

Prophetic Ministry and Practices in Contemporary Ghana

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ABSTRACT

This study explores prophetic ministries and prophets presently in operation, the ethical credibility of their claims and a critical evaluation of the influence of their social background on their teachings and practices. The study used three instruments namely: questionnaire, interview and participatory observational. Three Prophets were used as the case study for this study; Prophet Emmanuel Ansah (Prophet Nyhiraba), Prophet Reginald Kwesi Boateng (Odeefo Kwesi), and Prophet Jeremiah Yaw Nsiah.¹ It is obvious that, these prophets do not have leadership style that they follow and are mostly motivated by the gains they can make out of this ministry than for the service they render to the members of their groups. Though they may have been genuinely called they eventually get misguided in seeking for the material glory and honour of the calling. Also, most of these prophets see themselves as agents by whom all things become possible. Those who have the calling into the Prophetic Ministry may do so without any fear by submitting themselves to established ethics and principles for the sake of credibility. Speak the truth that comes from God and not what your intuition tells you. The Message from God goes beyond feelings and intuitions.

¹ Names of persons, churches used in the work is not the real names. This is due to the affect that content of the work can undermine their ministry and for ethical reasons.

Introduction

Prophetic ministry of today has seen some media publication due to its sensitivity, contribution to socio-economic and psychological impact on the people. There have been some inopportune circumstances in the operations of the gift in line with leadership and ethics. Despite this, Prophetic ministry is viewed today as welcome news to help solve social problems. It is difficult to number the prophets in the regional capitals of Ghana, especially Accra and Kumasi. Yet every now and then new prophet emerges in the scene. Their increasing number, leadership style and ethic raise questions about their credibility. It is in line with this that Wayne Grudem, in his book *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today* observed that, “the words of a true prophet are beyond challenge or question.” Then can one express that all the prophets whose words are always questioned are false prophets?²

Concerns have been raised in the society about some Prophetic ministries and multiplicity of prophetic activities within the Christian and larger Ghanaian communities. It has introduced, in its wake, such magnitude of confusion that prompted an enquiry into the ethical credibility of the claims and practices of such prophetic groups. Scholars have researched into the operations of these ministries from its social and spiritual perspectives for scholarly purposes concerning their life styles. However, an attempt is made in this paper to get a clear meaning of their operations, meaning of the Call, character formations period and not the least the Commission of the prophet into the Office. It will also help those who doubt and have an obscure mind about this gift to reconsider their mindset and views about the prophet.

The data in this paper is collected through Participatory Observation, interviews and the use of secondary sources from the Library. The researcher has limited the sample size to three persons. These were three prophets with congregations of Three hundred and fifty to five hundred in each attendance. These prophets selected are migrated from their mother church because, they saw themselves as prophets

² Wayne A. Grudem, *The Gift Of Prophecy In The New Testament And Today* (Westchester, Illinois: Crossway Books, 1990), 20.

called by God, but had no space to operate within their, then, mother-churches.

Biblical Concept

Prophecy is a discourse emanating from divine inspiration and declaring the purposes of God, whether by reproving and admonishing the wicked, or comforting the afflicted or revealing things hidden; especially by foretelling future events. Paul mentions this in letter to the Romans:

For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So, we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one member one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.³

Paul is talking here at the level of the ordinary member of the Body. He is speaking about things that the average believer can do. And he mentions different types of ministry. However, he does mention such things as prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhortation, giving, ruling and showing mercy. Many of these functions can also be seen in the ministry of the prophet, but if a person is functioning in one of these ministries, it does

³ Romans 12:3-8 (KJV)

not necessarily mean that he is destined to be a prophet.⁴

Prophets are God's agent to speak (Amos 3:8), to act (Jeremiah 43:8-9) or to write (Hebrews 2:1-3; Revelation 1:3) divine messages of warning (Ezekiel 3:17), instruction (Deuteronomy 4:2) or guidance (Isaiah 30:21) and concerning future events (I Kings 11:29-32) and the Messiah (Acts 2:30-35).⁵

The Old Testament captures the genesis of the life and ministry of the prophet as exemplified by Moses. Prophets were God's agent to speak (Amos 3:8), to act (Jeremiah 43:8-9) or to write (Hebrews 2:1-3; Revelation 1:3) divine messages of warning (Ezekiel 3:17), instruction (Deuteronomy 4:2) or guidance (Isaiah 30:21) and concerning future events (I Kings 11:29-32) and the Messiah (Acts 2:30-35).⁶ In the Old Testament, three words are normally used to designate the prophet. These are *rō`eh*, *hōzeh* and *nabi (nāvi)*. *Rō`eh* and *hōze* are properly rendered as “seer”, and are practically synonymous in meaning. Each of the three words designates one who is a spokesman for God.⁷ So, prophets were to be messengers from God sent to speak to men and women with words from God. This is seen in Haggai 1:13 “Then Haggai, the messenger of the Lord, spoke to the people with the Lord's message” (Obadiah 1:1), During the reign of King David, Nathan was given a message to be sent to him (the King David, 2 Samuel 12:25), and the Lord gave Isaiah the prophet a message to deliver to King Hezekiah concerning the need for him to prepare his house because he is going to die. (2 Kings 20:4-6).⁸

⁴ Les D. Crause *The Prophetic Ministry*
http://www.gmrnet.org/archives/articles/ldc_prophetic-ministry.htm accessed 22nd March, 2017

⁵ Norman Hillyer, *The Essential Bible Dictionary* (Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press, 2001), 178.

⁶ Hillyer, *The Essential Bible Dictionary*, 178.

⁷ B.W. Anderson, *The Living Word of the Old Testament* (London, England: Longmans Publishing, 1978), 628.

⁸ Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy*, 17-18.

In the New Testament the office of the prophet is sometimes confused with the gift of prophecy. Some who prophesy believe that they are prophets and prophetesses. But concerning this ministry John and Agnes Sanford made it clear that, “the prophet of the New Testament stands beside his brother, speaking God's word to him, that each brother may experience God's inscription of the law in his own heart. It is more of speaking and interpreting the Gospel.”⁹

New Testament Apostles are connected to the Old Testament prophets. The apostles' words are words of God just as the prophet's words are words of God. The message of the Apostles came directly from Christ in that Paul for example, insists that his message has not come from man but Christ, in the book of Galatians, “The gospel which was preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from men, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ.”¹⁰ From the New Testament perspective, the prophet only speaks but the apostle speaks and writes God's word or message.¹¹ Jeremiah also a prophet in the Old Testament gave a test of the prophet which was practical and simple. “When the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord has truly sent him” (Jeremiah 28:9). A true prophet is one whom 'the Lord has truly sent' (Jeremiah 28:9). But false prophet who prophesy lies are ones of whom the Lord says, 'I did not send them (Jeremiah 29:9, Ezekiel 13:6).

Historical Perspective

Prophetic Ministry in Ghana started in the early part of the twentieth century, which is believed have laid the foundation for the formation of independent churches in the country. These independent churches were led by prophets and prophetesses as an answer to the failure of the

⁹ John and Agnes Sanford, *The Elijah Task* (New Jersey: Logos International, 1977), 65.

¹⁰ Galatians 1:11-12.

¹¹ Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy*, 26-28.

orthodoxy to recognize the culture and some elements that give true identity to the indigenous Christian and the exercising of spiritual gifts of the members to the benefit of the churches. Of the numerous prophets and prophetesses who pioneered and maintained Spiritual Churches or Prophet-Healing Churches in Ghana, three prominently stand out. They are Prophets William Wade Harris, John Swatson and Sampson Oppong.¹² These men, Harris, Swatson and Oppong were prophets who pioneered Pentecostalism in Ghana, had Vision, foretelling, spoke in tongues and healed the sick.

According to Baëta, for some people, such individuals are seen to possess powers of healing, of revealing hidden things, predicting the future, cursing and blessing. He stated that: “The individual endowed with a striking personality and the ability to impose his will on the others, believing himself, and believed by others to be a special agent of some supernatural being or force, will emerge from time to time and secure a following.”¹² Also, they appear “to have access to privileged information about principalities and powers and how to out manoeuvre them”¹⁴

In recent times, the general public has also expressed their concern on the emergence of these prophets. The editor of a Christian magazine called '*The Watchman*' comments on the phenomenon and sees the emergence of the “young prophets” in especially, Accra as one of the disturbing issues confronting Christianity in the country. The paper laments that these prophets have established themselves as “demi-gods with spiritual capabilities that enable them to tell you 'everything' about yourself.”¹⁵ Similarly, 'the Spectator', a popular Ghanaian weekly

¹² E.K. Larbi, *Pentecostalism: the Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity* (Accra, Ghana: Blessed Publications, 2001), 57.

¹³ Christian G. Baëta, *Prophetism in Ghana: A Case Study of Some Spiritual Churches* (London, England: Charles Birchall and Sons Ltd, 1962), 6.

¹⁴ Simon Chan, *Pentecostal Theology and the Christian Spiritual Tradition* (Sheffield, U.K: Academic Press, 2000), 8.

¹⁵ Divine, P. Kumah, 'The Prophetic “All-Night” And Anointing for Sale', *The Watchman* 18 (10-23rd November, 1996).

newspaper published an article entitled, “Beware of these False Prophets” which also points out that “prophetic ministry has become a big-time profession for all who want to make money”.¹⁶

Case Study

1. Prophet Emmanuel Ansah (Prophet Nyhiraba)

Emmanuel Ansah was born in Kumasi but lost the parents in a very tender age. He had his basic education in Kumasi but migrated to Accra after the loss of the parents to stay with the senior brother who is a Pastor of one of the Assemblies of God Churches in Accra. He then had his secondary education in Accra. His parents who were then Christian and member of the Assemblies of God Church never allowed a Sunday to pass without sending him to church. So, he grew up knowing God. His stay with his brother, helped him to acquire knowledge in ministry but had no formal theological training. Emmanuel Ansah is married with a child. Ansah, now popularly known as Prophet Nyhiraba is the founder of the All Nations International Ministry, main lorry station, Amasaman. He has two major services, the Sunday service and his Wednesday's prophetic service.

Conversion and Call

Ansah come from a Christian home and was a member of the Assemblies of God, in Kumasi, were he happens to be a personal assistant to the then pastor of his church. He stays with the pastor and sometime sleeps in the church auditorium. In an interview, he told the researcher, in the church auditorium he had various dreams and visions concerning his calling but thought it wise to wait for God to use him in the Assemblies of God. But the church never gave him the chance to operate. God started telling him of things about the church and people which comes to pass. He then

¹⁶ *The Spectator*, 787, Saturday, February 22 - February 28, 2003.

started with prayer on a football park. Member of the neighbour and some Assemblies of God members started coming to the prayers. Most of those from the community had no church to attend and requested for a Sunday service. He asked God and was instructed to meet to begin a Sunday service. He started last two years and he is presently having about five hundred members with approximately three hundred and fifty in attendance each service.¹⁷

Participants Observation

Prophet Emmanuel Ansah has his prophetic service on Wednesdays from 9:00am. The time for closing was not specified. Obviously as the spirit leads the service. The researcher went to the service in a disguised form right from the beginning through all conversation to the end. He went as a member who saw a calendar with the picture of the prophet and direction to the place of meeting and dates and time of meeting and followed suit to the place. The Service started at 9:00 am with song being led by the associate pastor. Later around 10:15am one of the singers came. She led in praise and worship and the associate pastor stated preaching. During the preaching the prophet arrived but sat in his car waiting. After the preaching by the associate pastor, there were random prayers for people “as led by the spirit”.¹⁸

The entering of the prophet into the church auditorium brought a serene atmosphere. He went straight to his office for some few minutes for the associate pastor to wrap up. When he mounted the stage, he spoke of an “*Akwankyerê*”¹⁹ that was given the previous week. And this was the “*Akwankyerê*” everybody should come with grains of corn equivalent to

¹⁷ In an interview with Prophet Isaac Ansah at the church premises after a prophetic service on 16th June, 2017.

¹⁸ This was the answer given to the researcher when he asked why some were not touched and prayed for.

¹⁹ The term 'Akwankyerê' is an Akan word which literally means 'direction' or giving 'direction'.

the number of your age”. So, if you are thirty years come with thirty grains of corn. This, the researcher acquired his. He then told the congregation that the *Akwankyerê* has change. Now, one is to add one more grain to the grain he or she has. So, if your age is thirty, you are to have thirty-one grains of corn. He asked the house to look for a stream, river or any water body and sow (plant) them, three or four in each hole. He quoted a passage from the book of psalm to support his *Akwankyerê*

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditates day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.²⁰

According to him, “all that is needed is for the seed to germinate. As soon as it sprouts one will come out.”²¹ In the researcher's observation, the prophet never preached hermeneutically. His messages centre mainly on healing, deliverance, miracle, and prosperity and had no link to the text. He asked the church to pray for a former Eastern Regional Minister, whom he gave the name as Ampofo Yaw Adu on the 9th June, 2017. He asked the church to also pray for a radio presenter he is not going to mention the name, but he (the radio presenter) is heard on air every morning. In an interview he told the researcher God had revealed to him something is going to happen to the minister and the radio presenter. He never gave the name but asked the researcher to wait and will see what is going to happen.

²⁰ Psalm 1:1-3, (KJV).

²¹ Quoting exactly what the prophet said during the service.

During the service he told the researcher something has happen but the worse is going to happen. “They are going to take were you plug your pepper.”²² He then told the entire congregation he saw a coffin coming into the church and placed on my laps. He asked the researcher, “where is your wife?” He was told by the researcher; the wife is dead. This led to him saying much thing, like “I can see the family of your wife meeting at the east... see me after church for *Akwankyerê*.” Just after all these, he started with what he called “seed sowing”.²³ He explains that the grains of corn are physical seed they are going to sow; its spirituality and physical manifestation is the sowing of seed. He started by calling those who can sow a seed of a hundred Ghana Cedis (Gh¢ 100.00). This was reduced till it got to coins, fifty pesewas (0.50P). (After the service that lasted for more than seven hours, I went to see the prophet for my “*Akwankyerê*”.

2. Prophet Reginald Kwesi Boateng (Odeefo Kwesi)

Prophet Reginald Kwesi Boateng hailed from Kumasi. He had his basic and secondary education in Kumasi. He was a stout member of a Methodist Church, where he has been after his conversion. He is married with two children. Reginald Kwesi Boateng, now popularly known as Odeefo Kwesi is the founder and the general overseer of Grace Chapel Worldwide (Grace Palace), located at Offankor, Income Tax, off Achimota-Nsawam Road, Total Filling Station.

Conversion and Call

It all began on a Friday afternoon, when one pupil teacher of Kings International School, Teacher Kwesi, having noticed his diligence at

²² The prophet later explained that, someone who supports me is going to die.

²³ This is money that is given in the church with the hope that as a seed is sowed and it germinates and yields lots of fruits so shall the money give in the church germinate and gives will receive it fruits in hundred folds.

work, expounded the gospel to him. That simple approach let him to accept Christ. The teacher introduced Reginald Kwesi Boateng to the Assemblies of God at Bantama in Kumasi. Reginald observed and understudied various pastor and leaders that were brought and appointed whenever there is a change or transfer of pastors. Each person comes with a new style of leadership and ministry.

He heard of Prophet Owusu Bempah through a friend, (Ernest Nyarko) in Accra when he mentioned his plan of going to school to study the bible and ministry. This is due to the inner edge he has been having. He moved to Owusu Bempah School of Prophets. To him it all happened one night when he was sleeping. He saw Prophet Owusu Bempah come to him three times and laid his hands on him. On the third occasion, the prophet prophesied that the anointing on him would come upon him that God would use him in the nations. The prophet blessed him again and went away.

He went back to Kumasi after this event because he became miserable and devastated about what he saw. He went to a prophet, Ato Kwamena in Kumasi who prayed for him and asked him to go back to Accra where he was called and do what God says he should do. This is the genesis of his ministry and the Grace Chapel Worldwide.²⁴

Prophet Reginald Kwesi Boateng has his prophetic service on every Tuesday, from 9:00am to 1:00pm. At the level of the research, the researcher introduces himself to prophet and he was introduced to the entire congregation at the beginning of the service. The researcher observed that the prophet makes use of items like oil, handkerchiefs and honey to administer healing and deliverance and as a means to empower the client for wealth or prosperity. In an interview he claimed it's a prophetic direction from the Holy Spirit.²⁵

²⁴ In a conversational interview conducted by the researcher on Tuesday, 22nd June, 2017 with Reginald Kwesi Boateng at the Grace Chapel Worldwide, Offankor.

²⁵ In a conversational interview conducted by the researcher on Tuesday, 22nd June, 2017 with Reginald Kwesi Boateng at the Grace Chapel Worldwide, Offankor

On Tuesday, 29th June, 2017, the researcher visited the church anointing service. The anointing service is also a time of impartation of spiritual gifts and to empower the client to make wealth. Here, oil was mainly used on the clients. “On one hand, the church provided oil in a bowl for the prophet to use to anoint the clients, while on the other hand, client is asked to bring oil to service.”²⁶ The prophet, after preaching, asked that the oil be lifted up for him to pray. After this the clients may be asked to pour the oil on themselves in order to be prayed for instantly or to take it home.²⁷ In the collecting of money, it was termed an appeal for funds for church projects. After this appeal which started from Gh¢ 500 ended with the normal offering.

3. Prophet Jeremiah Yaw Nsiah

Jeremiah Yaw Nsiah was born in Berekum in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. His parents, who were 'traditionalists' and farmers could not afford to give him full education. He dropped out of school during his secondary education. He is married with a child. Prophet Jeremiah Yaw Nsiah is the founder and general overseer of Shelter of God Unity International in Subin Kumasi.

Conversion and Call

Yaw Nsiah comes from a 'traditional' home where he was forbidden to attend church. This grew in him that his heart was harden to preaching and anything concerning bible. He became a juvenile delinquent. This life led him into lots of deviant practices such as stealing, drunkenness and sexual promiscuity. Yaw Nsiah stole somebody's fowl and was

²⁶ This was in the researcher's interview with a member of the Grace Chapel Church on the 29th June, 2017, at the church premises after an anointing service.

²⁷ This was observed on the 6th July, 2017.

caught. This led to his arrest and detained in the Berekum Police Station, in the Brong-Ahafo Region. Whilst in custody, a routine preacher Kwaku Missah, visited and according to him, 'prophesied' that Yaw Nsiah will one day be used by God for his work. Two weeks after his release from prison, he had a dream. In this dream he saw his father and himself entering the shrine as they use to do. But at the entrance, he saw a beautiful city and saw Jesus being crucified on the cross with blood dropping down. Whiles watching the scene, he heard a voice saying; "this is the blood I shed for you and all mankind, if you will believe in this blood and the name Jesus I will perform signs and wonders through you. According to him, the name Jeremiah was given to him by God.

Participants Observation

Prophet Jeremiah Yaw Nsiah has his prophetic service on every Sunday, from 8:00am to 3:00pm. Prior to my visit I reached him on phone and arranged to meet him personally. After that meeting he accepted my participation and observation. Although the prophet was aware of my coming he never mention it to any of his associate or the members. In his presentation he made it clear that it is the wish of God to prosper a person as he quotes in the Akan language a text of scripture in third John verse two:

*Ôdêfo, meyi mpae sê, ase nyinaa mu, ênsi wo yie, na nya ahoôden sêdeê asi wokra yie no.*²⁸

*Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.*²⁹

²⁸ 3 John 2, Twi translation of the Bible

²⁹ The corresponding reference in the English NIV.

The prophet maintains that the ultimate will of God for the believer is physical or material prosperity and good health. Anything contrary to this prosperous wish is not from God but he attributed it to the devil that he uses '*atanfo*' as enemy in the Akan to call. In line with this the congregation is invited to repeat a confession after the prophet. The confession usually goes like this”.

*Ewuradiee!, Ôtanfo biara a amma me nnye yie no, Sê mebÔ mennsa mu bÔ mpae a Nsa mu bÔ nu edani apranaa ntse ngy moso “Car”mbÔ no enku no Sê êyê me maame-o, sê me papa-o eku no.*³⁰

O Lord, any enemy, who is hindering my progress or prosperity As I clap my hands to pray.

The clapping of my hands should turn into thunder strike on them May he/she be knocked down by a car and die, whether she/he is my mother or father.

After the above confession, the congregation is asked to pray fervently to destroy the *Ôtanfo*. Series of such confession were made which was accompanied with fervent prayers. Then it was time for prophetic and healing time. The prophet went to a woman sitting on the floor in front of the congregation. He intimated that '*maame ôtanfo a ôyewu no firiw'ebusua mu, nawobe sore egyina wonaso!*' meaning woman the enemy who is the cause of your sickness comes from your family, but today you will rise and stand on your feet. The prophet commanded the spirit to free the woman and the sickness be sent to the 'sender' (the *Ôtanfo* who caused it). He then commanded her to ride and indeed she was able to stand up and walk. According to the woman she was normal and healthy until one faithful afternoon she felt as if someone hit her with

³⁰ This was observed on Sunday 23rd June, 2017 at the Shelter of God Unity International church premises around 11:30am.

a heavy stick. She fell down at that moment and she could not rise up on her feet again for about three years. Her children sent her to the hospital and several places but all to no avail. Later they heard about Prophet Jeremiah Yaw Nsiah through a friend who also suggested that she should be sent to the church.³¹ Testimonies of various miracles were given, from sickness, acquisition of USA, UK, Italy, Germany visas, prosperity and other socio-economic issues.

An Evaluation

Popular Perceptions

Prophetic Ministry are local gathering or group of worshipers founded and organized under the leadership of individuals popularly called by the followers as “Prophets” or “Proph”, whose beliefs and practices are termed “Prophetic Ministry”. The messages of these prophets centred mainly on the social or spiritual well-being of the individual. There has been a rapid prevalence of such Prophetic ministry today and these are the fastest growing worshippers within the Ghanaian community. The contemporary prophets believe and maintain that any experience of pain and suffering, especially ill-health and poverty, in the person's life is not of God. Prosperity, which is understood in terms of good health and acquisition of abundant wealth, is offered as a 'here and now' affair. Concerning this Oosthuisen stated that:

The prophet/healer can meet this world of insecurity, often of misfortune and look into the future in order to be better prepared for what is approaching. The prophets take seriously the worldview in which their people live. The emphasis is never on “pie in the sky

³¹ Personal observation on Sunday 23rd June, 2017 at the Shelter of God Unity International church premises around 12:30pm.

when you die”, the emphasis is on what is needed in here and now, theologically, there are issues which need close scrutiny but from a socio-psychological point of view, the prophet's position is firmly established in many AIC and is a tremendous source of scrutiny to many.³²

This has been one major reason why these prophets are able to secure a following, especially in Ghana. They are very sensitive to the socio-economic needs of the people.

The Prophet of Today

In the Old Testament, prophets of YAHWEH were messengers of God or Gods spokesperson who normally write divine message of warning, instruct people due to the covenant relationship he has with them, they also give life guidance concerning future event and about the messiah. In observing the ministry of Prophets Emmanuel Ansah, Jeremiah Yaw Nsiah and Reginald Kwesi Boateng and prophetic messages, it was seen to conform to what the Old Testament said concerning prophets. They warning the congregation instructed them to do something and gave some guidance for future event. This was mostly evident in Prophet Emmanuel Ansah ministry asking them to go and plant corn grains they brought to church as “*Akwankyere*” yet their messages were more personal than acknowledging it source as from God. The term 'Thus saith the Lord’ is never heard but what is heard is “*misi*”³³ meaning 'I say or I said'. Jeremiah in his preaching says 'This is what Yahweh said to me.' None of the Prophets observed during the field research and observation happens to be a preacher of patriotism with religious motive. They never preached on morals and never called the congregation to repentance.

³² C. Gerhardin, Oothuizen, *Healer-Prophet in Afro-Christian Churches* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992), 193.

³³ Akan word

They were ordinary people in the political figure. But according to the Old Testament, prophets were more than national poets and analysts, preachers of patriotism and moral teachers, exponents of the law.

In the New Testament, prophetic ministry was more of speaking Gods word to people that each person may experience God's inscription of the law in his own heart. It is more of speaking and interpreting the Gospel. The preaching and interpretation of the Gospel was not seen as the hallmark of the prophets understudied. Prophets Emmanuel Ansah never preached but just read a text to support his '*Akwankyere*', Jeremiah Yaw Nsiah never preached nor even reading a text, and Reginald Kwesi Boateng who was the only person who made an attempt to preach never presented a hermeneutical message. The '*Akwankyere*' that fit into the Old Testament as instruction was the only found concept very laud in the entire programs. Looking at the message of the apostle Paul made it clear that the gospel which was preached by him is not man's gospel. "For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ."³⁴

A major characteristic of the early prophet is that they were not denominational, in the sense that they did not establish worshipping communities of their own as compared to the like of today's prophets. Today, all those who say they have received the 'calling' move on to the establishment of churches. They "perceived themselves as prophets raised by God to turn the heart of people to Jesus."³⁵ Early prophets were respected because they were not ready to be controlled or to compromise their faith, ethics and personality. This is a lesson to be noted in view of the contemporary practice of some prophets in Ghana Christianity.

A careful study has also shown that a wide gap exists between contemporary prophets and their members. I recommend that prophet should be people centred not to be seen a "god" whom one cannot just go to even with problems. Most of today's prophets live expensive life styles

³⁴ Galatians 1:11-12

³⁵ Deji Ayegboyin and Ademola Ishola S., *African Indigenous Churches: An Historical Perspectives* (Lagos: Greater Heights Publication, 1997), 23

at the expense of the poor whose hope has been lifted up to the prophet to elevate them from their economic hardship.

It is brought to light some reality truths about the operation. Prophetic ministries concerning leadership and ethical life style in their operation. This has led to criticisms and recommendation to help shape these prophets and their ministries. The prophetic ministry is biblical but real yet numerous charlatans have also arrogated to themselves prophetic titles and administering for all manner reasons one must be very vigilant and smart to discern these charlatans. People should exercise patience in acting on prophetic words from prophets of today, seek enough information about them before they consult them. Those who have the calling into the Prophetic Ministry may do so without any fear by submitting themselves to established ethics and principles for the sake of credibility. Speak the truth that come from God and not what your intuition tells you. The Message from God goes beyond feelings and intuitions.

Conclusion

It became obvious that these prophets administer their churches as leader of everything, even the music departments. They are sole signatories to their “church account”. They become very popular due to their ways of operation and their concept of getting result here and now. They dwell solely on the physical and the spiritual and socio-economic needs of the people. They specialize in meeting the existential needs of the society. Issues like poverty or money, sickness, prosperity witchcraft suspicion, fear, visa etc.

They get lost in the system when adherent expectations are not met. Sometimes when they fall victim to crime or moral promiscuity which drag them into the public domain. An example is the issue of Nana Kwesi Yirenkyi aka “Jesus One Touch,” founder and General Overseer of the Jesus Blood Prophetic Ministry at Oblogo in Accra, who defiled his own daughter and was convicted and sentenced to jail and The General Overseer of the Vineyard Chapel International, Bishop Vaglas Kanco who was also sentenced to 18 months imprisonment by the Accra Circuit Court for defrauding a British national to the tune of 120,000

pounds.³⁶ To some, their expectations have not been met and to others their hopes are still high that they will sooner or later be met. Some referred them as stumbling block and source of division in some churches and families yet it was perceived that the Prophets never leave the people with some sense of doubt.

According to observation, the researcher can conclude by saying all these prophets are mostly motivated by the gains they can make out of this ministry than for the service they render to the members of their groups. Though they may have been genuinely called they eventually get misguided in seeking for the material glory and honour of the calling. It was also realized that most of these prophets see themselves as agents by whom all things become possible. This has led to the worship of many of these prophets.

³⁶ <http://www.citifmonline.com/index.php?id=1.287156.1.378309> By *Fidelia Ahamata* accessed on the 28th of June, 2017 at 10:47pm

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