praise and joy in the presence of God. The dancing is corporate but, individuals dance before the Lord rather than with one another in a social manner. Thousands upon thousands of years ago in what is now known as the paleolithic age, an unknown artist painted a minor masterpiece on the wall of a Spanish cave. It is to be found in the great rock shelter, it represents three dancing men. Here in what is virtually the dawn of time, there is impressive evidence of the importance that dancing has had for human existence. In this particular instance what is being depicted is without question religious dance (Davies 1957: 3). Hence Mbiti has said that Africans are dancing and singing their theology. Their theology is not written in volumes of books but in their heart, and the only way to show it, is through singing or dancing.

The Zion Christian Church has the following major musical groups: The Brass Band which is led by the Bishop himself, *Mokhukhu* and *Mpogo*. These groups are the war department of

this church. What is interesting about musical groups in this church is that there is no mixed choir of male and female.

Sello "Chicco" Twala a secular musician, is producing videos of *Mokhukhu*, *Mpogo* and above all the Zion Christian Church Brass Band. Furthermore the music of this church is normally played or viewed on religious programmes of South African Broadcasting Corporation (S A B C), in particular Community Contemporary Values (C C V) Television and African Radio Stations. Sacred music is one of the most prominent factors that attracts people to this church.

The prominent group in the Zion Christian Church is *Mokhukhu* with their white boots. The colour of the Zionist boots may connote activating spiritual power and purity, but it also conflicts with modern notions of serviceability, implying conspicuous "leisure and prestige". The boots invoke pre-colonial and colonial signs of power, the wearer internalizes both kinds of signs and energetically treads down the persistently threatening "evil" of his everyday world. (Comaroff 1985: 244-245). These boots are not working shoes but prayer boots. These boots are large, and the vigorous male ritual dancer appears to be "all feet", his actions involving closely coordinated steps whose main feature is the pounding on the bare ground. Participants assert that, in this manner, they "stamp evil underfoot", or tramp it down in the dust. Such dance styles again have their origin in the polyethnic cultural forms of the industrial work-place, stamping is a feature of the Zulu war dance (Elliot 1978: 164).

The hymns are from the Zion Christian Church collection, *Songs of Zion*, printed at the movement's headquarters and translated into several Southern African languages. The tempo is sprightly of the chant clearly indigenous (Comaroff 1985: 245-246). Hymns, choruses and dancing, play a vital role in the dynamic of the Zion Christian Church.

2.6

MOTTO OF THE ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH

There are a number of peculiarities of a religious nature one sees in the Zion Christian Church. The motto of the Zion Christian Church which is now 84 years old has been and is and will be: "*PEACE UNTO YOU*". One striking feature of the Zion Christian Church is consistency of its preaching since it was founded in 1910 under the leadership of Bishop Engenas Lekganyane until today when the preaching is uttered by its current head Bishop Barnabas Lekganyane. The Zion Christian Church preaches, Peace, Love, Unity and Productivity, which is hard work (Lekganyane 1992).

The ordinary greeting is "Peace to Thee" instead of "Good morning" and the usual response is "Peace to thee be multiplied". And it has become the motto of the Zion Christian Church "Peace Be With You", which is a form of Greeting of the Jewish people (Shalom). Peace in the Old Testament meant a state of wholeness, possessed by persons or groups, which may be health, prosperity, security, or spiritual completeness of the covenant.

Lekganyane B E (1985) exhorted his followers to "Respect your father and mother" (Exodus 20: 12). Because this commandment of the Lord God does not only refer to a father

and mother in the strict biological sense, but it includes school teachers, school principals, elders, civic officials, church elders, church ministers and employers, and indeed all who give wholesome and pure guidance. It is through these people who hold the position they do, through the will of God, that peace and stability may be the way of life on earth. Barnabas Lekganyane believes that the Zion Christian Church is a church of peace and it should strive to bring peace in the whole world.

One is reminded of the solidarity of love which obtained among early Christians: All the believers continued together in close fellowship and shared their belongings with one another. Day after day they met as a group in the Temple, and they had their meals together in their homes, eating with glad and humble hearts, praising God, and enjoying the good will of all people. And every day the Lord added to their group those who were saved (Acts 2: 44-47).

A message from Bishop Barnabas Lekganyane, for the special celebration to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the church, made the following announcement: "I am again proud to make this second announcement about my late father and grandfather, as the first Christian of Zion Christian Church must be taught to respect the laws of their chiefs, governments and of South Africa. This is the key to peace. I also lead the members of the church along the same foot-paths". He further said that his followers must submit themselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake (I Peter 2: 13), and they should not judge the law, for it is for the individual to obey.

In his speech at Tsomo Mission in Transkei on 14 February 1987 he said the following: "We are a peace-loving church, and we wish to hurt nobody, in word or in deed. We offer our prayerful assistance to any one who is in need of it, irrespective of denominational affiliation and pre-condition. We are the children of one Father - the Almighty God, and the Creator of the universe. Our men in khaki uniforms should not be mistaken for an army and fighting soldiers. Far from it, instead they are the soldiers of the Prince of peace. We do not support apartheid as it is not in agreement with the principle of Christianity which is based on love. However, we are praying for its abolition" (Motolla 1987: 12). Unfortunately in the Zion Christian Church we have been innocent victims of these enemies of peace, some being ministers of religion who wanted our church to divert from its preaching for bringing change and peace through prayers. But, we did not turn our back, we continued preaching and praying peacefully for the achievement of a political transformation of our country without confrontation (Mukhondo 1992: 10).

The sermon of Bishop Barnabas Lekganyane on Easter 1990, reiterated the position of the church regarding politics. The stand of the church is not apolitical. Why this position: "the members of this church come from different political organisations and some are coming from outside the boundaries of South Africa. The result from this fact is that, they exercise their free will and choice in the life and activities of their different communities" (Motolla 1990: 4). The Bishop said political organisations envy the life-style of the Zionists and they want to make this church to side with them. But, he emphasized the stand of the church on peace, love and reconciliation with everybody. The church does not dictate what individuals should do with

their private life, their political interests and ideologies should be kept out of the boundaries of the church.

During the eighty two years of the anniversary of the Zion Christian Church, the church invited the then President of South African Government F W De Klerk, Nelson Mandela the current President of South Africa and also the President of the African National Congress, and Mangosuthu Buthelezi the President of the Inkhata Freedom Party. The whole exercise of inviting these important political leaders in South Africa was a means of finding a peaceful solution within the country. The invitation of these leaders underlines the political significance of the Zion Christian Church.

Barnabas Lekganyane says that members of the Zion Christian Church do not believe in violence in whatever form because violence begets violence. "Where elephants fight the grass will not grow". He emphasised that, the church abhors murder, irrespective of who perpetrates it, when, how and for whatever reason. *"to you Zionists, I reiterate and reaffirm my stand, which you know very well!! Such acts are taboo in this church"*. Even if they can hate you and scandalise you, to those who advocate that you kill or destroy, I say: know that this church as church stands for peace and reconciliation with everybody. Understand where the church is leading you to, namely: Reconciliation, love, and to let bygones be bygones. For the policy of the Zion Christian Church does not divide and differentiate members according to their affiliations to certain organisations, rather it is always current practice that the Zion Christian Church is for the reconciliation through the medium of prayer of people who are fighting (Mantini 1990: 8). Peace in South Africa is when all have hope in the future.

What Bishop Barnabas Lekganyane is preaching, is the same message of his father Edward and grandfather Engenas, a message of peace, love, reconciliation, harmony, unity, productivity and hard work as a motto or the main doctrine of the church.

2.7

MEMBERSHIP

The African Initiated Churches vary in size of membership from fifty members to millions. The Zion Christian Church is the largest Indigenous Church in South Africa. Amos Boshego (personal guard of Engenas) stated that Lekganyane had a slogan which reads as follows: "A true church will not look for the people, but the people will look for the church". This was often followed by a quotation from Isaiah 51: 1-3 "The Lord says, 'Listen to me, you that want to be saved, you that come to me for help. Think of the rock from which you came, the quarry from which you were dug. Think of your ancestor, Abraham, and of Sarah, from whom you are descended. When I called Abraham, he was childless, but I blessed him and gave him children; I made his descendants numerous'. I will show compassion to Jerusalem, to all who live in her ruins. though her land is a desert, I will make it a garden, like the garden I planted in Eden. Joy and gladness will be there, and songs of praise and thanks to me" (Lukhaimane 1980: 4).

The church grew from a mere 926 members in 1925 to 40 000 in 1943 and 80 000 in 1954 (Oosthuizen 1986: 126). The church continues to grow and today its membership is estimated to be over 6 millions. Emmanuel Motolla (Editor of the Z C C Messenger) estimated membership of 6,3 million in 1992,

including the neighbouring states of South Africa. The main reason why there is a tremendous growth in this church from 926 in 1925 to millions today, is due to the leadership of the church, its dogma, internal organization and management and their religious practices. The church does conform to the African way of life and culture. Above all it is the church of the people because it is where the people are, and it addresses their hopes and fears.

The students of the Dutch Reformed Theological School at Turfloop under the supervision of Prof. G Van Der Merwe, made an investigation into the motivation and needs of the Zion Christian Church. The following needs were recognized:

(a) Religious needs: Under this category the relationship with God is important and this implies reconciliation with God, peace with God and obtaining the help of God.

(b) Traditional/ Cultural needs: The need to protect and preserve traditional customs to adapt them to present-day needs, the need to bridge the gap between parents and children, between the older and younger generation and to restore respect among young people for traditional customs. All these can be grouped under this specific need.

(c) Magical needs: The need for protection against evil and harmful influences.

(d) Therapeutic needs: The need for healing in times of illness and for peace of mind when a person is troubled.

(e) Social needs: The need for warm companionship between people, for a community where one can feel at home and be strengthened.

(f) Pragmatic needs: The need for help in finding work or improving work conditions (more pay), the need for prosperity, the need for protection and for security in daily life and in work.

(g) Political needs: The need for liberation of people from adverse political circumstances and the need for a stable and prosperous society.

(h) Moral needs: The need to live a good life with good habits and to avoid or become free of bad habits like alcoholism, immorality, violence and thieving.

(i) The need for leadership: The need to have a leader, a person to look up to, through whom peace, order and blessings can be obtained (Oosthuizen 1986: 127).

In terms of section nineteen of the 1954 Constitution of the Zion Christian Church, the aim or objective of the church is to spread the Word of God and the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in this World:

"Whereas the pillars of the church shall see with deepest Christian anxiety, the deplorable spiritual and mental condition of our people who inhabit the colonies of this world, which the word of God declares shall be lighted up with the glorious rays of the sun of righteousness, and whereas the church further remembers with deep emotion the last command of our ascending Lord: "Go ye into the world and preach the gospel to all nations"; and desiring to show our love by our obedience, we therefore resolve hereby to constitute ourselves into a distinct denomination with various colonies to have and enjoy the free use and benefit of all premises acquired on behalf of this church, for rendering effectual the trusts created by purchase or trusts made to or in favour of the said people who are members of the said denomination or those who have come under the jurisdiction of this denomination without distinction of race and colour".

According to Dr. J L Maaga the conversion to Zion Christian Church, is not through the sermon, but rather through the

miracles wrought by the church, as manifest - inter alia, in the preservation of life and limb, and in many diverse ways in which the church comes to our rescue in times of distress. He does not know any member of the Zion Christian Church who has converted by hearing a sermon. All those he knew were converted by some deed or combination of deeds in their lives or those of their next of kin by the church. His grandfather J L was converted by the breaking of the drought because they depended very much on the rain for their livelihood, her grandmother by the restoration of the sight and her mother and father by the successful birth of his immediate elder brother - Jacob Mantu - after two unsuccessful pregnancies. Thus his family was drawn to the church, not by the sermon, rather by the successful intervention of the church in their lives when tragedy/misfortune played havoc. He further says that a person who is born into the Zion Christian Church is very fortunate, because he/ she acquires a superior way of life without even knowing. He is the case in point.

Jesus Christ said: those who believe and get baptised will be saved. In my name they will cast out demons, they will speak with tongues, they will perform all sorts of wonders and they will lay hands on the sick and they will get healed (Mark 16: 15-20). The members of the Zion Christian Church believes that this is happening within their church because they are following the footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In terms of section twelve of the 1954 Constitution, a congregation shall have not less than twenty five members, with an ordained minister. The ordained minister shall have the right to appoint one or more members of the local congregation to be leaders of Church Classes, under his charge. It shall not be necessary for the Annual Conference

to confirm the appointment of such Class Leaders, unless the majority of members of such a congregation shall object to such appointments.

The authority of an ordained minister is in the spiritual government of a local congregation or branch and is much the same as that of the Bishop in relation to the Annual Conference, and has its parallel in the local working committee of Class Leaders. The local working committee supervises the premises of the church, finance, especially to help the minister to run the local congregation, to settle disputes including those between the minister and the congregation and seek the general welfare of the congregation.

There are also societies for young people, men and women who are supposed to attend to the needs and disputes of their own members, and enter into competition with one another. the main society is that of men called *Mokhukhu*, they form the backbone of the church in general. But, as said previously women too play a very essential part and they meet every Wednesday afternoon for prayer meetings and thanksgiving, for sharing the message and giving interpretation to one another, for visiting members in need and generally almsgiving.

STIPENDS: Each local congregation shall be responsible for the payment of the stipend due to its minister and any and all other liabilities incurred by it, or by reason of a resolution passed by the Standing Finance Committee and confirm by the Annual Conference (Constitution 1956: Section 15). It is unfortunate to state that most, if not all ministers in the Zion Christian Church do not receive

the stipulated stipends. In fact, this is true of majority of the African Initiated Churches office - bearers. But, their service to their respective churches is remarkable.

According to Daneel (1987: 179), there is a close correlation between the endeavours and self-sacrificing service of individual office-bearers and the inspiration provided by the paramount leader. Other factors are ambition of providing their own powers, to acquire power and prestige in the community or establish their own sphere of influence. No matter how influential the paramount leader is, there is usually a profound conviction that the basic impulses inspiring Christian service emanate from God. Thus office -bearers regard self-sacrifice and service as their own direct response to God's commission and not simply as obedience to the injunction of their paramount leader.

The church has influenced the mode of life of many Blacks and also serves as a unifying factor amongst the different Black communities. This is evident when one takes into account the multitudes of people who attend the three Annual Conferences at the church's headquarters at Boyne, Pietersburg. This church is successful because it is able to get hold of some of the tribal chiefs in South Africa. The Zion Christian Church is hated but remains strong and powerful.

CHAPTER 3

3.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Social scientists remind us repeatedly that the word "development", though it has gained currency in the English language, is not an English word. It originated in another cultural environment and later found its way into the English vocabulary. What is of immediate interest to us is why and how the church is involved in the development programmes.

Wayne G Bragg (1984: 156), reminds us also that there are several approaches to development, e.g modernization, new international economic order, dependency and under-development, self-reliance, etc. All these approaches seek to contribute towards the understanding of human and social change. He observes that:

Development is a diffuse concept that inadequately describes the goals and the process of human and social change. It comes to mean whatever anyone wants it to mean, given whichever set of culturally-defined assumptions.

Christians believe that God who created order out of disorder created the universe with a purpose, and this purpose has to do with the welfare of human beings. Thus, Christian theology demands that all people enjoy the God-given blessings of creation equally, because all are created in the image of God and all are given the privilege of enjoying this creation equally.

Holistic development focuses on the material, physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual needs of every person in the community, not only the present generation but also future generations. Stewardship of the resources of nature therefore, becomes very important. Waste has to be avoided; and nothing should be done that will disturb the ecological balance of nature; because true development is the development of the people, the release of the people from their enslaved conditions so that they can have their rightful dignity of participation in the process of making decisions which affect their lives and labour (Gnana R, 1994: 318-319)

The miracle performed by Peter and John at one of the gates of the temple in Jerusalem points to the same purpose. Peter says to the man born lame, "I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you: in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, stand up and walk" (Acts 3:6). Peter removes the condition which was responsible for the man's dependency on others; he can now stand on his own feet and walk. Development is thus essentially the removal of the conditions of dependency on others. Two principles of authentic development, according to Gandhi, were self-reliance (*swadeshi*) and welfare to all (*sarvodaya*), and here Gandhi has drawn much from the teachings of Jesus.

"To build a better world is a cause which should capture the imagination of men and women of good will everywhere", said the Commission on International Development in its report 'Partners in Development' (Praeger 1969: 228). The idea of development towards a "community of mankind" should be welcome by a universal church. Development is human. The

principal purpose of productivity is not mere multiplication of products but the service of man, and indeed the full development of the whole man. The church believes that it can contribute to this (Fernandes 1971: 135). For development cannot take place in one isolated sphere of a human being's existence (Fromm 1979: 272).

The African Initiated Churches exist as churches of the poor. The term poverty in the New Testament is distinguished from need (*cheria*) without being poor (*ptochos*). All people have needs and are debtors to others to help them. The needs may be short-term or long-term. They may be slight or desperate. They may be physical or spiritual. As physical they are usually temporal. One may be sick today and if well cared-for, healthy tomorrow. It was need in the immediate sense which the Apostles met with the contribution of the believers in the earliest church (Acts 4: 35), as spiritual needs are always permanent.

Poverty has more than one form. It usually has an economic component. The physical means of survival are always short in supply, to find them is a continual struggle. The Hebrew word *ebyon*, translated sometimes poor and sometimes needy, expresses this. But it is the institutionalization of this condition in a system which enforces and intensifies economic need that gives poverty its social character, for the Hebrew word *ani* with a connotation of being victimized or oppressed. The third dimension of poverty is this time rooted not in external condition but in the person: weakness, disabling and incapability to carry the full burden of life, connoted by the Hebrew word *dal*.

From the Biblical point of view the world is not understood as a static system in which the future is dependent upon causal factors of the past only, but as a dynamic process with very new possibilities and realities. It has to be worked for and what is received depends mainly on man's own planning and toil (Oosthuizen 1986: 229). The religion of Israel is a protest against the religion of cosmic totality, against the "sacralizing" of all being, against the supremacy of fate, against the divination of chiefs, Kings, leaders and kingdoms. Secularization made a break with the everlasting cycle of nature and the ever-presence of myth (Van Leeuwen, 1964: 331).

Christianity, which led the development of Europe, does not seem to be able to do the same for Africa in spite of having assisted a section of Africa to overcome the microcosmic world view. Indigenous Christianity has received, through contact with the atmosphere of the Bible, in which man is called to utilize (manipulate) the earth (instead of fearing it because of the many adverse forces), a different approach to nature and the task of utilizing its benefits through one's own determined efforts (Oosthuizen 1986: 229-230).

Daneel (1987: 102) regards the African Initiated Churches as a rural phenomenon, because of the following reasons: The main breeding ground of these movements is still the communal lands where one finds tribal communities and farms run by blacks. This is where the large church colonies such as those of Shembe, Lekganyane, Mutendi and others are located, as are the 'Mount Zion' and "Jordan" rivers which play such cardinal roles in these churches. Their proselytizing techniques are largely geared to the life-style of agrarian communities where a subsistence economy is closely interwoven with and to a large extent maintained by

the traditional religion. By means of real adaptations and by offering alternatives to rain-making rites, the ancestor cult, healing practices and the belief in magic - that is, by offering a new, comprehensible and relevant spiritual infrastructure for rural community life - these churches achieve their greatest impact and most fertile growth in these areas.

Sundkler regards the urban areas as a growth point of the African Initiated Churches due to Western civilization - mines, commerce and education which have revolutionized the African society. According to Gerdener (1911: 47), Pretoria is the birth place of Ethiopianism, while the neighbouring Johannesburg is the birthplace of the Initiated Churches of the Zionist type. The Rand as a whole, through its central role in the economic and social life of the Union, has had a dominating influence on the development of the African Initiated Churches (Sundkler 1961: 80). By and large the majority of these churches are in the urban areas.

The action of the church in the world is at one and the same time mission and service. The two cannot be separated at any time without falsifying both. It is a reality of God's economy which is at issue, the economy by which the churches live and which is intended for the world.

It is clear that the economic environment of black communities in South Africa is indeed grim with its rapidly increasing unemployment and social disintegration. Against this development stand the Africa Indigenous Churches as a positive factor in their attempts to withstand the dislocating influences on individuals, families and communities. The survey undertaken by the Centre for Social

and Development Studies at the University of Natal and the Research Unit on the African Initiated Churches at the University of Zululand, revealed that the African Initiated Churches "are involved in assisting their members toward a better standard of living through healing improvement, careful budgeting, time management and through their support of stable family life in general, often in the face of great difficulties in keeping a family together" (Evans Cross Bekker and Oosthuizen, 1992: 1)

The major development issues in contemporary South Africa according to Oosthuizen (1992: 15) are: Housing, education, job creation, health, administration and skills. Such practices need to take place at the level of personal and family development. This is the level where changes must eventually take root and influence the communities. While Steve Biko⁹ (1978: 355-356) believed that the colour question in South African politics was originally introduced for economic reasons, he believed that the only way out of this problem in South Africa was when various groups within a given community have asserted themselves to the point that mutual respect has to be shown. Then one has the ingredients for a true and meaningful integration. At the heart of integration is the provision for each man and woman, each group to rise and attain the envisioned self. Each group must be able to attain its style of existence without encroaching on or being thwarted by another. Out of this mutual respect for each other and complete freedom of self-determination there will obviously arise a genuine fusion of the life style of the various groups. This is true integration.

The idea of 'Black Power', and the Black Conscious Movement as formulated by Biko and others had its origin in

theological reflection on what it really means to a Black person to be created in the image of God. This was in fact the first question that was asked in South African Black Theology. People who were psychologically weak through generations of oppression found in the Black Power concept a restoration of human dignity and self-esteem (Anderson 1992: 62).

We should remember that the church is part and parcel of the community, hence it should endeavour to shape itself according to the values, goals and spiritual power of Jesus Christ. For the Christian faith relates to the whole of man and woman, body and soul as well as to all his or her needs. The Bible contains the record of development from the garden of Genesis chapter one and two to the city of Revelation chapter twenty one.

The Bible does not offer a work ethos as such and does not define man or woman from a point of view of his work. It sees man and woman in a much wider perspective as can be seen from the combination of work and rest. The ideal for man's or woman's life in the Biblical view is a life of peace where every man or woman may sit under his or her fig tree, enjoying the grapes from his or her own vineyard (Micha 4:25). The focus of attention is on man's or woman's existence as such before God and on earth. The Bible describes man and woman in a great variety of work situation and conditions, what remains constant is God's purpose with man and woman (Van Wyk 1979: 8).

3.1

SHARING AND SERVICE

Sharing and service are two important concepts of community living. When Jesus taught his disciples that he came "not to be served but to serve" (Mark 10: 45), he used the Greek word *diakoneo*, "to serve or to wait on tables" which refers to slaves who poured out wine for the guests. It includes giving food and drink, extending shelter, providing clothes and visiting the sick and prisoners. In the context of Christian faith *diakonia* means to do, in a compassionate way, whatever we can to help the needy in any given situation. Jesus saw in the word *diakonia* the essence of the dynamic that makes a servant and a disciple: "Who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? But I am among you as one who serves (Luke 22: 27). Jesus was direct and straight-forward when he established *diakonia* as a fundamental and essential requirement of God for his people. In the famous passage on spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12: 4-11), Paul links the gifts of the Spirit with service, *diakonia*. *Diakonia* is carrying God's mercy into a merciless world or is to deal with the assistance of abnormalities. In general, the Christian *diakonia* refers to any service of genuine love. This is the essence of *diakonia*.

A recent brochure from the W C C Programme Unit on Sharing and Service (1994) sets forth eleven characteristics of *diakonia* as it has come to be understood ecumenically. According to the report, ecumenical *diakonia* :

1. puts the least advantaged first;
2. is mutual (those who serve the needy, accept their own need to receive and the ability of the needy to give);
3. acts with those it claims to serve, not for or about or over them;

4. respects the needy's judgement of what their needs are and how to meet them;
5. adds to the power of the needy to control what happens to them;
6. responds to immediate needs while understanding, resisting and transforming systems which create and aggravate them;
7. shares the resources that promote life;
8. remains faithful and refuses to desert the needy;
9. acknowledges the inevitable cost as well as gain;
10. gives an account of itself to those it serves;
11. sets no boundaries to its compassion.

The main resource for the survival and security of life in our traditional and present context is people. Promoting and maintaining the life of the whole village-based community takes place within each family unit. Therefore, parents, brothers, sisters, cousins, uncles, aunts, nieces, nephews, etc; are the main resources at the base of our human community. This traditional reality has been affirmed by text such as 1 Timothy 5: 8. *Diakonia* starts from there, for without a human basis of *diakonia* there is no feeling. Jesus within his human base is guided to see God's will within the wider community, nation and the world (Matt. 12: 48-50).

The church as *koinonia* is called to share not only in the suffering of its own community but in the suffering of all by advocacy and care for the poor, needy and marginalised; joining in all efforts for justice and peace within human societies; by exercising and promoting responsible stewardship of creation and by keeping alive hope in the heart of humanity. In so doing it shows its vocation to invite all people to respond in faith to God's love.

Diakonia to the whole world and *koinonia* cannot be separated (Best T F and Günther Gassmann (eds), 1994: 233).

The commitment of the people to service and sharing in the community grows out of their belief that God has genuinely called them to these different services or ministries. The peoples are servants of the community; chiefs are the servants of the people; people are servants of the chiefs; those in leadership, including ministers, are the servants of the community of believers, the church. When people discover these clues in the midst of life - inclusiveness, reconciliation, unity, dialogue, participation, partnership, fellowship, sharing and service - then we are closer to that heavenly community, the kingdom of heaven (Meo J I, July 1994: 229). For Christians, to become servants is a high honour because it is through service that we show our love and fidelity to Christ.

Martin Robra (1994: 277 & 281 says, during the Middle Ages, charity and almsgiving were motivated by the fact that they were seen, under the influence of Matthew 25: 31-46, as means of salvation. Monasteries, religious orders and lay brotherhoods operated institutions like hospitals. The Reformation viewed *diakonia* both as the believers spontaneous response of gratitude, directed to the suffering neighbour (Luke 10: 25-37), and as a task of the community, demanding a system of relief for the poor with the support of the local government (Lutheran churches) or organised by congregations through the ministry of deacons and deaconesses (Reformed churches), while the Orthodox churches viewed the Eucharist as embracing all aspects of life. It is a representative act of thanksgiving and offering on behalf of the whole world. The Eucharist celebration demands reconciliation and sharing among all those regarded

as brothers and sisters in the one family of God and is a constant challenge in the search for appropriate relationships in social, economic and political life.

3.1.1

SHARING

The basic question is, what is sharing and what is one sharing? The dictionary defines sharing as "dividing profits, costs, etc, with others; - becoming part owner with others; - paying part of an expense; - have or use with, have in common". Our second question is what are we sharing? The answer is resources. The third question will be, what are resources? The dictionary defines a resource as "wealth, supplies of goods, raw materials etc. which a person or country has or can use; - mineral wealth, potential water power - productivity of the soil; - something which can be turned to for support; - that which helps in doing something".

According to the definitions above, sharing implies a situation of give and take in a non-exploitative and non-dependent relationship. It also demands conditions of mutual trust and understanding of what resources are, what they will be used for and what kind of society people are trying to create by using any chosen resource. Sharing of resources also implies, sharing human and spiritual resources. Resource sharing calls us to share not only the fruits of our labour but also our struggle and pains. (Nyoni 1988: 158-159; 161 & 164).

In Acts Chapter 4:32-35, we read the following: "The group of believers was one in mind and heart. No one said that

any of his belongings was his own, but they all shared with one another everything they had. With great power the Apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and God poured rich blessing on all. There was no one in the group who was in need. Those who owned fields or houses would sell them, bring the money received from the sale, and the money was distributed to each one according to his or her needs".

The Apostles' unity of heart and soul was not created by human response to God, but by the action of God calling the people and bringing into life and work of the risen Christ. The free authority of the Apostles was expressed, not as a prerogative of office but as a gift of Christ who set them free for this contribution to the community. In truth, the human being is tripartite; each person is centred on the Holy Spirit, which flows through the psyche and the soma, uniting them, and also fusing the congregation of the faithful in a single, dynamic whole (Harlan 1906: 150). Thus reconstituted, the person becomes part of "one great family", and could set about constructing a community in which industrial production, commerce, and politics could be encompassed and reformed. The runaway urban world would be reclaimed again, its alienating logic replaced by that of the "original" theocracy. Man and his material context would together be healed and cleansed" (Comaroff 1985: 179).

The ultimate goal of resource sharing therefore must be to lead the weak to strength and self-reliance. Self-reliance here is equated with justice in which all the components and factors which make up life and human dignity, are in place. And resources should be defined not only in terms of meeting a need but also of removing that which causes certain needs to exist. This is because there can only be meaning to

life, if there is some degree of self-reliance and control over resources to support that life (Nyoni 1988: 161).

The idea of sharing is not novel to blacks. Sharing is embedded in the traditions of blacks from time immemorial. In African tradition, sharing is a state of mind, an attitude, a practice, an institution and element of culture. It implies giving when one has anything to give, and distributing goods among the original owner and his or her peers without any preliminary agreement being formalized. Generosity of heart is expected of everyone. Thus everyone is reminded that to exercise solidarity is for their own good. As a great African, Diagienda Kuntima, spiritual head of the Kimbanguist church, has said: I help myself when I help others (Mpansu 1986:386); in *Sepedi* we say *go fa ke go fega*. Thus, whether rich or poor, great or small, a person's standing depends on the confidence and recognition of others. This assertion is confirmed by Du Toit (1969:277) who wrote: "In the earliest records available and among the simplest societies today we find reference to persons participating in labour to prepare fields or to harvest the fruits. The herding of animals was often delegated by a number of neighbouring families to one person. For the concept of being human in Africa is far more that of the Bible than the individualism of the modern world (Taylor 1963: 117). In the Bible man does not exist for himself in his identity but in his involvement - so also in Africa.

The study of tribal life reveals that in most black tribes, homesteads were unable to satisfy all their labour requirements at all times and depended on assistance provided through communal labour. The chiefs depended largely on the labour tribute due to them by members of the

tribe. Commoners were helped by their kinsmen, friends and neighbours (Molefe 1989:43); and this custom is called *Letsema* (sotho word), *Amalima* (in Xhosa) *Dima* (in Shona), *Chipuma* or *Gala* (in Malawi). It is a traditional custom relating to reciprocity, is a work-party, where men and women in a small community will take turns in assisting each other with major tasks such as clearing land, cultivating, planting, weeding and harvesting. Beer and meat are provided for all the participants. Small presents of grain may be given at harvest but otherwise there is no remuneration. Although hard work is involved, the *letsema* or *amalima* have a party atmosphere with conversation, singing and refreshments attesting to their convivial nature (Hunter 1961: 87-92).

Mogodisano: Are "small-scale informal mutual benefit societies" (Burrows 1959: 50). This term *mogodisano*, is derived from the Sotho word 'godisa' which means to receive payment. In Xhosa it is called *Umgalelo*. The name is derived from the Xhosa verb *ukugalela*, "to pour forth, out, or in". (Kropf 1915: 113). In the old Xhosa tradition it could be used as *ukugale la inkomo*, to pour in cattle in competing for a wife. Two or more contestants for a wife would bid against each other with cattle. The competition for a wife is called *ukuxama* (Kropf 1915: 114 & 466). *Mogodisano* or *umgalelo* is based on mutual benefit and has an element of saving. Due to the fact that *mogodisano* requires contributions of money (rather than labour), honesty is a prerequisite. This honesty is best assured and checked by persons who know each other. The result is that *mogodisano* is usually undertaken by people who know and trust one another. This form of association is still practised by many blacks as a way of compulsory saving, especially amongst blacks in the urban areas.

These societies consist of a number of persons, who agree that each will contribute a specific weekly or monthly sum of money. The number is limited to give everyone a chance of receiving the pool before the end of the year. The total proceeds are given to members in turns. The presentation may take place at an informal gathering or during a small ceremony where admission is charged and sometimes beer is sold, especially in large associations.

The *mogodisano* or *umgalelo* principle has roots in traditional African practices of mutual help and reciprocity in social relationships which could take specific forms. Among the *Tswana*, for an example, there is the *mafisa* custom whereby a poor man borrows a cow from his more prosperous neighbour and keeps every second calf in return for caring for the animal. It was customary for a chief to dispense cows and land in this way without any question of transferring ownership (Kokoali 1983).

Parallels can be drawn with the "box clubs" and friendly societies of the British working class which were concerned with "the problem of thrift and self-help", voluntary associations which had their origin in the 17th and 18th centuries but flowered in the early 19th century. It was an attempt by working men to meet their social and convivial needs as well as to insure against the hazards of sickness and death (Gosden 1973: vii).

The whole purpose of *mogodisano* or *umgalelo* is to amass a lump sum of money at regular intervals which it would be difficult to accumulate in any other way. A chair-person and secretary are responsible for dealing with the business

side of the party, recording all the sums of money "paid so that this can be reciprocated at the next party, but the social side is also important" (Oosthuizen 1986: 138).

TIMITI: *Timiti* is an evening concert among the South Sothos, in which music is provided for singing and dancing, and food and drink for refreshment. In the past the host would also bring beer and food as gifts as the party was not intended for gain. The emphasis was rather social enjoyment and entertainment. Nowadays, money is raised by charging an admission fee at the door. People also pay for the privilege of asking certain individuals or groups to sing particular items, or not to sing, as the case may be. They are expected to bid one another and this competitive element is a money-spinner as well as adding to the enjoyment (Oosthuizen 1986: 140).

Furthermore, *timiti* is patterned on the "tea-meeting" or concert of the "school" people in the country, where alcohol was banned, and the *iitimiti* of the "red" people, where beer was sold and there was traditional dancing (Hunter 1952: 361-362). Wilson and Mafeje (1963: 132-136) note that this type of concert "apparently dates from the beginning of the mission education, and that it appears in its most elaborate form in the afternoon spend. Now it is a popular way of raising money for social benefits such as crèches, old-age homes and football clubs¹⁰. This *timiti* is for adult, not young people¹¹.

BURIAL SOCIETIES: Burial societies are another form of variation of co-operative associations formed by Africans. The aim of the burial societies is to cover all the funeral expenses of the deceased and to provide moral support and sympathy to the bereaved. These societies function in two

ways. Money is either collected as regular contribution, more usually, a fixed sum is collected from each member when one of their number, or member of his or her family dies (Oosthuizen 1986: 143). In addition they also subscribe to burial insurance companies and building societies.

Some African people say that they do not belong to the Westernized burial societies, because these do not meet the emotional needs of an African. African people have no pride in belonging to this sort of burial society as they do with one of their own, and the lack of any sort of personal element does not give them a sense of belonging. If an African man dies, then the members of his burial society are morally bound to act like his kin and so fulfil the traditional obligations. If the deceased comes from the rural areas they will immediately inform his family and see to it that all the formalities are correctly observed. Prayers will be conducted the same evening where he or she died, and the body will be sent home for a "proper" burial (Oosthuizen 1986: 144).

There is a considerable social pressure among Africans to join a burial society. If you are excluded you feel very lonely¹². There is total community involvement in these burial societies. Not only is there mutual aid but there is also sharing in the expression of grief. The African burial societies fulfil these same needs, their members taking over the role of the kin in the dislocation of the urban situation. By giving money towards the funeral expenses they are "putting their hands into" the burial work and so following the old form. This is done because one day the member's turn will come (Oosthuizen 1986: 144-145).

These burial societies have developed a religious component, to meet the religious as well as the social needs of people who suffer deprivation, cultural, social, economic and political. Entertainment is provided, with the singing of church and traditional songs. They usually meet on Sundays, for their fund-raising parties. These societies have also names like "The Great North Burial Society" and their members wear distinctive uniforms.

With the coming of Christianity, mission and the church activities initially intended to provide for all the converts social and religious needs, the Christian community took over from traditional villages as the small-scale social unit. Industrialization, however, contributed to the breakdown of social relations and the consequent anomie of the individual. The large Western-oriented churches in the townships have generally failed to meet the needs of the African people for close community and mutual aid. The African Initiated Churches, on the other hand, provided small caring communities which satisfy a variety of needs in the urban milieu (Oosthuizen 1986: 139).

Stokvel: In African Tradition women come together after a feast to help clean the pots. The host will donate food and beer as an offer for their labour. Men will also come to eat the "head of the animals" slaughtered and to drink beer. With coming of a money economy among urbanised people clubs were formed to continue this system reciprocity, but the emphasis changed from being a purely social affair to raising funds for mutual aid (Oosthuizen 1986: 141).

This institution occurs in nearly all black urban areas. While its form may differ from one urban area to another,

certain structural and functional features remain constant. The word '*stokvel*' is a corruption of the English word '*stock-fair*', where numbers of people gathered to sell their stock to the highest bidder. Brandel-Syrier (1962:17) defines a '*stokvel*' as: "A form of organised mutual assistance based on the rule of reciprocity", and Hellman (1948: 43) roughly defines a stockfair as a mutual benefit society.

Membership of a *stokvel* is dependent on personal invitation. The main function of a *stokvel*, is to act as a kind of savings. Each member of the '*stokvel*' pays a subscription on a weekly or monthly basis,. Music is generally provided.

The various forms of sharing or self-help schemes mentioned above contain the elements of reciprocity, the mutual benefit obtained from pooling resources, and the knowledge that time and labour or money spent on another man's or woman's field will be repaid in due course. The working party thus has an economic aspect which is to the benefit of the organizer and those who assist him or her. These schemes have an in-built assurance policy in the sense that those who assist when others need them will also be assisted when their turn comes. It can be seen that the central theme in these activities is mutual assistance based on the principle of reciprocity.

Sharing of resources takes place today in the African Initiated Churches as something deriving from African tradition, though the reasons behind it and its meaning may be outside the experience of the faithful. Its development and application however, vary within the various contemporary African church communities. It does not

everywhere have the same importance or dynamism. In those churches which are the direct product of Western Christian missionary effort and where westernization has gone hand in glove, the practice of sharing is secondary in relation to the means of subsistence and development available to them through the parent organization, despite the quest for indigenisation or inculturation, and outside aid is very evidently significant.

It is in the African Initiated Churches that sharing of resources is really organized on a more or less systematic institutional basis, to ensure not only subsistence but also equipping needs. Joy in giving is great and it is compounded by the enthusiasm and sense of fellowship which binds members of the congregation together, and above all by awareness of responding to an appeal of the church and of the authority who is present with them and who recognizes each of the faithful givers. They will give several times during a single night vigil and various groups will compete, each undertaking to give more and making every effort to do so through the repeated contribution of their members. At the end of the night vigil, totals are counted and the results are announced to the congregation, with congratulations to the groups achieving the highest figures.

Sharing of resources or redistribution and reciprocity is the African traditional political economy. This embraces essentially both solidarity and the principle of community. Consequently it can be said that Africans re-distribute their products and in so doing create structures of productive reciprocity which are themselves in turn a motivation for production. It is evident that both the African Initiated Churches and the Western-oriented churches

prefer community development as a goal of church activity. A holistic approach to development is the only way forward.

There are those churches and religious groups in Black Africa which directly or indirectly improve the living standard of their adherents through moral reformation, health improvement, less money-wasting practices concentrating on basic needs, stable family life in spite of difficulties, often, in having their families with them, consistent habits which are formed round a seven-day week programme which include fellowship, healing practices and welfare activities¹³. This is especially true of the indigenous churches where initiative among the adherents is encouraged, trust created, leadership developed (especially among the youth), flexibility towards the changing modern situation is encouraged (Oosthuizen 1986: 231).

The above mentioned societies or clubs are a challenge to the church, especially the Western-oriented churches, because the African Initiated Churches are indirectly involved in these associations. This is confirmed by Bosch (1984: 35-36), when he maintains that the African Initiated Churches are "the best examples of the practice of basic communities of the African soil". These associations offer a sense of belonging in an alternative community in which social relationships are based on mutual obligation and reciprocity. At the same time there is an active involvement in self-help projects which come to grips with the immediate social and economic problems. On the religious side, ritual action provides a direct link with the ultimate and a feeling of tapping the source of power. The success of these associations is seen as evidence that God is with their members (Oosthuizen 1986: 147).

3.2 THE ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH FUNERAL BENEFIT ASSURANCE FUND

The Zion Christian Church is the church of the more thoroughly proletarianised in the community: as a result, its socio-cultural forms are the product of a necessarily complementary existence with the demands of wage labour; and it makes practical and iconic use of more than the snatched, disembodied signs of the neo-colonial system, putting coherent features of the productive and organizational forms of the latter to work in its own interest (Comaroff 1985: 241).

The size of the congregation of the Zion Christian Church is such that it has evolved into a significant sector of the population of South Africa. As such this slice of the population derives its income from the South African economy and also becomes the victim of the economic pressures brought upon the country.

An integral part of the standard of a nation with moral fibre is the cohesive spirit of the family unit and the respect of life. As an African nation we were taught to respect death and as such we hold the dignified burial of our lost ones in high regard. The sad reality is that death is always unexpected. The Zion Christian Church has taken it upon itself to help financially in this regard by founding the *Zion Christian Church Funeral Benefit Trust Fund*, under the directorship of Bishop Barnabas Lekganyane on the 1 October 1990. This Fund is administered by the *Marc de La Harpe & Associates (Pty) Ltd and African Life Assurance Company*. Their offices were officially opened by

Bishop Barnabas Lekganyane in Pretoria, Suit No. 1 Centre Forum, corner of Van der Walt and Struben Streets, on the 31st January, 1993. The Zion Christian Church has full control of the society to ensure that the interests of its members are protected.

This Trust Fund had placed itself in the position of guardian over the interest of its congregation, ensuring a means of providing the dignified burial of those family members who participate in the Fund. Excess funds will then be utilised to fund projects established for the purpose of upgrading the education of members of the congregation, who most require it. Furthermore the concept had been designed to reach as many people as possible within the congregation. The Bishop ensured that the premium payable would be as low as possible in an endeavour to reach as many members as possible. The philosophy behind this is that the more members who join the Fund, the more other needy members can be reached whilst the well-being and prosperity of the members participating is protected (Motollo 1990:20-21).

**3.2.1. ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH BURIAL BENEFIT TRUST FUND:
MISSION STATEMENT**

1. Our mission is to ensure that all members of the Zion Christian Church are covered in terms of African Life Policy AL0001, including members of the church who are over the age of sixty-five.
2. Our mission is to educate the staff of Zion Christian Church in proper administrative principles.

3. We will ensure that proper control is kept on the matters of Zion Christian Church as they relate to the Burial Fund.

4. We will ensure that the individual Zion Christian member is secure in the knowledge that his church is being administered properly.

5. We will attempt to reduce the trauma of death within the family unit.

6. We will efficiently and courteously handle claims which arise from a death within the family unit.

7. We will ensure that the Burial Benefit Fund remains profitable and ensure that the Zion Christian Church member is not exploited.

8. We will channel profits back into the church for the upliftment of the Zion Christian Church as a whole.

9. In our dealings with them the dignity of Zion Christian Church will be preserved above all.

10. We will cultivate the dignity of the individual Zion Christian member.

11. We will attempt to ensure that the individual Zion Christian Church member remains proud to be a member of his church.

The benefits of this Fund are as follows: Adults - R1 500; Children 14-25 - R1 500; Children 6-13 - R 500; Children 0-5 - R 250. The administration of this Fund is processed at an average of 200 000 documents per month. The Burial Benefit

Fund has been successfully running for eighteen months in its present form. The Benefit Fund is represented by church secretaries at some 1 128 congregations across South Africa. Further-more each minister and secretary are being educated, to ensure that the contribution system is properly administered (Motolla 1993:12;14;17;34-35).

3.3 THE BISHOP EDWARD LEKGANYANE BURSARY FUND

Article twenty six of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, stipulates that it is a right for one to go to school, and primary schooling must be free. At school one should be able to develop all one's talents and one should be taught how to get on with others, whatever their race, religion or the country they come from. The parents also have a right to choose how and what their children will be taught at school.

The purpose of education is to enable one to sift and weigh evidence, to discern the true from false, the real from the unreal and the facts from fiction. Education is therefore, to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. And therefore, we should remember that the goal of education is intelligence and character. Education will therefore, transmit to one not only the accumulated knowledge of society but also the accumulated experience of social living. For education is power. Thus Bishop Edward Lekganyane deems it fit that his members should go to school old and young.

Bishop Edward Lekganyane discovered the power of education after he had completed his theological education at Stofberg

Theological College near the University of the North. He thus founded the Bursary Fund for his church. He furthermore established a primary School in Moria, and this school was very small hence Bishop Barnabas Lekganyane and Marc De la Harpe and Associates through the Burial Benefit Fund, added eight classrooms in 1993.

Barnabas Lekganyane also saw the light of education and he completed his theological education in Witbank and he thus founded the BISHOP EDWARD LEKGANYANE BURSARY FUND with its Board, to ensure that education can be provided from a wider base. Bishop Barnabas Lekganyane also established a High School called Marobathotha, adjacent to the headquarters of the Zion Christian Church. He furthermore instituted an Adult Literacy Campaign.

J M S Mamabolo, Assistant Director of Education Allemansdrift area, gives us a summary of statistics on the Zion Christian Church Literacy Campaign (1990-1991) as follows: Orlando Centre 48 Students; Meadowlands, 25 and the Regional Co-ordinator was E Matshidza. Thabamooopo has 56 students, all women; Rakopi has 42 students and the supervising teacher was D Seabi; Soshanguve has 72 students. There were some disturbances but schooling nevertheless continued well under the supervision of the teacher M D Zulu; Mankweng has 75 students and the district co-ordinator was M J Mabetlela. Siyabuswa has 56 students and the supervising teacher was J Mahlangu; Vaalbank has 110 students and the supervising teachers were Mrs. Mahlangu and Mrs. Mackay. In Venda centres there were 183 students and the district co-ordinator was A J Mukhondo.

Mamabolo then, made the following remarks: "The Zion Christian Church Literacy Campaign is in flourishing progress. The multitudes of knowledge-seekers flock so much to our centres. We require the support and co-operation by the various Departments of education, from teachers, tutors and other interested institutions, to facilitate in peace, in the co-ordination of the learning centres for these knowledge-thirsty people. We entreat youth in the church to take cognisance of the importance of being educated. The future is so bleak for an uneducated person. We cherish a hope that both young and old will heed this advice and then, dedicate yourselves to the letter in this regard" (1992:28-35).

In the MESSENGER of September 1990, the official mouthpiece of the Zion Christian Church there was a column called, "Pass Your Examinations Easily", by J C Morwane and T J Mpye . In that issue Morwane explains the problems of Biology and Physical Science while Mpye explains the basic approach to the teaching of Mathematics and hints on the question paper of Standard Ten. Both are using the approved educational techniques, strategies and principles.

3.4 INVOLVEMENT OF THE AFRICAN INITIATED CHURCHES IN POLITICS

Every man or woman lives in two worlds. He or she lives within the four walls of the place he or she calls home, and where his or her companions are members of his or her own family, this is his or her private home. But equally a man or woman has to go out of his or her house and home, and has to live in a public world. He or she is not only a member of a family but is also a member of a community, a state and

a world. He or she is not only a private person but he or she is a public citizen.

A man's or woman's attitude to the world can take more than one form. He or she can be totally immersed in the world. He or she can plunge himself or herself into it and live as if there is no other world. His or her attitude may be: 'Eat, drink and enjoy yourself, for tomorrow you die'; or he or she can take the opposite course and completely renounce this world. There has always been a strain of so-called Christian thought which had no use for this world at all, and there were people who have deliberately and as completely as possible divorced themselves from the world. During the third and fourth centuries there were great days of the monks and the hermits, when they deliberately turned their backs on life and on men and women and went to live in the desert.

So then, there are people who are immersed in the world, and there are people who in the name of Christianity have renounced the world. From the point of Christian ethics immersion in the world nor isolation from the world can be justified. Jesus Christ was quite clear that His men were not of this world (John 17:14 & 16), so much so were they not of this world that He warned them that the world would hate them as it hated Him (John 15:18-19; 17:14). It is therefore, clear that no follower of Christ can be immersed in the world. On the other hand Jesus Christ was equally clear that God loved the world (John 3:16). He did not pray that His men should be taken out of this world, but that they should be kept from evil of the world (John 17:15), and in the end He deliberately and with set purpose sent them out into the world (John 17:18; Matt. 28:19). In Matthew

22:21, Christians are commanded to pay the Emperor what belongs to him, and pay God what belongs to Him.

What is politics? The true meaning of politics is not strife, opposition or a struggle to get to the top, but politics have something to do with the welfare of one's people or with that of humanity in general. The welfare of man or woman is both spiritual and physical, and it is wrong to regard man or woman only in a spiritual sense and it is also equally wrong to think of man or woman only in a material sense or in a political sense.

Now the basic question is: Should Christians take part into politics? In any part of the world Christians are divided on this issue. African Christians are not an exception over this issue, but there is a reason why some of them respond negatively over this issue. Many missionaries who preached the Gospel in Africa, taught Africans that it is wrong for a Christian to participate in politics, but while they themselves participated in politics.

The rise of the African Initiated Churches stands in direct connection with the awakening all over the world of a spirit of nationalism. The founding of the Tembu Church by Nehemiah Tile - who could be called the father of the African Initiated Churches Movement in Southern Africa - was not only a reaction against missionary paternalism but also against the actions of the Cape Colony Government of the 1880's (Oosthuizen 1986: 233). Tile was the first African to lead an African Initiated Church in which the Thembu Paramount Chief was accorded a prominent place. Tile was accused by the mission church of venturing into politics, in spite of the fact that in 1875 this church was associated

with the imposition of white rule over the Thembu Chiefdom through magistrates from the Cape Government and the Chiefdom was annexed in that same year.

The first separatist church emphasized black liberation and "a conception of common blackness" (Saunders 1971: 555 & 567). Tile's church was considered to be more dangerous than elite black organizations of the time such as the Native Educational Association and the South African Native Political Association. Nearly four million so called "separatists" rejected the fleshpots of "Egypt" in order to be themselves (Oosthuizen 1976: 61-62). Many others could be mentioned. The largest indigenous church among the Zulu, the *iBandla lamaNazaretha* ("The Church of the Nazarites") started off as a liberation movement (Oosthuizen 1986: 233). King Sobhusa II undoubtedly utilized the monolithic support of the Zionists as a political asset in dealing first with the British and later, in 1972, with post-independence elections in which his own *Imbokodvo* Movement won a landslide victory. Thus the Zionists did contribute to the political stability of the country by enhancing the power and authority of the King (Oosthuizen 1986: 179).

Africa does not accept the hatred of violent power but of love - that power which will overcome evil with good. Power is thus interpreted not as authority over others but the potentiality to reach one's fellow man. Life should be understood as participation and as such its relationship aspect becomes vital. Power means in the service of one's fellow man; it is not power over others but power with others and as such it is creative and leads to the liberation of people. It frees the powerful from their dehumanizing perversion and the sin of the abuse of power and the powerless from their position (Boesak 1976: 48).

Black power is understood as the "power to be" and "the courage to accept my human worth" (Boesak 1976: 150). Suffering implies an experience of power - the power of the powerless to take on oneself this burden. God does not shun suffering; He accepts it. He comes into man's situation of need as in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. God shares in Christ the lives of the oppressed (Luke 4: 8).

There has been a resentment and feeling of suspicion among Black people in South Africa because their just claims to economic opportunity and sufficient land have been disregarded. "How can the white community wish us well, if whilst they gives us the Bible and they take from us land and the privilege to rise in industrial service?" It is difficult to sever *what we teach* from *what we do*: Hence this tendency to separate on the part of many Black people in matters of Christian Religion (Lea 1927:17).

The African Initiated Churches in South Africa played a major role in the establishment of the African National Native Congress in 1912 (the word "native" was deleted in 1925). The African National Congress was formed because of the exclusion of Blacks from the National Convention which drafted the Constitution for the Union of South Africa. For forty-eight years before this organization was banned in South Africa, it tried in vain to convince the successive white governments that South Africa is doomed if Blacks are not included in its law-making processes. This emphasis with its nationalist tendencies was strong in some African Initiated Churches (Oosthuizen 1986: i).

The Commission for the Socio-Economic Development of the Bantu Areas of the Union of South Africa (better known as

the Tomlinson Commission after its chair-person) brought its report in 1955. The report described, in a very comprehensive way, the situation in black areas. It had drawn the blue-print of apartheid societies. It dealt with African life in all its aspects: politics, economy, culture and religion. One of the commissioners, Dr. C H Badenhorst, was a N G missionary and educationist (Kritzinger J J:1994). He saw to it that one of the volumes of this massive report dealt with the religious situations hence the African Initiated Churches were also affected.

In 1953 Rev. C J Lucas and Rev. J Chiliza made a plea to Dr. Eiselen to recognize the African Initiated Churches and his reply was: "I wish to inform you that the Department in principle favours the independence of the Black Churches from European control, when the ability of the office bearers designated to administer the affairs of the church will allow them to do it in an efficient manner. The department will therefore, consider sympathetically the future recognition when transfer of Moderatorship to a Black office-bearer takes place" (Sundkler 1970:283).

In 1955 a Zulu politician by the name of A W G Champion met Dr. Verwoerd at Nongoma. Champion made a pious plea on behalf of the Black Churches with an elegant reference to the founder of our faith: "the harvest is plentiful". He was thus pleading for the recognition of the Black Churches. The whole machinery of church recognition had obviously been thrown out of gear and the government was seeking a new approach (Sundkler 1970:282).

The Tomlinson report further regarded the proclamation of ecclesiastical independence among the Black people as

essential. The Commissioners felt that the time had arrived for a new approach to the problem. It thus recommended that all churches and missionary societies at work among the Blacks be registered with the state and except in very exceptional cases, the state should for an indefinite period grant recognition to no new churches.

In 1957 the Government issued far reaching amendments: Churches in South Africa having a following of one million or more souls of all races would automatically qualify for church sites and this rule only applied to Western oriented churches. Other churches would have to show that they had a following of one hundred baptized members over a period of fifteen years, to possess a regular Constitution, to show general signs of progress, to possess at least six congregations, the ministers should be educated, possess moral integrity and ability to discharge civil functions. If the requirements were met then the church concerned would be recognized by the State. Unfortunately most of the Black Churches were unable to meet these requirements (Sundkler 1970:285)

In February 1959 a rule was passed which affected the Black Churches directly. By December 1960 church sites occupied by unrecognized churches in the urban areas had to be vacated. The new rule hit hard almost all the African Initiated Churches and threw them into a severe crisis. The crisis was part of the general influx of Africans into urban areas in the late fifties. On many occasions Government ministers, particularly Dr Verwoerd and De Wet Nel expressed concern over the rising number of the non-recognized Black churches. A few years later Dr Verwoerd suggested that the Black Churches should unite into five churches. He thought that the whole problem would be easily handled by the

administrators. In fact the leaders of these churches did not appreciate this point.

Government machinery of recognition of churches initiated in 1925 was discontinued in about 1965. From 1900 only eleven African Initiated Churches were recognized, one of these, moreover, the Ethiopian Church of South Africa was struck off the list in 1953. The total number was reduced to ten and out of these only four were recognized after 1925, that is, in the period regulated by the rule of the Native Affairs Commission laid down in 1925. These four were the Bantu Methodist Church of South Africa, 1933; the African Congregational Church, 1937; the African Orthodox Church, 1941 and finally the African Gospel Church 1948 (Sundkler 1970:286).

The African Initiated Churches are accused of being too much inward-looking and having no interest in politics, but this is not the true picture of these churches. Yes, a large section of these churches are the poorest of the poor, the people with the lowest jobs of all. They are what they call the 'working class'. They know what it means to be oppressed, exploited and crushed. And so what do these people say about politics? They join political organisations, trade unions and civic organisations in the struggle for liberation. But it is a matter of individual choice. Members of the same church or denomination may join different political organisations, trade unions and other community organisation for the welfare of their society.

It is very clear from the Scriptures that Christians cannot be neutral on the matter of human dignity, freedom and equality. Men Like Moses, Joshua and Nehemiah took part in

politics. Moses prayed for the deliverance of his people from under foreign rule. The weeping prophet Jeremiah said "I will go to the people in power and talk with them. Surely they know what God requires, what the Lord wants them to do" (Jeremiah 5:5).

Bishop Barnabas Lekganyane (1987) said the following about politics: We do not support apartheid as it is not in agreement with the principles of Christianity which are based on love. However, we are praying for its abolition. The policy of the Zion Christian Church does not divide and differentiate its members according to their affiliations to certain organizations; rather it is always current practice that the Zion Christian Church is for reconciliation through the medium of prayer, of people who are fighting. It is not crucial, neither important, in the Zion Christian Church to which organisation you belong nor where you come from. The Zion Christian Church has members who belong to different and divergent organisations at home. What is important, however, is that all these people are children of the Zion Christian Church, who are loved in equal measure in the spirit of the Zion Christian Church, which is the spirit of generating and promoting peace country-wide (Motolla 1990:4).

The model of the alternative of the Zion Christian Church is not the encapsulated group on the desert fringe; it is the new Jerusalem, a centred theocracy. Yet, at the local level, its congregations function like encompassed nominal societies, their regular practice being a perpetual protest and healing catharsis which repeatedly attempts to redress the contradictions of political coercion and economic dependency (Comaroff 1985: 241).

Archbishop Ngada, one of the Zionist leaders in South Africa, reiterated the view of Bishop Barnabas Lekganyane, when he was addressing a conference in Holland during September 1991. He said the following about the African Initiated Churches: Some people think that because we do not often make public statements about political matters, our churches are not concerned about politics. It is not easy for us to make public statements and, in any case, public statements are not the only indication of concern about social injustices. Our whole existence as African Initiated Churches is based upon our protest against racial discrimination, oppression, domination and humiliation in the Western-oriented churches. That is why we broke away from those churches. We have always been striving as churches for freedom and independence.

In our history we saw the missionary church and the state as one and the same thing. From the beginning we were regarded as a hotbed of African nationalism. And what scholars and academics often overlook is that the people who belong to our churches are the people who also belong to trade unions, civic associations and political organisations. We do not come to our churches in order to escape from these political and social bodies. We come to our churches for the healing of the whole person in community, but if we want to fight for our rights as workers we go to the trade unions. In a similar way we struggle for our rights through civic associations and political organisations. Generally speaking our members are deeply involved in politics - they are the oppressed of this country (Ngada February 1992:3).

On the 24 th May, 1992, members of the Church of God and Saints of Christ - commonly called the Israelites -

commemorated the 71st anniversary of their ancestors' massacre by the government of Jan Smuts. Hundreds of Israelite men were mowed down at Bulhoek, a village situated about 50 kilometers outside Queenstown, on that fateful day of the 24th May, in 1921. They died because they had refused to compromise their religious beliefs as black Israelites (Kekana 1992: 22).

In Africa the final totality is the community which is not complete without the supernatural world. To fit into the community means to receive social, economic and spiritual benefits - the perfect 'social gospel'. These religious communities become the keepers of the conscience of the people; they are vital as establishers of reciprocal relationships for health and stability of the personalities of the people in the culture (Oosthuizen 1979: 12).

3.4.1 INVOLVEMENT OF THE ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN BUSINESS.

Economics plays a very significant role in the lives of any community. Our lives are valued in Rands and cents. In this regard we have a perfect example of our Lord Jesus Christ who was bought with silver; again we have an example of the liberation movement in South Africa, which was basically fighting for the land in order to share the wealth of the country. Their primary goal is to empower the oppressed people economically. Political liberation is a means to and not an end in itself. So, there is no institution, organisation, association or any form of a group of people which could operate without utilising the material resources.

At the national level, the Zion Christian Church owns farmland which it works by mechanized means, though its proceeds are used primarily in support of the cult centre, and the bulk is not marketed. It also employs bureaucratic techniques of administration and accounting (Comaroff 1985: 241). Generally, most members of the Zion Christian Church are involved in small business, from street hawkers to shop-keepers and few are involved in big business. Their corner-stone of success is the Bishop and his *ditaelo*. All business men and women make it a point of annually visiting Moria to ask for *ditaelo*, for they believe that the church has no limits. And they are careful not to prescribe to the Bishop what to do, because they regard themselves as patients who have come to the doctor. Because patients normally do not prescribe the treatment to the doctor, but tell the doctor about their illness.

What is important again is that business men and women should run their business along sound business principles, giving their customers a fair deal, in respect of quality of service, pricing, politeness, quality products and dependability. The business men and women of this church believe that sound business practice should be coupled with *ditaelo* and it must win the day. Furthermore business men and women in the church have organised themselves into a *Lekgotla La Baepereki* (Organisation of the Self-employed Business Men and Women). They normally meet once a year at the headquarters.

Bishop Barnabas Lekganyane bought the Bahwaduba Bus Services from Kellermans in 1969, and a new management team was introduced on the 17th January, 1983. They serve the area of Boyne, Mankweng, Makotopong, Sebaeng, Dikgale,

Solomondale, Namphaka, Houtbosdorp, Olyfburg, Matoks, Ga-Ramokgopa, Eisleben and Pietersburg city.

On 17th March, 1985 Bishop Barnabas Lekganyane officially opened the Matthew Auto Spares at Atteridgeville. He had also opened the Kgotso Family Store, in the city of Pretoria, at 34 Van der Walt Street. Members of the church as far as the Western Cape province, Namibia, Swaziland and Zimbabwe flock to this store. And they sell the following articles: Men's manyanyata (dancing shoes); boys manyanyata; green cap; navy cap; men's khakhi suit; boys khakhi suit; khakhi socks; men's khakhi shirt; Zion Christian Church Green Badge Ties, Khakhi Badge Ties; special boot whitener made in the Bishop's factory; cap covers; ladies green skirt; ladies blue uniforms and girls blue uniforms.

Bishop Barnabas Lekganyane was invited by the Pietersburg Chamber of Commerce and Industries to deliver a paper on the 26th July, 1990. His paper was entitled "Know Your Employees". Basically he was speaking about the individuals who are job-seekers, who have a responsibility of providing their dependents with food, clothes, education and other needs. The second target was the schools, sports facilities and other institutions like welfare organisations. He further outlined the philosophy of church regarding a family unit and said a happy man and woman are people who are employed and so make a happy family unit. He concluded by praying for the Pietersburg and Lebowa area for prosperity in material and spiritual needs (1990:32-33).

CHAPTER 4

4. THE MANAGEMENT OF THE ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Jesus Christ is the basis for our ministry. He came, not to be served, but to serve (Mark 10: 45). His body (the church) continues His ministry. And for this ministry of Christ, Hans Küng (1972: 39) says: "No other word could be used than that 'completely ordinary, non-religious word with somewhat humble flavour that suggests no connotation of officialdom, authority, domination, position of dignity - the word *diakonia*, service (more exactly service at table)". The relation between love and service is made obvious when Jesus washes the feet of his disciples. The Gospel writer does not start his report by describing the scene, but starts out by explaining the reason for Jesus' action: His exceeding great love. "Having loved his own who are in the world, He now showed the full extent of his love..." (John 13: 1-20). The washing of the feet teaches a practical lesson of great importance (Zokouè 1990: 9). It was He who "gave gifts to mankind", he appointed some to be Apostles, others to be Prophets, others to be Evangelists, others to be Pastors and Teachers. He did this to prepare all God's people for the work of His service, in order to build up His body (Eph. 4:11-12).

For to be a servant means to come nearer to one's client, and nurture his or her abilities to share in or take responsibility and maintenance of himself or herself. The servant should be able to extend the ability of a client to cope with his or her situation, for example, by being the

eyes, ears, hand and mind of the unconscious. Furthermore it means to be understanding, useful, unselfish, self-sacrificing, self-disciplined, self-assured and sustaining the clients, he or she serves. Hence Christ warned against failure to count the cost (Luke 14: 25-33), for it has become fashionable for men and women to move in and out of ministry at will, with little or no consideration of this matter. Moreover, among those who continue in the work of the pastorate, often there is too much looking back after having placed the hand on the plough.

The church is pictured in the New Testament as a unique organism, although even in its local expression it is more than an organism. The very nature of the body of Christ makes it important for every member to function and contribute to the process of edification, that is why the Holy Spirit provides diverse gifts to the different members. It is clear that the different "offices" and roles in the church are also among the gifts given to the body. The ministry is essentially a team work and a mutual supporting use of gifts.

Although there are no "higher" and "lower" gifts in the body, it seems as if there are those with more of co-ordination and leadership functions which are also important. The emphasis on the ministry of every believer by Luther (the priesthood of all believers) does not mean that there is no place or regard for certain special and control leadership ministry. Christian leadership is not so much a position as it is a function, this means that it is not a title but a role.

Christian leadership is different from other kinds of leadership because no Christian leader can assume a top or number one position. Jesus Christ is the only one who is at the top or the number one leader in the church. Christ commended His disciples for calling Him teacher and Lord (John 13: 13). These titles showed Him to be their superior in knowledge and authority. When Christ spoke of ministering discipleship, He warned against failure to count the cost (Luke 14: 25-33).

The chief characteristic of a Christian leader must be submission to Christ. The Christian leader must also be the ultimate follower of the Leader Himself. He should also know where the Lord is going so that he can get others to follow him as he follows the Lord. The main purpose of a Christian leader is to guide others in following Christ. His aim should be to focus on Him and to know and show others how to do it.

Christian leadership is a gift from the Holy Spirit. This leadership is more than a skill to be learned, though it is certainly included. However, one must have the capacity for leadership from the Spirit in the first place or no amount of control will produce the skill necessary for spiritual leadership. This gift like other spiritual gifts is sovereignly distributed by the Holy Spirit and is not a matter of human choice or by human effort. Even though it is a product of the Holy Spirit's presence and God's grace, this gift requires diligence, faithfulness, hard work and commitment if it is to be exercised effectively.

The Zion Christian Church Government is structured hierarchically with a great variety of offices, often

subdivided into various ranks. The paramount leader is called the Bishop, the most common offices are those of the General Secretary, Ministers, Evangelists, Deacons, Preachers and Class Leaders. Then, we have the following structures: Family Council (Inner Council), Executive Church Council (consists of Senior Ministers called Pillars), Standing Committees, Dispute Resolution Committee called *Kgoro*, District Council and Local Church Council.

Prophets are the soul of the church but they are not included in the formal structures of the church. The prophetic office is manifested in the Old Testament sense in that divine communications are revealed through prophecies to the community of believers by individuals with the gift of prophecy. Prophecy is an essential part of ministry.

With reference to control over prophetic activities, Turner (1967b: 133) says that in the Aladura Churches " it is widely recognized that revelations may come from the devil and his evil spirits, as well as from the Holy Spirit and the angels, so that one must 'discern the spirits'. Under the influence of the evil spirits some utter false dreams, visions and prophecies deliberately, this 'lying against the Holy Spirit' is a very great sin, and anyone so discovered must be excommunicated".

In the Zion Christian Church, the control over prophecies is less systematic. Some prophecies are accepted simply on the strength of the prophet's authoritarian personality or eminent rank. Some junior prophets will normally verify their prophecies from the senior prophets, especially if they affect the whole congregation or the entire church or imply charges of sorcery or witchcraft.

The Class Leaders, Preachers, Evangelists and Ministers are elected by their respective congregations, but the Pillars or senior Ministers, the Secretary, the Executive Church Council are appointed by the Bishop. The Inner Council is a family matter. The ministers are more often in charge of a specific congregation. They live close to their people at the simplest of levels and without much financial security. They face the same problems of lack of education and employment. Good character and general leadership qualities are sufficient for the ministry. It is widely lamented in Africa that too many of the educated ministers of the mission churches have ceased to be ministers and have become administrators remote from their people, managing schools, institutions and attempting to bring the sacraments at long intervals to a large number of small congregations (Turner 1967b: 12).

The Evangelist is second in command in a congregation and he is an assistant to the Minister. The District Council is composed of office bearers of a number of congregations, as it will be determined by the Executive Church Council. Election of a Bishop is the prerogative of the Inner Council, and Biblical justification is sought in the Kingship succession patterns of ancient Israel.

There are Methodist, Apostolic Faith Mission and hierarchical system influences from African traditional society, to be seen in the management of the Zion Apostolic Church. It appears in many other terms like Annual Conference, the role of the laity in preaching and prayer and kgoro. Thus the Zion Christian Church incorporates a variety of historical church influences into a single system

to adapt to the indigenous circumstances. The African features are therefore, not expressed through the structures that closely mirror traditional society, but rather through a polity that continues the hierarchical system inherited both from traditional society and from the mother church namely the Apostolic Faith Mission, and modifies it by the addition of elements from the Methodist Church forms of government. It could be regarded as a mixed Western polity operating in a characteristically African way. According to Sundkler the Methodist influences laid the foundation for efficient church organization in Africa (Sundkler 1962: 164).

The emphases on hierarchical order does not necessarily rule out lay activity, whether through integration into lower ranks of hierarchy or simply by empowering various offices. The fact is that virtually every church member has some form of responsibility. Seniority of membership, religious zeal, conformity to group norms, charismatic potential, social standing and Bible knowledge are the norms for appointments and promotion in the leadership hierarchy. It is important to realize that members within their respective offices in the Zion Christian Church, have clearly defined rights and duties in the constitution of the church and on the certificates issued in respect of the various offices, with the exception of the office of the prophet, who is controlled by supernatural powers. The lowest rank is that of a Class Leader and the highest rank is that of the Bishop.

DUTIES OF THE BISHOP: Section twenty two of the 1954 Constitution of the Zion Christian Church, stipulates the duties of the Bishop as follows: The Bishop shall preside over all conventions which are summoned and have power in

the church over all ministers, missionaries and other matters affecting the church. He shall settle all questions of law and rules of orders, subject to an appeal to the Annual Conference, sign all documents and labour assiduously for the promotion of the church. He will well guard the spirit of this Church Constitution to be observed and to be adhered to. He will, in conjunction with presiding ministers, and full ministers, ordain candidates selected and presented to him for ordination whilst the Annual Conference is in session. He will have the power to remove, suspend or charge ministers after investigation by a committee of not less than three members of ministers and missionaries. In the absence of the Bishop, the Annual Conference may elect a chairman amongst the presiding ministers of the district according to their order of seniority. Should a vacancy occur during the interval of the conference, the Executive Church Council will fill it up until the Annual Conference is held. And generally to do anything which may be beneficial to the church.

The Bishop is naturally the head of the church in the spiritual sense in the same way as a tribal chief. He has absolute power and authority over his church. He is the sole interpreter of the Constitution of the church and also the procedures at the Annual Conferences. He may proclaim new rituals, and in this regard he may be assisted by prophets who are believed to be God's eyes in the church. His supervision is believed to penetrate the whole strata from the most senior members to the ordinary members in the church. Daneel regards this type of hierarchy as autocratic, because the principal leader delegates authority to office bearers and controls their appointment.

As in any organization, control in the Indigenous Churches poses formidable problems when expansion results in a vast following dispersed over a large geographical area like the Zion Christian Church. The leader is no longer able to exercise direct control as in the early days when he journeyed from village to village or from one urban area to another on proselytizing campaigns with his small, manageable following. The Bishop of the Zion Christian Church is relying increasingly upon his office bearers representing the outlying congregations. At congregational level he is more dependent on his office-bearers to implement his decisions. Hence group control relies more on a balance in play of relations between senior and junior leaders. Generally he exercises control within the hierarchical system of the church

DUTIES OF MINISTERS: An ordained minister has the authority to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Matt. 28: 19-20); to lay on hands and pray for the sick (Mark 16: 17-18; James 5: 13-15); to consecrate children (Mark 10: 14-16); to baptize believers (Matt. 28: 19); to administer the Lord's Supper (I Cor. 11: 23-31); to bury the dead (I Cor. 15; Rev. 14: 13; Ez. 39: 13-14); to solemnize marriages (John 2: 12; Psalm 45: 9-10) (Constitution 1954: section 23).

In practice the administration of the Lord's Supper, is the prerogative of the Bishop. Furthermore ministers do not normally bury the dead because of the long procedure of purification before they could assume their normal duties. Burying the dead is a normal duty of the Evangelists, Deacons and Preachers. An Evangelist has much the same responsibilities as the minister, but he is not permitted to solemnize marriages. The Deacon is not permitted to administer the Lord's Supper, consecrate children and to

solemnize marriages, while the Preacher is not even allowed to baptize believers.

The ministers also hold the office of priesthood, but not in the Reformed sense as Daneel says that "The coming of Christ replaced the Old Testament priesthood, which implies human mediation between God and Man through the bringing of sacrifices, with the perfect priesthood of Christ. Hence the New Testament reference to the Christian's 'royal priesthood' implies a totally new concept. Firstly it implies priestly dignity which gives all those who believe in Christ free access to God; secondly it involves spiritual offerings of prayer, praise and the living sacrifice of the renewed life, which replaces all mediatory offerings on the altar, in response to the sin-offering of the high priest Jesus Christ; thirdly, it implies a service of sacrifice expressed in a daily life of love and service as a manifestation of inward crucifixion and commitment" (1987: 145-146).

For the simple reason that believers in the Zion Christian Church bring their problems and concern to their respective ministers for a solution, it is an indication of the priestly status of these ministers. The priestly attributes of spiritual sacrifices and self-sacrificing service are manifested in the lives of the ministers of the Zion Christian Church,. through regular periods of seclusion, fasting, meditation, prayer, and good works. Priestly service implies more than just spiritual care. It includes agricultural and educational facets. Hence a ministry of this church reveals a comprehensive approach.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: This is the most important office in the church and it is a full-time office. The office is responsible for church correspondence and all matters affecting the church. All actions instituted either on behalf of the church or against it shall be brought in the name of or against the General Secretary in his capacity as such, and the General Secretary shall be authorised by a joint resolution of the Lay and Finance Committees to institute or defend any such action (Constitution 1954: section 18). It is the prerogative of the Bishop to appoint the General Secretary, and such a person must be trustworthy.

The funds of the church shall be raised by the members thereof, and otherwise as may be determined by Annual Conference, and all moneys received shall be paid over to the General Secretary of the church. He shall be bound and obliged to pay the same into an account in the "First National Bank of South Africa, Limited", at Pretoria, or such other bank as the Annual Conference may approve of in the name of the "Zion Christian Church". All payments to be made on behalf of the church shall be made by means of cheques drawn on this account. The chair-person of the Finance Committee and the General Secretary of the church are authorised to operate upon this account (Constitution 1954: section 13). The official First National Bank of the Zion Christian Church is the First National Bank of South Africa in Pietersburg near the headquarters of the church.

THE FAMILY OR INNER COUNCIL: This Council is the second in command in the church. Important decisions of the church are first discussed by this council in an informal way before they can be implemented by the Bishop. To a certain extent this council can be regarded as an advisory board to

the Bishop. This council should be seen as resembling the inner council of *Bakgomana* in the tribal legal constitutional system (Lukhaimane 1980: 25-27).

THE EXECUTIVE CHURCH COUNCIL: Second in command to the Family Council is, the Executive Church Council which is made up of the senior ministers of the church called Pillars. These are appointed by the Bishop himself and they are accountable to him alone. They attend to matters brought forward by district chair-persons of different districts and also matters brought forward by ministers from different congregations to the council for arbitration.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION COMMITTEE (KGORO): The third structure to the Inner Council is *kgoro* or Dispute Resolution Committee. This committee deals with minor disputes especially during Annual Conferences. Even local congregations have their *kgoro*. Any member who is found guilty of vicious or immoral acts shall be deemed to have broken the rule of the church and may be disciplined or reprimanded. Fines are fixed in the same way as in the tribal courts, though warnings predominate. All fines, whether in the form of livestock or money are handed to the Bishop, who decides how the fines should be utilised. Sometimes a goat or a sheep could be given to the elders at the *kgoro* to slaughter and eat as *mangangahla* (reward to the elders for their diligence in handling the case).

No member of the church shall have the right to take any matter or dispute relating to the church or any ordained minister to any Court of Law, until he or she shall have had the matter or dispute adjudicated upon by either one or other of the said Standing Committees, and the findings of

such committees referred to the Annual Conference (Constitution 1954: section 14).

LOCAL CHURCH COUNCIL: The authority of a Minister in the spiritual government of the local branch is much the same as that of the Bishop in relation to the Annual Conference, and has its parallel in the Local Church Council of men chosen by the congregation. The task of this Council is to supervise the premises of the church and finance, and especially to help the minister to run the local congregation, to settle disputes including those between the Minister and the congregation and seek the welfare of the congregation. There are societies for young people, men and women who are supposed to attend to the needs and disputes of their own members, and enter into competition with one another. The main society is that of men called *Mokhukhu* (the dancing group).

The Local Church Council consists of all Class Leaders, and other officials of the church. They shall hold a meeting once in each quarter, at which meeting the minister in charge of the congregation shall preside. This Quarterly Meeting shall elect one of its members to be the secretary thereof, who shall be obliged to keep a proper record of the happenings at every meeting, as also of its decisions. It shall also be required to transmit to the General Secretary, through the minister in charge of the congregation, the quarterly report and financial statement relating to all business transacted at the meeting during the preceding quarter, and to remit with such statement any money he may have in hand (Constitution 1954: section 16). Because of the size of the church it is no longer necessary that the local secretary should report to the General Secretary, but he should report to the District Secretary.

At this meeting all matters of finance, concerning the congregation, and all other matters relating exclusively to the concerns of that congregation, shall be discussed, dealt with, and decisions taken thereon. The decisions taken at such meetings, provided they are not in conflict with rules of the church, the powers of the Standing Committees or the Annual Conference, shall be binding upon the members of that congregation.

SOCIETY PROPERTY: The Annual Conference shall elect not less than three (3) or more than five (5) of its members to be the Trustees of the church, and all the church property shall be held by these Trustees, and in case of immovable property, shall be registered in the names of such Trustees.

The Trustees shall hold the said property for the said church upon condition that only ordained ministers or lay preachers appointed by the Annual Conference shall hold service therein. They shall further deal with such property in such manner as they may be directed by the members of the Quarterly Meeting of the congregation within whose area the property shall remain in all cases the property of the church, and not of any particular congregation (Constitution 1954: section 17).

CONTROL OF COMMITTEES: Each of the said committees or structures shall have full control of matters submitted to them respectively, and their decisions therein shall be binding upon all parties, but so that any person or persons feeling themselves to have been aggrieved by the finding of

any committee may appeal to the Annual Conference for its decision in the matter. The Annual Conference shall have the right and power to confirm, vary, amend, reverse or veto any of the decisions of any of the above committees, and the action of the Annual Conference herein shall be final and binding upon any member and adherent of the church (Constitution 1954: section 11).

Power and authority in this church are distributed among the group and yet one particular member is recognized to be more than the other - a *primus inter pares* relationship. Leadership is therefore of a charismatic nature and yet the leaders regular power depends upon the group who accorded them that responsibility. Reciprocally the leadership must give priority to the welfare of the church because the leadership symbolizes the well being of the whole church.

With regard to the ministry as a whole, it has become apparent that this church has created a system that depends more on African traditional leadership than on the Western models. It has been reflected in the effectiveness of the growth of this church through out the past decades. This has been possible only through the degree of religious conviction and pastoral concern of devotion to duty and readiness for sacrifice.

4.1

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

All groups of people in a society need educated leadership. The church is no exception to this rule. As good quality of the leadership is highly valued, much attention has been paid to the education of the leaders in the various fields

of life. Throughout the history of the church, the education of church leaders has usually been an important activity of the church. Be it at the ancient Catechetical School at Alexandria, the monastic or cathedral schools of the middle ages or the nineteenth century teacher, the education for the ministry in particular has been regarded as central to the life and witness of the church. The higher the quality of church leaders, including pastors, the better the members will be equipped for their witness and for the up-building of the church. For theological education "is a process of equipping men and women to be equippers of the entire people of God" (Zorn 1975: x). Zokouè (1990: 10) also says, "men and women that our churches need for leadership must be educated to have a servant spirit".

The lack of theological education among the African Initiated Churches is a major problem. Dlamini¹⁴ says, many of educated Christians from the Western-oriented churches look down upon the Zionist as being backward. The Zionist attitude towards the Bible is not negative, they regard their churches as being based on a Biblical foundation, and would not mind to learn more about it. However, they are only interested in theological education that is based on their needs and traditions, not an education which attempts to impose a different ideology. They are proud of their churches because of its closeness to traditional culture and more relevant to Africans (Oosthuizen 1986: 210).

The leadership of the African Initiated Churches in particular the Zion Christian Church, are like a motor vehicle which is not serviced. The vehicle should be taken to a garage for service, repair, fuel and oil, for it was not meant to stand in a garage, but to be on the road by day. These churches and their leadership should not "park"

themselves in their separate churches all the time, but should be able to brave the dirt roads of everyday life for the larger part of their available time.

It must be recognized, however, that ministry is not a natural skill; methods that will make it effective can be taught, and the mistakes that will spoil it can be pointed out. Even the talented artist and craftsmen and women need instruction (Sweazey 1976: 1). Thus the ministers of the Zion Christian Church in particular should not rely too much on supernatural powers because it is not enough. Theological education is a must, for it promotes self-knowledge and self-criticism in relation to other churches and Christianity in general. They must supplement their natural skills with theological education. They must follow the example of Bishop Edward Lekganyane and Barnabas Lekganyane, for the development of Christianity.

It is not necessary for the Zion Christian Church to have its own Theological College or Bible School, for we have enough of such schools in the country with few students. What they can do, is to look around in the country for any Theological School which will take them seriously. The school should identify itself with the Africans and at the same time respect the indigenous African culture and life-view. Furthermore they should look for a Christian theology which is born in Africa through an African and for the people of Africa, which will fully address the fears and hopes of its people. It should be hundred percent Biblical and yet fully address the needs and problems of Africa. An African should be able to hear clearly how Christ talks to him or her. If this should fail, they can establish their own Theological School.

The Zion Christian Church just like any other African Indigenous Church is striving to Africanise the Western forms - making Christianity indigenous within the African soil, just like the New Testament churches whose stories are revealed in Acts and Epistles. This church allows the participation of the laity, the aim being that they should have a sense of belonging, which of course is important. The very nature of the body of Christ makes it important for every member to function and contribute to the process of edification. Worship and rites of this church are all basic elements and not foreign to Scriptures.

Naudé (1995: v) regard the numerous African Initiated Churches as a sleeping giant, and he believes that they must be acknowledged and be brought into the theological mainstream.

4.2

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

African theology stems from experiential religio-mythical world-view. I am religious, therefore I am! For the African, therefore, "to live is to be caught up in a religious drama. This is fundamental, for it means that man lives a religious universe" (Mbiti 1974: 15-16). Stanley Mogoba (1985: 6) refers to the fact that there is no appropriate word for "religion" in many African vernaculars, "because all life is religion".

African Christian Theology is 'an attempt to give African expression to the Christian Faith within a theological framework' (Ukpong 1984: 501). At the root of this search for authentic African Christianity in many quarters on the

African scene are two main premises. One of these premises arises from the widely-shared suspicion that the European purveyors of the Christian Faith to Africa did not take it to the continent pure and unalloyed, but rather carried it there clothed in Western European garb. The contention then is that to reclaim the core of the Christian Faith, it is necessary that the prevalent forms of Christianity be stripped to the bone to rid the continent of any objectionable manifestation therein. But this is just one side of the coin, the obverse side of it, we can say. The corollary to this is the second premise which represents the reverse side of this coin. Here it is strongly held that apart from stripping the current brand of African Christianity of its foreign matter, and therefore, leaving it bare, pure and unadulterated, we need to dress it in African clothing if it is to be of any lasting significance to the indigenous peoples (Omulokoli 1988: 41).

European colonialism in Africa created a crisis situation, particularly in relation to culture, which is the common denominator for both African Philosophy and African Christian Theology. In his last book, *The Guardian of the World*, the late Guinean Camara Laye (1975: 24) writes: "When people live for years in freedom or within some sphere of influence, either in a feudal state or under colonial domination...then it is natural that such people should return to their roots, should investigate their past and, delving into that past, should enter upon a passionate quest for traces of those beings and those things that have guided their destiny".

The quest for African philosophy reflects the tensions of political, economic, cultural, religious and ideological relationship between Africa and the West. The problem which

have generated and governed the quest for African philosophy are essentially the same for African Christian Theology (Tiènou 1990: 25 & 31). That explains why Tshimalenga (1981b: 173) can claim that the proponents of Black philosophy, Black theology and African philosophy, all have the same preoccupation: the rediscovery of African identity and the recapture of historical initiative. African churches are the by-products of the Christian West (Ela 1980: 132).

African Christian Theology is emerging from the African hermeneutic because the questions it addresses are African and the answers have to speak to the African situation in the light of the Word of God. Thus speaking to the soul of an African. The African is first and foremost a human being and then a believer. In fact, African Christian Theology is a reflection of what the Biblical God is doing to enhance African survival through the agency of people who are informed by Scripture and traditional concepts of God who is revealed to us through the faith and life of Jesus Christ. This definition refers to what God is doing to feed the hungry and to clothe the naked. African Christian Theology is then interpreted and understood as the truth of how life will triumph over death, in our present and future as lived out by Jesus Christ. It speaks the vernacular of the African masses because it is the language through which we express our faith. It is to articulate God's actions of grace, justice, and providence that enhance survival. Both Biblical and traditional religious beliefs take the matter of survival very seriously for it is the reason for an affinity for religion. Survival in this corporal life and our spiritual bodies is a top priority in African life and thought (Muzorewa November 1990:36,38 & 45). African Christian Theology does not neglect any aspect of life because the African world view is comprehensive.

When Rev Z R Mahabane addressed the International Missionary Council at the Le Zoute Conference in 1926, he said the following: "The black man still believes that Christianity comes from God, so he clings to it, although his mind is in a state of revolt against Western Christianity" (Smith 1926: 38). Setiloane regarded this statement as the summary or gist of African Christian Theology. The term African Christian Theology was used for the first time in 1965 by the All Africa Conference of Churches. Even though it was understood to be more a Nationalistic slogan than real (Setiloane 1986: 30). And of course, the acceptance by Africans of Christianity does not necessarily mean that they cease to be Africans.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu (1978:366) described the roots of the African Christian Theology at the 1975 Jos (Nigeria) Conference on Christianity in Independent Africa, by saying the following: African Christian Theologians have set about demonstrating that the African religious experience and heritage were not illusory and that they should have formed the vehicle for conveying the Gospel verities to Africa. It was vital for the African's self-respect that this kind of rehabilitation of his religious heritage should take place. It is the theological counterpart of what has happened in, say, the study of African history. It has helped to give the lie to the supercilious but tacit assumption that religion and history in Africa date from the advent in the continent of the white man. It is re-assuring to know that we have had a genuine knowledge of God and that we have had our own ways of communicating with deity, ways which meant that we were able to speak authentically as ourselves and not as pale imitations of others. It means that we have a great store from which we can fashion new ways of speaking

to and about God, and new styles of worship consistent with our new Faith.

Setiloane (1986:32-34) further says that African Christian Theology accepts as its base the human cum divine experience recorded in African Traditional Religion. It further accepts and confesses Christianity as a late-comer which has been imposed upon this phenomenon of African Traditional Religion. What African Christian Theology also rejects in Western Theology is the accretion of Western Civilization and culture which have come to be considered as inseparable part and parcel of Christianity.

Furthermore, identity is being used as the hermeneutical key to understand African Christian Theology. To the extent that this "anthropological" concern of African Christian Theology "to rehabilitate Africa's rich cultural heritage and religious consciousness (Tutu 1978: 366) has been made as a self-consciously Christian and Theological effort, it can be said to have been an endeavour to demonstrate the true character of African Christian identity. For it is looked at from the context of the African Christian Theologians themselves, the traditional religions of Africa belong to the African religious past. Yet this is not so much a chronological past as an "ontological" past, which, together with the profession of the Christian faith, gives account of one and the same entity, namely, the history of the religious consciousness of the African Christian. In this sense, the African Christian theologian concern's with the pre-Christian religious heritage becomes an endeavour to clarify the nature and meaning of African Christian identity.

If, as E Fasholè-Luke (1975:268) of Sierra Leone has argued, "the quest for African Christian Theologies amounts to attempting to make clear the fact that conversion to Christianity must be coupled with cultural continuity", then it becomes understandable that what African Christian Theologians have been endeavouring to do is to draw together the various and disparate sources which make up the total religious experience of Christians in Africa a coherent and meaningful pattern". It is the quest for what Kenneth Cragg (1980:194), in another connection, has described as "integrity in conversion, a unity of self in which one's past is genuinely integrated into present commitment". Thus the crisis of repentance and faith that makes us Christian truly integrates what we have been in what we become.

A statement of the All Africa Council of Churches Assembly which met at Lusaka in 1973, defined African Christian Theology as following: "By African Christian Theology we mean a theology which is based on the Biblical Faith and speaks to the African's soul. It is expressed in the categories of thought which arise out of the philosophy and world view of Africans". The Zion Christian Church and other Zionist Movements does not allow African Religion to be Christianized, rather they Africanise Christianity.

The Zionist Churches are reviving a sense of togetherness among the African people and they are also revealing a dynamic working of the Spirit that transcends the doctrinal and organizational partitions of denominations. The members of these churches have a sense of belonging, for they could not understand the individualism of western civilization which did not satisfy their needs in the Western oriented churches. The desire for belonging was one of the element, in the founding of these churches, and is being expressed in

the spirit of the group, both in worship and in daily fellowship.

In the area of worship they have outclassed the Western oriented churches. Instead of reciting creeds, African Christians are more at home in dancing their faith, in celebrating their faith, in shouting their faith and singing their faith. African Christians are not only content to recite their faith in a form of creeds, but they want also to demonstrate that their faith is not only in the head but in the whole person, body and spirit. The sincerity of their faith and prayer brings many people to a personal relationship with Christ. We should bear in mind that prayer is the central phenomenon of religion. Stanley Mogoba (1985: 9) is fully convinced that, the African way of worship with its richness of symbolism and celebration has tremendous potential to "bring back the joy into Christianity".

For Heiler (1932:xiii), author of the great classic on prayer, says prayer expresses the faith, life work and ruling motive of the religious believer. He (1932:358) further says prayer is a living communion of the religious man with God (conceived as personal and present in experience), a communion which reflects the forms of the social relations of humanity. Prayer is not simply only the oral aspect of worship or religious ritual, nor even simply an 'oracle rite'. It is an essential activity, or the essential disposition of the religious man or woman. Prayer is the basis and foundation of worship. Above all, prayer is essentially an asymmetrical relationship with a supernatural power perceived in experience (Aylward 1975: 4). To one who listens, it has an effect upon the worshipper analogous to that of the psychotherapist upon his

client, helping him more effectively through listening than through offering service (Hollings and Gullick 1971: 3). The new rush of Western civilization does not affect this Africanisation process.

The Gospel does not turn Africans into Europeans or Americans by engrafting them into His fellowship, in the same way as He did not expect the Hellenes to undergo Jewish circumcision when accepting them into His church. The Gospel must relate itself to the realities of life in Africa. These realities are historical in character, that is, they encompass the past traditional heritage, the present day problems and needs and the future goals and expectations (Pobee 1979: 27).

The term "inculturation" expresses the encounter between Christianity and African traditional religions, which is basically an encounter between two cultures. Since Christianity comes to Africa from another culture it is expected to grow within the African culture in order to become truly African. There is a process of transformation that takes place in order for Christianity to reflect authentically the African cultural milieu. While "indigenisation" basically means the same thing as inculturation, indigenisation is meant to emphasize the incarnational aspect. The concept, drawn from Christology, means that just as Jesus became human in order to redeem humankind so must Christianity become African in order to reach the African soul. The Gospel must impregnate every aspect of an African life, both at its more visible level - institutions such as the family, law and customs - and the deeper levels of values, philosophy and world-view. Christianity must grow within the African environment so as to acquire the characteristics, forms and tapping of African

spirituality. African spirituality is rooted in the traditional religions of the African people, which existed long before other religions such as Christianity and Islam were introduced (Nthamburi July 1989: 113).

The paradoxical situation of Africa is that the struggle for identity is now more acute than ever before. As long as Europe and the West continue to dominate the economy and educational systems of Africa, the quest for the right to difference will remain (Tiènou 1990: 32). Africans sense of identity derives from an awareness of being part of the community. To be human is to be in relationship with others, integrated in community. African identity is conceived primarily as participation in community and only secondarily as individual existence. In contrast to the Cartesian, "I think, therefore I am", the African maxim is "I belong by blood relationship, therefore I am" (Pobee J S, 1979: 88 & Mbiti J S, 1992: 108-109). Mbiti further says, "In traditional life, the individual does not and cannot exist except corporately... He is simply part of the whole.

Paul J Sankey (1994:440) says, that the African traditional clan structure can enrich our understanding of the *koinonia* dimension of Christian communal life. Hospitality and fraternity, a sense of belonging, participation and fellowship, and the common (clan) ownership of property are all features of traditional African Communal life. Everyone has a role in contributing to the welfare of other members of the clan and there is no distinction between "public" and "private" spheres. A Clan is marked by a dynamic network of internal relations in which all participate and all benefit. The harmony of the clan transcends the selfish pursuits of the individual.

The gradual rise of a Christian theology growing out of a reflection on Christian revelation in the light of African life is a sign of vitality in African Christianity. African Christian Theologians must continue to explore new channels by which the Gospel can take root in Africa.

Naudé (1995: 8) believes that, the African theologies of indigenisation are excellently equipped to enrich our present theological framework. He (1985 144) further says the broader church should not close herself off as if the "final truth" has been attained once and for all. It is the work of the Spirit to lead the church in the truth. The basis for theological intercommunication in South Africa lies, inter alia, in the third person of the Trinity. He opens our eyes to understand "alien" spiritual experiences as experiences of the Spirit.

Participation in and contribution to the innate spirituality of African theology may foster the fundamental affirmation that "we are Africans". Of course it does not imply a monotonous uniformity of worship "but it goes a long way if first of all, you feel affirmed and you know that you are an African" (Mogoba 1985: 16).

4.3

CONTEXTUAL THEOLOGY

Ideally, for a genuinely contextual theology, the theological process should begin with the opening of culture, that long and careful listening to a culture to discover its principal values, needs, interests, directions and symbols (Schreiter 1985: 28). The Institute for Contextual Theology in Johannesburg defines contextual

theology as follows: Contextual Theology is the conscious attempt to do theology from within the context of real life in the world.

Contextual Theology was discovered by poor and oppressed nations, races and classes of the world. In other words, it came from the people who were not living in the same context as the white Western theologians of Europe and North America. The discovery was first made by the Third World Theologians.

Thus, Christianity should not ignore our African heritage, if it wishes to be well established in South Africa. Christianity must be contextualised. By contextualisation we mean translating the universality of the Christian faith into a language understood by the people of a given region. However, context is not passive, but plays a dynamic and critical role. When one looks into the incident of Pentecost, when those who had come from so many areas: "Parthia, Media, Judea, Egypt, Asia, Rome etc" were amazed and wondered, saying, "These people who are talking like this are Galileans!.How is it, then, that all of us hear them speaking in our own native languages; the mighty works of God" (Acts 2:5-13). That was the beginning of contextualisation. Thus, we can no longer afford to proclaim the Gospel in Africa in a foreign language. Indeed it is the opinion of anthropologists and others that Christianity should be adapted to indigenous African culture (Jabavu 1942: 6); for one's past or culture does not lie behind, but within. For an example, contextualisation as understood by the African Initiated Churches is down-to-earth because they deal not only with theological issues raised by white oppressive structures but also and perhaps

more importantly with issues of 'Africanness, past, present, and future' (Oosthuizen 1986: 71).

We can add nothing to the Gospel, for this is an eternal gift of God. The Gospel criticizes culture. While some aspects of a culture will be either affirmed or enriched by the Gospel, other elements will be brought under judgment. No area of culture can escape scrutiny. The Gospel redeems culture and brings reconciliation and does not impose cultural uniformity. Thus, we should endeavour in critical contextualisation.

I would like to explain contextualisation by way of the image of a grain of wheat. The seed disappears into the soil. When the wheat sprouts, it is different from the seed and still the same, viz. wheat. Strictly speaking theologians and ministers should interpret the Gospel message in a contemporary African cultural context; they should sow the seed of the Gospel in the cultural context, and allow it to grow and bear fruit, following internal dynamics of its own. The Gospel becomes the indigenous factor working its way in the culture; since Jesus Christ is the Gospel proclaimed, it follows that He with His Spirit works his way through the culture, and He is understood in the frames of reference of that culture and seen as an integral part of it. In short, the Christian faith must incarnate itself in a specific culture and God in Christ must transform a culture into what He wants it to be.

But one should bear in mind that there was no culture to be found in the world which has easily absorbed the Christian faith without pain. Yes, there was no language to be found which was impossible to communicate the Gospel. During the

nineteenth century it was possible to affirm that every race, every religion, every social level, and every form of human organization has yielded a number of converts to the Christian Faith.

APOSTOLICUM FOR THE ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Naudé (1995 131) proposed the following creed for the Zion Christian Church, through the Itsani congregation of the St. Engenas Zion Christian Church:

*We believe in the God of Engenas, Jehovah;
who instructed us to pray;
and who as the holy Father stops the fighting of this world.*

*We believe in the Lord Jesus, our Saviour, the Son of God;
who died on the cross;
who is the shepherd;
who as nanga of the spirit controls our lives;
who is the Messiah on his way
and who will return at the sound of the horn.*

*We believe in the Holy Spirit who blesses us;
who as Good Spirit fills our hearts.*

WE believe in the pardoning of offences through the blood of the Lamb;

*WE believe in Engenas as father of the nation, the chief of all chiefs;
who gives us rain and who heals;
we accept Moxwadube who dances luibo,
who preaches the gospel,
and about whom everyone speaks.*

*WE believe in the truth that Moria, the holy mountain of Engenas is for all;
we believe that in Zion whence we are called by prayer,
everybody will be pardoned and healed.*

*We believe in the unity of the church, based on peace and love which come from the Lord Jesus;
and we believe that the Father makes the emblem of Moria shine.*

*We believe in heaven, eternal life before GOD,
where we shall praise the Name of Jesus.*

Amen.

THE ROAD AHEAD

The church of Jesus Christ is energetic and alive, but the challenges ahead are sobering, and they will not be met if the present body of Christ repeats what it has always done. Never in the history of the church have we had so many different factions that, as it seems, can not work together. Efforts are duplicated, some basic theological beliefs have been weakened. The world is growing rapidly more secular making Christianity seem less and less meaningful. If the church is to be effective until the Lord's return, it needs a fresh vision for the future built on a well-interpreted past. The church must make history and not repeat it. The church is neither democracy nor a republic, it is a theocracy. The Bible is a covenant document divinely revealed and deposited with the church by the Sovereign Himself. In it, are the principles of organisation and management that the Sovereign has imposed upon His subjects.

"Be careful how you build!" warned Paul. A church can be weak and immature if it is constructed of wood and hay, or it can be strong and mature if it is composed of gold, silver and precious stones (I Cor. 3: 10-15). If it is immature, it reflects impatience, jealousy, strife, divisions, pride, arrogance and unbecoming behaviour. If it is mature, it reflects a growing love, a unity of faith and steadfast hope on the Lord. The church today needs leaders like Paul, who was determined with his whole heart to bring the whole Gospel to the whole city or neighbourhood. He left no stone unturned in devising means to reach the people.

Sundkler (1984: 4) regarded the African Initiated Churches not as an amorphous sum of different churches but as a *movement* - with certain local and personal varieties. To take an example: the common historical roots of Nkonyane and of Lekganyane Zionists indicate that they are closely related and parts of a larger whole. Oosthuizen (1986: i) concurred with Sundkler that these churches are a big movement because they have become a distinct phenomenon in many countries in Africa and especially in South Africa. He emphasises that this movement is growing at such a tremendous pace that warrants intensive attention by various disciplines in the humanities.

Oosthuizen further says, that it is obvious that the changed attitudes of the African Initiated Churches enhance the process of development. In both the Western oriented churches and the African Initiated Churches, specific traditional attitudes which have negative inclinations and attitudes which enhance progress have come to the fore. The African Initiated Churches which have so often been

described as backward, and as retarding development have actually been responsible in changing attitudes advantageous to progress.

The African Initiated Churches have led many away from the microcosmic to the macrocosmic world, from a passive approach to one actively involved for socio-economic change, from communal emphasis to more openness; from the "strong man" symbol to symbols which enhance progress and development. If given the opportunities these churches will be actively involved in building up a new South Africa. They will get away from what Liyong accuses the *élite* for, who are caught up in comfortable conservatism which suits the consumption syndrome rather than being creative. They have fallen according to Taban Lo Liyong for the "ideals of Negritude" which are retrogressive. The youth says: "Let's strive to catchup, rather than: We arrived long ago; Negritude had it all in store" (Roscoe 1977: 822).

The African Initiated Churches and the churches in general, together with a better prepared youth, better training opportunities, could change a desperate situation into one of hope. These churches are thus a movement towards adaptation to a modern secular society without discarding the deep religious disposition which was basic to the African world view. For them progress and religion go hand in hand (Oosthuizen 1986: 240).

The Zion Christian Church is both the refuge and the emblem of the poor and uneducated, those "at the bottom of the heap" (Kiernan 1977: 40). It is again the crusade at the level of the "obvious". It is at once a statement of denial and art of radical reconstruction, both effected at the

level of everyday practice. But the crusade of the Zionist has also been carried out in the one arena which enjoys relatively generous license in their coercive environment—that of organized religion. By seizing the church as their preeminent communicative domain, Black South Africans, like their Jamaican counterparts, have turned the structures of Western orthodoxy inside out, transforming marginality into esteem and subordination into defiance. Like the Rastafarians and their Creol antecedents (Braithwaite 1971: 64).

The organization and management of the Zion Christian Church displays distinct African traditional tendencies. Baëta (1962: 128-129) also came to the same conclusion when he studied the African Initiated Churches in Ghana, and said: "On the whole these churches follow the same pattern of organization of Africa communities... it centres round the strong personality of its leader, who is its real pivot, though use is made of all sorts of councils to express themselves freely". The movement as a whole revolves around the leader to such an extent that there are clear signs of African traditional organisation and management of a sacral Kingship.

The Zion Christian Church can no longer be regarded as bridges back to Traditional Religion. It must rather be seen as a church in existence, as bridges to the future, for a truly indigenous Christianity in Africa. This church has never allowed African Religion to be Christianized, rather it has Africanised Christianity. To those in this church, Zion means newness of life, health and wholeness, a new identity and a bridge to the future (Sundkler 1976: 305).

It is very clear that the African Initiated Churches, in particular the Zion Christian Church have challenged the church in Africa. Maimela (1985: 71) observed that 'the greatest attraction of these churches lies in their open invitation to the Africans to bring their fears and anxieties about witches, sorcerers, bad luck, poverty, illness and all kinds of misfortune to the church leadership'. The nature of the African Initiated Churches, its worldwide scope, rapid growth and indigenous character, are some natural missiological implications that should be considered. First, there is a need to focus a significant portion of mission strategy on these vast grass-roots movements. African Initiated Churches will continue to grow and be the major religious force in the third world for the next number of years. They will carry with them their best understanding of the Christian Gospel (Tinklenberg 1991: 3).

Fr. Finbar Flanagan (1984: 32) believes that the Western-oriented churches in Africa have much to learn from the African Initiated Churches. Certainly this has been recognised in England where for some years now a successful project has been going on between the white Western-oriented churches and the many Black Indigenous Churches present in Great Britain. Adrian Hastings (1976: 48) believes that the Black Indigenous Churches can give a lead to the historic churches in cultural adaptation. Some of them can also be a challenge to the compromising mediocrity of mission church life (Hastings 1979: 83).

Clemenger (1977: 13-16) says that the church in Africa has neglected one of the famous "three selfs", which is *self-supporting*. I assume that he is referring to churches which have originated from the Western churches and not the African Initiated Churches. He regard this as a vital

challenge for missionaries to get involved in economic projects with their national brethren. Hodges (1972) says churches that receive no missionary help are often stronger than those who have the help and finance of missionaries. Dr. George Peters calls for no foreign funds to be made available to national churches.

The African Initiated Churches are forcing missionaries and theologians to formulate a more positive approach. As one missionary writer lamented, the African indigenous church movement "...is apt to humiliate our own ecclesiastical self-confidence" (Beyerhaus 1965: 4). Beyerhaus called for the study of these churches in order to critically re-examine and adjust the traditional church's ecclesiastical forms and religiosity. While Mostert in *Religion Alive*, reminded his colleagues not to forget that "in the river-bed we so conveniently and energetically make into an objective field of study - phenomenologically, psychologically, religiously, historically - flows a strong current of real life which contains the aqua vitae for millions in our sub-continent. It leads to the very source of all meaning in existence and sustains all their efforts to counter the degrading and life-destroying forces in a modern world of soulless technology leading to a complete breakdown in traditional societal relationships" (Oosthuizen 1986: 82). Daneel views the African Initiated Churches as genuine in contextualisation of the Gospel.

If the Western-oriented churches take heed of this call and take the African Initiated Churches seriously and reflect on them carefully, maybe both may come to a more well-rounded understanding of the Gospel and some more effective ways of communicating the Gospel. Let us hope that as the wheel of time rolls on, and as Christ and His Spirit continue to be

at work in these churches, proper and genuine inculturation will be achieved, resulting in truly African Church, where a truly African Christianity will evolve (Ngubane 1985: 73).

Despite some syncretic weaknesses and the negative criticism of the misinformed and uninformed, the Zion Christian Church is growing by leaps and bounds, in number and strength. For it offers social, spiritual and supernatural protection to their members through the help of prophets and spiritual leaders. Syncretism will hopefully be avoided when dialogue is entered into by the traditional culture and its religion, with tenants of Christianity. This can be achieved effectively by African Christian Theologians themselves.

Indeed the Zion Christian Church and other African Initiated Churches have created a synthesis of African Traditional culture and Christian beliefs, and formulated a truly African indigenous Christianity which gave Africans an African identity, thus making their unique contribution to the wealth of Christian theology.

Nobody can wish away the African Initiated Churches, in particular the Zion Christian church, for its adherents have a firm conviction that their experience are firmly embedded within the Christian and Biblical tradition. In Mark 9: 38-40, the disciple John approached Christ with a question: "Teacher, we saw a man who was driving out demons in your name, and we told him to stop, because he doesn't belong to our group. Do not try to stop him, Jesus told them, because no one who performs a miracle in my name will be able soon afterwards to say evil things about me. For whoever is not against us, is for us".

Finally a National Inter-Faith Conference under the auspices of the World Conference on Religion and Peace - South African Chapter - was held in Pretoria, on the 22 - 24 November 1992, and it has adopted a Declaration on Religious Rights and Responsibilities. This Declaration shall be included in a future Bill of Human Rights for South Africa. Section 2.1 of the Declaration stipulates the following: "The state shall uphold the equality of all religious communities before the Law, not identifying with or favouring any, but shall consult and cooperate with religious communities in matters of mutual concern".

I hope the African Initiated Churches will accept this challenge from the World Conference on Religion and Peace. Yes, it is true that Christianity was for too long protected by the Government. Hence these churches face the future in full confidence in the Lord and they are ready and willing to increasingly fulfill their calling in this part of the world, in particular South Africa. No doubt, the African Initiated Churches have succeeded in removing the foreignness from Christianity. They have placed Christianity within the African context (Obeng 1988: 116).

NOTES

1. Vusamazulu Credo Mutwa is one of the famous *Senusi* (He is above a *Sangoma*) in South Africa, and he reside in Soweto. His wife is also a *Sangoma*. They regard themselves as custodians of the African culture.
2. Dr. J L Maaga is a medical doctor by profession and also a senior minister within the Zion Christian Church. He was born into the Zion Christian Church on the 17-08-1937, and his grandparents and parents were members of the Zion Christian Church.
3. This is Melanesian word introduced into history of religion by the missionary Codrington in a letter to the famous scientist of religion, Dr Max Müller in 1877.
4. It can also be interpreted that the spirit of a departed will live only for as long as the decedents pay their homage, even in thoughts alone; the sacrifices merely ensure that such homages are conscientiously paid.
5. Mgr. J Malula (Speech to Elite and to Missionaries) in *Revue du Clergè Africain*, 1960, 5, pp 499-500.
6. David Wasdell, presented a work-paper at the General Synod of the church of England in November 1974, entitle *Let My People Grow*.
7. See Lumko series of publication **Training for Community Ministries**, which include no. 4: **The Training of Hymn-Leaders** by Hirmer, O and Dargie, D (Lumko 1976) and no. 40:

Workshops for Composing Local Church Music by Dargie, D (Lumko 1983).

8. Vatican II (1963-1965): **Decree on Ecumenism**, Introduction: in the **Documents of Vatican II**, ed. W M Abbot, Geoffrey Chapman, 1966.

9. The late Steve Biko was the President of the South African Students' Organisation (SASO), and leader of the Black Consciousness Movement for liberation through self-reliant struggle, which included social, economic and educational activities. His organisation was banned in 1977, and he died of torture and neglect under detention. This article on *Toward True Humanity in South Africa*, is composed of two chapters taken from a collection of selected writings by him, published by the Bowerdean Press, London, in November 1978 with the title: *Steve Biko - I Write What I Like*, edited by Father Alfred Stubbs, C R.

10. Mosothomane, T D M, a lecturer in African Languages, University of Stellenbosch, was interviewed by Fr. C Kokoali, minister in the Anglican Church, Paarl, 27 December 1984.

11. Fr. Kokoali interviewed, Toyi J, member for Herchel district, at U 116, Mbekweni, 14 October 1984.

12. Mosothomane, T D M, interview, Stellenbosch, 27 December 1984.

13. Turner, H W, "The Relationship between Development and New Religious Movements in the Tribal Societies of the Third World", New Era Conference, Puerto, December 10, 1983 - January 4, 1984.

14. Pastor I Dlamini, Zionist Leader, Manzini, Swaziland.

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CONSTITUTIONS OF THE ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH (1946)**BE IT HEREBY MADE KNOWN THAT:**

That whereas the Zion Christian Church referred to as the Church was founded a number of years ago.

Whereas owing to the increase in membership and the growth of its activities and ministrations it has been necessary to amend and amplify the Original Constitution of the Church in various ways:

And whereas it is desirable to consolidate all laws, rules and regulations governing and appertaining to the Church. Now therefore, the Conference of the Church representing all the Ecclesiastical officers and members of the Church, does hereby and agree that the following shall be the Constitution of the Church. And all former Constitutions shall hereby be annulled and cancelled.

(i) "ANNUAL CONFERENCE"

A Conference shall be held annually upon a date fixed from time to time by the Ecclesiastical Committee of the Church.

(ii) "CONSTITUTION OF ANNUAL CONFERENCE"

The Conference shall consist of:

- (a) All ordained Ministers of the Church;
- (b) All lay Preachers of the Church;
- (c) Two delegates to be elected out of the Ministers, Lay Preachers or office bearers of the Church by each congregation of not less than twenty-five (25) members.

(iii) **"ELECTIONS"**

The Conference shall then proceed to elect a Bishop who shall hold office for life.

The Bishop so elected shall preside at the Annual Conference; shall be recognised as Head of the Church, its executive officer and the legal representative of the Conference and shall act in all matters on behalf of the church and shall be chairman of all Committees of the Church.

The Conference shall then proceed to elect a General Secretary and Treasurer who shall hold office until the Conference decides to terminate such appointment.

The Conference shall appoint twelve (12) Ministers of the Church who shall be styled the "Pillars" of the Church" and whose appointment may be terminated by Resolution of the Conference at any time.

(iv) **"GENERAL"**

The Conference shall deal with all matters and decide disputes affecting the Church. It shall also receive reports of congregations, quarterly-meetings and secretaries reports of the various committees herein referred to.

The Conference shall have power to pass regulations governing the conduct of its ministers and members of the Church. To fix stipends if any payable to the Bishop and Ministers and generally for all purposes affecting the Church-welfare. It shall also have power to provide for the expenses of the Committees herein referred to.

(v) **"APPOINTMENTS"**

The Conference shall have power to appoint, suspend, excommunicate or remove Presiding Elders, Ministers, and Lay Preachers as also any other officer of the Church.

No minister shall assume office until he shall have been ordained by the Presiding Elder or the Bishop.

Should the Conference decide that other officials be appointed to assist in carrying on the work of the Church in any congregation of not less than twenty-five (25) members the said congregation may nominate any one or more of their members to be such officials: or officials and such appointment shall be subject to confirmation by the Conference. No official so appointed may be suspended by the Minister in charge of the Congregation, nominating such officials but the case of such official shall immediately be reported to and dealt with by such of the under-mentioned **Standing Committee** of the Conference as shall have power to act in such matter.

(vi) **"STANDING COMMITTEE"**

The Conference shall appoint an Ecclesiastical Committee, a Lay Committee and a Finance-Standing Committee to deal with Church matters when Conference is not in session. Each of the said Committee shall be presided over by the Bishop who shall be ex-officio be a member of each of such Committees or in his unavoidable absence by the eldest Presiding Elder.

(vii) **"ECCLESIASTICAL STANDING COMMITTEE"**

The Ecclesiastical Standing Committee shall consists of not less than three (3) ordained Ministers, and shall deal with and decide ecclesiastical matters and disputed matters of the Church discipline and matters relating to the spiritual

and moral welfare of the members of the Church. Such Committee shall have power to suspend any Minister or Lay Preacher and to confirm the suspension of any other officer from office pending the sitting of the next Annual Conference.

(viii) **"FINANCE COMMITTEE"**

The Finance Committee shall consists of not less than five (5) members to be elected annually by the Conference, and the General Secretary of the Conference shall be the secretary of such committee. The finance Committee shall deal with all financial matters of the Church and no payment shall be made on behalf of the Church except with the consent and authority of this committee.

The Committee shall further scrutinize all accounts submitted by the various Quarterly Meetings and shall report annually to the Conference regarding all matters dealt with during the previous year.

All payments or claims of payments made by this Committee shall be subject to confirmation at the Annual Conference.

(ix) **"LAY STANDING COMMITTEE"**

The Lay Standing Committee shall consists of the General Secretary and not less than four (4) Class Leaders; It shall deal with all matters of the Church which do fall within the province of the Ecclesiastical Committee or Finance Committee.

(x) **"CONDUCT OF BUSINESS OF COMMITTEES".**

Each aforesaid Committees shall appoint a Secretary to whom

all communication regarding the respective Committee shall be addressed. The Committees keep proper record of all matters submitted to them and of their findings therein and shall in due course report all such matters at the Annual Conference.

(xi) **"CONTROL OF COMMITTEE"**

Each of the said Committees shall have full control of matters submitted to them respectively and their decisions therein shall be binding upon all parties but should any person feel himself aggrieved by the findings of the Committee may appeal to the Conference for its decision in the matter.

The Conference shall have the right and power to confirm, vary, amend, reverse or veto any of the decisions of any of the above Committees, and the actions of the Conference herein shall and be final and binding upon any member and adherent of the church.

(xii) **"CLASS LEADERS"**

Any ordained Minister shall have the right to appoint one or more members of the church to be Leaders of Church Classes in the congregation under his charge. It shall not be necessary for Conference to confirm the appointment of such Class Leaders unless the majority of the members of such congregation shall object to such appointment.

(xiii) **"FUNDS"**

The Funds of the church shall be raised by the members thereof and otherwise as may be determined by the Conference and all moneys received shall be paid over to the General

Secretary of the church. He shall be bound and obliged to pay same to and to account to the Bishop who may pay such moneys into any such Bank or Building Society as he may decide in the name of the Bishop of the **ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH**.

The chairman of the Finance Committee and the General Secretary are authorised to operate upon such account or accounts.

(xiv) **"DISPUTES"**

No member of the church shall have the right to take any matter or dispute relating to the church to any **COURT OF LAW** until he or she shall have had the matter or dispute adjudicated by either one or more of the said Standing Committees and the findings of such Committees referred to the Annual Conference.

(xv) **"STIPENDS"**

Each congregation shall be responsible for the payment of the stipends due to its Ministers, if any, and all other liabilities incurred by it.

(xvi) **"QUARTERLY MEETINGS"**

A Meetings consisting of all Class Leaders and other officials of the Church appointed in any congregation shall be held once in each quarter at which Meeting the Ministers in charge of congregation shall preside. At this Meeting all matters of finance concerning the congregation and all other matters relating exclusively to the concerns of that congregation shall be discussed, dealt with, and decisions taken thereon.

The decisions taken at such Meetings provided they are not in conflict with the rules of the Church. The powers of the Standing Committee or of the Annual Conference shall be binding upon the members of that congregation. The Quarterly Meeting shall elect one of its members to be the Secretary thereof who shall be obliged to keep a proper record of the happenings at every meeting as also of its decisions.

The Secretary shall also be required to transmit to the General Secretary through the Minister in Charge of the congregation, a quarterly report, and a financial statement relating to all business transacted at the meeting during the proceeding quarter and to remit such financial statement any money he may have in hand.

(xvii) **"SOCIETY PROPERTY"**

The Bishop in his capacity as such shall hold immovable properties for the said Church upon condition that only ordained Ministers or Lay Preachers appointed by the Conference shall hold services therein or thereon and the Church shall be entitled to acquire immovable property; the Bishop in his capacity as such shall deal with such properties in such manner as he may be directed by the members of the Quarterly Meetings of the congregation within whose area the property shall be situated but only in such manner that the property shall remain in all cases the property of the Church as a whole and not that of any particular congregation.

(xviii) **"ACTIONS"**

All actions instituted either on behalf of the Church or

against it shall be brought in the name of the or against the General Secretary in his capacity as such and the general Secretary shall be authorised by a joint resolution of the Lay and Finance Committee to institute or defend any such action.

(xix) **"OBJECT OF THE CHURCH"**

The Church shall be organised for the spread of the Word of God and the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in the world. Whereas the above Pillars of the Church have seen and still see deepest Christians anxiety the deplorable spiritual and mental condition of those who inhabit the colonies of the world which the Word of God declares, shall be lighten up with the glorious rays of the sun of righteousness. And whereas we further remember with deep emotion the last command of our ascending Lord, "Go ye the World and preach the Gospel to all nations".

And desiring to show our love by our obedience we therefore resolve hereby to constitute ourselves into a distinct Church with various branches, to have and enjoy the free use and benefit of all premises acquired on behalf of the said congregation, for rendering effectively the trust created by purchase of grounds, gifts, donations, device legacies, and bequest of trusts made to or in favour of the said people who are members of the said Church or those who have come under the jurisdiction of this Church without distinction of race and colour.

(xx) **"NAME OF THE CHURCH"**

The name of the Church shall be designated the Zion Christian Church: "But ye are come unto Mount Zion and unto the City of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem and to

innumerable company of Angels the general assembly, and the church of the first born of God the Judge of all (Hebs 12: 22-23) and are built upon the foundations of the Apostles and Prophets: Jesus CHrist being the chief corner stone (Ephesians 2: 20).

(xxi) **"ORDER OF PRAYER"**

We adopt the common prayers as the Apostles used when the Holy Ghost within them constraineth, or healing order, to lay hands on the sick and pray. "Ye are the children of the Lord your God, ye shall not cut yourselves nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead" (Deut. 14: 1).

"Is any sick among you? Let him call for the Elders of the church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord" (James 5: 14).

(xxii) **"DUTIES OF THE BISHOP"**

The President shall preside over all conventions which summoned and have power in Church over all Ministers, Missionaries, etc. He shall settle all questions of laws and rules of orders subject to an appeal of the Conference, sign documents and labour assiduously for the promotion of the Church. He will guard the spirit of the Church Constitution to be observed and adhered to. He will in conjunction with presiding Ministers and full Ministers ordain candidates selected and presented to him for ordination. Whilst the Annual Conference is in session. He shall have the power to remove, suspend, or change Ministers after investigation by a committee of not less than three (3) members of Ministers and Missionaries. In the absence of the Bishop the Annual Conference may elect a chairman amongst the presiding Ministers of the district according to

their order of seniority. Should a vacancy occur during the interval between the Annual Conference, the Executive Church Council will fill it up until the Annual Conference is held.

DUTIES OF MINISTERS.

To preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ - Matt. 28: 18-19

To lay hands on and pray for the sick - Mark 16: 17-18;
James 14: 15.

To bury the dead - 1 Cor. 15: 12-58; Rev. 14: 13.

To baptise believers - Matt. 28: 18-19.

To consecrate children - Matt. 19: 15-16.

To administer the Lord's Supper - 1 Cor. 11: 23-31.

To solemnise marriages - John 2: 2.

DUTIES OF AN EVANGELISTS.

To preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ - Matt. 28: 18-19.

To lay hands on and pray for the sick - Mark 16: 17-18;
James 5: 14-15.

To bury the dead - 1 Cor. 15: 12-58; Rev. 14: 13.

To Baptise Believers - Matt. 28: 18-19.

To consecrate children - Matt 19: 15-16.

To administer the Lord's Supper.

DUTIES OF THE DEACON

To preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ - Matt. 28: 18-19.

To lay hands on and pray for the sick - mark 16: 17.18;
James: 5: 14-15.

To bury the dead - 1 Cor. 15: 12-58; Rev. 14: 13.

To baptise believers - Matt. 28: 18-19)

DUTIES OF THE LAY PREACHERS.

- To preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ - Matt. 28: 18-19.
- To lay hands on and pray for the sick - Mark 16: 17.18;
James 5: 14-15).
- To bury the dead - 1 Cor. 15: 12-58; Rev. 14: 13.

THE ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH CONSTITUTION (EDWARD'S GROUP) 1954**BE IT HEREBY MADE KNOWN:**

That whereas the above ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH (Hereinafter referred to as the Church) was founded a number of years ago;

Whereas, owing to the increase in membership and the growth of activities and ministrations, it has been found necessary to amend and amplify the original constitution of the Church in various ways; and

Whereas it is desirable to consolidate all laws, rules and regulations governing and are pertaining to the church;

Now therefore we, the undersigned, representing all the ecclesiastical officers and members of the Church, and particularly the members of the Congregations set opposite our name, do hereby resolve and agree that the following shall be the Constitution of the Church, and all other or former constitution are and shall be hereby annulled and cancelled.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

A Conference shall be held annually upon fixed date.

CONSTITUTION

The Conference shall consists of:

- (a) All ordained Ministers.
- (b) All Lay Preachers.
- (c) Two delegates to be elected out of the officers of the Church by each congregation of not less that 25 persons.

ELECTIONS

The Conference shall first proceed to elect a Bishop who shall hold office for one (1) year.

The Bishop so elected shall preside at the Annual Conference; shall be recognised as the Head of the Church, its executive officer and the legal representative of the Conference during such time as it shall not be sitting.

The Conference shall then proceed (sic) to elect a General Secretary and Treasurer.

GENERAL

The Conference shall deal with all matters and decide all disputes affecting the Church. It shall also receive all reports of Congregations, Quarterly Meetings and Secretaries of the various Committees hereinafter referred to.

Conference shall have power to pass regulations governing the conduct of its Ministers and members of the Church, to fix the stipends payable to the Bishops and Ministers, the fees payable for marriage, baptism, burials and membership, and generally for all purposes affecting the welfare of the Church. It shall also have power to provide for the expenses of the three Committees above referred to.

APPOINTMENTS

The Conference shall have power to appoint, suspend, excommunicate or remove Presiding Elders, Ministers and Lay Preachers, as also any other officers required by the Church who shall be nominated as hereinafter set out.

No Minister shall assume office until he shall have been ordained by the Bishop or Presiding Elder.

Should Conference deem it desirable that other officials be appointed to assist in carrying on the work of

the Church, any congregation of not less than twenty five (25) members may nominate one or more of their members to be such official or officials, and the Conference shall, if it approves of such person or persons appoint him or them to such position. No official so appointed may be suspended by the Minister in charge of the congregation nominating such official, but the case of such official shall immediately be reported to and dealt with by such of the under-mentioned Standing Committees as shall have power to act in such matter.

STANDING COMMITTEES

The Conference shall appoint an Ecclesiastical, Lay and Finance Standing Committee to deal with Church matters when Conference is not in session. Each of such Committees shall be presided over by the Bishop, who shall ex-officio be a member of each of such Committees, or, in his unavoidable absence, by the eldest Presiding Elder.

ECCLESIASTICAL STANDING COMMITTEE

The Ecclesiastical Standing Committee shall consists of not less than three (3) ordained Ministers, and shall deal with and decide ecclesiastical matters and disputed matters of Church discipline and matters relating to the spiritual and moral welfare of the members of the church.

Such Committee shall have power to suspend any Minister or Lay Preacher, and to confirm the suspension of any other officer from office pending the sitting of the next Annual Conference

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee shall consists of not less than five (5) members of the Church to be elected annually by the

Conference, and the General Secretary of the Conference shall be Secretary of such Committee. The Finance Committee shall deal with all financial matters of the Church, and no payment shall be made on behalf of the Church except with the consent and authority of this Committee.

The Committee shall further scrutinize all accounts submitted by the various Quarterly Meetings, and shall report annually to the Conference regarding all matters dealt with during the previous year.

All payments or claims of payment made by this Committee shall be subject to confirmation at the Annual Conference.

LAY STANDING COMMITTEE

The Lay standing Committee shall consists of the General Secretary and not less than four (4) Class Leaders. It shall deal with all matters of the church which do not fall within the Province of the Ecclesiastical Committee or Finance Committee.

BUSINESS OF COMMITTEES

Each of the aforesaid Committees shall appoint a Secretary, to whom all communications regarding the respective Committees shall be addressed. The Committees shall keep proper record of all matters submitted to them and of their findings therein, and shall in due course report all such matters at the Annual Conference.

CONTROL OF COMMITTEES

Each of the said Committees shall have full control of matters submitted to them respectively, and their decisions therein shall be binding upon all parties; but so that any person or persons feeling themselves to have been aggrieved

by the finding of any Committee may appeal to the Conference for its decision in the matter. The Conference shall have the right and power to confirm, vary, amend, reverse or veto any of the decisions of any of the above Committees, and the action of the Conference herein shall be final and binding upon any member and adherent of the Church.

CLASS LEADERS

Any ordained Minister shall have the right to appoint one or more members of the Church to be Leaders of the Church Classes in the congregation under his charge.

It shall not be necessary for Conference to confirm the appointment of such Class Leaders unless the majority of members of such congregation shall object to such appointment.

FUNDS

The funds of the Church shall be raised by the members thereof, and otherwise as may determined by Conference, and all moneys received shall be paid over to the General Secretary of the Church. He shall be bound and obliged to pay same into an account in the "National Bank of South Africa, Limited", at Pretoria, or such other bank as Conference may approve of in the name of the "Zion Christian Church". All payments to be made on behalf of the church shall be made by means of cheques drawn on this account.

The Chairman of the Finance Committee and the General Secretary of the Church are authorised to operate upon this account.

DISPUTES

No member of the Church shall have the right to take any matter or disputes relating to the Church or any ordained

Minister to any Court of Law, until he/she shall have had the matter or dispute adjudicated by either one or other of the said Standing Committees, and the findings of such Committees referred to the Annual Conference.

STIPENDS

Each congregation shall be responsible for the payment of the stipends due to its Minister and any and all other liabilities incurred by it, or by reason of a resolution passed by the Standing Finance Committee and confirmed by the Conference.

QUARTERLY MEETINGS

A meeting, consisting of all Class Leaders and other officials of the Church appointed in any congregation, shall be held once in each quarter, at which meeting the Minister in charge of the congregation shall preside.

At this meeting all matters of finance, concerning the congregation, and all other matters relating exclusively to the concerns of that congregation, shall be discussed, dealt with, and decisions take thereon.

The decisions taken at such meetings, provided they are not in conflict with the rules of the Church, the powers of the Standing Committees or of the Annual Conference, shall be binding upon the members of that congregation.

The quarterly Meetings shall elect one of its members to be the Secretary thereof, who shall be obliged to keep a proper record of the happenings at every meeting, as also its decisions.

It shall also be required to transmit to the General Secretary, through the Minister in charge of the congregation, a quarterly report and financial statement relating to all business transaction at the meeting during

the preceding quarter, and to remit with such financial statement any moneys he may have in hand.

SOCIETY PROPERTY

The Annual Conference shall elect not less than three (3) or more than five (5) of its members to be the Trustees of the Church, and all the Church property shall be held by these trustees, and, in case of immovable property, shall be registered in the names of such Trustees.

The Trustees shall hold the said property for the said Church upon condition that only ordained Ministers of Lay Preachers appointed by Conference shall hold services therein.

They shall further deal with such property in such manner as they may be directed by the members of the quarterly Meeting of the congregation within whose area the property shall be situated; but so, that the property shall remain in all cases the property of the Church, and not of any particular congregation.

ACTIONS

All actions instituted either on behalf of the Church or against it shall be brought in the name of or against the General Secretary in his capacity as such, and the General Secretary shall be authorised (sic) by a joint resolution of the Lay and Finance Committees to institute or defend any such action.

DENOMINATION

Such as to organise such denomination for the spread of the Word of God and the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in the world: Whereas the above pillars have seen, and still see

with deepest Christian anxiety, the deplorable spiritual and mental condition of our people who inhabit the colonies of the world, which the Word of God declares shall be lighten up with the glories rays of the sun of righteousness, and whereas we further remember with deep emotion the last Command of our ascending Lord: "Go ye into the world and preach the GOSpel to all nations"; and desiring to show our love by our obedience, we therefore resolve hereby to constitute ourselves into a distinct denomination with various colonies to have and enjoy the free use and benefit of all premises acquired on behalf of the said congregation for rendering effectual the trusts created by purchase or trusts made to or in favour of the said people who are members of the said denomination or those who have come under the jurisdiction of this denomination without distinction of race and colour.

BASIS

The name of the Church shall be designated the Zion Christian Church. "Be ye are come unto Mount Zion, City of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem, innumerable company of angels general assembly and Church of the first born of God, the Judge of all" (Heb. 12: 22-23). And are built upon foundations of the Apostles and Prophets Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Corner Stone" (Ephesians 2: 20).

ORDER OF PRAYER

We adopt the common prayers as the Apostles used when the Holy Spirit Ghost within them constraineth, or healing, order to lay hands on the sick and pray. "Ye are children of the Lord your God, ye shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead (Deuteronomy 14: 1).

"Is any sick among you, let him call for the elders of the Church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord (James 5: 14).

DUTIES OF THE BISHOP

President shall preside over all conventions which are summoned and have power in the Church over all Ministers, Missionaries, etc. He shall settle all questions of law and rules of orders, subject to an appeal to the Annual Conference, sign all documents and labour assiduously for the promotion of the Church. He shall guard the spirit of this Church Constitution to be observed and to adhered to. He shall, in conjunction with Presiding Ministers, and full Ministers, ordain candidates selected, and presented to him for ordination whilst the Annual Conference is in session. He shall have power to remove, suspend or change ministers after investigation by a committee of not less than three of ministers and missionaries. In the absence of the Bishop, the Annual Conference may elect a chairman amongst the presiding Ministers of the district according to their order of seniority. Should a vacancy occur during the interval of the Conference, the Executive Church Council will fill it up until the Annual Conference is held.

DUTIES OF MINISTERS

Is ordained and has authority to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Matt. 28: 19-20); to lay hands on and pray for the sick (Mark 16: 17-18; James 5: 13-15); to consecrate children (Mark 10: 14-16); to baptize believers (Matt. 28: 19); to administer the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11: 23-31); to bury the dead (1 Cor. 15; Rev. 14: 13; Ez. 39: 13-14); to solemnize marriages (John 2: 12; Psalm 45: 9-10).

DUTIES OF EVANGELISTS

They have authority to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Matt. 28: 19-20); to lay hands on and pray for the sick (Mark 16: 17-18); to consecrate children (Mark 10: 14-16); to baptize believers (Matt. 28: 19); to administer the Lord Supper (1 Cor. 11: 23-31); to bury the dead (1 Cor. 15; Rev. 14: 13).

DUTIES OF THE DEACON

They have the authority to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Matt. 28: 19-20); to lay hands on and pray for the sick (Mark 16:17-18); James 5: 14-15); to baptize believers (Matt. 28: 19); to bury the dead (1 Cor. 15; Rev. 14: 13).

DUTIES OF LOCAL PREACHERS

The Local Preacher has the authority to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Matt. 28: 19-20); to lay hands on and pray for the sick (Mark 16: 17-18; James 5: 13-15); to bury the dead (1 Cor. 15; Rev. 14: 13); Jesus Christ said "Ye shall receive poor (sic), after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; ye shall be my witness unto the uttermost parts of the earth" (Acts 1: 8).

ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Superintendent of the church: Rev Engenas B Lekganyane.
Headquarters: Zion City Moria, Warmberg, Private Bag,
Pietersburg.

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying All power is given unto me in Heaven and Earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost (Matt. 28: 18-19).

MINISTERIAL CREDENTIAL.....194

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE BEARER HEREOF
.....
OF.....
having been called by the HOLY Ghost as a Christian Worker in Zion Christian Church, has been ordained by us and is recommended to the Saints as a Minister in good standing, this Credential to hold good as long as he has our confidence and keeps unity of the spirit with us.

AND HAS AUTHORITY

- To preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ - Matt. 28: 18-19.
- To lay hands on and pray for the sick - Mark 16: 17-18
James 5: 14-15
- To bury the dead - 1 Cor. 15: 12-58, Rev. 14: 13
- To baptize believers - Matt. 28: 18-19.
- To consecrate Children - Matt. 19: 15-16
- To administer the Lord's Supper - 1 Cor. 11: 23-31.
- TO solemnise Marriages - John 2: 12.

..... Superintendent.
..... Minister in charge.
..... Secretary

THE ST. ENGENAS Z . C . C CONSTITUTION (JOSEPH'S GROUP)

ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH

NOW

ST. ENGENAS ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH

FOUNDED IN 1924 BY HIS LORDSHIP BISHOP E B LEKGANYANE.

SUCCEDED BY

BISHOP J E LEKGANYANE (1949)

HEADQUARTERS:

ZION CITY MORIA, P O BOX 6 BOYNE, PIETERSBURG.

PREFACE

The ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH was founded in 1924 by the late Bishop ENGENAS BARNABAS LEKGANYANE who died in 1948, having nominated his son JOSEPH ENGENAS LEKGANYANE, to succeed him as Spiritual Leader and Bishop of the Church.

After the customary year of mourning for the founder, Bishop Joseph Engenas Lekganyane was installed as Spiritual Leader of the Church at a Conference held at Zion City Moria, Pietersburg, in 1949.

On the 26th December, 1965, it was resolved at a Conference of the Church, to sanctify the founder and name the Church after him. The name of the Church was then changed to ST. ENGENAS ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

The amended constitution of the Church was adopted at a Conference of the Church held at Zion City Moria on the 3rd September 1972.

ST. ENGENAS ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH CONSTITUTION

NAME OF THE CHURCH

1. The Church shall be called ST. ENGENAS ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH and shall hereafter be referred to as the Church.

OBJECTS

The objects OF the Church are:

2. To establish and maintain the continuity of the church for the spread of the Word of God and the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in accordance with traditional Christianity.
3. To provide Ministers and such other officials and employees as may be required in order to carry out all matters connected with the observance of the Christian Religion and Rites and to fix fees payable for any services rendered.
4. To conduct classes for religious and educational instruction.
5. To purchase, hire or acquire by way of donation or otherwise, movable or immovable property and to provide, maintain and equip buildings suitable for religious, educational, social and other purposes whatever, and to sell, let, mortgage, transfer, donate or otherwise dispose of movable and immovable property.
6. To invest the funds of the Church in property, debentures, Government or Municipal securities, Building Societies and/or banks.

7. To raise or borrow money for the purpose of the Church in such manner and of such security as may determined and in particular by passing mortgage bonds for registration with the proper authorities.

8. Generally to further the interests of Christianity and to do all such things and carry out all such undertakings as may be necessary or incidental to the aforesaid objects.

NO SHARE IN ASSETS

9. In no case shall any member or group of members be entitled to claim any share of the assets of the Church

ACQUISITION AND ALIENATION OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

10. NO immovable property shall be purchase, sold, or mortgaged unless such purchase, sale or mortgage be authorised by the Church Council

CONFERENCE

11. A Conference or Convention of the Church members shall be held at least once in each calendar year at such place or places as the Executive Committee shall from time to time decide.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE

12. The Bishop of the Church shall preside at all Conferences, but he may delegate this duty to the Chairman of the Executive Committee or failing him the Vice-Chairman or failing him any other Council member present.

13. When a vacancy in the leadership of the Church occurs, a new Bishop shall be elected at a Conference of the Church, as the Spiritual Leader thereof.

14. The elected Bishop shall be a descendant, in the male line, of Bishop Joseph Engenas Lekganyane, successor to his father, the founder of the Church, and shall require the recommendation of the Church Council. Provide however, that should a Bishop during his lifetime or by way of a Will or other document nominate his successor from amongst his male descendants, the Conference shall install such nominee as the Bishop and spiritual Leader of the Church. The Spiritual or installed shall hold office for life.

15. Should the Bishop not be able to fulfill his duties for any period owing to illness or for any other reason, then the Bishop shall have the power to nominate an acting Bishop, to act on his behalf during such period. Should a vacancy occur during the interval between Conference, the Church Council shall have the power to appoint an acting Spiritual Leader who shall act as such until the next Conference.

16. The Conference shall elect an Executive Committee consisting of 9 members of the Church, including a Secretary and Treasurer, to deal with day to day affairs of the Church. The members so elected shall hold office at the pleasure of the Conference. The existing Executive Committee shall continue in office until otherwise decided by the Conference.

17. Any vacancy in the executive Committee shall be filled by the Bishop by the appointment of any other Church member to the Executive.

18. The Conference shall deal with and decide upon all matters raised by the Bishop, the Church Council, the executive Committee, any congregation or member. It shall receive reports from the Bishop, Executive Committee, Ministers and congregations and generally deal with all matters affecting the conduct and welfare of the church and affiliated congregations.

MANAGEMENT

The Management, control, and general administration of all matters and affairs of the Church, including the control of the Church finance, shall be vested in the Executive Committee, all the members of which shall be paid officials of the Church. The emoluments payable to the Secretary, treasurer and individual members of the Executive Committee shall be determined by the Bishop.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

20. The Executive Committee shall meet immediately after the date of the Conference at which it was elected. The Bishop shall appoint from the members of the Committee, a Chairman to preside over its deliberations as well as a Vice-Chairman. Such appointments shall be at the pleasure of the Bishop, who may vary such appointments in his own discretion from time to time. The Secretary of the Church shall act as the Secretary of the Committee.

21. The Executive Committee shall elect at its first meeting such sub-committees as it may deem fit and necessary. The Chairman shall be ex-officio a member of each sub-committee.

22. The Executive Committee shall only with the consent of the Bishop have the right to co-opt any other Church member

to fill any vacancy occurring on the Executive Committee and with the permission of the Bishop may co-opt additional members to undertake special duties allotted to them.

23. A quorum of the Executive Committee shall consists of a majority of its members.

24. The Executive Committee shall adjudicate upon disputes between individual members, between members and the congregation of which they are members and on any matter submitted to it. Any person or body may appeal against any decision of the Executive Committee to the Bishop, whose decision shall be final and binding upon all the parties concerned.

25. The Executive Committee shall from time to time determine the membership fees and subscriptions payable by members and congregations, fees payable for any special services of the Church; the stipend payable to the Bishop and shall have the right, under special circumstances, to reduce, or suspend any Church or Congregation charge.

26. The Executive Committee shall adjudicate upon disputes necessary for the purpose of transacting the day to day business of the Church.

27. The secretary shall keep concise and accurate minutes of the proceedings of the Conference, the Church Council and the Executive Committee which minutes, together with all correspondence and documents shall be preserved. No such minutes shall be destroyed without the authority of the Conference.

28. The Treasurer shall regularly submit to the Executive Committee a statement of the affairs of the Church and shall be subjected to the authority of the Executive Committee or

any sub-committee it may appoint to deal with Church finance.

29. The Executive Committee shall have the power to:

- (a) Engage and terminate the services of officials and other employees and determine their remuneration.
- (b) Pay salaries, incur and pay such expenditure as it may authorise.
- (c) Appoint sub-committees from amongst its members for the purpose of carrying out any special business.
- (d) Institute, defend, carry on, abandon, compromise and settle any actions or other proceedings in any court of law and to submit any claim by or against the Church and any dispute to arbitration.
- (e) Authorise by resolution any two members of the Executive Committee to sign on behalf of the Church, all powers of Attorneys, Contracts, Agreements or other deeds or documents for the purpose of litigation, and for the sale or purchase of immovable property authorised by the Church Council.
- (f) Set aside moneys for Pension Fund for employees or subscribe to any Pension Scheme.
- (g) Vote from the funds of the Church such amounts as they may decide as honoraria or bonuses to officials or servants or as subscriptions or donations to any charitable or other fund.
- (h) Do all such acts and things not inconsistent with these rules which, in the interest of the Church, it may deem desirable.
- (i) Deal with any condition or circumstances arising, for which specific provision is not provided in these rules.
- (j) Open a Banking Account in the name of the Church and/or Savings Accounts, Fixed Deposit Account, Share Account with building Society and make, accept, endorse, execute and issue Promissory Notes, Bills of Exchange and all transferable instruments. All funds of the Church shall be

deposited to the credit of such Account or Accounts as soon as conveniently possible. All such accounts shall be operated on by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee together with either the Secretary or Treasurer.

(k) Admit persons to membership of the Church and on the complaint of any Congregation Committee and after proper investigation, to reprimand or suspend any member from the enjoyment and exercise of all or any privileges for a specific time, or excommunicate any member.

(l) Generally to do all such things as may be necessary to carry out and further the objects of the Church.

30. Any member of the Executive Committee absenting himself for three consecutive meetings, without having received leave of absence, or giving reasons satisfactory to the Council, shall ipso facto cease to be a member thereof.

31. The Executive Committee shall be subject to the supervision of the Church Council and shall at all times carry out the directions and resolutions of the Church Council.

CHURCH COUNCIL

32. The Church Council consists of the members of the Executive Committee and delegates from affiliated Congregations.

33. The Council shall hold quarterly meetings to be convened by the Executive Committee; such meetings shall be presided over by the Chairman of the Executive Committee unless a Chairman is elected by the Council.

34. The Council shall in general further the objects of the Church, for which purpose it shall call for and receive such

reports as it may require from the Executive Committee and Congregations and resolve upon any matter under consideration.

35. The Council shall have the power to:

(a) Generally to do all such things as may be necessary to carry out further the objects of the Church.

(b) Authorise the building of churches and other amenities by Congregation.

(c) Frame by-laws and alter, amend or rescind same, provided these are not inconsistent with the Constitution.

(d) Adjudicate on disputes or complaints submitted to it and impose such disabilities or penalties as the Executive Committee is empowered to impose and in addition thereto cancel the affiliation of any congregation.

(e) Do all such acts and things not inconsistent with these rules which, in the interest of the Church, it may deem desirable.

(f) Deal with any condition or circumstances arising, for which specific provision is not provided in these rules.

(g) Determine the amount of, and impose a special levy, to be paid by members of affiliated Congregations for the purpose of building churches and amenities for the use by their respective Congregations.

ABSTENTION OF OFFICIALS

36. No salaried official or employee shall be permitted to absent himself from his duties without first obtaining the permission of the Chairman of the Executive Committee. Should he desire leave of absence for a period exceeding seven days, his application shall be made in writing to the Executive Committee.

MISBEHAVIOUR OF MEMBERS

37. In the event any member conducting himself in an unbecoming or improper manner whether in or within the precincts of any Church elsewhere, or engaging directly or indirectly in any trade, vocation, or practice, which in the opinion of the Executive Committee is calculated to bring the Church or its members into disrepute, or which in the opinion of the Executive Committee is disgraceful, the Executive Committee shall have the right to impose on such member all or any of the following disabilities or penalties, viz:

- (a) Orally or in writing reprimand the offending member;
- (b) Suspend such member from enjoyment and exercise of all or any privileges for a specific time;
- (c) Excommunicate such member from the Church and erase his name from the list of members.

Before the Executive Committee exercise its rights hereunder, an inquiry shall be held, which enquiry the member shall invited to attend. Should the member fail to attend such enquiry, the Executive Committee shall proceed with the enquiry in his absence and resolve on the matter. An appeal against a decision of the Executive Committee shall lie to the Bishop, whose decision shall be final and binding.

CONGREGATIONS

38. Congregations of the Church may, subject to approval of the Bishop, be formed by Communities comprising not less than twenty five (25) members of the Church. Such Congregations shall be autonomous and be responsible for the conduct of their own affairs, subject always to the supervision and overriding authority of the Church Council, the Executive Committee and the Bishop. Upon any such

Congregation being formed in terms hereof, it shall be deemed to have become affiliated to the Church and bound by the terms of the Constitution.

39. Each Congregation shall elect a Committee from amongst its own members, comprising a Chairman, two members, a Secretary and a Treasurer, to manage, control and administer the affairs of the Congregation, provided that if the members of a Congregation exceed twenty five (25) in number, such Congregation may elect an additional member to the Committee for every twenty-five (25) (or major fraction thereof) additional members in excess of twenty-five (25), provided however, that the maximum number of members (excluding the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer) of any such Committee shall be ten (10).

40. Each Congregation shall be responsible for its own finances and the Church shall not be liable for the debts incurred by any Congregation, nor shall it have any financial obligation towards any Congregation. Each Congregation shall be responsible for the stipends due to its Ministers or any of her liabilities incurred by it.

41. All property purchased by any Congregation shall be registered in the name of the Church, in terms of this Constitution, and become an asset of the Church.

APPOINTMENT OF MINISTERS, ASSISTANT MINISTERS, EVANGELISTS, DEACONS AND LAY PREACHERS.

42. The Bishop shall appoint members of the Church as Ministers to Congregations. The Bishop shall have the power to ordain such members as Ministers and to suspend or withdraw the right to ministry, from any member so ordained. The Bishop shall furthermore have the power to appoint Assistant Ministers, Evangelists, Deacons and Lay Preachers

to perform such duties as they are authorised to carry out, and to withdraw such appointment or appointments in his discretion.

DUTIES OF MINISTERS AND ASSISTANT MINISTERS

43. All Ministers shall lead their Congregations in prayer and preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They shall lay hands on and pray for the sick, conduct religious marriages services, funeral services, baptise prospective members according to the practice of the Church, Christen or Bless Children of members, administer the Lord's Supper, accept believers into the Church and generally carry out such further duties as shall be assigned to them by the Bishop.

DUTIES OF EVANGELISTS

44. The Evangelists shall lead the Congregations in prayer and preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They shall lay hands on and pray for the sick, conduct funeral services, baptise prospective members according to the practice of the Church, Christen or Bless children of members and accept believers into the Church.

DUTIES OF DEACONS

45. Deacons shall lead Congregations in prayer and preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They shall lay hands on and pray for the sick, conduct funeral services, baptise members according to the practice of the Church, Christen or Bless children of Members and accept believers into the Church.

DUTIES OF THE LAY PREACHERS

46. Lay Preachers shall lead CONgregations in prayer and preach the GOspel of Jesus Christ. They shall lay hands on and pray for the sick and conduct funerals services.

THE BISHOP

47. In addition to being the Spiritual Leader of the Church and in addition to the powers vested in him under this Constitution, the Bishop shall decide on CHurch Law and practice and have the power to perform the duties assigned to Ministers and other appointees.

BOOKS OF ACCOUNT AND AUDIT

The Treasurer shall keep and maintain a record of all Church financial transactions. He shall at the first Executive Committee meeting after the close of the financial Year present his report together with the Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet of the Church, which accounts shall be audited and countersigned by an Auditor nominated by the Executive Committee.

FINANCIAL YEAR

49. The Financial Year end on the thirty first day of December in every year.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

50. At any Conference, Church Council Meeting, or Executive Committee Meeting the first business shall be the reading, by the Secretary, of the minutes of the previous meeting of the Conference or the Church Council or the Executive

Committee as the case may be, and if correct, shall be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

VOTING

51. At all Conferences, except as herein otherwise provided, each member above the age of eighteen (18) years shall have one vote and the vote of the majority shall be binding on the minority, in accordance with the provision hereof.

52. Any amendment to this Constitution shall require a two thirds majority of members voting.

53. Except in those cases where a vote by ballot is desired by five members qualified to vote at a meeting, the voting shall be by show of hands.

54. A division or poll may be demanded by five members qualified to vote. In such case Scrutineers shall be appointed by the Chairman from members present.

55. No resolution passed at a Conference shall be rescinded except by majority of two thirds present and voting at a subsequent Conference or at a meeting specifically convened for such purpose

INTERPRETATION

56. The decisions of the Church Council, as to the interpretation of the rules, regulations and by-laws shall be final and binding.

AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION

57. The rules of this Constitution may be amended by a two third majority vote of the members present and voting at a Conference of the Church. The Church Council may introduce any amendment it may deem necessary for consideration. Any member wishing to introduce an amendment shall give notice thereof to the Church Council in writing, at least 60 days prior to a Conference and if such amendment is acceptable to the Council, the latter shall make a recommendation in relation to such amendment, at the next Conference.

58. The Church may sue or be sued in its corporate name and service by any legal document may be made upon the Chairman of the Executive Committee or the Secretary for the time being.

ORDER AND PROCEDURE

59. All questions of order or procedure in regard to any meeting or action of the Church, the Conference, the Church Council, the Executive Committee or Sub-Committee thereof, shall be determined in accordance with recognised procedure.

EMBLEM

60. The Emblem of the Church is a Dove, struck from metal, superimposed on black and green material
