THE NATURE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF PROPHECY IN PENTECOSTAL-CHARISMATIC EXPERIENCE: AN EMPIRICAL-BIBLICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The notion of prophecy is a *Leitmotiv*, both in Scripture and in the Church. However, the most common form of prophecy that is witnessed in the Church today is the charismatic prophecy manifestations in the Pentecostal-charismatic movement. Although the latter is now billed as the fastest growing Christian movement in church history, and has brought to the fore the biblical notion of the *charisms* of the Holy Spirit, the subject of charismatic prophecy has received limited attention in Pentecostal studies. There is therefore a gap in knowledge. The present study is an attempt to address the lacuna from an empirical-biblical perspective. The study answers the question: "What is the nature and significance of charismatic prophecy as observed in a particular context of the Pentecostal-charismatic Movement?"

The overarching methodology of the study is hermeneutical; it is an empirical-biblical interpretive study of charismatic prophecy in the light of critically reflected empirical observations in an African Pentecostal-charismatic context. The choice of the African context for the study is informed by the observation that the rise of Pentecostal-

charismatic spirituality in the early twentieth-century was greatly enriched by African spirituality. Therefore the African context plausibly offers etymological perspectives of the Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon. The specific Pentecostal-charismatic context is an African Initiated Church, the Redeemed Gospel Church (RGC), based in the most evangelical African nation, the country of Kenya. The RGC is a typical African Initiated Church which utilizes categories derived from African culture in understanding and interpreting the Christian message. It, nonetheless, manifests typologies of global Pentecostalism since it was formed in the early 1970s as a breakaway from a foreign missionary church and has continued to have close links with international Pentecostal-charismatic missions. It therefore offers an ideal context for studying a universal aspect of Pentecostalism in a particular significant setting.

The empirical study process is a hermeneutical-praxis model; it employs the case study method, entailing exploratory and evaluative case studies, including 'focus group' as an adjunct data gathering strategy. The study then forges a dialectical synthesis between empirical data, scripture and espoused beliefs of the Pentecostal-charismatics in order to offer an empirically-biblically grounded thesis of charismatic prophecy.

The study presents a particular thesis: that charismatic prophecy, as observed in Pentecostal-charismatic congregational settings in the African context, is sacramental in its nature and *parakletic* in its functional significance. Thus, the charismatic prophecy experience is viewed as an intense moment of a participatory interface between the divine Spirit and the human spirit in which the divine Spirit infuses the human conscious dimension with revelatory impulses. The experience is *parakletic* in the sense that it edifies, encourages, and comforts the church in congregational settings.

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Also deserving gratitude are all those who made my project feasible. I am particularly indebted to the leadership of the Redeemed Gospel Church Inc. for facilitating the empirical part of the study. I am also indebted the Library staff at the University of Birmingham Library, Andover- Harvard Theological Library, and Boston University School of Theology Library. The financial assistance that I received from my home church and from my family, as well as from well-wishers, is greatly appreciated. "May God make all grace abound to them, so that in all things at all times, having all they need, they will abound in every good work" (2Cor 9:8 paraphrase).

Special gratitude is due to my family who not only braved the pain of extended periods of my absence from them but also encouraged me to finish my course with success. May the Lord who comforted them in their pain of loneliness not only refresh their hearts with joy at the completion of this project but also reward them with his שָׁלוֹם, *shalom*. Above all, "to our God and Father be glory forever and ever, Amen" (Phil4:20).

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

The notion of prophecy is a *Leitmotiv*, both in Scripture and in the Church. The Scriptures are referred to as "prophecy of Scripture: "no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation; for prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit"(2 Pet1:20-21).[1] The biblical symbolism of divine presence, the "Spirit of God" or the "Spirit of Christ" (e.g. Gen 1:2; Isa 40:13; John 4:24; Rom. 8:4, 9; 2 Cor 3:17; Phil 1:1,9), also referred to as the "Holy Spirit"(e.g. Ps 51:11; Isa 63:10-11; Luke 11;13) is also portrayed in Scripture as "the Spirit of prophecy"(Rev 19:10).[2] The notions of "Scripture" and "Holy Spirit" are therefore significant motifs in the study of the phenomenon of prophecy. However, the focus of the present study is neither on the prophecy of Scripture nor prophecy as a ministry of the church in general. Rather, the

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[1] The "prophecy of Scripture" in this pericope includes both the Old Testament and the New Testament texts of the Bible since the context (2 Pet 1:16-21) makes references to both the Old Testament ("the word of the prophets," v.19) and the New Testament apostolic witness (v.16). See also Luke 24:25-27 and Romans 1:2; 16:25-26. Unless otherwise indicated, all Bible quotations are from the *New International Version*, copyrighted 1984, by the International Bible Society.

[2] Robert P. Menzies argues that "the traditional Jewish understanding of the 'Spirit' is 'the Spirit of prophecy.'" Idem, *The Development of Early Christian Pneumatology with Special Reference to Luke- Acts* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 58. However, as Max Turner remarks, this could be an anachronistic argument. Idem, *Power from on High: The Spirit in Israel's Restoration and Witness in Luke- Acts* (repr; JSOTSup 9; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2000), 86. The portrayal of the "Spirit of God" as the "Spirit of prophecy" is plausibly a nuanced reference. This plausibility will be explored further in the study.

concern of the study is charismatic or congregational prophecy as manifested in the contemporary Pentecostal-charismatic movement. The specific research question which the study seeks to investigate is the nature and significance of the Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon of prophecy that is manifested in congregational-liturgical settings in an African Pentecostal-charismatic context. The specific African context selected for the study is the country of Kenya in East Africa. The rationale for the selection of the specified context is explicated in Section 1.3 under the rubric: "study context."

At the outset, the study postulates that all forms of prophecy are intuitive divine-human intermediatory phenomena; they are characterized by the immediacy of a revelation from the world of divinity to a human recipient, which is received without any prior rationalization or reflection on the part of the recipient. The prophetic mode of intermediation is epiphanic in the sense that the deity is revealed, not only through the revelatory message, but also through a divine presence which is experienced as an awe-inspiring power which enthuses the human recipient to speak the revelatory message.[3] However, the phenomenon of prophecy that is commonly observed in Pentecostal-charismatic congregational settings appears to present features that are unique to the Pentecostal-charismatic movement such that the phenomenon of charismatic prophecy is best understood in the context of the movement. It is therefore *a propos* to preface the

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[3] See also Niels C. Hvidt, "Prophecy and Revelation: A Theological Survey on the Problem of Christian Prophecy," *Studia Theologica* 52 (1998):147-161(149), and Idem, *Christian Prophecy: The Post-Biblical Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 6. Peter Rigby, in an anthropological study of different modes of intermediation in Africa, draws a distinction between prophecy and other forms of intermediatory divinations by noting that "diviners and prophets are alike in being mediators of the divine, but prophets speak forth the divine word directly without reading it off a symbolic medium." Idem, "Prophets, Diviners, and Prophetism: The Recent History of Kiganda Religion," J*ournal of Anthropological Research* 31 (1975): 116-148(121).

study of charismatic prophecy with an introductory explication of the appellations 'Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon' and 'Pentecostal-charismatic experience' in historical perspective in order to clarify the experiential context for the modern Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon of prophecy.

1.1 The Pentecostal-Charismatic Phenomenon

Pentecostalism, as a sectarian designation of a Christian movement, is, according to Hollis Ganz, of recent origin; it was originally associated with the eighteenth nineteenth century Wesleyan doctrine of holiness and experience of sanctification.[4] However, the revivalist groups of the early twentieth century America and elsewhere, who emphasized 'speaking in tongues' as on 'the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4),' earned the sectarian appellation 'Pentecostal.'[5] Augustus Cerillo portrays the origins of Pentecostalism in terms of four epistemological approaches: the providential approach which focuses on the nineteenth century revivalist fervors in many parts of the world, the historical roots approach, also known as the genetic approach, which seeks a continuity between Pentecostalism and antecedent religious and social developments, particularly the Wesleyan-Holiness experiences of sanctification in the nineteenth century, the multicultural approach which portrays Pentecostalism as a multicultural phenomenon

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[4] Luther Garlach and Virginia Hine define a 'movement' as "a group of people who are organized for, ideologically motivated by, and committed to, a purpose which implements some form of personal or social change; who are actively engaged in the recruitment of others, and whose influence is spreading in opposition to the established order within which it originated." Idem, *People, Power, Change: Movements of Social Transformation* (Indianapolis: Merrill Educational, 1970), xvi. See also Kenneth J. Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic for the Twenty-First Century: Spirit, Scripture and Community* (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 36, R. Hollis Ganz, "Issues in Pentecostalism," in *Perspectives on the New Pentecostalism* (ed. R. P. Spittler; Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1976), 107, and Allan Anderson, "Varieties, Taxonomies, and Definitions," in *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods* (ed. A. Anderson, M. Bergrunder, A. Droogers, and C. van der Laan; Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2010), 15.

[5] R. Hollis Cause, "Issues in Pentecostalism," 107.

springing up from African spirituality encounters with the North American revivalist fervors of the nineteenth century, and a functional approach which views the origins of Pentecostalism in terms of marginalized and disenfranchised groups that sought solace in the apocalyptic imageries of the revivalist fervors.[6]

The four approaches are, however, implicit in the historical realization of the Pentecostal movement in the Azusa Street revival meetings in Los Angeles (1906-1908).[7] As Deborah Cole notes, "the strength of this (historical roots) approach is that it allows the continued search for links to the past to keep going as new historical information and insights become available."[8] Kenneth Archer notes that the early

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[6] Augustus Cerillo, "Interpretive Approaches to the History of American Pentecostal Origins," *Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 19 (1997):29-52 (31-49). See also William K. Kay, "Karl Popper and Pentecostal Historiography," *Journal of the Society of Pentecostal Studies* 32 (2010): 5-15 (10).

[7] See also Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 18, Kenneth J. Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic*, 11, and Walter Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Development Worldwide* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1997), 18- 24. Other scholars, however, view the historical roots' actualization of Pentecostalism as a multiple location uprising. Douglas Jacobsen, for example, argues that "the origins of the Pentecostal movement are too scattered and fluid to support the idea of original unity … Pentecostalism arose in a number of places at roughly the same time instead of emanating from any single unified center." Idem, *Thinking in the Spirit: Theologies of the Early Pentecostal Movement* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2003), 10. See also Mark J. Cartledge who notes that several revivalist movements sprang up in Kansas, Los Angeles, Wales, India, and Australia in the late nineteenth-early twentieth centuries. Idem, *Charismatic Glossolalia: An Empirical-Theological Study* (Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate, 2002), 70- 71. Allan Anderson also remarks that "without minimizing the importance of Azusa Street, due recognition must be given to places in the world where Pentecostal revivals broke out independently of this event and in some cases predated it." Idem, "Revisiting Pentecostal History in Global Perspective," in *Asian and Pentecostal* (ed. A. Anderson and E. Tang; Bagnio City: Regum, 2005), 154. The notion of a "multiple location uprising" of the Pentecostal movement underscores the implicitness of divine providence in the historical roots approach. Notwithstanding the multiple location uprising thesis, most scholars acknowledge that the revivals at Azusa Street, Los Angeles, in the early twentieth century were the epicenter of the nascent development of the modern Pentecostal movement. As Douglas Jacobsen concedes, "there is no doubt that the Azusa Street mission played the role of Grand Central Station for the Pentecostal movement." Idem, *Thinking in the Spirit*, 10.

[8] Deborah K. Cole, "Historiographical Approaches to Asian Pentecostalism," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 9 (2006): 59-82(64). Cole, nonetheless, cautions that if the historical roots approach is viewed singly, it tends to "neglect the contributions of each unique environment and setting where

twentieth century Pentecostal multiple uprisings were "a diffuse group of restorationist revivalist movements held together by a common doctrinal commitment to the 'full gospel message' and a passionate emphasis upon the ecstatic religious experiences associated with 'Spirit baptism.'"[9] Edith Blumhofer observes that the restorationist motif in which the revivalists sought to re-enact the Luke-Acts pneumatological paradigm in contemporary Christianity was the basic impetus for the rise of modern Pentecostalism.[10] Mark A. Noll also notes that the most pervasive characteristic of the early Pentecostals was their passionate desire for an immediate experience of divine presence through the Holy Spirit.[11] The restoration and 'full gospel' motifs are succinctly expressed in the early twentieth century doctrinal statement of the Pentecostal Fellowship of North America:

> During the Reformation God used Martin Luther and others to restore to the world the doctrine of justification by faith (Rom 5:1). Later on, the Lord used the Wesleys and others in the great Holiness Movement to restore the gospel of sanctification by faith (Acts 26:18). Later still, he used various ones to restore the gospel of divine healing by faith (James 5:14-15), and the gospel of Jesus' Second coming (Acts 1:11). Now the Lord is using many witnesses in the great Pentecostal Movement to restore the gospel of baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire (Luke 3:16; Acts 1:5) with signs following (Mark 16:17-18; Acts 2: 4;10:44-46; 19: 6; 1:1-28:31). Thank God we now have preachers of the full gospel.[12]

Pentecostalism grew and may also neglect the significance of God's activity and moves of the Holy Spirit in history." Idem, "Historiographical Approaches," 64.

[9] Kenneth J. Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic*, 13-14.

[10] Edith Blumhofer*, Restoring the Faith: The Assemblies of God, Pentecostalism, and American Culture* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 4.

[11] Mark A. Noll, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 387.

[12] Narrated in H. S. Maltby, *The Reasonableness of Hell* (Santa Cruz, Calif.: n.p., 1913), 82-83. See also Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (London: Scarecrow, 1987), 19-20.

Thus the Pentecostal restoration motif utilized Martin Luther's notion of a 'priesthood of all believers' to argue for a 'prophethood of all believers.'[13]

The early Pentecostal restoration motif was also eschatological. Steven Land notes that "the movement was simultaneously restorationist and eschatological … Pentecostalism's reason for existence was the carrying out of a last days, global, missionary mandate by those who were Christ-like witnesses in the power of the Holy Spirit."[14] Amos Yong develops this view further and observes that the contemporary Pentecostal movement, as a coalesced continuation of the nineteenth-early twentieth century revivalist-restorationist movements, manifests three types of pentecostalisms:

> The classical Pentecostal movement connected to the Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles in 1906- 1909, the Charismatic renewal movement in the mainline Protestant, Orthodox, and Roman Catholic churches beginning in the 1960s, and a neo-Charismatic 'catch-all' category that comprises 18,810 independent, indigenous, post-denominational groups that cannot be classified as either Pentecostal or Charismatic but share a common emphasis on the holy spiritual gifts, Pentecostal-like experiences … signs and wonders, and power encounters.[15]

Allan Anderson equally notes the diverse nature of contemporary Pentecostalism by remarking that "it is probably more correct to speak of pentecostalisms in the contemporary global context."[16] The diverse nature of Pentecostalism has led a number

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[13] See also Steven J. Land who notes that the early Pentecostals' view was that the prophethood of all believers was being restored just as the priesthood of all believers had been restored in Martin Luther's fifteenth century reformation. Idem, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (Cleveland, Tenn.: CPT Press, 2010), 7.

[14] Steven J. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, 6, 49.

[15] Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 18. See also Stanley M. Burges and E. M. van der Maas, eds. *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movement* (rev. and enl; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), xviii- xxi, and Walter Hollenweger who also notes three types of Pentecostalism: classical Pentecostalism which retains much of the original Pentecostal ethos, the Charismatic Renewal movement of the 1960s, and the Pentecostal-like indigenous churches. Idem, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Development,* 1.

[16] Allan Anderson, "Varieties, Taxonomies, and Definitions," 15.

of scholars to argue that contemporary Pentecostalism defies a precise definition. For example, Walter Hollenweger argues that the overarching definitional characteristic of contemporary Pentecostalism is its vestigial roots in the nineteenth century African-American spirituality which is characterized by oral and narrative theology, total congregational participation in worship gatherings, supernatural manifestations of *charisms* of the Holy Spirit in individual and congregational worship settings, and an unmediated experience of divine presence through the Holy Spirit.[17]

Jacobsen, on the other hand, views contemporary Pentecostalism as an "essentially contested concept- an idea or ideal that is clear to everyone with regard to its general meaning but impossible to define in detail in a way to satisfy everyone."[18] Jacobsen, nonetheless, observes that:

> [in] a general sense, being Pentecostal means that one is committed to a spirit-centered, miracle-affirming, praise-oriented version of Christian faith, but as soon as one begins to ask more specific questions, such as, how exactly does one receive the Spirit?, what are the relationships between the baptism of the Spirit, justification, and sanctification?, how is the Spirit related to or identified with the Godhead as a whole?, Pentecostal opinion begins to diverge, sometimes in rather marked ways.[19]

However, a helpful classification of contemporary Pentecostalism is by proposed Allan Anderson in his typological approach which utilizes a "family resemblance analogy" to identify four types of contemporary Pentecostalism, based on the movement's generic

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[17] Walter J. Hollenweger, "After Twenty Years' Research on Pentecostalism," *International Review of Mission* 75 (1986): 3-12 (5-6).

[18] D. Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit*, 11.

[19] D. Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit,* 12. See also Ogbu U. Kalu who, however, argues that the attempts to categorize contemporary Pentecostalism based on North American categories fails to recognize the fact that "the North American categories do not replicate easily outside the region." Idem, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 13.

"emphasis on the Spirit and spiritual gifts,"[20] notably (i) classical Pentecostals- "those whose diachronous and synchronous links can be shown, originating in the early twentieth century revival and missionary movement," (ii) older independent and Spirit churches- "especially in China, India, and Sub-Saharan Africa, that sometimes have diachronous (but usually not synchronous) links with classical Pentecostalism; these churches do not always have a clearly defined theology, nor do they necessarily see themselves as 'Pentecostal,' but their practices of healing, prayer, and spiritual gifts are decidedly so," (iii) older church charismatics- "those movements remain in established churches, are widespread and worldwide, and often approach the subject of Spirit baptism from a sacramental perspective," and (iv) neo-Pentecostal and neo-Charismatic churches."[21]

The appellation 'Charismatic,' though often subsumed under the more embracing rubric, 'Pentecostal,' usually refers to the more recent 'Pentecostal experience' movements within mainline 'non-Pentecostal' denominations as well as non-denominational and locally indigenous initiated groups who manifest the Pentecostal experiences both in individual and in congregational settings. The specific referent of the term "charismatic" is the experience of the χαρισμάτων or πνευματικά ('charisms' or 'gifts of the spirit') as outlined in 1 Corinthians 12-14 and *passim*, and as experientially manifested among the Pentecostals in general.[22] However, an alternative understanding of 'Pentecostal-Charismatic' is suggested as follows: the term 'Pentecostal' can be

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[20] Allan Anderson, "Varieties, Taxonomies, and Definitions," 16-17.

[21] Allan Anderson, "Varieties, Taxonomies, and Definitions," 16-19.

[22] See also Andrew Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission: A Holistic Charismatic Missiology* (Milton Keynes, U.K.: Paternoster, 2005), 2, and Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Development*, 1-2.

visualized as a reference to the praxis-driven ethos of spiritual empowerment of the believer as a concomitant dimension of Christian initiation, while the term 'Charismatic' can be viewed as a reference to the actual experiential manifestation of the 'Pentecostal' Holy Spirit empowerment in terms of the *charisms* of the Spirit, such as glossolalia, healing, or prophecy.[23]

1.2 The Pentecostal-Charismatic Experience

The Pentecostal-charismatic experience, which includes manifestations of the phenomenon of charismatic prophecy, is apparently an ecstatic expressive experience associated with Spirit Baptism as an antecedent experience of an infusion of the Holy Spirit.[24] The experience of Spirit baptism, regardless of how it is defined or experienced in the variegated Pentecostal-charismatic traditions, is viewed as an empowering χαρισμάτων, or a transforming mystical encounter with the Spirit of God.[25] Harvey Cox

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[23] A somewhat similar view is proffered by Ralph Del Colle, "Postmodernism and the Pentecostal-Charismatic Experience," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 17 (2000): 97-116 (99-100).

[24] Daniel E. Albrecht notes that "at the core of Pentecostal spirituality abides the belief in an experience characterized as a divine 'overwhelming' of a human person. This experience of overwhelming may be identified by various terms ('Spirit baptism' and 'baptism with the Holy Spirit' being among the most common) and has been understood in various ways. Yet there seems to be a general belief among Pentecostals and Charismatics that the overwhelming experience of God in the Spirit is something they share in common." Idem, *Rites in the Spirit: A Ritual Approach to Pentecostal-Charismatic Spirituality* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 241- 242. See also Killian McDonnell and George Montague who argue that the experience of 'Spirit baptism' or 'baptism in the Holy Spirit' is found "almost universally in the churches, Protestant and Catholic, in which the Charismatic renewal is experienced." Idem, *Fanning the Flame* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1991), 9, 28. James Robinson also notes that Spirit baptism has always been "regarded as the basis of various Christian witnesses and the prelude to an expansive gifting of the *charismata* as outlined in 1 Corinthians 12 and 14." Idem, *Pentecostal Origins: Early Pentecostalism in Ireland in the Context of the British Isles* (Milton Keynes, U.K.: Paternoster, 2005), 1.

[25] The most common views on the experience of Spirit baptism are, first, the classical Pentecostal notion of a new impartation of the Holy Spirit and attendant *charisms* of the Spirit subsequent to regeneration and unrelated to any immediate sacramental context except prayer, worship and a thirst for things spiritual, and, second, the sacramental view of Spirit baptism as "a breakthrough to a conscious awareness of the Spirit already received and present through water baptism, rather than being a new

remarks that "for those early converts, the baptism of the Spirit did not just change their religious affiliation or their way of worship; it changed everything; they literally saw the whole world in a new light; Spirit baptism was not just an initiation rite; it was a mystical encounter."[26]

The spiritual experiences of the Pentecostal-charismatics are informed by Scripture as well as the present proclamations and praxis of Scripture. Kenneth Archer notes that:

> Pentecostals located the inspirational work of the Holy Spirit in both the past written document (Scripture) and in their present experience with Scripture. Inspiration was not limited to the Scripture in the sense that it was a past document containing no errors, but it also included the present ability of the Scripture to speak to the community. The community experienced the Spirit through reading and living according to the Scripture.[27]

The Luke-Acts pneumatological paradigm is particularly instructive for the Pentecostal-charismatic experience. The Lukan promise of a Spirit baptism (Luke 3:16) which is not only reiterated in the book of Acts (Acts 1: 5) but is also portrayed as fulfilled on the day of Pentecost as "all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them."(Acts 2: 4), is thus viewed as both a fulfillment of the Old Testament promise (Joel 2:28-29; cf. Acts 2:17-18) and a pattern for New

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imparting; it is an actualization of the grace already received." Veli- Matti Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit in Ecumenical, International and Contextual Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 97. See also Henry I. Lederle, *Treasures Old and New: Interpretation of Spirit Baptism in the Charismatic Renewal Movement* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1988), 105-106.

[26]Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty- First Century* (Reading, Mass.: Addison- Wesley, 1995), 70. See also Kenneth J. Archer, A *Pentecostal Hermeneutic,* 43, and Daniel E. Albrecht whose extensive research on Pentecostal spirituality leads him to conclude that Pentecostal worship is "designed to provide a context for a mystical encounter, an experience with the divine. This encounter is mediated by the sense of the immediate divine presence." Idem, "Pentecostal Spirituality: Looking Through the Lens of Ritual," *Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 14 (1992): 107-125(121).

[27] Kenneth j. Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic*, 54.

Testament Christianity. Hence the common view in Pentecostal scholarship that the Pentecostals' "religious passion was shaped and facilitated by their restorationist reading of the New Testament narrative."[28] This common view is articulated by Amos Yong as follows:

> From the days of Azusa Street onward, Pentecostals have understood the modern outpouring of the Holy Spirit as a fulfillment of prophecy. If the original day of Pentecost was foretold by Joel, it was only the 'early rain' awaiting the abundant showers of a 'latter rain' (Joel 2: 23). Insofar as modern Pentecostalism was understood to fulfill this prophecy of a 'latter rain' revival anticipating the last days, the template for organizing and explaining this later experience has been drawn from the early Christian experiences recorded in the book of Acts. Acts itself is suggestive for this Pentecostal reading.[29]

The Pentecostal mystical encounter through Spirit baptism is neither a spirituality of individualistic interiority nor is it "escapist disembodied mysticism."[30] Rather, it is a spirituality that is ecstatically expressive in praise and worship of God and in witnessing and is thus both a God-oriented and a community-oriented relational spirituality. The Pentecostal-charismatic spirituality is radically open to experiences of divine presence, especially the continued operation of the *charisms* of the Holy Spirit, including the *charism* of prophecy. The Pentecostal-charismatic spirituality is not only informed by the Luke-Acts pneumatological paradigm but also by Pauline

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[28] Kenneth J. Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic*, 29. See also Frank J. Ewart, *The Phenomenon of Pentecost* (rev. ed; Hazelwood, Mo.: Word Aflame, 1975), 39, Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism,* 250, and Veli- Matti Karkkainen, *Pneumatology*, 95.

[29] Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 83.

[30] James K. A. Smith, "Is the Universe Open for Surprise?: Pentecostal Ontology and the Spirit of Naturalism," *Journal of Religion and Science* 43 (2008): 879-896 (888). Evelyn Underhill's classical definitions of mysticism as an exclusively God-oriented experiential disposition and a mystic as an exclusively other-worldly attuned individual do not, therefore, fit the pattern of the Pentecostal mystical experience. See Evelyn Underhill, *Mystics of the Church* (Wilton, Canada: Morehouse Barlow, 1925), 10. Rather, the Pentecostal mystical experience of Spirit baptism is both experientially God-oriented and community-ward expressive. See also Daniel E. Albrecht, "Pentecostal Spirituality," 21.

pneumatology, especially his discourse on the *charisms* of the Holy Spirit in 1

Corinthians 12-14. As Gordon Fee argues, "crucial to the Pauline experience is the

dynamically experienced nature of the coming of the Spirit in the life of the individual

and in the ongoing life of the believing community … the Spirit as an experienced reality

lies behind both the Corinthian abuse and the Pauline corrective of Spirit life in that

community (1 Cor 12-14)."[31] The core spiritual experience of Spirit baptism and the

continuing experience of the *charisms* of the Spirit is what gives a sense of unity to the

otherwise diverse Pentecostal-charismatic traditions, hence the propriety of the generic

appellation 'Pentecostal-charismatic movement.' It is in the context of the Pentecostal-

charismatic experience and manifestation of the *charisms* of the Holy Spirit that the

present study seeks to examine the nature and significance of the phenomenon of

charismatic prophecy.

1.3 The Study Context

The African context which is selected as the study setting is strategic for the

present study in a number of ways. First, as a number of scholars have observed, African

spirituality was instrumental in the formation of the twentieth century Pentecostal-

charismatic spirituality.[32] The study of prophecy as an aspect of Pentecostal-charismatic

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[31] Gordon D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1994), 896-897. See also Max Turner, *The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts in the New Testament Church and Today* (rev. ed; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2009), 255-277.

[32] See Augustus Cerillo, "Interpretive Approaches to the History of American Pentecostal Origins," 29- 52, William K. Kay, "Karl Popper and Pentecostal Historiography," 5-15, and Walter Hollenweger, "After Twenty Years' Research on Pentecostalism," 5-6. The expression 'African spirituality' is a reference to the native African religious worldview which reflects the African peoples' perceptual experiences of divine presence and activity in the world; it is an expression of "encounter with God in real life and action … a living communion with God who is experienced as being personally present in the relationships of humanity." Aylward Shorter, "African Spirituality," in *Spirituality in Religions: Profiles and Perspectives* (ed. C.W. du Toit; Pretoria: University of South Africa Press, 1996), 62-64.

spirituality in an African context is, therefore, likely to provide indigenous insights

which are critical to an understanding of the phenomenon in its etymological perspective.

This is particularly pertinent since, as John Baur observes, Pentecostal Christianity in

Africa, particularly in the independent charismatic and other African initiated churches,

has attempted to reconcile Pentecostal spirituality with the African religio-cultural

heritage.[33] Second, the researcher is an African and hence the African setting has a

natural appeal which is a motivating factor for the study. Third, the specific contextual

location selected for the study in Africa is the country of Kenya, which is strategic for

the researcher in that it is his home country and therefore offers ease of access in terms

of travel and familiarity with the country's socio-cultural and Pentecostal-charismatic

traditions. Implicitly therefore, the researcher's own heritage and experience gives him

native insights into the nature of the phenomenon of charismatic prophecy in the Kenyan

context. Fourth, the country of Kenya offers a study context that is the most saturated

with Evangelical and Pentecostal-charismatic Christianity in Africa; it is now "the most

evangelical African nation with 56 per cent of its Christians being 'born again,' beating

the more populous South Africa and Nigeria at 34 and 26 per cent, respectively."[34] John

S. Mbiti, the Kenyan-born doyen of African theology, also observes that "Christianity

has taken on a volcanic dimension in Kenya, not only in the explosive increase in

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[33] John Baur, 2000 *Years of Christianity in African History*,62-1992 (Nairobi, Kenya: Pauline Publications, 1994),288.

[34] Robert Nickleberg, "Spirit and Power: A 10- Country Survey of Pentecostals," *The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life* (Oct. 2006). Online: http://www.pewforum.org.christian/evangelical-protestant-churches/spirit-and-power- aspx. Cited September 15th 2010.

adherents nor in its sectarian growth at the current rate of one new denomination every month, but also organizationally and in its outreach."[35]

The history of Christianity in Kenya, as in many other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, started with Western 'Christian' explorers venturing into Africa. Although the Western Christian ventures into Kenya date back to the fifteenth century with the Portuguese presence on the East Coast of Africa, as evinced by the relics of the *Fort Jesus* monument in Mombasa, Kenya, built around 1498 CE, it was not until the nineteenth century that Christianity began to have a firm foothold in Kenya, spearheaded by the European Church Missionary Society and soon followed by other missionary organizations.[36] In the early twentieth century, a major revival movement, historically associated with missionaries from the British Oxford Movement and the Keswick Convention, broke out among the missionary-established churches in East Africa. The revival movement was also fueled by the arrival of Western Pentecostal missionaries in East Africa in the early twentieth century. This was the beginning of the widespread and vibrant Christian spirituality in Kenya.[37] However, from within the missionary-established churches in the revival movement, charismatic groups led by Africans began

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[35] John S. Mbiti, "Preface," *Kenya Churches Handbook: The Development of Kenyan Christianity*, 1498-1973 (ed. D. B. Barrett, G. K. Mambo, J. McLaughlin, and M.J. McVeigh., Kisumu, Kenya: Evangel Publishing House, 1973),xvii.

[36] See David B. Barrett, "Chronology of Christianity in Kenya, 1498-1972," in *Kenya Churches Handbook,* 21-28.

[37] George K. Mambo observes that "the widespread movement of spiritual life in Kenya … is a part of what is widely known as the East African Revival." Idem, "The Revival Fellowship (Brethren) in Kenya," in *Kenya Churches Handbook*, 110-117. See also P. M. Miller's detailed accounts of the congregations of the East African Revival in Kenya in the early twentieth century. Idem, *Equipping for Ministry in East Africa* (Dodoma, Tanzania: Central Tanganyika Press, 1969).

to emerge as Independent Charismatic Churches or African Instituted Churches.

Philomena Mwaura, a Kenyan theological scholar, observes that:

> The dynamic growth of Kenyan Christianity has become a prominent feature of Kenyan society … apart from the considerable number of former mission churches established at the beginning of the twentieth century, there exists a large, enduring and expanding body of African Initiated Churches … Charismatic revivals from within the mainline churches soon fed into Pentecostal forms as young puritans emerged from the mainline churches and formed charismatic ministries and churches.[38]

Thus the phenomenal presence of Christianity in Kenya has been propelled, largely, by the surging growth of the independent charismatic churches such that, whereas the independent charismatic churches averaged about 14 per cent of Christianity in Africa by the year 2000, in Kenya they accounted for about 25 per cent of the Christian community.[39]

The phenomenal growth of the independent charismatics in Africa has been attributed to a number of factors. Paul Gifford, for instance, advances an economic deprivation thesis; he argues that deteriorating economic conditions in Africa since the 1970s have led people to seek solace and welfare in the churches which provide material, social and spiritual comfort.[40] However, the economic deprivation thesis is problematic in the sense that African Pentecostal-charismatic Christianity appears to challenge the classical theory of secularization which argues that as people become more educated and

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[38] Philomena N. Mwaura, "Gendered Appropriation of Mass Media in Kenyan Christianities: A Comparison of Two Women-Led African Instituted Churches in Kenya," in *Interpreting Contemporary Christianity: Global Processes and Local Identities* (ed. Ogbu U. Kalu; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 274-275.

[39] See D. B. Barrett, G. T. Kurian, and T. D. Johnson, eds., *World Christian Encyclopedia*, Vol. I (2d. ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 13, and P. N. Mwaura, "African Instituted Churches in East Africa," *Studies in World Christianity* 10 (2004): 160-184(162).

[40] Paul Gifford, *African Christianity: Its Public Role* (London: Hurst & Co., 1998), 47.

more affluent they tend to relent in their commitment to religion.[41] Whereas, according to the economic deprivation theory, the independent charismatic churches should have waned in membership sizes as the countries of Africa have advanced economically, Jayne Svenungsson observes a contrary development in the African setting; "there are strong reasons to assert, contrary to the theory of secularization, that religious engagement does not necessarily decline as levels of welfare and education increase."[42]

A more plausible explanation is given by Ogbu Kalu and Kwame Bediako who argue that the most significant factor in the growth of African independent charismatic churches is the Pentecostal-charismatics' appropriation, or inculturation, of Christianity into the African worldview. Thus the 'Africanization of Christianity' through the adoption of African traditional liturgical rhythms and ritualism has endeared Christianity to African tastes and sensibilities.[43] It is, nonetheless, conceivable that the ultimate impetus for the phenomenal growth of Pentecostal-charismatic Christianity in Africa and elsewhere in the world is the apparently providential-spontaneous outpouring of the Holy Spirit since the beginning of the twentieth century.

The American Pentecostal-charismatic movement, which has been spearheading the global outreach of the Pentecostal-charismatic spirituality, has impacted African Pentecostal-charismatic Christianity through the influx of American evangelists, the worldwide proliferation of their literature, and through their international radio/television

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[41] See Jayne Svenungsson, "Transcending Tradition: Towards a Critical Theory of the Spirit," *Studia Theologica* 62 (2008):63-79(65).

[42] J. Svenungsson, "Transcending Tradition," 66.

[43] Ogbu U. Kalu, "Preserving a Worldview: Pentecostalism in the African Maps of the Universe," *Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 24 (2002):110-137(137), and Kwame Bediako, *Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of A Non- Western Religion* (Edinburgh: Orbis, 1995), 192.

gospel broadcasts, to such an extent that S. Hoover portrays the neo-Pentecostal or

independent charismatic churches in Africa as extensions of the 'American electronic

church.'[44] Thus the Pentecostal-charismatic Christianity in Kenya, and in the rest of

Africa, is both a localized phenomenon and an integral part of the global Pentecostal-

charismatic Christianity.[45] The implications of the 'global-local' nature of Pentecostal-

charismatic Christianity in Kenya is that the findings of the present study will not

necessarily be idiosyncratic with respect to the Kenya situation; rather, they will also

have implications for the global Pentecostal-charismatic movement. Nonetheless, the

present study seeks to make a significant contribution to our understanding of

charismatic prophecy in the African context and thus fill a gap in knowledge in

Pentecostal studies. The specific Pentecostal-charismatic denomination selected for the

empirical study will be discussed in conjunction with the empirical case study context in

Chapter 3.

1.4 Study Outline

The purpose of the present study is to investigate the nature and significance of

prophecy in the context of the contemporary Pentecostal-charismatic experience. The

flow of the study is as follows: Chapter One introduces the phenomenon of the

contemporary Pentecostal-charismatic movement, including teasing out the meanings of

the terms 'Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon,' 'Pentecostal-charismatic experience,'

and their bearing on the phenomenon of charismatic prophecy. Chapter Two discusses

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[44] S. Hoover, *Mass Media Religion: The Social Sources of the Electronic Church* (London: Sage, 1998), 24. See also P. N. Mwaura, "African Instituted Churches in East Africa," 176-184.

[45] See also Paul Gifford who acknowledges that "Africa's Christianity is both localized and part of the world religion." Idem, *African Christianity*, 47.

the methodology of the study. Chapter Three presents the results of an empirical-exploratory case study which seeks to gain an inductive understanding of the phenomenon of charismatic prophecy in an African context. The exploratory case study is also an attempt to test the relevance and adequacy of the study methodological design and to clarify the study questions. The heuristic postulates about charismatic prophecy which emerge from the inductive-exploratory case study are then subjected to critical engagement with Scripture and relevant empirical-theoretical literature. This is presented as "A Review of Literature" in Chapter Four. In Chapter Five, the theoretical constructs emerging from the review of literature are subjected to subsequent deductive-explanatory, or evaluative, case studies analysis in order to show whether the empirical data confirms or disconfirms the validity of the emerging theoretical constructs of charismatic prophecy.

In Chapter Six, the study proceeds to conceptualize the emerging empirical-analytic results into an empirical-biblical model of charismatic prophecy in the contemporary Pentecostal-charismatic experience. Thus the data emerging from the empirical case studies, in critical engagement with Scripture and literature, is subjected to further critical reflection in order to extrapolate (in the sense of inferring values from observed variables) an empirical-biblical model of charismatic prophecy. The purpose of Chapter Six is thus to utilize the data from the previous chapters in order to present a particular thesis. Chapter Seven concludes the study by drawing together the empirical-biblical results and concepts of the nature and significance of charismatic prophecy, as well as highlighting any issues arising from the study that invite future studies.

1.5 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The present study is limited by a number of factors. First, the study is limited to investigating the phenomenon of charismatic prophecy within the context of the contemporary Pentecostal-charismatic experience. As such, it is neither a study of the phenomenon of prophecy in general nor of the whole gamut of prophecy motifs in the whole of Scripture or in the whole of Christendom. Second, the study is largely synchronic and does not, therefore, consider in any depth the diachronic perspectives of charismatic prophecy in the history of the Pentecostal-charismatic movement; the accent is on the phenomenon of prophecy in the contemporary Pentecostal-charismatic experience. Third, the empirical case studies are carried out in a particular Pentecostal-charismatic tradition and in a particular spatio-temporal and socio-cultural context. Although the Pentecostal-charismatic spirituality in the African study context has both local and global features, it is, nonetheless, reckoned that the findings of the study cannot be directly applied to the global Pentecostal-charismatic movement without negotiating the socio-cultural and biblical-hermeneutical disjunctures within the global movement.

The qualitative approach adopted for the empirical case studies may be viewed as a limiting factor by virtue of the fear, expressed in some quarters of scholarship, that "a qualitative approach cannot do justice to the very object of empirical theology."[46] It will, however, be argued that this fear is based on a naïve positivistic objectivism which

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[46] The fallacy of this argument is pointed out by Johannes A. van der Ven, "An Empirical or a Normative Approach to Practical Theological Research?: A False Dilemma," *Journal of Empirical Theology* 15 (2002):5-33(24).

views mathematical quantification as the only valid method of empirical research.[47]

Coupled with the naïve positivistic objectivism is the view that empirical research

utilizing the religious data of beliefs, feelings, values, or attitudes is idiosyncratically

subjective and therefore not valid for scientific-theoretical modeling and extrapolation.[48]

It will, however, be argued, following Hans-Gunter Heimbrock, that "science does not

proceed from facts that exist independently of human beings, but from appearances

(phenomena) that present themselves to people as data in which the facts 'appear' to

them (experiences)."[49]

1.6 Significance of the Study

Although the Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon is now billed as the fastest

growing Christian movement in church history and has brought to the fore, in

contemporary Pentecostal studies discourse, the question of the *charisms* of the Holy

Spirit, "surprisingly there are no comprehensive critical discussions of prophecy."[50]

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[47] See also Stanley J. Grenz, "Why do Theologians Need to be Scientists?," *Journal of Religion and Science* 35 (2000):331-356(347).

[48] For a detailed discussion of this argument, see Jaco S. Dreyer, "The Researcher: Engaged Participant or Detached Observer?," *Journal of Empirical Theology* 11 (1998):5-22(8).

[49] Johannes van der Ven, "An Empirical or a Normative Approach?," 7- 8. See also Hans-Gunter Heimbrock, "From Data to Theory: Elements of Methodology in Empirical Phenomenological Research in Practical Theology," *International Journal of Practical Theology* 9 (2005):273-299(281).

[50] Max Turner, *The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts*, 315. See also David E. Aune, who remarks that prophecy is "a somewhat neglected subject" in the church and in the academy. Idem, *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 1. Max Turner, does, nonetheless, acknowledge that "a significant start has, however, been made by Mark J. Cartledge." Idem, *The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts*, 306. See also Mark J. Cartledge, "Charismatic Prophecy and New Testament Prophecy," *Themelios* 17 (1991): 17-20, "Charismatic Prophecy: A Definition and Description," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 5 (1994): 79-120, and "Charismatic Prophecy," *Journal of Empirical Theology* 8 (1995): 71-88. On the question of the phenomenal spread of Pentecostalism, see Daniel E. Albrecht, *Rites in the Spirit: A Ritual Approach to Pentecostal- Charismatic Spirituality (*Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999*)*,27, Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 18-22, André Droogers, "Globalization and Pentecostal Success," in *Between Babel and Pentecost: Transnational Pentecostalism*

Although there has been a resurgence of interest in prophecy in the church, as evinced by a proliferation of popular literature on prophecy, the resurgence of interest has yet to gain momentum in critical discourse in the academy. Within the circles of Pentecostal-charismatic scholarship, the *charism* of glossolalia has attracted much attention, as attested by the considerable space that is given to the subject of glossolalia in academic journals of Pentecostal studies. This observation is underscored by Mark Cartledge who notes that "the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements are now producing an increasing number of scholars who are critical participants. This scholarship has been especially interested in what may have been considered to be the focus of such movements-'speaking in tongues,' otherwise known as 'glossolalia.'"[51]

It is, however, noted that the programmatic Pauline discourses on πνευματικῶν and the exercise of χαριδμάτων in congregational liturgy (1 Cor 2:1-11; 14:1-40) appear to privilege the *charism* of prophecy over glossolalia in congregational settings, thus:

> Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy. For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit. But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort. He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. He who prophesies is greater than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may be edified (1 Cor 14:1-5).

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in Africa and Latin America (ed. A. Corten and R. M. Fratani; Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 2001), 41-61, Harvey Cox, *The Future of Faith* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), 8-9, and Joel Robbins, "The Globalization of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 33 (2004): 117-143(125-141).

[51] Mark J. Cartledge, *Charismatic Glossolalia*, 1.

It is also observed, from the proliferation of popular literature on the subject of prophecy, that charismatic prophecy is portrayed as one of the most common and most cherished manifestations of the *charisms* of the Holy Spirit in the contemporary Pentecostal-charismatic congregational settings. The present study is therefore significant in the sense that it is an attempt to make a contribution, from an empirical-contextual perspective, to the nascent scholarship on charismatic prophecy.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY: AN EMPIRICAL-BIBLICAL APPROACH

2.1 Introduction

The contemporary phenomenon of charismatic prophecy falls under the rubric of religious experience, and is therefore a phenomenon that is amenable to empirical investigation. However, most of the available literature on prophecy discourses the nature of Christian prophecy in general and from scriptural-theoretical sources. This study offers a more focused and fresh approach in that it is an empirical-biblical investigation of a particular form of Christian prophecy. The overarching methodology of the study is hermeneutical; it is an empirical-biblical interpretation of charismatic prophecy in the light of critically reflected empirical observations. It thus seeks to combine empirical data with Scripture, empirical literature, and the self-understanding of the Pentecostal-charismatics, in order to understand the nature and significance of the phenomenon of charismatic prophecy. The emerging theory will thus not be premised on any particular theological or ecclesial tradition; rather the study seeks to develop an empirical-biblical model of charismatic prophecy that will not only provide data for critical theological reflection but will also dialogue with various ecclesial traditions within the Pentecostal-charismatic movement in particular and with the Church in general.

The methodological approach of the study will entail an inductive-exploratory case study in order to develop theoretical constructs which will then be subjected to further empirical investigation by way of deductive-explanatory case studies employing a qualitative approach. The deductive case studies will thus be both evaluations of the

exploratory observations as well as hermeneutical tools that will seek to bring observed

charismatic prophecy experiences into dialogic interaction with Scripture, empirical

literature and the self-understanding of the Pentecostal-charismatics. In the final analysis,

the study seeks to offer a modest empirically-grounded scriptural model of the

Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon of prophecy. The case studies will involve

congregational participant observation, focus group interviews, in-depth interviews and

documentary analysis in congregations selected from a particular tradition in the Kenyan

context of the African Pentecostal-charismatic movement. The selection criteria will be

strategic and practical; congregations will be selected on the basis of reported prevalence

of charismatic prophecy experiences and manifestations in their liturgical settings. The

practical consideration is the ease of accessibility of the congregations by the researcher

in terms of travel distance and language communication. The present chapter is devoted

to explicating, in detail, the hermeneutical theory and methodological approach of the

study.

2.2 The Biblical-Hermeneutical Paradigm

The term "hermeneutics" is derived from the Greek word *hermeneuein* which

means "to interpret, exegete, explain or translate."[52] In a broad sense, hermeneutics

entails the translation of meaning "from one world into another."[53] It is, therefore, not a

technique but an epistemological paradigm; it is both the translation and application of

meaning into a socio-cultural context, as well as an attempt to understand the context in

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[52] Elizabeth S. Fiorenza, "Method in Women's Studies in Religion: A Critical Feminist Hermeneutics," in *Methodology in Religious Studies: The Interface with Women's Studies* (ed. Arvind Sharma; Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 207.

[53] E. S. Fiorenza, "Method in Women's Studies in Religion," 207.

the light of the meaning.[54] Hermeneutics is also specifically defined as the discipline concerned with the interpretation of texts.[55] Johannes van der Ven observes that "hermeneutical work is always concerned with revealing meanings of texts produced in the past … hermeneutical work always implies the construction of a bridge between the past in which the text was created and the present."[56] The notion of 'text' is, however, a broad concept. Paul Ricoeur, for example, defines a 'text' as "not only expressions fixed in writing but also mediation exerted by all the documents and monuments which have a fundamental trait in common with the written word."[57] The implication of Ricoeur's 'text' for biblical hermeneutics is that scriptural interpretation is not simply an exegetical analysis of the texts of the bible; it entails a dialogic interaction of Scripture with what John Darr calls "inter-texts" or the experiences of life which one brings into the text as analogies for understanding the text.[58] In this sense, therefore, hermeneutics can be viewed as a creative meaning-making encyclopedic process.[59] The present study, therefore, views the experiences of the Pentecostal-charismatics as "inter-texts" which

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[54] See also Kenneth J. Archer who points out that "a Pentecostal or any hermeneutic cannot be reduced to a static, distinctive exegetical methodology, but must include the important element of the social location of the readers and their narrative tradition." Idem, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic*, 180. See also Wolfgang Iser who argues that, in a hermeneutical process, the meaning of a text is actualized by the reader in his or her socio-cultural location. Idem, *The Art of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (London: Routledge, 1978), 18-19.

[55] Hans- Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (trans. G. Barden and J. Cumming; New York: Continuum, 1975), 146, and Johannes A. van der Ven, *Practical Theology: An Empirical Approach* (trans. B. Schultz; Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, 1998), 46.

[56] Hans- Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 46.

[57] Paul Ricoeur, "Toward a Hermeneutic Idea of Revelation," *Harvard Theological Review* 70 (1977): 1-37 (35).

[58] John A. Darr, "Glorified in the Presence of Kings: A Literary-Critical Study of Herod the Tetrarch in Luke-Acts" (Ph.D. diss. Vanderbilt University, 1989), 63.

[59] See Peter C. Phan, "Method in Liberation Theologies," *Theological Studies* 61 (2000): 40-63(54).

are integral to the process of biblical hermeneutics. This is also akin to Tite Tiénou's

"mnemic hermeneutics," or "allowing one's own natural analogy to become the crucial

key in understanding scripture."[60]

Amos Yong proposes a "hermeneutics of the divine," in biblical-theological

reflection, which embraces the notion of "inter-texts."[61] Building on the work of Charles

Wood, Yong describes "hermeneutics of the divine," as embracing the basic notion of

scriptural interpretation as well as interpretation of the broader world of the Christian

faith. Thus hermeneutics of the divine is "a reflection upon the aims and conditions of

what may be called 'Christian understanding' of Scripture and tradition."[62] Yong

emphasizes the 'inter-textual' embrace of his "hermeneutic of the divine" by pointing

out that it includes, but is neither limited to, "biblical hermeneutics (textual interpretation

of the biblical content), nor is it "canonical hermeneutics" (interpretation of the Bible as

a Christian text for the benefit of the Church), nor "spiritual hermeneutics"

(interpretation of the Christian spiritual quest).[63] Although these hermeneutical

approaches are necessary parameters in Yong's hermeneutical method, he, nonetheless,

argues that "a hermeneutic of the divine that fails to properly account for the

interpretation of the extra-Scriptural world will ultimately sabotage the theological

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[60] Tite Tiénou, "The Church in African Theology: Description and Analysis of Hermeneutical Presuppositions," in *Biblical Interpretation and the Church: The Problem of Contextualization* (ed. D. A. Carson; Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson, 1985), 160.

[61] Amos Yong, *Spirit- Word- Community: Theological Hermeneutics in Trinitarian Perspective* (Eugene, Ore.: Wipf & Stock, 2002), 3.

[62] Amos Yong, *Spirit- Word- Community*, 4- 5, and Charles Wood, *The Formation of Christian Understanding: Theological Hermeneutics* (2d. ed.; Valley Forge, Pa.: Trinity International, 1993), 21-28.

[63] Amos Yong, *Spirit- Word- Community*, 4.

task."[64] Therefore, a robust Christian hermeneutic, Yong argues, is "one that aims at interpreting the totality of human experience – and that includes God and God's relationships with human selves and the world as a whole."[65]

Yong's hermeneutic of the divine is premised on the argument that the Bible is never interpreted in a vacuum; "it both comes already culturally embedded and is engaged by readers and communities who are similarly culturally located."[66] Hence, both the Scriptures and the communities of readership come under the purview of the hermeneutical process. Yong goes on to argue that a pneumatological dimension depicted as experience of the divine Spirit is implicit in the hermeneutical process and that it "enables the truthful and critical reading of the Scriptures in such a way that discernment of the ideological forces which are at work in all cultural constructions can occur."[67] Yong's pneumatological-hermeneutical dimension is reminiscent of Peter Phan's "theological imagination," or "the power of perception and insight (*satori*) that enables theologians to grasp the meaning beneath the surface things and phenomena."[68] This broad hermeneutical paradigm therefore transforms the hermeneutical task from the narrow concern of uncovering the supposedly objective meaning of texts into the more encompassing purpose of understanding the dynamic re-enactment of the Word of God in existential contexts. As Hans-Georg Gadamer notes, "a hermeneutics that regarded

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[64] Amos Yong, *Spirit- Word- Community*, 4. Yong's "Extra-Scriptural world" dimension is here understood, not as an indication of an eclectic-universalistic theological approach, but as denoting the socio-cultural context in which the Christian interprets his or her faith praxis.

[65] Amos Yong, *Spirit- Word- Community*, 6.

[66] Amos Yong, *Spirit- Word- Community*, 11.

[67] Amos Yong, *Spirit- Word- Community*, 11.

[68] P. C. Phan, "Method in Liberation Theologies," 49.

understanding as the reconstruction of the original would be no more than the recovery of dead meaning."[69]

Implicit in the foregoing discourse is the affirmation that reflection on Christian experiences in the light of Scripture is, indeed, a hermeneutical task. This nuance resonates with the classical Anselmian definition of theological reflection as *fides quaerenes intellectum* "faith seeking understanding."[70] St. Anselm, in effect, echoes the Augustinian maxim: "I believe in order that I may understand."[71] The notion of "understanding" is thus the goal of the hermeneutical task. Christian hermeneutics can therefore be summed up as the quest for a coherent meaning of the experience of the divine in the light of Scripture and contemporary existential contexts. This, in effect, is hermeneutical praxis. In the Aristotelian philosophical tradition, praxis is "purposeful and reflective action initiated through engagement in social situations."[72] Although the Aristotelian notion of praxis posits a dichotomous relationship between *praxis* and *theoria,* further developments of the concept of praxis in the idealism of G. W. F. Hegel visualize praxis as epistemological experience that is united with theory.[73] Later developments of the concept of praxis, particularly in the works of Jürgen Harbermas and Matthew Lamb, portray praxis as reflected practice and, hence, the foundation of

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[69] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method,* 149.

[70] St. Anselm, *Proslogium, Monologium: An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool by Gaunilon* (trans. S. Norton; La Salle, Ill.: Open Court Publishing, 1951), 178.

[71] St. Augustine, *Confessions and Enchiridion* (ed. A. C. Outler; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1955), 338.

[72] Hyun-Sook Kim, "The Hermeneutical-Praxis Paradigm and Practical Theology," *Religious Education* 102 (2007): 419-436(421).

[73] Hyun-Sook Kim, "The Hermeneutical- Praxis Paradigm," 421.

understanding. [74] However, an impression that might be inferred from this assertion, namely that scriptural understanding is mere reflection on practice, would be simplistic reductionism; the epistemological essence of praxis is best understood as creative action that is illuminated by critical reflection while, dialectically, creative action inspires critical reflection, thereby giving rise to new action and new insights.[75]

Praxis is therefore a dialectic of the normative claims of the Christian faith and the lived Christian experience. The epistemological assumption implicit in hermeneutical praxis is best articulated by Holland Sanks and Brian H. Smith; they observe that, "a body of knowledge is both a product of the lived experience of a community and a factor in determining that lived experience."[76] The dialectic of praxis, in scriptural hermeneutics, is therefore viewed as an ongoing reciprocal dialogue between Scripture and praxis, in which critically reflected tenets of Scripture inform Christian praxis while, reciprocally, concrete situations of Christian experience give rise to fresh scriptural reflection. The reciprocal process progressively yields more refined scriptural reflection and more illuminated Christian praxis. In other words, both Scripture and praxis remain open to a reciprocal dialogue with the concrete experiences of the Christian faith and newer hermeneutical understandings of Scripture. This constitutes a hermeneutical circle of sorts which involves a continuous interchange between praxis and interpretive

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[74] Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. 1: Reason and Rationalization of Society* (trans. T. McCarthy; Boston: Beacon Press, 1984), and Matthew Lamb, *Solidarity with Victims: Toward a Theology of Social Transformation* (New York: Crossroad, 1982).

[75] See also Randy L. Maddox, "The Recovery of Theology as a Practical Discipline," *Theological Studies* 51 (1990): 650-672(663).

[76] Holland Sanks and Brian H. Smith, "Liberation Ecclesiology: Praxis, Theory, Praxis," *Theological Studies 52* (2001): 3-38(3).

scriptural reflection. As Jon Nilson puts it, "experiences of the heart yield their light to the mind."[77]

2.3 The Empirical-Biblical Method

Method is not simply a matter of technical procedures; it is also a paradigm of critical analysis and reflection.[78] The generic use of the term 'method' embraces both concepts and techniques. Critical analysts often prefer to differentiate method from methodology, the former referring to "the way one collects data, the means or process of selecting information for analysis,"[79] while the latter denotes "the assumptions and preconceptions that influence one's analysis and interpretation of data, that is, the theoretical and analytical framework, even personal feelings, that one brings to the task of organizing and analyzing facts."[80] The nuances of 'method' and 'methodology' permeate empirical-biblical studies since the experiential dimension of religion admits the use of technical procedures to access the data of experience, and the attempt to interpret the data of experience inevitably entails biblical assumptions and preconceptions that influence one's interpretation of the experience.

The employment of the empirical method, which is traditionally viewed as the bedrock of modern empirical science, raises questions in 'spiritual' matters. Thus can the scientific empirical paradigm function as an apt methodological approach for religious

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[77] Jon Nilson, "Doing Theology by Heart: John S. Dunne's Theological Method," *Theological Studies* 48 (1987): 65-86(86).

[78] E. S. Fiorenza, "Method in Women's Studies in Religion," 212.

[79] Jon R. Stone, *The Craft of Religious Studies* (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 6.

[80] Jon R. Stone, *The Craft of Religious Studies*, 6.

enquiry, and if so, does this not constitute a methodological dependency of irreducible 'spiritual' truths on a reductionist scientific method?[81] It is, however, arguable that the question betrays a positivistic view which portrays the empirical approach as simply a neutral observation of factual data and a naïve deductive move from observation to factual conceptualization, or naïve realism which "equates knowing with looking."[82]

Donna Teevan, in a review of Albert Einstein and Bernard Lonergan's empirical methods, observes that Einstein "eschewed the easy move from direct observation to conceptualization … such a move would be an oversimplification, perhaps more characteristic of nineteenth century positivism."[83] As Teevan goes on to observe, Einstein "asserts that scientific knowledge has two components, one given empirically and the other imaginatively and theoretically, with neither one simply derived from the other."[84] This is what Bernard Lonergan calls "critical realism" or the argument that "human knowing consists in the operations of experience, understanding and judging."[85] Thomas S. Kuhn likewise argues that "science is not merely the neutral observation of data."[86] Kuhn goes on to assert that social constructions of reality are the paradigms that not only direct the scientific process but also constitute the worldview of the scientist and

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[81] See, for example, Stanley J. Grenz, "Why Do Theologians Need to be Scientists?," 331-356.

[82] Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Seabury, 1972), 238.

[83] Donna Teevan, "Albert Einstein and Bernard Lonergan on Empirical Method," *Journal Religion and Science* 37 (2002): 873-890(875).

[84] D. Teevan, "Albert Einstein and Bernard Lonergan," 879.

[85] D. Teevan "Albert Einstein and Bernard Lonergan," 886.

[86] Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (2d. ed.; Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1970), 126. See also Stanley J. Grenz, "Why Do Theologians Need to be Scientists?," 346.

influence the scientific process.[87] A similar argument is presented by Stanley Grenz who remarks that "natural science does not simply describe and explain nature; it is part of the interplay between nature and ourselves; it describes nature as exposed to our method of questioning."[88] Implicitly therefore, the scientific method of empirical observation and analysis is permeated with the socio-cultural and ideological worldviews of the observers, be they scientists, biblical scholars or theologians.

The above discourse leads to a further question of whether religious research is analogous to scientific inquiry. Robert J. Russell observes that although methodology in religious research is generally analogous to scientific methodology, there are, nonetheless, significant disanalogies. He argues that "theology, being the most inclusive field, is … irreducible to the rest of human knowing."[89] Scientific inquiry is, in the Kantian sense of limits of human knowing, bounded by the finitude of human sense perception including cognitive reasoning and imagination. However, in theological inquiry, "human reason, in one sphere of its cognition, is called upon to consider questions which it cannot decline, as they are presented by its own nature, but which it cannot answer, as they transcend every faculty of the mind."[90] Religious inquiry is, thus, about transcendent divine realities that are beyond the realm of empirical perception.

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[87] T. S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 100-126.

[88] S. J. Grenz, "Why Do Theologians Need to be Scientists?," 347.

[89] Robert J. Russell, "The Relevance of Tillich for the Theology and Science Dialogue," *Journal of Religion and Science* 36 (2001): 269-308(270).

[90] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (trans. J. M. D. Meiklejohn; Minneola, N.Y.: Dover, 2003), vii.

Hence Paul Tillich's adverse assessment of the attempt to apply the scientific-empirical method to theological inquiry.[91]

Tillich's pessimistic view of the scientific empirical method, as applied to empirical-theological inquiry, is premised on three grounds: first, that religious experience is not a source of theology; second, that God who is our ultimate concern, as the object of theology, cannot be encountered objectively but only subjectively through participation in him; and, third, that our ultimate concern "cannot be tested by scientific method of verification."[92] Tillich's argument that mystical experiences of divinity cannot be a source of theology is, plausibly, informed by his aversion to 'open' religious experiences that appear to transcend the confines of the unique event of Jesus Christ as the criterion of all Christian religious experience. He cites the case of the Enthusiasts of the Reformation who did not envisage spiritual experiences transcending the Christian message; thus "for the Reformers, experience was not a source of revelation; the divine spirit testifies in us to the biblical message. No new revelations are given by the spirit; nothing new is mediated by the experience of the spiritual power in us."[93]

Tillich then contrasts the "Enthusiasts of the Reformation" against "Evangelical Enthusiasts:"

> Evangelical enthusiasm, on the other hand, derived new revelations from the presence of the Spirit. The experience of the man who has the Spirit is the source of religious truth and therefore of systematic theology. The letter of the Bible and the doctrines of the Church remain letter and law if the Spirit does not interpret

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[91] Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology 1: Reason and Revelation, Being and God* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1951), 40-46.

[92] Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology 1*, 44.

[93] Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology 1*, 45.

them in the individual Christian. Experience as the inspiring presence of the Spirit is the ultimate source of theology[94]

Tillich thus derides the "Evangelical Enthusiasts'" embrace of a hermeneutical significance of the experience of divinity in illuminating theological reflection. He, nonetheless, acknowledges the hermeneutical significance of the immediacy of spiritual presence by portraying Spirit-Christology, which ties spiritual presence exclusively to the event of Jesus Christ, as a tradition which developed because the Church was "afraid that the ultimate criterion of all revelatory experiences – the New Being in Jesus Christ – would be lost in the name of the immediacy of the Spirit; therefore they bound the Spirit to the Word, to the biblical message of Christ."[95]

Whereas Tillich acknowledges that the Church's tradition of tying spiritual presence to the doctrine of the event of Jesus Christ was a sound hermeneutical move, he, nonetheless, faults it because "the spiritual presence's impact was replaced by an intellectual acknowledgement of the doctrine."[96] Tillich's adverse assessment of Christian experience as a source of theological reflection is therefore not consistent with the main thrust of his theological method. A reading of his entire theological method suggests that he does indeed acknowledge the theological-hermeneutical significance of religious experience. Tillich's method of correlation does, indeed, infer a mutual relationship between experience and theological reflection; "the method of correlation

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[94] Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* 1, 45. This characterization of Evangelical enthusiasm is, plausibly, a rhetorical hyperbole. As Alister McGrath notes, the Christian experience of spirituality is never conceived apart from the biblical truth claims that under gird the spiritual experience. Idem, *Christian Theology*, 147.

[95] Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III: Life and the Spirit, History and the Kingdom of God* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1963), 128.

[96] Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* III, 128.

explains the contents of the Christian faith through existential questions and theological

answers in mutual interdependence."[97]

The experiential inference in Tillich's method of correlation is, plausibly, not

emphasized enough. Hence David Tracey's revisionary model of correlation which

critiques Tillich's correlation method for not taking seriously the answers that human

experience proposes for the Christian scriptural tradition. Tracey views Tillich's method

as a vertical model that simply applies the answers of the Christian *kerygma* to the

questions of human situation. Tracey's revisionary model is therefore an attempt to

portray a more dialectical method of correlation in which the questions and insights

arising out of human experiences are taken as seriously as the questions and answers

contained in the Christian *kerygma* such that a mutually enriching hermeneutical

dialectic of *kerygma* and experience is sustained.[98]

Concerning the argument for the object of theology, Tillich's assertion that the

object of theology is God or "our ultimate concern"[99] is at variance with other

theological views. Johannes van der Ven, for example, while concurring with Tillich that

God is not directly accessible through empirical approaches, nonetheless counters that

"God is the direct object of faith in so far as God is accessible in the subjective

engagement of the religious believer as the objective reality of faith which concerns him

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[97] Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology 1,* 60.

[98] See Hans Kung and David Tracey, *Paradigm Change in Theology: A Symposium for the Future* (New York: Crossroad, 1985), 34-62. See also Hyun-Sook Kim, "The Hermeneutical- Praxis Paradigm," 427, 428.

[99] Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* 1, 44. Tillich argues that "the object of theology is what concerns us ultimately," and then goes on to explain that "man is ultimately concerned about that which determines his ultimate destiny beyond all preliminary necessities and accidents." *Idem*, *Systematic Theology* 1, 14.

ultimately."[100] Van der Ven goes on to argue that, although the self revelation of God to a believer cannot be a direct object of empirical-theological research, the human experience of the revelation can be accessed through empirical inquiry:

> Through God's self-revelation in faith, the religious person manifests himself as one who is moved, who is touched; he articulates himself as the subject of the reception … This reception leads to a response in which the believer in turn reveals himself to God through prayer. However, the reception also leads to a reaction in which the believer turns to other people and bears witness to God, particularly in the confession of faith and proclamation. Only in and through these multiple forms of reception, response and reaction, and not outside them, is God indirectly accessible to theological research.[101]

The object of empirical-theological investigation is, thus, not God directly, but the revelation of God that is embedded in the human experience of divine disclosure. While not persuaded to Tillich's argument which negates the epistemological value of religious experiences, the present study is, nonetheless, consistent with the Tillichian argument that empirical enquiry is not a direct source of theological knowledge; rather, empirical research provides data for critical reflection. Therefore the goal of the present study is to produce empirically and biblically-grounded knowledge of the nature and significance of the Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon of prophecy and thus provide empirical-biblical data for critical reflection.

On the question of whether Tillich's notion of 'verification' is the goal of empirical enquiry, Van der Ven aptly points out that Tillich's positivistic view of empirical science in terms of objective certitude is dated and no longer tenable,

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[100] Van der Ven, "Practical Theology: From Applied to Empirical Theology," *Journal of Empirical Theology* 1 (1988): 7-27(13). On the specific quest of the empirical approach to theology, Van der Ven maintains that "the direct object of empirical theology is not God but rather human experience of God." *Idem,* "From Applied to Empirical Theology," 19.

[101] Van der Ven, "From Applied to Empirical Theology," 13-14.

particularly in social sciences research. Van der Ven remarks that, "in the last few decades, however, empirical methodology has undergone a fundamental development and no longer corresponds to the views of Tillich and many other theologians after him."[102] Jaco S. Dreyer, likewise, observes that "this positivistic view of science has gradually lost its hegemony."[103] Thus the goal of empirical research is not verification or certification, or otherwise, of the truth of hypotheses. Such a task would require that a hypothesis must be proved true or false in all situations, in all time and in all methods. Since this is a humanly impractical task, an un-falsified or disconfirmed hypothesis still remains a hypothesis.[104] Hence no hypothesis can ever be certified as factually absolute or positively verified. The contemporary empirical research approach is therefore akin to a dialectical relationship in which hypotheses are always dialectically pitted against other competing hypotheses in a continuous process of adding value. As William Indick observes, "no theory can ever be accepted as absolutely true; there are only better and better arguments that build upon and replace the older arguments in a never-ending process of enlightenment. Consequently there are no facts, only better and better interpretations of evidence."[105]

Interpretation of empirical-biblical research data inevitably entails viewing and analyzing data from a particular pre-understanding or hermeneutical perspective. It is a hermeneutical dialectic in which the pre-understanding of the observer brings meaning to

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[102] Van der Ven, "From Applied to Empirical Theology," 14.

[103] Jaco S. Dreyer, "The Researcher: Engaged Participant or Detached Observer?," 8.

[104] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 105.

[105] William Indick, "Fight the Power: The Limits of Empiricism and the Cost of Positivistic Rigor*,"* *Journal of Psychology* 136 (2002): 21-36(25).

the data while, reciprocally, the data critiques the hermeneutical perspective of the observer. Van der Ven views the hermeneutical dialectical process as a composite "judicial theological process" or "hermeneutical judgment."[106] He opines that it is not just the empirical data and methods that impinge upon the hermeneutic judgment but that the whole discipline of theology is involved in the hermeneutical process.[107] Plausibly, therefore, the empirical-hermeneutical outcomes, far from being value-neutral analytic results of observations, represent a compendium of various ideological reflections on the empirical data. Nonetheless, the ideological compendium is informed, and indeed critiqued, by the empirical-hermeneutical data

2.4 A Hermeneutical-Praxis Model

The present study seeks to forge a dialectical synthesis between empirical data, Scripture and espoused beliefs of the Pentecostal-charismatics concerning the phenomenon of charismatic prophecy, thereby offering an empirically-scripturally grounded model of charismatic prophecy and, hence, data for theological reflection. As already argued above, an underlying assumption of the study is that religious praxis is hermeneutical rather than merely practical; it makes epistemological contributions to espoused beliefs, even as espoused beliefs inform religious praxis. The hermeneutical dialectic between espoused beliefs and religious praxis is thus envisioned as a mutually enriching and mutually illuminative model of theory and praxis as represented in the following Figure.

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[106] Van der Ven, "An Empirical or a Normative Approach?," 19..

[107] Van der Ven, "An Empirical or a Normative Approach?," 19.

Figure 2.1.

$$\boxed{\text{Theory} \leftrightarrow \text{Praxis} \leftrightarrow \text{Theory}}$$

(A Hermeneutical-Praxis Model of Espoused Beliefs and Religious Practice).

Espoused beliefs in the Pentecostal-charismatic context issue from a reflective interpretation of Scripture in the light of pneumatological discernment, the socio-cultural and ecclesial traditions of the Pentecostal-charismatics, and their experiences of divine presence.[108] The beliefs are articulated as faith convictions. Praxis, on the other hand, is reflected and purposeful religious action, both in ecclesial settings as well as in non-ecclesial, or church-in-the-world, contexts. The above hermeneutical-praxis model, akin to Don S. Browning's model, is therefore a corrective of the traditional deductive "theory → praxis" practical theology model. [109] The latter is a monologuistic sequential application of theory to practice and thus ignores the hermeneutical-epistemological dimension of purposeful action. In the "theory↔praxis↔theory" model, the starting point is neither theory nor praxis; it is neither wholly inductive nor strictly deductive, but a mutually correlative dialectic between theory and praxis. As Hans-Georg Ziebertz notes:

> Facts alone have no meaning; they become meaningful when they are brought into interaction with ideas. With the help of ideas, possible solutions become recognizable in the facts; ideas evoke more observation; through the interaction

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[108] Pneumatological discernment, in this context, is understood as the illumining experience of the divine Spirit. See also Amos Yong, "The Hermeneutical Trialectic,"28.

[109] Don S. Browning, *A Fundamental Practical Theology: Descriptive and Strategic Proposals* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 1991), 69. See also Hyun-Sook Kim, "The Hermeneutical-Praxis Paradigm," 428-429, and Van der Ven, *Practical Theology,* 113.

with facts, ideas become clearer and sharper and, by reason of new ordering of ideas, new facts can be recognized.[110]

In the Christian faith, for example, it is not possible to discern whether one's initiation into the Christian faith is prompted by the proclamation of the Gospel message, or whether it is the consciousness of divine presence, at the liminal state of human self-consciousness, that predisposes one to attend to, appreciate, and appropriate, the proclamation of the Gospel message. It is plausible that a dialectical correlation between proclamation and experience sets one on the path of religious pilgrimage. For example, in the Pauline *Epistle to the Romans,* humanity is portrayed as accountable to God through their knowledge of him in the experiences of nature and conscience (Rom 1:19-20; 2:14-15). On the other hand, humanity is portrayed as helpless without the Gospel message: "How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?" (Rom 10:14). There is, thus, an apparent hermeneutical dialectic between the proclamation of the Gospel message and the experiences of divine presence, or the en-spirited nature of the hearer. [111]

The above hermeneutical-praxis model is mutually illuminative because it deals with dialectics of interpretations, not raw data. Espoused beliefs are reflected faith

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[110] Hans- Georg Ziebert, "Normativity and Empirical Research," 15.

[111] Karl Barth, in his commentary on *The Epistle to the Romans*, expresses a similar dialectical relationship when he remarks, concerning the Romans 1:19-21 pericope, that "we know that God is He whom we do not know, and that our ignorance is precisely the problem and the source of our knowledge" And concerning the pericope, Romans 10:14, Barth states that , "this knowledge of God, which is the God- given presupposition of all observation and definition, is faith in all its hiddenness; faith, however, presupposes hearing and preaching and mission, which are likewise hidden. In other words, knowledge of God presupposes the possibility, nay, the reality- of the hidden Church …" Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans* (trans. E. C. Hoskyns; London: Oxford University Press, 1933), 45,385.

convictions while religious praxis is value-laden action. [112] The observations made in the

present empirical-biblical study will not, therefore, be raw data; rather, they will be

interpreted data in terms of feelings, beliefs, values and value-laden practices of the

research population which represent a hermeneutical awareness of divine activity at the

liminal state of human activeness. The empirical research will, thus, not be a study of

religious people, but their interpretively value-laden characteristics.[113] As Hans-Gunter

Heimbrock notes, perceptual characteristics are given to human beings, not merely

through sensual perception but, through meaning-giving interpretive perceptions.[114]

2.5 The Empirical-Biblical Process

The present study adopts Johannes van der Ven's "empirical-theological cycle,"

or hermeneutical process paradigm, for the empirical-biblical process. The preference for

a biblical, rather than a theological, hermeneutical approach is informed by the

researcher's heuristic observation that the Pentecostal-charismatics, particularly in the

African context, have an aversion for what they perceive to be "theological speculation,"

and a high view of Scripture. Inferentially, therefore, they are more predisposed to

biblical, rather than theological, hermeneutics.[115] Nonetheless, a biblical-hermeneutical

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[112] See also Don S Browning, *A Fundamental Practical Theology*, 69-71.

[113] See also Van der Van, *Practical Theology,* 111, and M. J. Cartledge, *Charismatic Glossolalia,* 13.

[114] Hans-Gunter Heimbrock, "From Data to Theory," 282.

[115] This observation is particularly pertinent in the African context. Peter Paris, for example, notes that "Africans are not easily disposed to speculative thought … much of African thought, including that of theology and ethics, arises out of the problems of daily experience." Idem, *The Spirituality of African Peoples: The Search for a Common Moral Discourse* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 1995),132. At the same time, H. R. Weber observes that Africans have a high, and tendentiously sacramental, view of Scripture. Idem, *'The Book that Reads Me': A Handbook for Bible Study Enablers* (Geneva: World Council of Churches Publications, 1995),ix.

process is akin to a theological-hermeneutical process since, as argued above, biblical

interpretation is loaded with theological pre-understandings of the interpreter. However,

the critical distinctiveness of the empirical-biblical hermeneutical paradigm is that

Scripture will be the foundational and essential basis of the hermeneutical reflection.

Van der Ven's process model is intra-disciplinary; it enables empirical-religious

research to be done on the basis of religious theory and has, indeed, been a tremendous

contribution to empirical research in religion.[116] Alternative empirical-religious models

entail religious researchers utilizing either inter-disciplinary or cooperative approaches in

which they borrow insights from empirical research in the social sciences (inter-

disciplinary model), or cooperate with the social scientists to do empirical-religious

research (cooperative model). In either case, the alternative approaches necessitate a

religious reinterpretation of empirical data since social sciences research is aimed at

sociological, rather than religious, theory building.[117]

The present study, however, utilizes Van der Ven's quantitative empirical-

theological cycle with necessary modifications for empirical-biblical and the qualitative

approaches.[118] The choice of the qualitative approach is informed by the nature of the

study; it seeks to establish descriptive and explanatory meanings which individuals and

groups reveal in their expressions of beliefs, feelings, attitudes, convictions, and

practices, with respect to the Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon of prophecy. A

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[116] See also Chris A. M. Hermans and Mary E. Moore, "The Contribution of Empirical Theology by Johannes A. van der Ven: An Introduction." In *Hermeneutics and Empirical Research in Practical Theology: The Contribution of Empirical Theology by Johannes A. van der Ven* (ed. C. A. M. Hermans and M. E. Moore; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 4.

[117] Chris A. M. Hermans and Mary E. Moore, "The Contribution of Empirical Theology," 4.

[118] See Van der Van, *Practical Theology*, 8, and Idem, "An Empirical or a Normative Approach?," 15.

particular concern of the study is that the unique and individual meanings of religious

experiences should not be lost through mathematical permutations and objectification or

generalization of data. As Hans-Gunter Heimbrock notes:

> In quantitative research, the results obtained relate only to general characteristics
> of the total population to which the findings of the research population are
> generalized. In other words, the authenticity and uniqueness of the individuals
> and their meanings are inevitably lost. One is left with models of collective
> meanings and with models of causal relations.[119]

The quantitative approach entails a measure of distanciation between the researcher and

the research subjects while a qualitative approach involves a high degree of interaction

between the researcher and the research participants. In the latter approach, the research

problem is viewed from the emic perspective of the research participants; hence the use

of fairly open study questions in which the primary accent is the participants' native

experiences and viewpoints. Nonetheless, in either approach, "one has to be both insider

and outsider, engaged participant and detached observer."[120] In the final analysis, the

preference for the qualitative approach over the quantitative method is essentially a

question of emphasis rather than a choice between mutually exclusive options.

A basic presupposition of the present study is that the divine-human encounter

that is implicit in religious experiences in general, and in prophecy manifestations in

particular, is an irreducible dialectic between divine transcendence and human finitude.

As such, it always has a surplus of meaning since divine transcendence cannot be wholly

comprehended and conceptualized in human finitude. Human perception can neither

exhaust the unique experiences of revealed divine transcendence nor can human

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[119] Hans-Gunter Heimbrock, "From Data to Theory," 282-283.

[120] Jaco S. Dreyer, "The Researcher: Engaged Participant?," 14.

conceptual models capture the totality of the experiences of divine presence; there is thus

a surplus which cannot be conceptualized and articulated in linguistic symbols. A. N.

Williams' axiom that "union with God is superior to talking about God" is an apt

description of the irreducible surplus in human experiences of divinity.[121]

The subject of the present study, charismatic prophecy, is thus deemed to be a

unique and irreducible divine-human revelatory encounter shrouded in

visions…dreams…riddles" (Num 12:7-8) in which "we know in part and we prophesy in

part … we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror" (1 Cor 13:9,12a). The dialectic in the

divine-human encounter is also underscored in Karl Barth's dialectical theological

discourse; he states that "revelation in the bible means the self-unveiling, imparted to

men, of God who by nature cannot be unveiled to men … it is the *Deus revelatus* who is

the *Deus absconditus*."[122] The design of the study questions will therefore be less

determinative and, hence, allow an element of indeterminacy in cognizance of the

"surplus" in the dialectical divine-human revelatory encounter that is implicit in

prophetic experiences.

Since Van der Ven's process cycle is the hermeneutical-methodological process

paradigm adapted for the present study process, it is deemed necessary to explicate the

cycle systematically and in sufficient detail in order to delineate the methodological

process frame of reference for the study. Van der Ven's process cycle is an empirically

grounded hermeneutical process; it is "a systematic development of the experiential

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[121] A. N. Williams, "The Logic of Genre: Theological Method in East and West," *Theological Studies* 60 (1999): 679-707(687).

[122] Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics 1.1: The Doctrine of the Word of God* (2d. ed.; trans. G. W. Bromiley; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1975),320-21.

processes which every person is undergoing at every waking moment … and which are implicit in the interactions of the human being with his environment."[123] Van der Ven bases his process cycle on de Groot's "experience cycle" model which posits that "a complete experience process involves four moments in a cyclical pattern: perception, experimentation, examination, and assessment."[124] Building on de Groot's experience cycle model, Van der Ven develops a five-phase and fifteen sub-phase empirical-theological cycle which frames his methodological process. Van der Ven's process cycle is adapted for the present empirical-biblical study approach as follows:[125]

    1. Research Problem and Goal.

        i. Development of research problem

        ii. Development of a research goal.

    2. Empirical Induction

        iii. Perception

        iv. Reflection

        v. Formulation of the research question

        vi. Empirical research design.

    3. Empirical Deduction

        vii. Conceptualization

        viii. Conceptual model

        ix. Operationalization.

    4. Data Collection and Analysis

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[123] Van van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 112.

[124] A. D. de Groot, *Methodologie. Grondslagen van Onderzoek en Denken in de Gedrags-wetenschappen.* (Den Haag, 1968), 37. See also Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 112-113.

[125] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 119- 156. A critical review of Van der Ven's Empirical-theological cycle is also outlined in M. J. Cartledge, *Charismatic Glossolalia*, 13-16.

       x. Data collection

       xi. Preparation of data set

       xii. Data analysis.

   5. Evaluation

       xiii. Interpretation

       xiv. Reflection

       xv. Methodological reflection.

2.6 Research Problem and Goal

The research problem and goal are concomitant components of the first phase of the cycle in the sense that the identification of a research problem inevitably triggers the quest for a resolution. Hence the need to develop a research goal in response to the research problem.

2.6.1 Development of Research Problem

The first phase of the adapted cycle begins by identifying and grappling with a problem. The seemingly obscure or enigmatic experiences of divine revelatory presence in the Pentecostal-charismatic prophecy manifestations is the problem which the present study grapples with. The problem is then expressly stated and clarified. According to Dewey, "it is a major achievement to have determined what exactly the problem is that makes the research necessary."[126]

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[126] John Dewey, "The Pattern of Inquiry," in *The Later Works* 1925- 1953 (ed. J. A. Boydston; Edwardsville, Ky.: Carbondale, 1986), 105- 122. See also Hans-Georg Ziebert, "Normativity and Empirical Research in Practical Theology," 15.

2.6.2 Development of Research Goal

The development of appropriate research goal(s) is an attempt to respond to the identified problem. It also entails an articulation of the implicit assumptions and the observations to be made. Assumptions are the implicit norms which define the field of reference and serve as heuristics for relating the problem to the research goal. The research goal of the present study is to offer a modest empirically-grounded biblical-hermeneutical model of the nature and significance of the contemporary Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon of prophecy. Charismatic prophecy which is portrayed in Pentecostal-charismatic popular literature as an immediate revelatory divine-human encounter has profound biblical-hermeneutical implications for Christian spirituality,[127] particularly in the contemporary church age of accentuated interest in mystical religious experiences.[128] The contemporary widespread interest in spirituality is actually viewed as a positive development but which needs biblical-hermeneutical guidance. Edward Farley, for instance, decries the loss of the original meaning of *theologia,* which he etymologically defines as "sapiential and personal knowledge of divine self-

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[127] See, for example, Austin Sparks, a Pentecostal-charismatic minister, who describes prophecy as "the anointing (that) brings about that first-hand touch with God … and when that happens you come into the place of direct spiritual knowledge of God, direct touch with God, the place of the open heaven." Idem, *Prophetic Ministry: A Classic Study on the Nature of a Prophet* (Shippensburg, Pa: Destiny Image, 2000), 9. Another Pentecostal- charismatic minister, Kim Clement, describes prophecy as real-time God speech; "the basic principles of prophecy is that God's voice creates something new in our lives; there is a creative power associated with His speech, and when His Word comes to us, it comes to us with dynamic energy." Idem, *Secrets of the Prophetic: Unveiling Your Future* (Shippensburg, Pa: Destiny Image, 2005, 64.

[128] Spirituality, in general parlance, refers to the metaphysical dimension of life's experiences. In the Christian context, spirituality has the inference of life inspired by the Holy Spirit, traditionally understood as the third person of the divine trinity. See Ross Thompson, *Christian Spirituality* (London: SCM, 2008), x. Alister McGrath defines Christian spirituality as "the quest for a fulfilled and authentic Christian existence involving the bringing together of the fundamental ideas of Christianity and the whole experience of living on the basis of and within the scope of the Christina faith." *Idem, Christian Spirituality* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1999), 2. Pentecostal-charismatic spirituality, in particular, emphasizes the experiential dimension of the Christian faith, and is thus marked by deep conviction of divine reality and passion for the experience of divine presence. See also Steven J. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality,* 11-23.

disclosure."[129] Thus, for Farley, theological knowledge is not simply objective-propositional knowledge; rather, it is, primarily, personal experience of God through a relational divine-human encounter. The goal of the present study is therefore significant in that it seeks to provide a biblical-hermeneutical basis for the Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon of prophecy from the standpoint of praxis.

2.7 Empirical Induction

Induction, in the context of empirical research, refers to "the observation, directed by reflection, of phenomena in the empirical reality."[130] Both perception, or observation, and reflection are therefore integral to the process of induction. Induction, in this context, is viewed as an exploratory approach to empirical research in which heuristic knowledge emerges from observation of, and reflection on, phenomena.

2.7.1 Perception

Van der Ven distinguishes between random and systematic perception, noting that the former is "what we do when we collect observations of hermeneutical-communication praxis without previously established system of categories."[131] Systematic perception, on the other hand, is "characterized by the use of standardized instruments of observation."[132] Van der Ven also makes a distinction between

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[129] Edwards Farley, *Theologia: The Fragmentation and Unity of Theological Education* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 7. See also A. E. McGrath, *The Future of Christianity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 136.

[130] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 115.

[131] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 121.

[132] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 121.

participatory and non-participatory perception. In a non-participatory perception, "no social interaction occurs between the researcher and the subjects under study."[133] However, in participatory perception, the researcher is actively engaged in the activities of the research subjects. Van der Ven, nonetheless, points out that participatory and non-participatory perceptions are essentially the limiting points of a continuum since neither total participation nor total non-participation are practical in empirical research. In practice, the extreme positions are characterized, at one end, by a high-level of involvement, or active participation, and at the other end, by a low-level of involvement, or passive participation. The present study will entail active participation, but will compliment systematic observation with random observation.

Another salient distinction that Van der Ven makes is direct versus indirect perception. Indirect perception concerns "written or audiovisual expressions of feelings, attitudes or interactions by the persons being studied."[134] Direct perception, on the other hand, entails the researcher's real-time encounter with the participants in their expressive activities. Van der Ven then notes a dialectical tension that subsists between the need to perceive, in real time, the spontaneity of expressions of the research participants and the danger of "contamination" of the investigation through the researcher's emotional and interpretive involvement in the situation under study.[135] The present study seeks to manage the dialectical tension by a judicious balancing act of indirect perception in terms of examination of written and audio-visual expressions of perceptions, feelings or

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[133] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 121.

[134] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 123.

[135] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 123.

convictions of the research participants, and direct participatory observation of participants in congregational-liturgical settings as well as participatory moderation of case study focus groups.

The degree of precision in the design of study questions and structure of the case study focus groups will be fairly flexible since, as already argued above, the research participants' expressions are deemed to be perceptual mystical religious experiences that are not easily amenable to precise description; they contain a surplus of meaning which cannot be precisely formulated in linguistic symbols.[136] Therefore a certain degree of flexibility in the design of the study questions and the structure of the case studies' focus groups will be necessary in order to allow participants to express their otherwise ineffable experiences in their intrinsic ways. Widick Schroeder notes that "relatively unstructured in-depth interviews in which subjects illumine the way in which they integrate the various components of their experiences into a whole are better able to illumine the complexity of human experience; but such data are not amenable to precise formulations and categorization."[137]

Schroeder goes on to point out that there should be a pattern of increasing precision as one moves from intrinsic feelings and experiences to extrinsic human

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[136] Mystical experience, in this context, is used in the Tillichian sense of "the experience of the divine presence within us … mysticism means inwardness, participation in the ultimate reality through inner experience … this mystical experience is the inward participation in and experience of the presence of the divine." Paul Tillich, *A History of Christian Thought*, 317-18. See also Rudolf Otto who uses the expression *mysterium tremedum* to denote mysticism as a numinous experience which "transcends or eludes comprehension in rational or ethical terms." Otto argues that "religion is not exclusively contained and exhaustively comprised in any series of rational assertions." Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy: An Inquiry in to the Non-Rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and Its Relation to the Rational* (2d. ed., trans. J.W. Harvey; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1950), xvi, 4. It is, however, argued that the Pentecostal-charismatic mystical experiences are not simply an inwardness; they are both inwardly-divinely perceived and outwardly-expressive or community-oriented.

[137] Widick Schroeder, "Measuring the Muse," 150.

actions because linguistic symbols referring to inner feelings and subliminal religious experiences are less precise than linguistic symbols denoting extrinsic experiences or reflected expressions of intrinsic experiences.[138] The present study presupposes that some of the research participants' linguistic symbols will be expressive of the subliminal inner experiences while others will represent the participants' reflections on their inner experiences; hence the need for a certain degree of flexibility in the empirical study design in order "to pick up people's experiences by means of observation, participation, conversation, interviewing, and ongoing reflection and feedback, to explore their speech and actions, discover the meanings they attribute to their speech and actions, and decipher the symbols embedded in these meanings."[139] This presupposition also underscores the need for a qualitative approach in order to capture the otherwise non-objective and unquantifiable expressions of inner experiences and reflections of the study participants.

2.7.2 Reflection

The reflection sub-phase of the induction process is a dialectical interplay between observational perceptions and critical analysis. Thus the perceptual observations made by the researcher in the perception sub-phase are subjected to critical review in order to "arrive at some preliminary conclusions which in turn may lead one to place subsequent perceptions into a more specific or more accurate perspective."[140] Van der Ven argues that an effective act of reflection requires a thorough review of theoretical

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[138] Widick Schroeder, "Measuring the Muse," 150.

[139] Van der Ven, "An Empirical or a Normative Approach?," 15.

[140] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 123.

literature relevant to the research area as well as relevant empirical literature in the relevant discipline.[141] However, at the preliminary stage, the review of literature is heuristic in the sense that it is the preliminary and unstructured exploration of literature which the researcher undertakes in order to have a feel of the issue of interest and to determine the need and feasibility of the research problem.

A preliminary review of Pentecostal-charismatics popular literature on prophecy has led the researcher to realize that much of charismatic prophecy praxis is orally archived, biblically allusive and culturally traditioned and, hence, tendentiously syncretistic. [142] There is therefore need for empirically and biblically- grounded research in order to provide documentary critical understanding of the contemporary Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon of prophecy from a biblical-praxis perspective. This necessity is accentuated by the observation that the problem of oral archiving of faith convictions and praxis is particularly acute in the African context. Thus much of the Pentecostal-charismatic praxis in the African context is informed by faith convictions that are simply expressed orally in sermons, testimonies, songs, or rituals.

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[141] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 123-25. See also Catherine Marshall and Gretchen B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research* (4th ed.; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2006), 43- 48, and John C. Cresswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* (3d ed.; Los Angeles: Sage, 2009), 25-28.

[142] See, for example, Allan Anderson, "Stretching the Definition?: Pneumatology and 'Syncretism' in African Pentecostalism," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 10 (2001): 98-119. See also Jack Deere's satire on 'Pentecostal' versus 'Presbyterian' prophets. Idem, *Surprised by the Voice of* God (Eastbourne, U.K.: Kingsway, 1996), 64-78. See also P. S. Brewster, *The Spreading Flame of Pentecos*t (London: Elim Publishing, 1970), 135, and Charles W. Conn, *Pillars of Pentecost* (Cleveland, Tenn.: Pathway, 1956), 56.

2.7.3 Formulation of Research Question

Van der Ven opines that the problem which necessitates a research project should be stated in broad terms whereas the research question, which frames the research issue more specifically, should be more explicit and limited in character.[143] However, as argued above, a certain degree of indeterminacy and flexibility is imperative in a qualitative approach, even in the "more explicit and limited" formulation of the research question. The research question for the present study is stated in broad terms, thus: "What is the nature and significance of the phenomenon of prophecy in the Pentecostal-charismatic experience?" The wide semantic ranges of the notions of "nature" and "significance" entail a certain degree of indeterminacy and flexibility, hence the proprietary of the qualitative approach for the present study. Van der Ven outlines three criteria that have to be applied in formulating the research question: first, scientific relevance of the question; second, practical relevance of the research project; and, third, researchability of the problem.[144]

Scientific relevance is a function of the nature, type and goal of the research study, that is, whether it is an inductive-exploratory, a deductive-explanatory, or a hypothesis-testing research. An exploratory approach is preferable when the goal is simply to understand and describe a phenomenon without inferring any explanatory or causal relations, while an explanatory approach is appropriate where empirical exploration and explanation of a relatively new field of inquiry is an imperative, and is thus necessitated by a situation where "major lacunae exist in the knowledge about the

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[143] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 125.

[144] See also Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 125-27.

relations of the research object to other factors."[145] However, where ample body of knowledge exists, then one can derive hypotheses from the body of knowledge and adopt a hypothesis-testing approach. The scientific relevance approach is essentially a three-point continuum; the exploratory and hypothesis-testing approaches form the limiting ends of the continuum while the deductive-explanatory approach is the median.[146] The continuum is thus a function of the scope and reliability of prior knowledge in the field of inquiry, ranging from exploration, in a situation of limited scope and relatively unreliable body of prior knowledge, to hypothesis-testing where there is ample and reliable prior knowledge.

The Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon of prophecy is a relatively new field of inquiry in empirical-biblical and theological research. Consequently, the scope of prior knowledge in the filed is fairly limited. Although there is a lot of popular literature on the subject, this is largely idiosyncratic; it represents heuristic self-expressions of the Pentecostal-charismatics concerning their experiences of congregational prophecy. As such significant lacunae in knowledge about the nature of the Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon of prophecy and its significance for the Pentecostal-charismatic movement still exists. Hence, following Van der Ven's argument above, the Pentecostal-charismatic popular literature is not sufficient to justify a hypothesis-testing approach. The design of the present study will, initially, adopt an inductive-exploratory case study approach utilizing the idiosyncratic self-expressions of the Pentecostal-charismatics as *a priori* research knowledge and assumptions. The heuristic postulates arising from the

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[145] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 125.

[146] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 125-26.

exploratory case study will be critically reflected upon in the light of observations from a survey of literature and the data of Scripture. The theoretical constructs emerging from the critical reflection will, next, be subjected to evaluation by way of subsequent deductive-explanatory case studies.

The second criteria that Van der Ven outlines for formulating the research question has to do with practical relevance. He draws a distinction between fundamental, or basic research, and applied research; "the former is rooted in scientific curiosity; its purpose is to obtain empirically validated pure knowledge. The latter is oriented towards the practical application of knowledge and the solution of practical problems."[147] In the semantics of fundamental and applied research, the present study is, mainly, applied research; it seeks to provide an empirically grounded biblical-hermeneutical model of charismatic prophecy based on Scripture and the Pentecostal-charismatic praxis. Thus the present research is not simply driven by scientific curiosity, but by the need of practical knowledge for biblical-theological reflection and praxis.

The third criteria for formulating the research question concerns scientific logic and practical feasibility of the research project. Scientific logic relates to the reasonableness of the issue in principle, as well as the state and scope of scientific knowledge that is presently available on the research question. Practical feasibility of the research question relates to resources, such as time, competent human resources, equipment, as well as financial resources, for undertaking the research. Van der Ven underscores the significance of practical feasibility by stating that "practical feasibility may appear prosaic, but, is often one of the deciding factors affecting the delimitation of

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[147] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 126.

the problem and the formulation of the research question."[148] The present study has

reasonably ample resources in terms of time and finances. The empirical case studies will

also be conducted in strategic locations in terms of ease of accessibility by the

researcher. It is also envisaged that no specialized equipment will be required for the

empirical study.

2.7.4 Empirical Research Design

The research design is a concise formulation of the empirical question that the

study seeks to explore, including an adumbration of the methodological and

organizational options for the study. Van der Ven notes that, in contemporary empirical

research, a number of research designs are commonly employed, namely, the survey

method, the quasi-experimental design, content analysis, and field research.[149] The

survey method, which is the frequently used approach in empirical research, entails

building up an exploratory and/or explanatory inventory of knowledge about a research

issue, usually through a systematic data gathering process. The quasi-experimental

design, on the other hand, investigates effect-relations of variables, and is often used to

describe and explain the impact of interventions in certain situations.[150] It is quasi-

experimental in the sense that the variables under scrutiny cannot be totally controlled in

the same way as, say, chemical or biological variables in a laboratory experiment.[151]

Content analysis entails "the description and explanation of the contents of written

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[148] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 127.

[149] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 127.

[150] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 127.

[151] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 127.

communications,"[152] while field research generally involves "case studies in which situations and processes are studied through participatory perception and qualitative methods."[153]

The various research design approaches are, nonetheless, not mutually exclusive and the choice of one dominant approach is simply an emphasis of the main thrust of a study approach. The empirical approach of the present study is a composite of various study designs; it is an exploratory-explanatory field research; it seeks to build a descriptive-explanatory inventory of knowledge of the Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon of prophecy through congregational case studies. The case study approach is a distinctive form of inquiry; it is "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident."[154]

A congregational case study approach is most appropriate for the study of charismatic prophecy because congregational contexts are, reportedly, the most common contextual settings for the prophetic experiences and manifestations. As Steven Land observes, the heart of the Pentecostal-charismatic spirituality is "the liturgical life of the community."[155] This observation is consistent with the New Testament norm for charismatic prophecy experiences and manifestations, which is portrayed as the liturgical setting of the Christian community:

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[152] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 128.

[153] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology,* 128.

[154] Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Method* (4th ed.; Los Angeles: Sage, 2009), 18.

[155] Steven J. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, 23.

> So if the whole church comes together and everyone speaks in tongues, and some who do not understand or some unbelievers come in, will they not say that you are out of your mind? But if an unbeliever or someone who does not understand comes in while everybody is prophesying, he will be convinced by all that he is a sinner and will be judged by all, and the secrets of his heart will be laid bare. So he will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, "God is really among you." (1Cor14:23- 25).

It is also reckoned that the boundaries between the prophetic manifestations and the congregational contexts are not clearly evident. The symbiotic relationship between the congregational contexts and the prophetic manifestations will be explicated further in the survey of literature. The case study design for the present study is a multi-stage approach in which one congregation will be studied in an inductive-exploratory fashion, while two subsequent congregations will be studied in a deductive-explanatory fashion.

2.8 Empirical Deduction

The empirical deduction phase, in Van der Ven's cycle, comprises three moments: conceptualization, determination of a conceptual model, and operationalization.

2.8.1 Conceptualization

Concepts are the constructs that explicate the theoretical variables for the study. Although concepts are generally viewed as idealized and universalized abstractions from reality, Van der Ven notes that human concepts inevitably "contain an unconceptional moment relating to the intentional orientation of the concepts to aspects of reality … concepts have the qualities of here and now. They exist in the consciousness of particular individuals or groups of varying sizes."[156] A fundamental requirement for conceptual

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[156] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 131.

theories in empirical research, therefore, is that they must contain empirical references, or "information indicating to what they refer- to which ideas and attitudes of which group(s) of people, under which spatial and temporal circumstances and under what conditions."[157] The purpose of the "empirical reference" criterion is to ensure that empirical research concepts have sufficient contextual specificity in order to be empirically researchable. The choice of a particular Pentecostal-charismatic tradition in a particular socio-cultural setting for the present study is therefore an attempt to ensure that the empirical research concepts have concrete contextual referentiality.

2.8.2 Conceptual Model

A theoretical-conceptual model is the methodological construct which frames the linkage between theoretical concepts and empirical reality and which determines the operational process as well as the analytical method.[158] An empirically operable conceptual model should therefore be constitutive of theoretical and empirical variables as well as their linkages. Van der Ven argues that a conceptual model must have three parameters: concepts or variables, relationships between the concepts or variables, and research units."[159] Theoretical variables are the conceptual units of the study, such as attitudes, feelings, expressions, or actions, while empirical variables are the explications of the manner in which the theoretical variables are measured.[160] However, since the present study adopts a qualitative approach, there will be no empirical variables in terms

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[157] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 131.

[158] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 131.

[159] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 131.

[160] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 132.

of definitions of measurability; rather, the conceptual model will entail conceptual units only; these will be defined in terms of linguistic symbols conveying the research participants' attitudes, feelings, perceptions, convictions or actions.

2.8.3 Operationalization

Empirical operationalization of the conceptual model is viewed as the process of bridging theoretical concepts with empirical reality. It is essentially a continuation of the conceptual model process and entails transformation of the theoretical model into an operational model. Van der Ven defines operationalization as the "defining of concepts in terms of operations."[161] In the present study's qualitative approach, the operationalization process implies a description of concepts in terms of identifiable parameters, such as the linguistic symbols which delineate religious attitudes or behavior, and development of appropriate research instruments such as interview schedules.

Van der Ven outlines two basic criteria for testing whether the instruments developed for capturing the theoretical variables are suitable in the context of the research being considered. The criteria are validity and reliability.[162] The validity criterion asks whether the content of the instruments corresponds significantly to the envisaged theoretical variables, while reliability has to do with the question of whether the process by which the instruments are applied accords, to a significant degree, with

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[161] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 134.

[162] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 138.

the theoretical variables.[163] Thus validity pertains to the content of the research

instruments while reliability is the applicability or relevance of the research instruments.

Although Van der Ven emphasizes that empirical concepts must be

operationalized as precisely as possible, he, nonetheless, notes the inevitability of a

surplus of meaning in concepts that defies operationalization; he explains the notion of

surplus meaning as follows:

> The surplus meaning of concepts is part and parcel of the non-conceptual
> cognitive stream or orientation that underlies the concepts themselves. It is
> precisely the non-conceptual moment that forms the core of human experience of
> reality. In itself it cannot be conceptually stated and defined, and yet all concepts
> essentially point to this cognitive orientation as to something which they wish to
> represent in a perspectival manner but cannot in fact express adequately … one
> also comes to grips with the inadequacy and the limitation of concepts.[164]

This is, in effect, not only an acknowledgement of the inevitable gap between theoretical

concepts and empirical realities, but also a disclaimer on the adequacy of the conceptual

variables in capturing the totality of religious experiences.

The inadequacy of conceptual variables and quantitative measurements is also

noted by A. N. Williams who points out the fallacy of "quantitative operationalism," or

the quantitative attempt to "secure mastery over the whole realm of accessible truth."[165]

Nonetheless, a qualitative approach has its own measure of the fallacy of

"operationalism" as noted by Williams who also points out the inadequacy of linguistic

symbols to capture the whole of empirical reality.[166] Thus, even in a qualitative

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[163] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 139.

[164] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 135.

[165] A. N. Williams, "The Logic of Genre," 681.

[166] A. N. Williams, "The Logic of Genre," 687.

approach, there will always be a surplus of experienced reality which cannot be wholly

encapsulated in theoretical constructs. Widick Schroeder equally points out the inherent

degree of vagueness between linguistic symbols and human experiential

consciousness.[167] The present study is therefore cognizant of the inadequacy of

conceptual constructs to capture the totality of religious experiences in general, and

Pentecostal-charismatic prophecy experiences in particular. In the final analysis, it will

be admitted that, in prophecy experiences and manifestations, "we know in part and we

prophesy in part … we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror" (1 Cor 12:9-12).

2.9 Data Collection and Analysis

This phase of the Van der Ven's cycle, as adapted for the present study, entails

data collection, preparation of data sets, and data analysis.

2.9.1 Data Collection

The data collection process begins with decisions concerning the target

population (the universe) as well as the specific research population (the sample), and the

methods of collecting data.[168] Data is the phenomena that are given to the senses or

consciousness or, as Bernard Lonergan puts it, "the data of sense and the data of

consciousness."[169] The primary data in the present study will be the linguistic symbols,

or words, that the research population uses to communicate their perceptions, feelings,

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[167] Widick Schroeder, "Measuring the Muse," 150.

[168] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology,* 280.

[169] Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 201. See also Hans- Gunter Heimbrock, "From Data to Theory," 280.

attitudes, beliefs, convictions or actions.[170] The target population, or the universe, and

hence the primary source of data for the study, is determined by the goal of the research.

Since the present study is about the Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon of prophecy,

the target population is members of the Pentecostal-charismatic movement in

congregational settings while the research population is a sample of congregations in a

particular Pentecostal-charismatic tradition.

Non-probabilistic sample of congregations will be obtained from one of the

Pentecostal-charismatic traditions in the selected African country. A probabilistic sample

implies that "every element of the population has a certain known chance or probability

of being included in the sample, and this probability is independent of the characteristics

that are significant for the study."[171] However, since the present study strategically

focuses on the elements of the population that are most characteristic in terms of

charismatic prophecy experiences and manifestations, the sample for the study will,

therefore, be non-probabilistic and will comprise multi-stage sampled primary and

secondary elements. The primary elements will be congregations sampled from the

selected Pentecostal-charismatic tradition, while the secondary elements will be

individuals sampled, for focus group and in-depth interviews, from the selected

congregations. These will be individuals who have, reportedly, experientially manifested

charismatic prophecy.

The actual data for the study will be gathered from multiple sources, including

documentary analysis, participant observation, field notes, focus group interviews and in-

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[170] See also Widick Schroeder, "Measuring the Muse," 149.

[171] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 140.

depth interviews. Documentary analysis will entail a critical examination of any primary documents produced by a congregation, such as written personal narratives, recorded prophetic utterances, or reflections on prophetic experiences, in order to obtain useful corroborative information to augment data from other sources. Participant observation is a special mode of data gathering in which the researcher is not merely an observer, but a participant within the real-life situation of the phenomenon under study. In the present study, the researcher will seek to participate in congregational worship gatherings and other congregational prayer or devotional meetings where prophetic manifestations are, reportedly, commonplace. Participant observation will thus afford the researcher an opportunity to perceive the reality of the phenomenon under investigation from the emic viewpoint of an insider and thereby gain some empathetic clarity of the linguistic symbols used by the participants in describing their experiences.

However, as already noted above, participant observation runs the risk of subjective bias in terms of emotional involvement of the observer. This is what Jaco Dreyer calls a methodological dilemma, or the dialectical tension between the need for an insider emic perspective in order to see the phenomenon from the research participants' point of view, and an outsider etic perspective in order to see the phenomenon from a critical standpoint.[172] Dreyer, nonetheless, points out the need to embrace the dialectical tension between the insider perspective and the outsider perspective:

> From the insider/engaged participant perspective the aim is to eliminate or reduce the researcher's ideological (subjective) interpretations by stressing the importance of the interpretations of the research participants (the researched).

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[172] Jaco Dreyer, "The Researcher: Engaged Participant or Detached Observer?," 11.

The researcher therefore has to immerse him/herself in the life world(s) of the researched (the moment of belonging) so that their voices (interpretations) are not muted by the researcher's interpretations. On the other hand, from the outsider/detached observer perspective the aim is to eliminate or to reduce the ideological interpretations ("false consciousness") of the researched and of the researcher him/herself (the self-distancing which is implied by distanciation). The researcher therefore cannot take the interpretations of the researched at face value, but has to take a critical (objectifying) stance (the moment of distanciation).[173]

The insider perspective gained from participant observation will thus be corroborated with, and counterbalanced by, an outsider perspective in terms of evidence form the other non- participatory data sources in order to counterbalance the insider perspective with a critical view.[174]

Interviews are conversational settings where key research participants will be interacted with in an open-ended manner, either as individuals in in-depth interviews or in focus group settings. In-depth interviews, in particular, will be designed to elicit, not only the facts of the phenomenon under study, but also the interviewees' opinions about, or interpretations of, the phenomenon. The challenge in an in-depth interview is, thus, to pursue a consistent line of inquiry but at the same time nurture a non-threatening and friendly atmosphere for authentic responses and, hence, authentic perceptions. Van der Ven notes that the emotional context of religion and the attendant possibility of respondents' resistance demand that the researcher "must not only have considerable organizational talent but also exhibit a great deal of social tact, circumspection and equanimity."[175]

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[173] Jaco Dreyer, "The Researcher: Engaged Participant or Detached Observer?," 13-14.

[174] See also Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research,* 111-113.

[175] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 142.

The assumption in administering the interview schedules is that the characteristics of the phenomenon under study can be obtained fairly accurately through discursive self-disclosure. Thus the researcher will count on the honesty and accuracy of the respondents or discussants. The interview schedules will comprise several questions, including both structured response categories and open-ended questions. While the open-ended questions elicit the respondents' own views and opinions expressed in their own intrinsic linguistic symbols and idioms, it is also reckoned that many respondents may not have clear and lucid views about the phenomenon under study. Therefore inclusion of structured response questions will help the respondents to formulate fairly articulate perceptions, views, and opinions.[176]

2.9.2 Preparation of the Data Sets

Preparation of qualitative data will entail collating data, immersion in the data, and coding in order to generate data categories and themes. In the collating process, the data will be organized into data sets which display such basic variables as dates of data collection, places or settings from which data was gathered, and the types of data. Immersion in the data will involve reading through the data several times in order to gain familiarity with the data. The sheer volume of data from participant observation, interviews, field notes and focus groups can be overwhelming. However, as Marshall and Rossman observe, "reading, re-reading and reading through the data once more forces the researcher to become intimately familiar with those data."[177] The resultant heightened

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[176] See also C. Marshall and G. B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research,* 125-26, and Widick Schroeder, "The Researcher as Engaged Participant", 149, n.3.

[177] C. Marshall and G. B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research,* 158.

awareness of the data from immersion will enable the researcher to note any anomalous data for further scrutiny. It will also enable the researcher to generate categories and themes. Marshall and Rossman note that the process of generating categories and themes involves "identifying salient themes, recurring ideas or language and patterns of belief."[178] Categories are characterized by internal convergence or internal consistency within each category, and external divergence or the quality of each category being distinct from others.[179]

The process of immersion into data sets in order to generate categories and themes will, in the exploratory case study, be an inductive-analytical approach whose goal will be to generate typologies which "reflect the understanding expressed by the participants."[180] However, in the explanatory case studies, the process will be a deductive- analytical approach which will result in typologies which, though grounded in the data, will be analytic typologies stipulated by the researcher beforehand in terms of theoretical constructs emerging from the exploratory case study and from the review of literature. Nonetheless, as M. Q. Patton notes, the researcher's before-hand analytic typologies run the risk of imposing "a world of meaning on the participants that better reflects the observer's world than the world under study."[181] The plausibility of such a risk will be obviated by verifying whether the 'beforehand' analytic typologies are closely corroborated by the empirical data.

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[178] C. Marshall and G. B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research,* 158.

[179] C. Marshall and G. B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research,* 158- 59.

[180] C. Marshall and G.B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research,* 159.

[181] M. Q. Patton, *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods* (3d ed.; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2002), 459-60. See also C. Marshall and G.B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 159.

Coding of data, though more common in quantitative approaches, is also applicable in qualitative research designs. It is a formal representation of analytic thinking whereby the researcher designs a coding scheme and assigns codes to the categories and themes emerging from the data set. G. B. Rossman and S. F. Rallis define coding as "the process of organizing the material into chunks or segments of text before bringing meaning to information."[182] Coding, in a qualitative approach, may take the form of non-valuating numbering, abbreviations of key words, or other forms which assign nomenclatures to the categories or themes emerging from the data sets. The coding process is more than a technical procedure; it is essentially part of analytic thinking, and the coding process may reveal new insights which necessitate re-classifications of the data.[183] The coding process in the present study will mainly entail non-valuating numbering and word concisions of participant expressions.

2.9.3 Data Analysis

The process of data analysis, according to Van der Ven's cycle, is a continuation of the process of preparation of the data sets.[184] The qualitative analytic process usually entails writing analytic memos which contain illuminating reflections and thoughts or unusual insights which crop up in the data analysis process. The process of analytic memo-writing, which augments creativity in the data analysis process, is an effort to make sense out of the texts of the data. As John Cresswell notes, the whole process of data analysis involves "continual reflection about data, asking analytic questions and

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[182] G. B. Rossman and S. F. Rallis, *Learning in the Field: An Introduction to Qualitative Research* (2d. ed., Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2003), 171.

[183] See also C. Marshall and G.B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research,* 161.

[184] See also Van der Ven, *Practical Theology,* 144-45.

writing memos."[185] Qualitative data analysis utilizes less structured analytical tools than quantitative data analytical approaches. Qualitative data analysis primarily requires classifying research participants and the variables which characterize them, identifying patterns and themes from the participants, and then attempting to understand and interpret the patterns and themes in relation to the research questions.[186]

M. Q. Patton describes this interpretive process as "attaching significance to what was found, making sense of the findings, offering explanations, drawing conclusions, extrapolating lessons, making inferences, considering meanings and otherwise imposing order."[187] Likewise, Marshall and Rossman observe that:

> As the researcher discovers categories and patterns in the data, she should engage in critically challenging the very patterns that seem so apparent. She should search for other plausible explanations for these data and the linkages among them. Alternative explanations exist, and the researcher must identify and describe them, and then demonstrate how the explanation she offers is the most plausible.[188]

An analytic technique that is often employed in case study data analysis, and which will be employed in the present study, is "pattern-matching logic."[189] The technique entails comparing the empirically derived patterns of data with predicted patterns in the conceptual research model to see the extent to which the predicted patterns explain the empirical reality. Low levels of matching precision call for alternative interpretations of the empirical reality, as well as critical reassessment of the empirical-conceptual model.

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[185] John W. Cresswell, *Research Design,* 184.

[186] John W. Cresswell, *Research Design,* 184,199.

[187] M. Q. Patton, *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods,* 480. See also C. Marshall and G. B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 162.

[188] C. Marshall and G.B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 162.

[189] Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research Design*, 136.

2.10 Evaluation

Evaluation is the final phase of Van der Ven's empirical cycle; it seeks to relate the results of the empirical analysis back to the research problem and goal and is thus a hermeneutical reflection on the connection between the empirical data and the ideas or theories that gave rise to the empirical enquiry.[190] Van der Ven notes that "empirical facts are meaningful only when they are placed within a hermeneutic context of theological concepts and theories and evaluated from within this context."[191] In other words, the concrete and specific data of empirical reality needs to be related to the theoretical concepts in order to give the latter contextual content.[192] Following Van der Ven's cycle, the present study's evaluation phase will comprise three moments: interpretation, reflection, and methodological reflection.

2.10.1 Interpretation and Reflection

There is a certain amount of overlap in Van der Ven's process cycle with regard to interpretation and reflection. For purposes of the present study, the processes of interpretation and reflection are combined together. In the interpretative process, the empirical-analytic results will be related to the postulates that are encapsulated in the empirical-biblical model in order to determine whether the postulates are validated or disconfirmed by the empirical-analytic results. The empirical-analytic results may shed light on the postulates and, dialectically, the postulates may clarify the empirical results.

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[190] See Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 152.

[191] See Johannes van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 153.

[192] See also Chris A.M. Hermans, "Epistemological Reflections on the Connection Between Ideas and Data in Empirical Research into Religion," in *Empirical Theology in Texts and Tables* (ed. L. J. Francis, M. Robbins and J. Astlet; Leiden: Brill, 2009), 81,82.

Reflection, which ensues from interpretation, is the process of deciphering "the meaning and relevance of the results" of the interpretation.[193]

As Van der Ven notes, the results of the interpretation are not an end in themselves; they need to be viewed in the context of the larger hermeneutical goal of the research. Thus whereas interpretation will relate empirical-analytic results to the postulates implicit in the empirical-biblical model, the reflection process will go further and investigate the relationship between the views or convictions that people cherish and their praxis as revealed by the empirical results. The process will then relate the cherished convictions and praxis to the wider Christian sense of scriptural tradition, both in diachronic and synchronic perspectives.[194] For this task, Clodovis Boff suggests a "correspondence of relations" model which interrogates the empirical-analytic results with questions of correspondence and, hence, relevance.[195] For purposes of the present study, the "correspondence of relations" model will be utilized to probe the correlation between the empirical-analytic results and Scripture, Church praxis in historical perspective, and other contemporary empirical models of charismatic prophecy.

Van der Ven augments Clodovis Boff's "correspondence of relations" model with a judicial-hermeneutical model informed by the view that "the process of finding truth in human sciences is similar to the way a judge arrives at a verdict in judicial

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[193] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 152.

[194] See also Van der Ven, "An Empirical or a Normative Approach?," 17.

[195] Clodovis Boff, *Theology and Praxis,* 146- 153. See also Van der Ven, "An Empirical or a Normative Approach?," 18.

procedure."[196] Van der Ven's judicial-hermeneutical model takes the results derived

through Boff's correspondence of relations approach, and then embarks on:

> [w]eighing the arguments for and against the respondents' convictions; weighing the advantages and disadvantages, effects and unintended side effects of the convictions; finally, arriving at an "attestatory" judgment, where "attestatory" implies that this is a valid, well considered- albeit fragile- judgment, based not on mathematical proof, but on rational insight; based not on a logical conclusion but on a reflective decision; not intended for all eternity but based on currently available data and insights, and that it will come up for review when new data or insights become available.[197]

Thus, in the final analysis, the outcome of the study will be an empirical-biblical

judgment that will be informed by empirical data and critical-judicious reflection and

will, hopefully, serve to illumine the research issue in its existential context.

2.10.2 Methodological Reflection

Methodological reflection concerns evaluation of the methodological

presumptions and their implications for the empirical-biblical research as a whole. The

evaluation process may reveal necessary modifications to the research methodology.

Such modifications are, indeed, positive outcomes of the study. As Van der Ven remarks,

methodological correctives "should be seen, not as scientific failure, but as a gain; like

all other sciences, theology develops only through negations and falsifications."[198] The

conceptual postulates and the attendant study designs will thus be subjected to review in

the methodological reflection process. Van der Ven notes that "the question which must

be asked over and over is whether the instruments actually measure what they are

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[196] Van der Ven, "An Empirical or a Normative Approach," 19.

[197] Van der Ven, "An Empirical or a Normative Approach," 19.

[198] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology,* 155.

intended to measure (validity) and whether they do so in a reliable manner (reliability)."[199] In the qualitative approach, the retrospective question will thus be whether the empirical-biblical model has satisfied the criteria of validity and reliability.

2.11 Summary

A summary of the empirical-biblical process paradigm adapted for the present study is diagrammatically summarized in the following figure:[200]

Figure 2.2:

I. **RESEARCH PROBLEM AND GOAL** →	II. **EMPIRICAL INDUCTION** ↔	III. **EMPIRICAL DEDUCTION** ↔	IV. **DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS** ↔	V. **EVALUATION** ←
1.Development of Problem ------------------ 2.Development of Goal	3.Perception -------------------- 4.Reflection -------------------- 5.Research Question --------------------- 6.Research Design	7.Conceptualization ------------------------ 8.Conceptual Model ------------------------ 9.Operationalization	10.Data collection -------------------- 11.Prep: Data sets ------------------- 12.Data Analysis	13/14.Biblical Interpretation and Reflection ---------------------- 15.Methodological Reflection

(Charismatic Prophecy: Empirical-Biblical Process Paradigm)

The cyclical nature of the empirical-biblical process paradigm is indicated by the iterative arrows (↔) which denote that each phase of the cycle loops back to the previous

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[199] Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 155.

[200] See also Van der Ven, *Practical Theology*, 156.

phases while, at the same time, it is linked to the next phases. For example, the empirical

induction phase loops back to the research problem definition in order to clarify the

definition in the light of the perceptions in the inductive-exploratory phase while, at the

same time, connecting to the next phase to conceptualize the perceptions gleaned in the

exploratory phase. Likewise the conceptualization phase loops back to the research

problem in order to conceptualize the problem while, at the same time, connecting to the

next phase to empirically evaluate the theoretical concepts. Equally, the empirical

deduction phase loops back to evaluate the conceptual understanding of the research

problem, the heuristic constructs arising from the empirical induction, and the empirical

conceptualization. The empirical evaluation is then subjected to critical review which

loops back to appraise not only the inductive, conceptual and deductive outcomes but

also the methodological process. However, an obvious drawback of the cyclical-looping

process is that, whereas it tries to synthesize the empirical process, there are inevitable

repetitions in the flow of the empirical study. In what follows, the next chapter presents

the results of the inductive-exploratory case study.

CHAPTER THREE

INDUCTIVE-EXPLORATORY CASE STUDY

3.1 Introduction

In order to gain an inductive understanding of the phenomenon of charismatic prophecy within the selected Pentecostal-charismatic congregational settings, it was decided to begin the empirical-biblical cycle with an exploratory case study. The purpose of the exploratory case study was to gauge the validity and reliability of the proposed methodology, aid in the development and clarification of the study questions, and gain some heuristic knowledge of charismatic prophecy in a Pentecostal-charismatic congregational setting. Thus the exploratory case study was part of the process of the study design in order to establish the construct validity in terms of whether the content of the study questions was relevant to the phenomenon under study, and reliability in terms of whether the process by which the study questions were to be applied was operationally precise with respect to the phenomenon under study.[201]

The exploratory case study also served the purpose of theory confirmation in terms of comparing the researcher's heuristic pre-understandings of the phenomenon of charismatic prophecy with the inductive knowledge emerging from the exploratory case study.[202] John. Creswell notes that "no qualitative study begins from pure observation … prior conceptual structures composed of theory and method provides the starting point

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[201] See Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research,* 40, 116. See also Richard A. Krueger on validity determination in terms of testing study questions in order to ensure that they are understandable and that they elicit relevant responses. Idem, *Analyzing and Reporting Focus Group Results* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 1998), 68.

[202] See Edward F. Fern, *Advanced Focus Group Research* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2001), 8.

for all observations."[203] The heuristic pre-understandings of the researcher, as modified

or adjusted on the basis of the exploratory case study data and on the basis of literature

review, were then developed into broad theoretical constructs that were subsequently

deductively evaluated through explanatory case studies. This process is consistent with

Rossman and Rallis' observation that qualitative research process is emergent, rather

than tightly prefigured, and that it moves dialectically between induction and

deduction.[204]

3.2 The Case Study Method

The exploratory case study approach employed in the present study is an

adaptation of Robert Yin's case study method. The preference for the case study

approach is informed by Robert Yin's observation that "you would use the case study

method because you wanted to understand real-life phenomenon in depth, but such an

understanding encompassed important contextual conditions- because they were highly

pertinent to your phenomenon of study."[205] As already observed in the previous chapter,

congregational settings are not only germane to charismatic prophecy manifestations but

are, indeed, the contextual condition for the manifestation. Eugene Boring, following

Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, notes that "within the community of faith, prophecy was a

function of the community gathered for worship. Early Christian prophecy was liturgical

prophecy; prophecy functioned in a public communal setting rather than in a private

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[203] John. W. Cresswell, *Research Design*, 64.

[204] G. B. Rossman and S. F. Rallis, *Learning in the Field,* 8-10.

[205] Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research*, 18. See also M. J. Cartledge, *Charismatic Glossolalia,* 29.

individual setting."[206] This observation is also noted by Mark Cartledge who states that worship and prayer gatherings provide the context in which prophetic experiences are manifested.[207]

Three methodological assumptions were implicit in the exploratory case study approach. First, it was a holistic focus on the whole of the phenomenon rather than an aggregation of its component dimensions. Thus the aim was to understand the phenomenon in its entirety instead of a focus on narrowly defined variables of the phenomenon. Consequently, the study questions were designed to elicit holistic perceptions of charismatic prophecy rather than analytical descriptions. Second, the approach was inductive; it began with specific observations, both direct participant observation and indirect observation from interviewees' responses. Subsequently, the process moved to development of general patterns of perception that emerged from the observations. Hence there was hardly any imposition of organizing structure on the case study process, nor were prior assumptions about interrelationships of phenomenal behavior imposed on expected observations prior to the actual observation. The goal was to use focus group interviews and extended in-depth conversations as sources of data through reflective listening, observing and forming empathic resonance with interviewees, while remaining watchful for themes that emerged out of the conversations. Third, the case study environment was made as natural as possible; the aim was to understand charismatic prophecy in its naturally occurring setting. The

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[206] M. Eugene Boring, *The Continuing Voice of Jesus: Christian Prophecy and the Gospel Tradition* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1991), 108, and Elizabeth S. Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins* (New York: Crossroad, 1983), 300.

[207] M. J. Cartledge, *Practical Theology: Charismatic and Empirical Perspectives* (Carlisle, U.K.: Paternoster, 2003), 157.

acceptance of the researcher by the congregation as an insider, by virtue of previous

acquaintance with the congregation and also their perception of a shared faith with the

researcher, enhanced the naturalistic setting of the case study environment.[208]

Although the insider perception may be open to charges of subjectivity, social

science research on religion has shown that an "outsider" perception leads to relatively

longer periods of trust-building. Moreover, responses from interviewees tend to be

guarded and tendentiously doctrinaire, whereas an "insider" perception engenders a high

degree of openness and interview responses tend to be unguarded naïve descriptions of

the phenomenon under study. This observation comports with a countervailing trend in

qualitative research that is challenging the epistemological and philosophical foundations

of positivistic objectivity.[209] The qualitative researcher is increasingly viewed as an

important source of data through his or her reflective observation of the phenomenon

under study.[210]

The above observation is underscored by Mark Cartledge who notes that the

researcher acts as a "researcher-participant" who "takes part in a social setting while at

the same time engaging in positive social interaction … the researcher as 'participant' is

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[208] See also M. Q. Patton, *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods,* 25- 31, for an explication of fundamental assumptions in a qualitative case study approach.

[209] See, for example, Heather Kavan, "Glossolalia and Altered States of Consciousness in Two New Zealand Religious Movements," *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 19 (2004):171-184 (176-177). See also Alison J. H. Leech, who observes that the approach of the researcher immersing himself or herself in the phenomena under study "acknowledges the subjective nature of all experience and helps people to become aware and set aside their particular subjective stances; it recognizes that neutrality is impossible." Idem, "Another Look at a Phenomenology of Religious Education," in *Religiouspadagogic und Phanomenologie* (ed. Hans-Gunter; Weinheim: Heimbrock, 1998), 94.

[210] Leading proponents of the countervailing view include N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln, *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 1998), and M. Q. Patton, *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods(* 3d. ed., Thousand Oaks*,* Calif.: Sage, 2002).

involved in a situation already, but takes time to step back and analyze what is happening from a research perspective."[211] Nonetheless, the scientific validity of the case study was secured through the use of systematic procedures of data collection, processing, and analysis. Thus a trail of evidence that makes explicit the linkages between questions asked, data collected, data analysis, and conclusions drawn there from, was established through the use of field notes and electronic recordings to capture the entirety of questions, the responses, and conversations. These were then reviewed and used in the analysis process. The process of debriefing of participants and the identification of emerging patterns and themes, followed by a comparative analysis of results of the various focus groups, under-girded the entire empirical process with scientific rigor.

3.3 The Case Study Setting

The congregations for the case studies were chosen on the basis of strategic and practical considerations, including a reported prevalence of charismatic prophecy manifestations in the congregations, prior acquaintance of the researcher with the church leadership and congregations, ease of access to the church locations, and the perception, by the church leadership and congregations, of the researcher as an insider, or as 'one of their own,' in terms of faith and Pentecostal-charismatic experiences of the *charisms* of the Holy Spirit.[212] In addition to church attendance, the researcher had access to church documentary resources including electronic recordings of church worship gatherings,

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[211] M. J. Cartledge, *Practical Theology*, 71.

[212] Edward Fern, following Richard Krueger, notes that researchers who moderate focus groups in experiential research should, ideally, "share similar life experiences with their respondents." Edward F. Fern, *Advanced Focus Group Research,* 187, and Richard A. Krueger, *Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research* (Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage, 1988), 22-25.

church bulletins, as well as the pastorate library of books and a repertoire of electronic-sermonic materials.

The congregation selected for the exploratory case study was part of a denominational network of over five hundred Pentecostal-charismatic congregations spread all over East Africa. The denomination is one of the emergent independent African initiated Pentecostal-charismatic churches in Kenya. Most of the African initiated churches are either conversions of foreign missionary churches into locally constituted churches through the initiative of local leaders, or outright breakaways from foreign missionary denominations, or African initiatives inspired by foreign missionary denominations or traveling evangelists. Either way, the emerging 'African Initiated Churches,' which are usually identified by the acronym 'AICs' are, in effect, African initiatives in Christianity. Thus the common feature of the various referents of the acronym 'AIC,' such as 'African Independent Churches,' 'African Initiatives in Christianity,' or 'African Instituted Churches,' is that they are Christian initiatives by Africans.[213]

Although in the past scholars have attempted to draw distinctions between traditional or native African Instituted Churches, or "spiritual churches," and the more recent movement of independent African initiated Pentecostal-charismatic churches, the influence of the latter on the former has been so overwhelming that the distinctions between the two are increasingly getting blurred.[214] Harold Turner's definition of an AIC

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[213] See also John S. Pobee and Gabriel Ositelu, *African Initiatives in Christianity: The Growth, Gifts, and Diversities of Indigenous African Churches: A Challenge to the Ecumenical Movement* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1996), 3-4.

[214] See Paul Gifford, *African Christianity: Its Public Role,* 306, Klaus Hock, "Jesus Power-Super Power: The Interaction Between Christian Fundamentalism and New Religious Movements in Africa,"

as "a church which has been founded in Africa, by Africans and primarily for

Africans,"[215] is no longer an apt description of the emerging African initiatives in

Pentecostal-charismatic churches; many of them have close collaborations with foreign

churches, foreign missionaries and traveling evangelists. The distinguishing mark of the

African initiatives in Christianity is, in the words of Inus Daneel, "their interpretation of

the Bible, distinctive forms of worship, and modified rites (which) are part of an

authentic indigenous response to the Gospel, an independent momentum free of

European supervision, and of the radical spirit which would have characterized a real

reaction to mission."[216] However, as Philomena Mwaura observes, the African initiated

charismatic or neo-Pentecostal churches, which are increasingly forming linkages with

the global Pentecostal-charismatic movement, are tendentiously aligning themselves with

modernity and "in their quest for modernity, they have tended to adopt Western

technology; this increases the force of externality in African Christianity."[217]

3.4 The Redeemed Gospel Church

The denomination which is the subject of the present case studies, the

Redeemed Gospel Church Inc. (RGC), is a typical African Christian initiative which

emerged in the early 1970s in Kenya, East Africa, as a breakaway from a foreign

missionary church, the Pentecostal Evangelistic Fellowship of Africa (PEFA). The latter

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Mission Studies 12 (1995): 56-70 (56), and Ogbu U. Kalu, "Estranged Bedfellows: The Demonization of the Aladura in African Pentecostal Rhetoric," *Missionalia* 28 (2000):121-142 (121).

[215] Harold W. Turner, "A Typology of African Religious Movements," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 1 (1967):12-25 (17). See also J.S. Pobee and G. Ositelu, *African Initiatives in Christianity*, 4.

[216] Inus Daneel, *Quest for Belonging* (Gweru, Zimbabwe: Mambo Press, 1987), 22.

[217] Philomena N. Mwaura, "Gendered Appropriation of Mass Media in Kenyan Christianities," 276. See also Antony Giddens, *Runaway World: How Globalization is Reshaping Our Lives* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 15-25.

was established in East Africa in the late 1940s by the Elim Fellowship of Lima, New York, USA.[218] Although literature on the RGC is scanty, the researcher is familiar with the origins and development of RGC, and the following historical account includes personal recollections of the researcher.

The RGC is one of the fastest growing independent Pentecostal-charismatic churches in Kenya, with over 500 congregations spread all over East Africa and hosting some of the largest mega-church congregations in East Africa. Founded in 1974 by a charismatic personality, Bishop Arthur Kitonga, the breakaway church mobilized young people, with its modern electric musical instruments and contemporary Christian music rendered in African tunes and rhythms, into mass evangelistic crusades all over the country. The apparent success of the initial RGC evangelistic crusades (in terms of mass conversions and, reportedly, attendant miraculous healings, exorcisms of demonic spirits, and prophetic utterances), attracted the attention of Western Pentecostal-charismatic evangelists, such as Reinhart Bonnke, Morris Cerullo, T. L. Osborn, Rex Humbard, among other, who teamed up with the RGC in their evangelistic thrust and thus popularized the RGC nationwide and beyond.

The researcher recollects attending some of the evangelistic crusades in Kenya in the mid- 1970s and can attest to the overwhelming appeal that the "miraculous" evangelistic crusades had on the masses in Kenya, particularly the youth.

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[218] See Afe Adogame, who also notes the prominence of Redeemed Gospel Church Inc. as an African initiative in Pentecostal Christianity; he states, "Independent Pentecostal Churches founded and led by Kenyans include Redeemed Gospel Church, founded by Arthur Kitonga." Idem, "Africa, East," in *Encyclopedia of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity* (ed. Stanley M. Burgess; New York: Routledge, 2006), 3.

Excerpts of the Redeemed Gospel Church mission statement, as posted on the
denomination's website, read as follows:

> Redeemed Gospel Church started way back in 1974 when Bishop Arthur Kitonga
> with a seven-man team of committed and dedicated Christians answered God's
> call and took the courage to step forward to evangelize the underprivileged …
> Redeemed Gospel Church was born as an independent Pentecostal Church which
> has adopted evangelism, blended with social concern, as a holistic approach for
> the total man- body, soul and spirit- to meet the needs of the slum community ...
> The purpose of the social initiative was to express God's love and address the
> physical needs of the poor people in the community, especially women and
> children … RGC believes in holistic deliverance and development of the person's
> body, soul and mind. [219]

The founder of the Redeemed Gospel Church Inc., Bishop Arthur Kitonga, narrates his
"breakaway" call as follows:

> It was around that time that God gave me a vision to feed the poor, and to educate
> the poor children. We embarked on the program. We also started projects to train
> the poor in skills that would make them self-supportive. The holistic Gospel
> requires that you reach out to assist those who are in need of food, clothing,
> shelter, education, and some means to earn income … The purpose of the
> initiative was to express God's love and address the physical needs of the poor
> people in the community, especially women and children. RGC believes in
> holistic approach to development; hence its involvement in both pastoral and
> development work.[220]

However, the defining feature of Redeemed Gospel Church is not the social welfare
program, although it is a prominent activity of the Church; rather, it is the charismatic
nature of its congregations and the reportedly pronounced manifestations of the Holy
Spirit *charisms* in their congregational worship gatherings. The charismatic character of
the Redeemed Gospel Church is signaled in the founder's ministry call narrative which
reads, in part, as follows:

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[219] "Taking a Different Path," n.p. Online: http://www.redeemedgospel.org. Cited 29th October 2010.

[220] "Taking a Different Path," n.p. Online: http://www.redeemedgospel.org. Cited 29th October 2010.

In 1964 I heard a clear call from God to preach the Gospel. … While I was still preaching, the power of God came down, people were filled with the Holy Spirit; they started speaking in new tongues and miracles started taking place. The sick were instantly healed. Deliverance took place that had not been witnessed in the church before.[221]

The Redeemed Gospel Church is now part of the Kenyan Pentecostal-charismatic evangelicalism which has also attracted the attention of the secular media. In a recent article in the Kenyan main newspaper, *Daily Nation*, titled "Evangelical Churches Shake up the Social Order in Africa," the writer observes that:

The fire of Pentecostal Evangelicalism is burning through the continent, scorching "sins" and shaking the religio-political status quo to its very foundation. Meanwhile traditional churches are watching helplessly as their members defect *en masse* to the Pentecostal churches … A 10-nation survey by US- based Pew Forum indicated that Kenya was the most evangelical African nation with 56 per cent of its Christians being born-again, beating the more populous South Africa and Nigeria at 34 and 26 per cent, respectively. The concept of being "born-again" used to be very unpopular with the working class but these new Pentecostal movements and mega-churches have glamourized it by recruiting young urban professionals, students, and high ranking Government officials through emotional messages and Christianization of secular music genres such as rock, hip-hop and reggae that are popular with the youth.[222]

Because of its close association with the Western evangelists since its inception, and the involvement of international charity organizations in its social welfare programs, such the World Vision among others, the RGC exhibits both local and Western features in its church polity, doctrine and congregational liturgy. It is truly, in the words of S. Hoover, an extension of the "American electronic church."[223] The RGC has continued to grow

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[221] "Bishop Kitonga," n.p. Online: http://www.munishi.com/kitonga.html. Cited 29th October 2010.

[222] Samora Mwaura, "Evangelical Churches Shake up the Social Order in Africa," in *Daily Nation, Kenya*. Friday October 30, 2009. See also Robert Nicklesberg, "Spirit and Power: A 10-Country Survey of Pentecostals," *The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life* (Oct. 2006). Online: http://www.pewforum.org?christian/Evangelical- Protestant- churches/spirit-and-power.aspx. Cited September 15, 2010.

[223] S. Hoover, *Mass Media Religion*, 24.

phenomenally both nationally and internationally under the steady leadership of the founding Bishop, Arthur Kitonga, and has recently established branch churches in South Africa, USA and U.K.

3.5 Participant Observation

The congregations of the RGC which were selected for the exploratory and explanatory case studies, respectively, are each located in different cities in Kenya, and are all reportedly renown for their pronounced manifestations of the *charisms* of the Holy Spirit, including glossolalic and prophetic utterances, 'miraculous' healings, and deliverances from 'demonic' oppressions. The process of conducting the exploratory case study, which was carried out strictly in accordance with the University of Birmingham-approved Ethical Review (a copy of which is enclosed at Appendix1), began with an informal attendance at church worship gatherings of the selected congregation. Initially the congregation pastor was requested not to announce the researcher's presence or intention. The purpose of the request was to ensure that participants were not conscious of being under observation, and hence to secure a natural observational setting.

The researcher attended every Sunday Morning and every Sunday Evening worship gatherings, every Wednesday Evening prayer meeting, and every Friday "Watchnight" service, an overnight prayer meeting held every Friday night in the church and popularly known in the Kiswahili language as *Kesha,* for a period of four weeks in July-August 2010. [224] Thus sixteen visits were made to live congregational worship

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[224] The congregation comprised, mainly, English-speaking working class urbanites. All the services, including the Weekday and the Friday overnight prayer meetings, were conducted in English with Swahili

settings over the four-week period. With the permission of the Senior Pastor, electronic

recordings were made of every prophetic utterance in the church gatherings. After a

relatively short period of time, the researcher had learnt when to expect prophetic

utterances and other manifestations of the *charisms* of the Holy Spirit in the course of a

congregational worship gathering.

All worship meetings, including the weekday meetings, began with enthusiastic

prayer and singing, with an accompaniment of musical instruments, notably electronic

keyboards, electric guitars, drums, and other African musical paraphernalia. The musical

orchestration was usually led by a "worship leadership team" which appeared to

comprise a few charismatic rhythmic vocalists who, intermittently, uttered exhortatory

locutions urging the congregation to worship "in tongues" and thus to "open up to the

presence of the Spirit" and to "expect the unexpected," often uttered in Kiswahili as

chochote chaweza tokea, "the unexpected can happen." Some songs which were

repeatedly and exultantly rendered, both in English and in Swahili, such as:

> Let the glory of the Lord come down, Amen,
> Let the glory of the Lord come down,
> Let the glory of the Lord from heaven come down,
> Let the glory of the Lord come down,

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interpolations every now and then. English is the official language of the country while Kiswahili is the inter-ethnic *lingua franca* spoken all over East Africa. An apt description of a typical Pentecostal-charismatic "worship" gathering is given by M. J. Cartledge, who, following Daniel E. Albrecht, notes that "worship includes a variety of components: singing, praying, the reading of Scripture and preaching, as well as alter calls or ministry times when people are prayed over for the work of the Holy Spirit to begin or increase in new or deeper ways." Idem, *Encountering the Spirit: The Charismatic Tradition* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2006), 51, and Daniel E. Albrecht, "An Anatomy of Worship: A Pentecostal Analysis," in *The Spirit and Spirituality: Essays in Honor of Russell P. Spittler* (ed. Wonsuk Ma and R. P. Menzies; London: T&T Clark, 2004),70-82.

or

Anointing fall on me,

 Let the power of the Holy Ghost fall on me,

Anointing fall on me,

appeared to catalyze the worship sessions into climactic moments of manifestations of

the *charisms* of the Holy Spirit. As the singing, clapping of hands, and dancing reached a

climactic crescendo, the worship leadership team would lead the congregation into

singing and praying in glossolalia; the scenario turned into what may be dialectically

described as a cacophonous ensemble of glossolalia, or what the Senior Pastor, in an

interview, described as the moment when "heaven comes down."

The climactic atmosphere was, in one sense, eerie and unsettling but, in another

sense, resplendently transcendent as the congregants appeared to transcend themselves

and enter into a 'heavenly' atmosphere. It was in this atmosphere of apparent self-

transcendence that some congregants would jerk and fall down, while others would let

out what sounded like weird shrieks. The latter attracted the attention of the pastoral

team who immediately swung into action to 'cast out demons' from the 'shrieking'

congregants. Other congregants would shout that they had been healed and/or set free

from "demonic oppression." As the atmosphere appeared to calm down, there would be

sudden irruptions of glossolalic utterances that sounded distinctively invasive.

Sometimes there were two or more simultaneous glossolalic utterance onsets but

one would usually prevail over and silence the others. At other times the pastor would

order that only one person should speak and that the others should wait for their turn.

The glossolalic utterances were usually followed, after a brief interlude of silence, by an

interpretive prophetic utterance, either by the glossolalic speaker or by someone else in

the congregation. There were also direct invasive prophetic utterances that were not

interpretations of glossolalic utterances. Each prophetic utterance was usually received

with a thunderous applause and shouts of "hallelujah," "amen," or "thank you Jesus."

3.6 Focus Groups

After the four-week period of participant observation, it was decided to

constitute focus groups as the principal data-gathering strategy of the case study

approach. The choice of the focus group strategy is informed by the now widely-

accepted idea that focus groups provide a way of generating data relatively quickly from

a large number of participants and in naturalistic settings.[225] Thus the focus group

strategy is increasingly gaining popularity, in social sciences research, as an effective

method for generating qualitative data, either as a stand-alone method or as an adjunct of

other research strategies. Sue Wilkinson observes that the focus group strategy "involves

engaging a small number of people in an informal group discussion (or discussions),

'focused' around a particular topic or set of issues," based on a series of questions, or

focus group schedule, with the researcher usually acting as the group moderator to

facilitate the discussion. [226]

An invitation was sent to twenty-four (24) adults (aged 18 and above) who had

been sampled from the church membership registers, in conjunction with the Senior

Pastor, on the basis of a stratified selection criteria which was representative in terms of

gender, age cohort, level of education, profession, marital status, and social class. A

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[225] See, for example, D. W. Stewart and P. N. Shamdasani, *Focus Groups: Theory and Practice* (London: Sage, 1990), 16, and C. Marshall and G. B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research,* 114-115.

[226] Sue Wilkinson, "Focus Group Methodology: A Review," *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 1 (1998):181-203(187).

sample of the invitation letter is enclosed as Appendix 2. However, since the research

interest was a specific population group whose common characteristic was

manifestations of charismatic prophecy utterances, the sampling procedure was strategic

with respect to the shared experience. Thus the Senior Pastor was instrumental in the

identification of congregants who often exercised the *charism* of prophetic utterances in

congregational settings, and therefore only congregants who were identified by the

pastor as commonly exercised in prophetic utterances were included in the sample,

subject to gender, age cohort, education, profession, marital status, and social class

representativeness. However, the identification process was carried out in conjunction

with the researcher who asked probing questions regarding each selection in order to

obviate any adverse situation of the pastor's gate-keeping role being used to select his

favorite members only.

Following the invitation, there were twenty three (23) positive responses,

comprising twelve (12) males and eleven (11) females. The researcher met with all the

respondents and agreed on a meeting schedule that was convenient to all. The

participants were divided into four focus groups: three groups comprising six participants

each and one group of five participants.[227] It was felt, in consultation with the pastor, that

there would be more group cohesion and self-disclosure if each focus group comprised

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[227] Although focus group sizes have traditionally been at least ten participants per group, there is now general consensus among focus group researchers that such large group sizes not only restrict the amount of input from each participant but also present difficulties in moderating large groups. As Edward F. Fern remarks, "there are fewer opportunities for participants to speak in large groups than in small groups; reticent group members may be likely to hide in the crowd and withhold their participation in the discussion." Idem, *Advanced Focus Group Research*, 11. See also Sue Wilkinson, "Focus Group Methodology," 187-192, and C. Marshall and G. B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 114-115. A focus group size of between four- to- eight participants is increasingly being viewed as a more appropriate size, depending on the research interest. See also Richard A. Krueger, *Analyzing and Reporting Focus Group Results,* 17-18.

participants of common age cohort, education, and social class. The focus group interviews for the exploratory case study were conducted in August 2010. Each focus group session began, at the participants' request, with prayer and a brief time of 'worship' led by a volunteering participant. As one participant put it, "we never transact any business here without prayer." Each focus group participant was given copies of Participant Information Sheet (Appendix 3) and Consent Form for Focus Group Participation (Appendix 4). After going through the content of the Information Sheet and the Consent Form, the participants were then invited to sign the Consent Form and also to complete the Participant Background Information Questionnaire (Appendix 5). The participants' background information summary is enclosed at Appendix 6.

The researcher, equipped with an electronic audio recording device and a field notebook, and accompanied by a research assistant who aided in taking field notes and recording the conversations, began each focus group discussion by asking the participants to describe their experiences of giving prophecy in a congregational setting. Since this was an inductive-exploratory case study, the discussion questions were strategically unstructured and framed in broad terms in order to accord participants the liberty to express the meaning of their experiences as freely as possible. The participants were generally very enthusiastic in narrating their experiences and the researcher had a hard time trying to limit the time taken by each participant's narrative. Apparently the grouping of the participants in terms of common age cohort, education, and social class, together with the cohesive atmosphere engendered by the commencing 'prayer and worship,' enthused all participants with the necessary freedom for self-disclosure in narrating their prophetic experiences.

The next phase of the focus group discussions centered on the impact of charismatic prophecy on individual congregants, their church and their communities. The researcher listened carefully to the tones of the conversations, observed the visual expressions of the participants and tried to establish an empathetic gestural rapport with the participants in an effort to get beneath the descriptions of their experiences into their perceptual world. In the course of the discussions, the researcher interjected, time and again, with points of clarifications and in order to steer the discussions on course, but without appearing to impose any organizing structure or to delimit the latitude of the responses.

At the end of each focus group discussion, participants were given an opportunity to summarize their thoughts and feelings. The aim of the summarization segment of the focus group session, which Richard Krueger refers to as "participant verification," was to ensure that the researcher had adequately understood the expressions and intents of the participants.[228] Many of the participants felt that their prophetic experiences had been validated by virtue of being selected to participate in the study. In addition to the participant verification at the end of each focus group session, there was also a final debriefing session at which all the focus group participants, as well as the pastors and church elders, were invited. At the debriefing session, a presentation of a synopsis of the research process and outcome highlights was made by the researcher. The pastors and church elders in attendance, as well as the focus group participants, were encouraged to give their observations and opinions. The debriefing session was

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[228] Richard A. Krueger, *Analyzing and Reporting Focus Group Results*, 11.

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electronically recorded and factored in the final analysis and reporting of the exploratory case study results.

3.7 Analysis

The analysis process is a description of the data generated from the congregational observations and the focus group discussions. The data for the exploratory case study comprised electronic recordings, field notes, and the participants' questionnaire information. The purpose of the analysis was to provide summary statements of the data and the focus was on the emerging themes. The approach adopted for the analysis of the exploratory case study data is a tape-based analysis of the audio recordings in conjunction with impressions gained from the field notes and the self-documenting artifacts of the church. A tape-based analysis, rather than a full transcript-based analysis, is usually deemed adequate for an exploratory observation and focus group study where the analysis is done by the same person who carries out the participant observation and moderation of the focus groups.[229] Thus, instead of a full transcript-based analysis which entails transcribing all the tape recordings, a tape-based or abridged transcript analysis entails a careful listening to all the tape recordings in order to prepare an abridged transcript which contains only those responses which are germane to the phenomenon under study.

Whereas a full transcript-based analysis aims to capture every word in the focus group discussions, and hence focuses on words and their frequency of usage as the units of analysis, the abridged transcript-based analysis focuses on themes or content clauses,

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[229] See, for example, Richard A. Krueger, *Analyzing and Reporting Focus Group Results*, 45.

and their extensiveness, as the units of analysis. Thus words are considered to have significance only in their thematic-syntactic context, hence the need to ground the analysis on thematic content rather than simply on frequency of word usage.[230] As Pol Vandevelde observes, the interpreter "is more a parameter than an agent."[231] Although there has been an increasing application of computer software in content analysis of focus group narratives, a number of researchers have cautioned against the over reliance on the manifest content represented by frequencies of words and thus miss out the latent thematic content.[232] Robert Yin also cautions that, even with software usage in qualitative studies, " you cannot use software outputs themselves as if they were the end of your analysis … developing a rich and full explanation, or even a good description of your case … will require much post-computer thinking and analysis on your part."[233] Therefore a thematic data analysis aims to be contextual, thereby grounding the interpretation in the situational context of the phenomenon under study and in the participants' emic view of the phenomenon. As such, "data are generally presented as

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[230] See, for example, Carl W. Roberts, "Other than Counting Words: A Linguistic Approach to Content Analysis," *Social Forces* 69 (1989): 147-177 (148). Although Carl Roberts cautions against gleaning impressions from a mass of transcripts without serious specification of the method of coding in a participant observation study, he nonetheless concedes that "in qualitative analyses, the assignment of codes to content depends on the coder's subjective impressions of the latent contextual meaning of words." Idem, "Other Than Counting Words," 147

[231] Pol Vandevelde, *The Task of the Interpreter: Text, Meaning and Negotiation* (Pittsburg: University of Pittsburg Press, 2005), 15.

[232] See Carl W. Roberts, "Other Than Counting Words," 148- 149, and Eric Woodrum, "Mainstreaming Content Analysis in Social Science: Methodological Advantages, Obstacles, and Solutions," *Social Science Research* 13 (1984):1-19.

[233] Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Method,* 128. Also E. A. Weitzman, while acknowledging the value of computer software for qualitative data marshaling, retrieval and classification, nonetheless cautions that the software "cannot do the analysis for you." Idem, "Software and Qualitative Research," in The *Handbook for Qualitative Research* (3d. ed., ed. N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2005), 806.

accounts of social phenomena or social practices substantiated by means of extensive illustrative quotations from the focus group discussion."[234]

The specific abridged transcript analysis approach adopted for the exploratory case study is the narrative method in which focus group participants' responses are presented in the form of paraphrased brief narratives. This is a chronological summary of the main points of the responses presented and numbered in the order in which they are transcribed.[235] The paraphrased narrative approach is, moreover, necessitated by the observation that the participants in the present study tended to tell their story, rather than give direct responses to the discussion questions. Thus the discussion questions were viewed, by the respondents, as invitations to share their 'testimony' or experience narrative. As Andrew Singleton remarks, "the considerable length of the stories makes it impractical to include a complete word- for- word transcript of each story."[236] Catherine Faver also notes that "narrative analysis does not assume a direct correspondence between lived experience and oral or written accounts of experience."[237] Rather, all

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[234] Sue Wilkinson, *Focus Group Research*, 183. See also Carl Roberts who argues that a subjective-perceptual thematic analysis of data "is more powerful than computer-aided content analysis because coders record relations among words and thus words' linguistic contexts are less likely to be ignored." Idem, "Other Than Counting Words," 148. See also Kent Lindkvist, "Approaches to Text Analysis," in *Advances in Content Analysis* (ed. K.E. Rosengren; Los Angeles: Sage, 1981), 23- 41. C. Marshall and G. B. Rossman also argue that the context of words in a focus group discussion is essential to understanding the participants' perceptions. Idem, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 115.

[235] For a discussion of the narrative method, see Livia Polanyi, *Telling the American Story: A Structural and Cultural Analysis of Conversational Storytelling* (Norwood, N.J.: Ablex Publishing, 1985), 8- 24, Andrew Singleton, "Your Faith Has Made You Well: The Role of Storytelling in the Experience of Miraculous Healings," *Review of Religious Research 43* (2001):121-138, and Sue Wilkinson, "Focus Group Methodology: A Review," *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 1 (1998): 181-203.

[236] Andrew Singleton, *"Your Faith Has Made You Well,"* 124.

[237] Catherine A. Faver, "To Run and Not Be Weary: Spirituality and Women Activism," *Review of Religious Research* 42 (2000): 61-78(67). See also Catherine K. Riesman, *Narrative Analysis* (Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage, 1993), 5-17, for a detailed discussion of an impressionistic interpretation of experiences.

narratives are assumed to be representations of experiences which have to be judiciously interpreted from the source narratives.

The procedure followed in the abridged transcript analysis is a heuristic engagement with the transcript text, "searching for segments of text to generate and illustrate categories of meaning."[238] Whereas the abridged transcript narrative analysis might be viewed as reductionist subjectivity, it is, nonetheless, reckoned that all qualitative data analysis, by definition, entails some measure of reduction as large masses of data are condensed into manageable categories and emergent themes are interpretively drawn out.[239] The abridged transcript narrative analysis procedure therefore entailed prolonged and repeated engagement with the tape recordings and field notes in order to identify the salient categories of perceptions as expressed by the focus group participants and as observed by the researcher. Thus the paraphrased narratives, or statements, represent the outcome of the prolonged engagement with the data from the four exploratory case study focus groups.

Although each statement is either a verbatim transcription or a paraphrased rendering of a response, each statement included in the analysis report is typical of several similar expressions. The degree of extensiveness of each typical statement is given in parenthesis at the end of the statement. Thus the code "SI" indicates the chronological listing of the inductive case study responses, while the code "R" indicates

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[238] C. Marshall and G.B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 155.

[239] See C. Marshall and G. B. Rossman who note that "each phase of data analysis entails data reduction … raw data has no inherent meaning; the interpretive act brings meaning to those data." Idem, *Designing Qualitative Research,* 156-57. See also M. Q. Patton who remarks that qualitative data analysis interpretively-reductively transforms raw data into findings. Idem, *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods,* 432.

the extensiveness, or the number of respondents who uttered the statement or supported it.[240] The preference for extensiveness, rather than frequency, is informed by the observation that whereas frequency indicates the number of times that a word or phrase occurs irrespective of whether it was uttered repeatedly by the same respondent or by several respondents, extensiveness indicates the number of respondents who expressed the same view. Thus the degree of extensiveness indicates the number of respondents who share the same perceptual experience.[241] The paraphrased narratives of the typical responses from the focus group discussions are annexed as Appendix 7.

3.8 Findings and Discussion

The discussion of the exploratory case study analyzed data is largely an inductive process which draws inferences from the analyzed data in terms of emerging themes that, in turn, give rise to theoretical constructs grounded in the exploratory case study data.[242] From the respondents' perceptions, the most common perceptual experiences of charismatic prophecy, in order of extensiveness, are summarized as follows:

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[240] Although the aspect of several respondents supporting a statement made by a seemingly domineering participant can have the negative effect of "identification," or opinion formation, by simply adopting the positions taken by highly persuasive or attractive individuals, the researcher countered the problem of 'identification' by ensuring that each 'supporting' respondent substantiated his or her supportive stance with reason and/or personal experience. For a discussion on the problem of "identification" and how to counter it, see Edward F. Fern, *Advanced Focus Group Research*, 229. See also T. L. Albrecht, G. M. Johnson, and J. B. Walther, "Understanding Communication Processes in Focus Groups," in *Successful Focus Groups: Advancing the State of the Art* (ed. D.L. Morgan; Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage, 1993), 51- 64, J. Kitzinger, "The Methodology of Focus Groups: The Importance of Interaction Between Research Participants," *Sociology of Health and Illness* 16 (1995):103-121, and Richard A. Krueger, *Analyzing and Reporting Focus Group Results,* 36, on the evaluation of extensiveness of responses in a focus group study.

[241] See also Richard A. Krueger, *Analyzing and Reporting Focus Group Results*, 36.

[242] See also C. Moustakas, *Phenomenological Research Methods* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 1994), 122- 127, and G. Gigerenzer, "From Tools to Theory: A Heuristic Discovery in Cognitive Psychology," *Psychological Review* 98 (1991): 254-267.

I. A feeling of being baptized in the Holy Spirit afresh (R23).

II. A sudden power coming over someone (R23).

III. Like translating a message someone was hearing within himself (R21).

IV. An explosion of tongues out of someone (R19).

V. A feeling of compulsion to speak, and words forming inside (R18).

VI. Words forming inside someone (R18).

Likewise, the perceptual impacts of charismatic prophecy, in order of extensiveness, are summarized as follows:

I. An experience of divine presence (R23).

II. Affirmation of women (R23).

III. Church made alive (R23).

IV. Fear of God in individuals, in the church and in the community (R23).

V. Faith strengthened (R23).

VI. The Bible made real (R20).

The onset of the charismatic prophecy experience was perceived as an intuitive phenomenon that was experienced as an invasive infusion of "Holy Ghost" power with a spontaneous formation of a message within a person. The prophetic message was either given, initially, in glossolalic utterances that were subsequently interpreted (glossolalic prophecy), or was a direct prophetic utterance in the speaker's vernacular; thus:

SI.2. As I worship, a sudden Holy Ghost power fell on me, and I started speaking in tongues (R23).

SI.3. When I am worshipping in tongues, a sudden power comes on me, and I started prophesying (R21).

SI.5. When I was worshipping in tongues, suddenly I felt an explosion of new tongues out of me (R19).

SI.6. Then someone else interpreted my tongues (R19).

SI.8. I feel a sudden energy overpowering me, and words begin to rise from deep within (R18).

The above paraphrased narratives generally indicate that charismatic prophecy, in the congregation studied, was perceived as extrinsically induced, but that the prophetic message was intrinsically formed within the speaker's self. Implicitly, therefore, the prophetic message was a divine-human formulation. This is reminiscent of the Pauline imperative to "weigh carefully what is said" (1 Cor 14:29b), presumably because of the fallible human dimension in the formulation of the prophetic message. Max Turner also observes that "The Spirit is conceived of as strongly stimulating the speech event itself and granting some kind of immediate inspiration of its revelatory content, while not completely excluding the human speaker's contribution."[243] Max Turner's further observation that "in more extreme cases, the Spirit may be viewed as entirely overwhelming … such that the Spirit is effectively the sole author of the words spoken,"[244] was also echoed by a number of respondents who stated that:

SI.13. I suddenly felt numb and collapsed to the floor, then words began to flow out (R15).

SI.23. As I opened my mouth to pray and praise, then prophecy words came out (R12).

The perception of complete displacement is, plausibly, a case of extreme overwhelming by the divine presence such that the human involvement in the formulation of the prophetic message becomes an unconscious process. The Pauline admonition that "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets" (1 Cor14:32) underscores the

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[243] Max Turner, *Power From On High,* 98.

[244] Max Turner, *Power From On High*, 98.

anthropological dimension of prophecy, in terms of the human self-control implied in the above scripture, notwithstanding the feeling of 'being overwhelmed.'

The experience of prophetic messages that began as dreams (SI.24), or revelations (SI.26) which were then fleshed out in the course of time, implies that some charismatic prophecies were non-invasive in the congregational setting.[245] The non-invasive prophecies raise questions concerning the extent to which personal views, prejudices and aspirations color the long drawn out reflective process of fleshing out the prophetic message. In an interview with the Senior Pastor, he seemed to be concerned about some prophecies or "words of knowledge" which were sometimes spoken to the church or to individual congregants; "some prophets are feared," said the pastor, because their 'prophetic' messages have tended to exert control over other people's lives or even over the church leadership.

It is conceivable that the invasive prophetic utterances afforded little time for human reflection and possible intrusion of human biases into the prophetic message, while the non-invasive, long-drawn out formulation of prophecies afforded excessive

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[245] Prophetic messages that are received in dreams or as revelatory visions could, plausibly, be termed as the *charisms* of "word of knowledge" or "message of knowledge" (1 Cor 12:8). Mark Cartledge defines "word of knowledge" as "a supernatural revelation of a fact or insight which could not have been known through the efforts of the natural mind. It is understood to be particular and special." Idem, "Charismatic Prophecy: A Definition and Description," 93. In the Pauline charismatic prophecy discourse, prophecy is portrayed as a revelation; thus "if a revelation comes to someone who is sitting down, the first speaker should stop; for you can all prophesy in turn" (1 Cor 14:30-31). Hence Mark Cartledge's remark that "the word of knowledge, as well as standing in a relationship to the word of wisdom, is considered to relate to prophecy." Idem, "Charismatic Prophecy: A Definition and Description," 94. Elsewhere, Mark Cartledge notes that "a broad definition of prophecy should start with the revelatory experience through which Christians believe that God communicates. This means that other prophetic types of experiences would also be considered under the rubric of prophecy. Therefore the category terms of 'the word of wisdom,' 'the word of knowledge,' 'the discernment of spirits,' and 'the interpretation of tongues,' would also be included as prophetic activity." Idem, *Practical Theology: Charismatic and Empirical Perspectives,* 157. Moreover, according to Scripture, the revelation need not be received invasively at a congregational worship. Thus, when worshippers come together, they might bring along "a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation" (1 Cor14:26).

opportunity for carnal intrusion into the prophetic message, as it were. However, this is a heuristic surmising that begs further inquiry. Nonetheless, the disconcerting aspects of charismatic prophecy are also echoed in Meredith McGuire's concern that prophecy has the potential to undermine institutional authority; "prophecy has the inherent potential to undermine their authority in the prayer group."[246] On the other hand, as McGuire remarks, strict control of the prayer meetings has the potential to mute freedom of utterance and spontaneity and, implicitly, run counter to the scriptural injunction not to "put out the Spirit's fire" (1 Thess 5:19). [247] This was, indeed, the dilemma of the Senior Pastor in the congregation studied.

From the paraphrased narrative accounts, it is evident that charismatic prophecy was perceived as intricately related to glossolalia; the experience of prophesying was likened to the initial experience of Spirit baptism with incipient glossolalic utterance, as the following paraphrased narrative statements illustrate:

> SI.1. My experience of prophecy is like when I was baptized in the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues (R23).
>
> SI.4. Prophesying is like translating a message which I was speaking within myself in tongues (R21).
>
> SI.5. When I was worshipping in tongues, suddenly I felt an explosion of new tongues out of me (R19).
>
> SI.7. Prophesying is like being baptized with the Spirit again and again and speaking in tongues (R18).
>
> SI.17. Worshipping in tongues, I began to understand my tongues; it was a message to the church (R14).

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[246] Meredith McGuire, "The Social Context of Prophecy: 'Word Gifts' of the Spirit Among Catholic Pentecostals," *Review of Religious Research* 18 (1977):134-147(137).

[247] Meredith McGuire, "The Social Context of Prophecy," 137.

Although not every prophecy was an interpretation of a glossolalic utterance, it was evident that "speaking in tongues" permeated the atmosphere of charismatic prophecy manifestations, as was noted during the participant observation phase of the case study.

The concomitance of glossolalia and charismatic prophecy is underscored by the observation that, although the question of glossolalia was not part of the focus group discussions, the subject featured prominently in the participants' responses. The frequent exhortations by the worship leadership team to "speak in tongues" and thus "open up to the presence of the Spirit," portrayed not only the essence of glossolalia as the *sine qua non* language of prayer and worship, but also as the context and catalyst for charismatic prophecy manifestations. Indeed a number of participants asserted that Spirit baptism with the "evidence" of praying in tongues was "a must" for prophetic manifestation (SI.40). It was also observed that the impact of charismatic prophecy on personal lives was not perceived as a uni-directional causal relation. Many participants asserted that the crisis experience of Spirit baptism with speaking in tongues, and a life devoted to prayer, fasting and worship, were prerequisites for charismatic prophetic manifestations (SI.37, SI.40), while the prophetic manifestations, in turn, deepened one's devotion to prayer, fasting, and worship (SI.36, SI.38, SI.39).

Charismatic prophecy, as practiced by women, was viewed as a divine affirmative action and a gender empowerment in the church. The participant background information at Appendix 6 reveals a fair gender balance in the exercise of the *charism* of prophecy. This is a very significant observation in an African androcentric society with an evident patriarchal church polity where women have not, generally, been in the forefront in societal leadership; hence the perception, by the women, of being recognized

and valued by God by virtue of being used to exercise the *charism* of prophecy in an otherwise patriarchal church polity:[248]

> SI.28. God values women because He uses them to prophesy (R23).
>
> SI.29. Women are not recognized in the church as men are, but in prophecy God recognizes them (R23).

Nonetheless, as Mark Cartledge observes, "while the gifts of the Spirit enable a radical egalitarianism, it is carried inside a formal patriarchal casting."[249] Thus the freedom of women to prophesy is exercised within the observed androcentric church leadership and, implicitly, under male superintendence.

The content of charismatic prophecy was portrayed in terms of present concerns in the church, as the following three prophetic utterances, which are typical of all the prophetic utterances recorded during the participant observation activity, illustrate:

> I. My children, my children, I have called you to be my servants, to stand in the sanctuary and minister to me. But you have lingered in unbelief and doubts; you have doubted my love and care for you; you have doubted my presence among you. Yet I will call you again to return to me with your whole heart, and I will fill you afresh with my Spirit; you will feel my presence, when you turn to me with all your heart, says the Lord.
>
> II. This is what the Lord is saying to you tonight: Jesus is going to calm the storm that you are going through. But you must stop trying to save yourselves. Are you

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[248] Although women involvement in the ministries of the church compared favorably with that of men (Appendix 6), majority of the women were deployed in the "service" ministries of ushering, Sunday school teaching, or prayer group leadership, rather than the "leadership" ministries of church deacons, elders or pastors, which were dominated by men. Nonetheless, a number of studies have shown that women in androcentric societies can indeed exercise leadership and effect change through social service; "women participate politically in ways that are rarely recognized or documented as political behavior or social protest- for example, by engaging in action through churches, clubs and other organizations." Guilder West and Rhoda L. Blumberg, "Reconstructing Social Protest from a Feminist Perspective," in *Women and Social Protest* (ed. G. West and R.L. Blumberg; New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 9. See also Catherine A. Faver who, in her study of spirituality and women activism, finds that spirituality and social justice were closely related in women, and that spiritual quest led to committed service that often influenced positive changes. Idem, "To Run and Not To Be Weary," 62- 69.

[249] Mark J. Cartledge, *Practical Theology*, 161-162.

ready to let God take over? You are too busy saving yourselves. The arm of flesh will fail you. Look to the Lord to save you, and you will then give Him the glory.

III. Listen to what the Spirit is saying: there is someone here who has not repented of his sin, although I have been knocking at the door of his heart. I am again knocking at the door of your heart; do not harden your heart as this is your last chance, or you will perish forever. And to you who heed my voice, I am rising with healing in my wings. But to the sinner I say, repent today or you will be lost forever from my presence, says the Spirit of God.

It is also observed that nearly all the responses by the focus group participants expressed present concerns or effects. Thus such statements as: "prophecy makes me feel the presence of God" (SI.27), "God values women because He uses them to prophesy" (SI.28), "the church is alive because of prophecy" (SI.30), or "there is fear of God in our lives and in the church … in the community" (SI.31, SI.32), all express present effects of charismatic prophecy. On the other hand, it is arguable that the expressed present concerns and effects of charismatic prophecy have eschatological dimensions. For example, the perception that prophecy engenders a continuing experience of divine presence is, in itself, a perception of a proleptic eschatological experience. This perception is reminiscent of the Johannine discourse between Jesus and Martha, in which the *eschaton* is portrayed in terms of a proleptic eschatological presence of the resurrected Jesus: "I am the resurrection and the life" (John11:25a).[250]

It was also observed that the charismatic prophecy utterances were articulated in biblical phraseology, hence the perception by a number of participants that "the Bible is real now, because many prophecies use Bible words to speak about now" (SI.34). The prevalent use of biblical phraseology in the prophetic utterances may be viewed as simply the manifestation of a Bible-saturated congregation. However, the perception that

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[250] See also John 6:39- 40, 44, 54; 11:24, for a close connection between *eschaton* and resurrection.

the prophetic messages uttered in biblical phraseology had a revelatory content concerning present concerns in the congregation counters the argument that the use of biblical phraseology in prophetic utterances was a simple manifestation of a Bible-saturated congregation. Rather, the prophetic utterances were expressed in the repertoire of biblical phraseology which was the *lingua franca* of the worship gatherings.

3.9 Reflection on Van der Ven's Model and Focus Group Strategy

Although the inductive-exploratory case study was conducted in accordance with Van der Ven's empirical approach to practical theology, it is, however, acknowledged that Van der Ven's approach entails a number of drawbacks with respect to its applicability in the African context. Whereas Van der Ven's model assumes that the direct object of empirical theology is the faith praxis of the people concerned, it does not have any inbuilt mechanisms for evaluating the biblical propriety or theological soundness of the concerned faith praxis. This is problematic in the African context since, as already observed, the African Pentecostal-charismatic faith praxis is tendentiously syncretistic in its attempt to reconcile Pentecostal spirituality with the African religio-cultural heritage.

The above problem is compounded further by Van der Ven's adoption of Jürgen Haberman's theory of communicative praxis which is premised on the criteria of equality, freedom, horizontal universality and universal solidarity. These criteria imply that, in effect, all voices in the concerned faith praxis are assumed to be equally valid and that no aspect of the faith praxis can be excluded in the construction of empirical theology. Hence the plausibility of constructing a syncretistic empirical theology from the African Pentecostal-charismatic context. The present study, however, mitigates this

problem by the adoption of an empirical-biblical approach which attempts to subject the empirical observations to a biblical-critical evaluation.

The adoption of the focus group strategy for data gathering in theological research in the African context is a relatively new attempt. Thus although the focus group strategy has been used widely in social sciences research in the African context, the use of the strategy in theological research in Africa is only at a nascent stage.[251] However, the study by Katharine Putman and others, which employed the focus group strategy in a religious study of Kenyan-African and Guatemalan-American religious communities, shows that the focus group strategy was as effective in data gathering in the Kenyan-African context as it was in the Guatemalan-American context.[252] The present study therefore makes a further contribution to the nascent experience of utilizing focus groups as a data gathering strategy in theological research in the African context.

In what follows, the above exploratory observations are subjected to critical interaction with theory, by way of literature review, in order to concretize the exploratory study results and then subject the emerging theoretical constructs to evaluation through subsequent deductive-explanatory case studies. The subsequent deductive-explanatory case studies phase is necessitated by the methodological axiom that inductively derived postulates cannot be evaluated within the context of the data from which they are derived; "it is generally accepted that you do not test a model on data that were used to

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[251] See, for example, Katharine M. Putman, Julia C. Lea, and Cynthia B. Ericksson, "Cross-Cultural Comparison of Religious Coping Methods Reported by Native Guatemalan and Kenyan Faith-Based Relief Providers," *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 39 (2011): 233-243.

[252] Katharine Putman, J. C. Lea and C. B. Ericksson, "Cross-Cultural Comparison," 237-243.

develop the model … evaluation must await additional quantitative or qualitative

research."[253]

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[253] Edward F. Fern, *Advanced Focus Group Research*, 54. See also D. T. Campbell, "Qualitative Knowing in Action Research," in *Methodology and Epistemology for Social Science* (ed. E. S. Overman; Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1988), 366-376.

CHAPTER FOUR

A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of literature review for the present study is not only to locate the research project in a larger ongoing dialogue but also to map out the scope of the research problem and to clarify the research questions in terms of gaps identified in the available body of knowledge. The literature review undertaking is also expected to help clarify the underlying assumptions and, hence, refine the theory that frames the subject and goal of the study.[254] There is thus a need to survey the conceptual, empirical and biblical perspectives of the broad concept of prophecy in order to establish a broad frame of reference for charismatic prophecy. This broad approach is also informed by the observation that Pentecostal-charismatic spirituality has not only permeated all Christian traditions but that "religious experiences have been accepted as normal by social scientists" such that social-scientific studies provide invaluable insights in the task of empirical-religious enquiry.[255] A methodological presupposition in the present review of literature is an axiomatic acceptance of the reality of the phenomenon of prophecy as a concomitant of human religious cultures since antiquity.[256]

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[254] See also Van der Ven, *Practical Theology: An Empirical Approach,* 123-125.

[255] André Droogers, "The Normalization of Religious Experience: Healing, Prophecy, Dreams, and Visions," in *Charismatic Christianity as a Global Culture* (ed. K. Poewe; Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1994), 36.

[256] See Johannes Lindblom, *Prophecy in Ancient Israel (Oxford: Blackwell,1962),* 1, Robert R. Wilson*, Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel (*Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980*),* 21-88, David A. Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean Word,* 23- 80, Thomas W. Overholt, *Prophecy in Cross- Cultural Perspective: A Source Book for Biblical Researchers* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 1, and Laura Nasralla, *An Ecstasy of Folly: Prophecy and Authority in Early Christianity* (Cambridge, Mass.; Harvard University Press, 2003), 1- 5.

4.2 Prophecy: A Conceptual Description

The English term "prophecy," is an anglicized Greek word, προφήτης, which is derived from two root words, a prefix, προ- (which has several nuances depending on the context in which it is used, but is commonly used to denote "before" or "for"), and φημϊ ("to say" or "to speak").[257] The term προφήτης can therefore refer to someone who "speaks before" in the temporal sense of proclaiming predictively, or in the vicarious sense of speaking on behalf of another person. In both cases the implicit idea is that the speaker acts as a spokesperson or mouthpiece of another person or being. In ancient Greek lexicology, the term προφήτης referred to someone who spoke for a god and thus interpreted the will of the god to human beings.[258] Colin Brown defines a classical Greek prophet as "a person who … by direct inspiration or by the interpretation of sounds and omens declares the will of the gods to a person who asks for advice."[259] Thus prophecy is basically a religious genre in the rubric of revelatory disclosures from the divine realm to the world of humanity and is thus an epistemic category of intermediation between

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[257] Colin Brown, ed. *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology,* Vol.3 (Carlisle, U.K.: Paternoster,1986), 74- 89. See also A. Lamorte and G. F. Hawthorne, "Prophecy, Gift of," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* (2d ed., ed. Walter A. Elwell; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 960.

[258] See Henry G. Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek- English Lexicon* (rev. ed., ed. H. S. Jones and R. M. McKenzie; Oxford: Clarendon, 1953), 1539-40.

[259] Colin Brown, *The New International Dictionary*, 76. Robert R. Wilson also observes that "In early (Greek) sources, the title *prophĕtĕs* is usually given to a person connected with the oracles of Apollo and Zeus, and the word originally seems to have designated one who 'speaks forth' or 'proclaims' the message of the deity and interprets the divine word for people seeking oracles. The *prophĕtĕs* thus seems to have occupied a mediatorial position between the people and the gods." Idem, *Prophecy and Society, 22.*

divinity and humanity, along with such other similar role labels of intermediatory

functionaries as diviners, shamans, mediums, or mystics.[260]

The various intermediary role labels are, however, not universal signifiers of the

different functions; they do not always describe the same phenomenon or function in

every culture and in every age. For example, in the ancient Hellenistic culture, the

conflation of the various intermediatory categories, and their trans-rational epistemic

motifs, is aptly portrayed in Plato's postulate that:

> God gave unto man's foolishness the gift of divination…no man achieves true
> inspired divination when in his rational mind, but only when the power of his
> intelligence is fettered in sleep or when it is distraught by disease or by reason of
> some divine inspiration …it is customary to set the tribe of prophets, των
> προφητών γένος, to pass judgment upon these inspired divinations, and they,
> indeed themselves are named diviners (μάντεις) by certain who are wholly
> ignorant of the truth that they are not diviners but interpreters of the mysterious
> voice and apparition, for whom the most fitting name would be prophets of things
> divined.[261]

The present study, however, attempts to define prophecy in terms of its function rather

than the role labels found in literature. A functional definition focuses on the essence of

the phenomenon while a role-label approach tends to limit the definition to the

occurrences of the role-label in cultures and in literature.[262]

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[260] Emil Brunner notes that "the concept of revelation, in some form or other, is as widespread as the idea of God." Brunner goes on to note that in the ancient world of the Judeo-Christian faiths origins, the idea of revelation, whether in the form of "primitive mantic practices of divination in order to discover the will of the gods . . . or again for the teaching of thinkers who claimed to have received supernatural 'illumination' in a state of ecstasy, was taken for granted and generally believed." Idem, *Reason and Revelation: The Christian Doctrine of Faith and Knowledge* (trans. O. Wyon; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1946), 4, 20.

[261] Plato, *Timaeus* 7.1 (trans. R. G. Bury; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1952), 186-187. See also Plato, *Phaedrus* (trans. R. Waterfield; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 244a.

[262] See also M. Eugene Boring who, in his preference for the functional definitional approach, argues that "the prophet is defined in terms of his essential function- his function which constitutes him as a prophet." Idem, "What Are We Looking For? Toward a Definition of the Term 'Christian Prophet'" *Journal of Biblical Literature* 2 (1973):142-154(145).

The ancient Hellenistic culture tended to categorize intermediation into *artificiosa divinatio* and *naturalis divinatio*. The former referred to divination by technical means, such as observation and interpretation of objects or events in order to discover the will of the deities, while the latter denoted "communication of a message from the gods by inspired speech, often received in trance, ecstasy, or vision."[263] Similar categories are noted in the ancient Israel where, for example, the priests often inquired of Yahweh through the symbolic objects of 'Urim and Thumim' (Exod 28:30; Lev 8:8; Num 27:21; 1 Sam 28:6; Ezra 2:63). At other times, divination was given through inspired speech. For instance, the prophet Elisha received 'inspiration' induced through music and uttered what may be termed as inspired speech, thus: "while the harpist was playing, the hand of Yahweh came upon Elisha and he said, 'This is what Yahweh says…'" (2 Kgs 3:15,16).[264] The 'Urim and Thumim' divinatory mode resonates with the Hellenistic *artificiosa divinatio,* or inductive divination, while Elisha's inspired mode of divination appears to approximate the Hellenistic *naturalis divinatio, or* intuitive divination.*[265]* It is, however, reckoned that the hallmark of prophetic intermediation, which distinguishes it from other intermediatory phenomena, is a divine initiative which

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[263] M. Eugene Boring, *The Continuing Voice of Jesus,* 49. See also David Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity*, 24. The notion of 'inspiration' is understood as an invasive divine compulsion or an overwhelming divine presence that is often experienced in prophetic activities as a feeling of energy and compulsion. Johannes Lindblom observes that "when inspiration strongly intensifies it turns into ecstasy … a mental state in which one has a feeling that the soul leaves the body." Idem, *Prophecy in Ancient Israel*, 4.

[264] The "hand of Yahweh" metaphor is often used in the Old Testament, especially in the book of Ezekiel, to signify an overpowering presence of God's Spirit. See, for example, Ezekiel 3:14, 22; 8:1; 33:22; 37:1; 40:1. See also J. J. M. Roberts who posits that the phrase "the hand of Yahweh" in the Old Testament prophetic corpus denoted divine compulsion or manifestation of supernatural power. Idem, "The Hand of the Yahweh,*" Vetus Testamentum* 21 (1971): 244-251 (249-50).

[265] See also Willem vanGemerem, *Interpreting the Prophetic Word*, 21-22.

not only brings about a revelatory message but also an immediacy of experience of

divine presence. [266]

4.3 Prophecy: A Biblical Perspective

The biblical survey undertaken in this section is, methodologically, not an

exhaustive exegetical analysis of biblical prophecy; rather, it is a hermeneutical

illustration of the phenomenon of prophecy from a broad biblical perspective.

4.3.1 Prophecy in the Old Testament

The phenomenon of prophecy in the context of the ancient Israelite faith and its

ancient Near Eastern religious milieu was generally understood as the human

transmission of divine messages, thereby revealing the divine will to humans.[267]

Although the phenomenon of prophecy is portrayed in the Old Testament in a variety of

ways, the aspect of intermediatory transmission, or proclamation of divine messages to

human audience, is generally viewed as the key characteristic of the Old Testament

prophecy.[268] Thus the flow of the prophetic intermediatory direction is divine-to-human,

and, therefore, the initiative for prophecy is always divine. Johannes Lindblom utilizes

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[266] See, for example, Niels C. Hvidt, *Christian Prophecy: The Post- Biblical Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 6.

[267] See Marti Nissinen, *Writings from the Ancient World, 12: Prophets and Prophecy in the Ancient Near East* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 1.

[268] The Hebrew Version of the Old Testament uses a number of role labels that appear to convey various nuances of the phenomenon of prophecy. These include נָבִיא as the generic word for "prophet" in the Hebrew Bible (e.g. Num 12:6; Deut 13:2), רוֹאֶה "Seer" or "Diviner" (e.g. 2 Sam 15:27; 1 Chr 9:22; Isa 9:9), חֹזֶה "Visionary" (e.g. 1 Chr 21:9; Isa 29:10; Amos 7:12), אִישׁ אֱלֹהִים "Man of God" (e.g. Deut 33:1; Josh 14:6; 1 Kgs 12:13). The various role labels could be indicative of nuanced prophetic manifestations. On the other hand, the different role labels could be indicators of different regional names for the same phenomenon. For example, the role label, רוֹאֶה is mostly used in the Ephramite (Northern Kingdom) prophetic books of the Bible while the role label חֹזֶה is most prevalent in the Judahite (Southern Kingdom) prophetic books. In addition, there appears to have been a temporal semantic development of the role labels. Thus, for example, "formerly in Israel, if a man went to inquire of God, he would say, 'Come let us go to the seer, רוֹאה,' because the prophet, נָבִיא, of today used to be called a seer, רוֹאֶה, (1 Sam 9:9)." See also Robert R. Wilson, *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel*, 136-141.

the key characteristic of intermediatory transmission of divine messages to provide a
generic definition of an Old Testament prophet as "a person who, because he is
conscious of having been specially chosen and called, feels forced to perform actions and
proclaim ideas which, in a mental state of intense inspiration or real ecstasy, have been
indicated to him in the form of divine revelations."[269]

Other biblical scholars, however, critique Lindblom's definition on the grounds
that his emphasis on the divine influence undervalues the role of the prophet's
personality and rationality in the formulation and transmission of the prophetic
message.[270] An alternative view of prophecy in ancient Israel and in the ancient Near
Eastern milieu highlights the rational cognitive role of the prophet. For example, Hans
M. Barstad defines such a prophet as:

> A person, male or female, who, through a cognitive experience, a vision, an
> audition, a dream or the like, becomes the subject of the revelation of a deity or
> several deities, and is conscious of being commissioned by the deity/deities in
> question to convey the revelation in speech or through metalinguistic behaviors,
> to a third party who constitutes the actual recipient of the message.[271]

Old Testament prophecy is also portrayed as a divine-human dialectic; in certain
prophetic oracles, the prophet utilizes the annunciation formula, "thus says Yahweh"
(e.g. Isa 37: 21; 50:1; 56:1), thereby appearing to function as a mere mouthpiece of
Yahweh, while at other times the prophet speaks as a narrator, and thus portrays an

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[269] Johannes Lindblom, *Prophecy in Ancient Israel,* 46.

[270] See, for instance, H.H. Rowley who points out that the prophets in Israel were Yahweh's spokes
people but not mere mouthpieces; "the prophet's message always bore the mark of the personality of the
man through whom it came." Idem, *The Servant of the Lord and Other Essays on the Old Testament*
(London: Lutterworth, 1965), 31.

[271] Hans M. Barstad, "No Prophet?: Recent Developments in Biblical Prophetic Research and
Ancient Near Eastern Prophecy," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 57 (1993): 39-60 (45).

anthropological dimension in the conceptualization of the prophetic proclamation. For example, the prophet Amos often uses the narrative introductory formula: "This is what the Sovereign Yahweh showed me" (Amos 7:1; 8:1). William McKane describes the anthropological dimension as the "transmutation of a prophet's meeting with God … the prophet absorbs the mysterious experience into his humanity, filtering it through human modes of apprehension and evaluation, and causing it to issue in a linguistic form which is human and not divine."[272]

The Old Testament locates the etymology of Old Testament prophecy in the Sinaitic theophany where a covenant relationship between Israel and Yahweh, the God of Israel, was consummated and ratified by means of a covenant code (Exod 20:23-23:19).[273] The Deuteronomist recounts the covenant-making episode (Deut 5:1-33) and then traces the provenance of the Israelite prophecy to that moment when the Israelites desired an intermediary to speak to them on behalf of Yahweh, rather than Yahweh speaking to them directly:

> Yahweh (יְהוָה) your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him. For this is what you asked of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said, "Let us not hear the voice of the LORD our God nor see this great fire anymore, or we will die. The LORD said to me: 'What they say is good. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words into his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him.' (Deut 18:15-18).[274]

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[272] William McKane, *Jeremiah,* Vol.1 (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986), xcviii.

[273] See also Joseph Blenkinsopp, *A History of Prophecy in Israel* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1996), 15.

[274] Although the "prophet like me" reference is interpreted in the New Testament as a prophetic reference to the ultimate mediator between God and humanity, Jesus Christ (John 1:45; 6:14; 7:40; Acts 3: 22; 7:37), there is, nonetheless, a nuanced reference to a collective succession of prophets (Deut 18:20-22). Although the term "prophet," נְבִיא, is rendered in the singular in this pericope, a number of English translations, notably the *New International Version* and the *Revised Standard Version*, have suggested a

The provenance of the Old Testament prophecy is thus portrayed as a mediated revelatory presence of an awe-inspiring Almighty God to human finitude that is otherwise overwhelmed by an unmediated overwhelming divine presence:

> Yahweh descended to the top of Mount Sinai and called… when the people saw the thunder and lightning and heard the trumpet and saw the mountain in smoke, they trembled with fear. They stayed at a distance and said to Moses, 'speak to us yourself and we will listen. But do not have God speak to us or we will die (Exod 19:20; 20:18-19).

Rudolf Otto describes the feeling of being overwhelmed by divine presence as *mysterium tremendum* or "the emotion of a creature, submerged and overwhelmed by its own nothingness in contrast to that which is supreme above all creatures."[275]

The phenomenon of prophecy that is attested in the Old Testament is portrayed as a prophetic *charism* as well as a prophetic vocation. Notable Old Testament prophetic figures, such as Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah, or Ezekiel, are not only referred to as prophets, נָבִיא (1 Kgs 18:36; 2 Kgs 9:1; Isa 37:2; Jer 1:5; Ezek 2:5), but their whole life spans are characterized by the exercise of prophecy as a vocation. The nature of their prophetic manifestations is, usually, either invasive or non-invasive. In the former category, the prophetic manifestation is an immediately inspired proclamation without

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plural rendering since the general content of the pericope intimates a successive series of prophets. See also John Penney who notes that "a mosaic origin for a prophetic office within Israel seems evident from Deut 18:14- 22 which explicitly relates to the Sinai covenant." Idem, "Testing of New Testament Prophecy," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 10 (1997): 35-84 (38). See also Johannes Lindblom, *Prophecy in Ancient Israel*, 202, and P. C. Craige, *The Book of Deuteronomy* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 24-32.

[275] Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy,* 10. See also Tony Ritchie who portrays Rudolf Otto's notion of *mysterium tremendum* as a numinous encounter characterized by "an ineffable awe at being in the presence of God." Idem, "Awe-Full Encounters: A Pentecostal Conversation with C.S. Lewis Concerning Spiritual Experience," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 14 (2005): 99-122 (107).

any apparent prior reflection on the part of the prophet. For example, "then the Spirit came upon Amasai, chief of the thirty, and he said…" (1 Chr12:18). Max Turner notes that, in invasive prophecy, "the Spirit is conceived of as strongly stimulating the speech event itself and granting some kind of immediate inspiration of its revelatory content".[276]

Non-invasive prophecy is essentially a prophetic report of a prior revelation in which the prophet appears to have reflected on the revelatory encounter with Yahweh and formulated it in the form of a report of what God had revealed to him or her. Elijah's prophetic report to king Ahab appears to fit the category of non-invasive prophecy (1 Kgs 21:20- 24). The apparently non-invasive prophecy is portrayed as a consequence of a prophet having "stood," or having become privy, to a heavenly council, thereby signifying a prior encounter with Yahweh. [277] For example, the prophet Jeremiah, in his polemic against false prophets, rhetorically depicts them as people who had not been privy to the council of God; "but which of them had stood in the council of Yahweh to see or to hear his word?" (Jer 23:18), to which Yahweh's rejoinder is: "but if they had stood in my council, they would have proclaimed my word to my people" (Jer 23:22a).[278] The inference here is that Old Testament prophecy was divinely initiated in

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[276] Max Turner, *Power from on High,* 98.

[277] The prophet Micaiah, who recounts his experience of being privy to the divine council, describes it as follows: "I saw Yahweh sitting on his throne with all the host of heaven standing around him on his right and on his left"(1 Kgs 22:19).

[278] In this text, Yahweh, seems to avow that he never does or speaks anything through his servants, the prophets, without first letting them be privy to his heavenly council: "Surely the Sovereign Yahweh does nothing without revealing his plan (council) to his servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7). The Hebrew word, סוֹד, translated "plan" in the English Version in Amos 3:7 is the same word translated "council" in Jer 23:18, 22 (See also Job15:8; Ps 89:7). It is observed that in a number of instances in the bible, "speaking" is, in effect, "doing" or "acting" such that prophetic discourses can also be viewed as "speech acts." For example, both Isaiah and Hosea speak of their words being performatives: "My word… will accomplish…" (Isa 55:11); "I killed you with the words of my mouth"(Hos 6:5). In the same vein, Amos' proclamation that God does nothing without letting his servants, the prophets, be privy to his council (Amos 3:7) could as well be rendered that "God says nothing through his servants, the prophets, without

its entirety, even as the New Testament writer reminds his audience that the Old Testament prophecy did not originate from human will or human reasoning (2 Pet 1:20-21).

There are also other prophetic manifestations in the Old Testament which appear to be associated with liturgical worship. The Chronicler, for instance, gives accounts of several people in the Davidic temple cultus (1 Chr 6:31- 48; 25:1- 31; 2 Chr 20:14- 17) who had been appointed by king David "for the ministry of prophesying, accompanied by harps, lyres and cymbals" (1 Chr 25:1b). Although their 'prophetic' activities appear to have been intermittent and part of their liturgical service in the temple, the term 'prophecy' as applied by the Chronicler had, plausibly, a wider hermeneutical significance than simply proclamation of divine oracles; prophecy as a mediated revelatory presence of God could also include such liturgical activities as music. This is perhaps the role that earned Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron, the title of "prophet" (Exod 15: 20) although no explicit prophetic activity is ever associated with her in the Bible except her leadership in the liturgical *Song of the Sea:* "then Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women followed her, with tambourines and dancing. Miriam sang to them …" (Exod15:20- 21).

Liturgical music is therefore portrayed as instrumental in the mediation of divine presence, even as the case of Elisha (2 Kgs 3:15, 16) also illustrates. Amos Hakham

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first letting them be privy to his plans." See J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (2d. ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1975), and Walter Houston, "What Did the Prophets Think They Were Doing? Speech-Acts and Prophetic Discourse in the Old Testament," *Biblical Interpretation* 1 (1993):167-188, for an exposition of speech-act theory which portrays words as performatives.

notes that, in the case of the "levitical prophecy," both prayer and praise were essentially

the words of God inspired to the prophet in the first instance:

> The Levites who sang and prayed in the temple were called 'prophets,' for when they prayed, and sang, and played, divine inspiration descended upon them … prayers to God consist of words that God has put in our mouth… thus some Jewish sages regarded the entire book of psalms as a work of prophecy.[279]

Liturgical worship is thus viewed as a symbolic response to the experience of God's

presence. J. D Crichton defines worship as, "a reaching out through the fear that always

accompanies the sacred to the *mysterium* conceived as *tremendum* but also *fascinas*,

because behind it and in it there is an intuition of the transcendent."[280] According to this

definition, therefore, worship is germane to prophecy in that it not only opens one's spirit

to divine encounter but is also a responsive expression of an intuitive experience of the

mytserium tremendum of divine presence; hence Crichton's further assertion that

"because it is God who always takes the initiative, Christian worship is best discussed in

terms of response; in worship, man is responding to God" or uttering divinely-inspired

words.[281]

     The general inference emerging from the above survey is that Old Testament

prophecy was multifaceted and complex. Although the Hebrew term נָבִיא (prophet)

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[279] Amos Hakham, *The Bible Psalms with the Jerusalem Commentary, Vol.* 1 (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 2003), xv- xvi. See also Sue Gillingham, "From Liturgy to Prophecy: The Use of Psalmody in Second Temple Judaism," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 64 (2002): 465-480 (470). Robert Wilson observes that an examination of the activities of the Davidic Levitical prophetic singers in the Deuteronomistic history and the Psalms portray a psalmodic prophecy and thus imply a close relationship in function between liturgy and prophecy. Idem, *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel*, 260.

[280] J. D. Chrichton, "A Theology of Worship," in *The Study of Liturgy* (eds. Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright and Edward Yarnold, New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 5. Chrichton utilizes Rudolf Otto's portrayal of a numinous encounter as *mysterium tremendum et fascinas* "awe-full, numinous and gracious" to convey the essence of prophecy as divine presence that confers divine grace. See also Tony Ritchie, *Awe-Full Encounters*, 103.

[281] J. D. Crichton, *A Theology of Worship*, 7.

appears to have achieved prominence as the generic term for the intermediatory

functionaries, the varieties and modes of prophetic functions still persisted throughout

the Old Testament period.[282] This has led Ronald Clements to remark that it is not

possible to construct a consistently homogeneous prophetic theology underlying the

variegated types of prophets and prophecies portrayed in the Old Testament.[283]

Nonetheless, the dominant motifs of Old Testament prophecy that emerge from the

above survey are that the ancient Israelite prophecy was a revelatory experience of divine

presence, that the prophet was the human medium who received and proclaimed the

divine revelation, and that divinely-inspired liturgical utterances were also, plausibly,

viewed as prophecy in the sense that they mediated the immediacy of divine presence.

4.3.2 Prophecy in the New Testament Church

The phenomenon of prophecy observed in the New Testament Church is

understood variously. Whereas some theological scholars espouse a dispensational

approach which posits that prophecy was intrinsically related to the dispensation of the

formation of the biblical canon, and therefore ceased with the formation of the canon,[284]

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[282] See also D. L. Petersen who employs a role-label theory to depict the continued existence of a variety of prophetic roles and modes in ancient Israel. Idem, *The Roles of Israel's Prophets* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1981), 38- 40.

[283] Ronald E. Clements, *Prophecy and Tradition* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1975), 23. See also Johannes Lindblom, *Prophecy in Ancient Israel*, 102.

[284] See, for instance, F. D. Farnell who argues that "prophecy of both testaments was foundational and linked to closure of the respective canons; hence prophetic claims after Malachi and after the formative revelatory period of the early church are to be rejected as false." Idem, "The Gift of Prophecy in the Old and New Testaments," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 150 (1992):387-410 (389). See also Palmer Robertson, *The Final Word: A Biblical Response to the Case for Tongues and Prophecy Today* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1993),1-15. John Penney adds that "cessationists argue from the testimony of 1 Cor 13:8-12 and the judgment threatened in Rev 22:18-19, that true prophecy ceased with the completion of the canon." Idem, "The Testing of New Testament Prophecy,"72. See also R. L. Thomas, "Prophecy Rediscovered?: A Review of the Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today," *Bibliotheca Sacra 150* (1992):255-267(259). However, as John Penney aptly points out, 1 Cor 13:8-12 most likely refers to the cessation of tongues and prophecy at the *parousia*, as intimated thus: "Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gifts as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed"(1 Cor 1:7). Idem, "The Testing of New Testament Prophecy," 72. See, however, R. B. Gaffin who, while accepting the *parousia* as the *terminus*

there is a general consensus in scholarship that there were continuing forms of prophetic

manifestations in the New Testament incipient Church, some of which were essentially a

continuation of the Old Testament prophetic forms.[285] J. Panagopoulos, for instance,

notes that "the manifestations of prophecy in the New Testament church are best

understood in the light of their background in Israel and in the mission of Jesus."[286] The

New Testament apostolic writings portray Jesus Christ as the ultimate revelatory

presence of God (1 Tim 2: 5; Heb 8: 6; 9:15; 12:24). The *Apocalypse of John* also

depicts Jesus Christ as the ultimate revelation of God and that his revelatory presence

constitutes the *charism* of the New Testament prophecy (Rev 19:10). [287]

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ad quem for cessation of tongues and prophecy, argues that the pericope, 1 Cor 13: 8-12, does not specify the time when prophecy and tongues would cease. Idem, *Perspectives on Pentecost: New Testament Teaching on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit* (Philipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed Press, 1979), 111.

[285] A basic presupposition of the present study is that the incipient Church that is portrayed in the New Testament was not the product of the New Testament Canon. Rather, the New Testament Canon is the outcome of the faith praxis of the Early Church's experience of the risen Jesus Christ through his Holy Spirit, as well as its pneumatic collective memory of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (John 16:5-14). See also Niels C. Hvidt who observes that "The New Testament is not the mother of the early Christian faith- quite the opposite; the New Testament is an expression of the faith of the Early Church whose belief chronologically precedes the formation of the Canon." Idem, *Christian Prophecy, 82.*

[286] J. Panagopoulos, *Prophetic Vocation in the New Testament and Today* (Leiden: Brill, 1977), 46. This is counter to arguments proffered in some quarters of scholarship that the prophecy found in the New Testament incipient church parallels the modes of prophecy found in the first century Graeco-Roman world. For example, T. Callan, "Prophecy and Ecstasy in Graeco-Roman Religion and in 1 Corinthians," *Novum Testamentum* 27 (1985): 125-140, and M. E. Boring, *Sayings of the Risen Jesus: Christian Prophecy in the Synoptic Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 81- 86, infer a Graeco-Roman background for New Testament prophecy, especially the Corinthian phenomena. However, there is a general consensus in scholarship affirming that the forms of prophecy found in the New Testament typify Old Testament prophecy. See C. Forbes, *Prophecy and Inspired Speech in Early Christianity and its Hellenistic Environment* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), 243-244, for a comprehensive review of recent scholarship on the origins of New Testament prophecy. Likewise, Eugene Boring's review of several scholarly works on the provenance of early Christian prophecy concludes that "several scholars consider 'Israel' rather than 'Greek' to be foundational for their portrayal of early Christian prophecy." Idem, *Sayings of the Risen Jesus*, 23, 49. See also H. A. Guy, *New Testament Prophecy: Its Origin and Significance* (London: Epworth, 1947), 1.

[287] Bogdan G. Bucur argues that "the spirit of prophecy in Revelation 19:10 refers not to the person of the Holy Spirit, or a heavenly agent … but to the charisma of the prophets." Idem, "Hierarchy, Prophecy, and the Anglomorphic Spirit: A Contribution to the Study of the Book of Revelation's *Wirkungschichte*," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 127 (2008):173-194 (190). Similar views are expressed by Isbon Beckwith, *The Apocalypse of John: Studies in Introduction with a Critical and Exegetical*

A survey of the usage of the word "prophecy" in the books of the New Testament reveals that, of the 144 occurrences, 123 of them refer to Old Testament prophets, while the remaining occurrences refer to Jesus Christ, to John the Baptist, the incipient Church prophetic figures, such as Agabus (Acts 11: 28; 21:10), the prophets at Antioch (Acts 13:1-2), Judas and Silas (Acts 15:32), and daughters of the Evangelist Philip (Acts21: 9).[288] In addition, there are other references to prophetic manifestations among early church believers. For example, some disciples in Ephesus are reported to have prophesied when Paul placed his hands on them; "they spoke in tongues and prophesied" (Acts 19: 6). Nonetheless, all forms of New Testament church prophecy appear to be subsumed under the authority of Jesus Christ as the ultimate prophetic-revelatory presence of God. [289]

The Early Church prophecy as gleaned from the New Testament texts appears to have been, characteristically, invasive prophetic manifestations in congregational settings, though a few people appear to have functioned as prophets in the ministry of the

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Commentary (New York: McMillan, 1919), 772, Pierre Prigent, *Commentary on the Apocalypse of St. John* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 635, and Henry B. Swete, *The Apocalypse of St. John: The Greek Text with Introduction, Notes, and Indices* (3d. ed.; London: McMillan, 1909), 303.

[288] See also Francis A. Sullivan, SJ; *Charisms and Charismatic Renewal: A Biblical and Theological Study* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Servant Books, 1982), 94. It is, however, reckoned that the study of prophecy cannot be limited to the semantic field of the word "prophecy." It is plausible that the prophetic phenomenon in the New Testament is wider than simply the occurrences of the word "prophecy" or "prophet." As Niels Hvidt notes, "there is no guarantee that all prophetic phenomena are linked to the word "prophet." Idem, *Christian Prophecy*, 51. Eugene Boring, also, cautions that "unless it is assumed that the phenomenon we wish to study is always bound to a particular terminology, and vice-versa, we must not limit our study to the texts that use the προφήτ vocabulary." Idem, *Sayings of the Risen Jesus*, 15.

[289] Niels C. Hvidt rightly remarks that "the designation of Jesus as prophet has its limitations." Idem, *Christian Prophecy*, 60. Thus while prophets speak the word of God, Jesus is the Word of God *per excellence* (John1:1-5). The writer of the *Epistle to the Hebrews* points out the surpassing nature of Jesus' prophetic role thus: "In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son…"(Heb 1:1-2).

early church.[290] However, the phenomenon of prophecy witnessed in the New Testament

incipient church should, ideally, be visualized in terms of two modes: a temporal and

authoritative apostolic-canonical mode of prophecy in line with the Old Testament

canonical prophecy, and a less authoritative but enduring form of congregational

prophecy manifestations.[291] The *Apocalypse of John* is portrayed as canonical prophecy

in line with Old Testament canonical prophecy (Rev1:3; 22:18) as well as the other New

Testament writings which are equated with "the other (Old Testament) scriptures" (2 Pet

3:15-16). However, congregational prophetic manifestations, such as are witnessed in the

Corinthian church (1 Cor 12-14), were viewed as a less authoritative form of prophecy

which needed to be evaluated to determine whether the prophetic utterances were

acceptable to the church (1 Cor14:29; 1 Thess 5:19- 21).[292]

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[290]See also J. Panagopoulos, who notes that "prophecy occurs in the early church both as the occasional utterance of various members of the congregation and as the continuing ministry of a relatively few persons within it." Idem, *Prophetic Vocation*, 51.

[291] See, for example, N. L. Geisler who, regarding the apostolic-canonical prophecy, remarks that "from John the Baptist to John the Apostle, New Testament prophets stood in continuity with Old Testament prophets, and their revelations from God were both authoritative and infallible. Idem, *Signs and Wonders: Healings, Miracles and Unusual Events: Which are Real: Which are Supernormal?: Which are Counterfeit?* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale, 1988),159. See also W. Grudem who also views the New Testament prophetic phenomena in terms of a temporary, authoritative canonical mode and a less authoritative but enduring mode of prophecy. Idem, *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today,* 17-23. John Penney also notes that "the majority in recent scholarship perceive a variety of forms of New Testament prophecy which were not equally authoritative … some prophecy to be of canonical significance and some to be of local and temporal significance, and thus an ongoing phenomenon in the life of the church." Idem, "The Testing of New Testament Prophecy," 35.

[292] The view that the earlier "authoritative-canonical" prophecy, which ceased with the production of the biblical canon, was different from later "less authoritative non-canonical" and continuing prophecy, was also expressed in the first/second century rabbinic writings. For example, Josephus reports about a widely held belief among the rabbis of his time that the earlier prophetic activities which had led to the production of the "holy books" were different from later prophetic inspirations. See L. H. Feldman, "Prophets and Prophecy in Josephus," *Journal of Theological Studies* 41 (1990): 386- 422. Also, the rabbinic writings postulate that "When the last prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi died, the Holy Spirit ceased in Israel, though she was allowed to hear the בת קול 'daughter of voice' *Tosefta Sotah* 13.2. The inference is that the latter 'daughter of voice' was a less authoritative inspiration than the earlier 'mother voice' of prophecy. See also John Barton, *Oracles of God: Perceptions of Ancient Prophecy in Israel after the Exile* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1986), 106-111, and John Penney, "The Testing of New Testament Prophecy," 42- 44.

4.4 Prophecy and the Spirit of God

A significant feature of prophecy, both in the Old and New Testaments, is its close association with the Spirit of God, or the Holy Spirit.[293] Notable incidents of association of the Spirit of God with prophecy in the Old Testament include the Mosaic "seventy elders" in the wilderness, of whom it is stated: "when the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied" (Num 11: 25b).[294] King Saul's prophetic manifestations are also attributed to "the Spirit of God;" thus "the Spirit of Yahweh will come upon you in power, and you will prophesy" (1 Sam10: 6; cf. 1 Sam 10:10b).[295] King David also states

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[293] The idea of 'spirit' in the contemporary secularistic worldview is problematic. As Elizabeth A. Johnson notes, the term "Spirit of God in relation" is problematic to the Western dualistic worldview which bifurcates "spirit and matter," or "God and humanity" in a non-relational fashion. Idem, *She Who is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad, 1992), 132. Lee Snoock, in his commentary on the dualism of the Western worldview which tendentiously echoes Platonian dualism, portrays it as "a stubborn mode of thinking that undercuts any theology of wholeness and relationality." Idem, *What in the World is God Doing?: Re-Imaging Spirit and Power* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 1999), 23. The secularistic-dualistic worldview portrays 'spirit' as either the conceptual idea of phenomenal reality or as an infinite divine ontological state that is unrelated to the world of phenomena. The biblical accounts, on the other hand, portray the Spirit as the ontological principle of divine presence, or the immanence of the transcendent God. This portrayal underscores the providential relation of God to creation, hence the plausibility of a discourse on prophecy as divine-human encounter in spatio-temporal existence. See also LeRon Shults who remarks that the contemporary scientific concept of relational dynamism of the whole of reality makes possible the task of presenting "a Christian understanding of the relation between God and the world that overcomes the problem of dualism (or deism) without collapsing into the opposite problems associated with monism (or pantheism), that is, without conflating the concepts of Spirit and matter." Idem, "Dialogue: Spirit and Spirituality: Philosophical Trends in Late Modern Pneumatology," *Journal for the Society of Pentecostal Studies* 30 (2008): 280-294 (285).

[294] An exegetical question that is often raised in biblical scholarship is whether the "spirit" referred to in the case of the seventy elders was the Spirit of God or the spirit of Moses, since the text states, "I will take of the spirit that is on you (Moses) and put the spirit on them" (Num11:17). However, Moses' answer to Joshua's critique of some of the elders, who prophesied outside the Tent of Meeting, clearly shows that the Spirit that enthused the elders to prophesy was evidently the Spirit of God: "I wish that all Yahweh's people were prophets and that Yahweh would put his Spirit on them" (Num 11:29).

[295] Saul's prophetic manifestations are rather problematic in the sense that he appears to prophesy when he is under the influence of the Spirit of God (1 Sam10:10) as well as when he is under the influence of a malevolent spirit (1 Sam 19:23). However, the verbal form of the word for "prophesy" used in both cases is the Hebrew *Hithpael* reflexive form, יְתְנַבָּא, which means that the reference is not to the content of Saul's prophecy but to his visible manifestations or behavior that was consistent with prophetic activity. It can be inferred from this that the presence of spirits, other than the Spirit of God, in human beings can also produce manifestations consistent with prophetic activity. This observation accounts for the existence of the phenomenon of prophecy in non- Judeo- Christian faiths and cultures. See also Simon B. Parker, "Possession, Trance and Prophecy in Pre-Exilic Israel," *Vetus Testamentum* 28 (1978):271-275 (272).

that "the Spirit of Yahweh spoke through me; his word was on my tongue" (2 Sam 23:2).

Likewise, Azariah, son of Oded, uttered a prophetic oracle to Asa, king of Judah, when

"the Spirit of God came upon Azariah" (2 Chr 15:1-7). Also, the Spirit of Yahweh came

upon Jahazel, son of Zachariah, and then he prophesied to king Jehoshaphat and the

inhabitants of Judah (2 Chr 20:14-17). Again, "the Spirit of God came upon

Zechariah…he stood before the people and said, 'this is what God says" (2 Chr 24:20).

Deutero-Isaiah associates his prophetic call with the Spirit of God: "the Sovereign

Yahweh has sent me with his Spirit; this is what Yahweh says" (Isa 48:16-17; cf. 61:1-

3). Ezekiel also attributes his prophetic utterances to the inspiration of the Spirit of God:

"the Spirit of Yahweh came upon me, and he told me to say" (Ezek 11: 5). Similarly,

Micah reports that "I am filled with power with the Spirit of Yahweh … to declare to

Jacob his transgressions, to Israel his sin" (Micah 3: 8). The prophet Joel foretells of a

future dispensation when the Spirit of God would be poured out more abundantly and,

consequently, the *charism* of prophecy would be available to all: "and afterward, I will

pour out my Spirit on all people; your sons and daughters shall prophecy" (Joel 2: 28).

The New Testament Petrine epistolary reference to Old Testament prophecy

underscores the early church's conviction that "prophecy never had its origin in the will

of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet

1:21). The association of the Spirit of God with prophecy was equally prevalent in the

Inter-testamental Judaism. The apparent lacuna in prophetic activity during that period is

explained, in rabbinic literature, in terms of the absence of the Spirit of God; "when the

last prophets, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi died, the Holy Spirit ceased in Israel."[296]

Also, the Aramaic paraphrastic translations of certain books of the Hebrew Bible, the *Turgums*, often make reference to "the Spirit of Prophecy," or the prophetic *charism* of the Spirit of God.[297]

Prophecy in the incipient New Testament Church is portrayed in terms of an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. *The Acts of the Apostles* depict the "Day of Pentecost" as the programmatic onset of Joel's eschatological prophecy when the Holy Spirit was poured out on all flesh with prophetic manifestations. The narrator of the "Pentecostal" discourse (Acts 2:1- 39) views the "afterward" of Joel's prophecy as the dispensation of the New Covenant (Acts 2:17; cf. Jer 31:31-34; Ezek 36:25-27) when

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[296]*Tosefta Sota* 13:2. b (cf. *Sota* 48b; *Jubilees* 31:12).Yehezkel Kaufmann, weighs in on the question of apparent cessation of prophecy in Israel and notes that "The end of prophecy is not rooted in any abstract theory; it is the result of a deep-seated mood, the consequence of the feeling of the wrath of God," which is usually understood as the withdrawal of God's Spirit. Idem, *History of the Religion of Israel: From the Babylonian Captivity to the End of Prophecy* (New York: Ktav Publishing, 1977), 461. Plausibly this is the mood that is expressed in an apparently exilic Psalm which portrays the dearth of prophecy in Israel: "Why have you rejected us forever, O God? … We are given no miraculous signs; no prophets are left, and none of us knows how long this will be" (Ps 74:1- 9).

[297] See, for example, *Turg. Onk*. Gen 41:38; Num 11:26, 29. The references to "the Spirit of Prophecy" as the *charism* of prophecy underscores the Jewish understanding that it was through the Spirit of God that revelatory divine presence was actualized as prophecy. See also Jan Fekkes, *Isaiah and the Prophetic Traditions in the Book of Revelation: Visionary Antecedents and their Development* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), 40- 58, David E. Aune, "The Prophetic Circle of John of Patmos and the Exegesis of Revelation 22:16," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 37 (1989):108- 111, and Bogdan G. Bucur who observes that "it seems, then, that 'the spirit of prophecy' in Rev19:10 refers not to the person of the Holy Spirit or a heavenly agent … but to the charisma of the prophet." Idem, "Hierarchy, Prophecy, and the Anglomorphic Spirit," 190. Similar observations are made by Henry B. Swete, *The Apocalypse of John,* 303, Pierre Prigent, *Commentary on the Apocalypse of St. John*, 635, and Isbon Beckwith, *The Apocalypse of John,* 772. Although Max Turner understands the "spirit of prophecy" as a reference to "the organ of communication between God and man," Idem, "The Significance of Receiving the Spirit in Luke-Acts: A Survey of Modern Scholarship," *Trinity Journal* 2 (1981), 157, and, Idem, "The Spirit of Prophecy and the Power of Authoritative Preaching in Luke-Acts: A Question of Origins," *New Testament Studies* 38 (1992):66-88 (67), the "organ" is really not the Holy Spirit *per se*, but the prophetic charisma which the Holy Spirit imparts to the prophet.

the Spirit of God would be poured into the hearts of all the people of God, thereby, inferentially, universalizing the *charism* of prophecy.[298]

The Pauline epistolary discourses on the Holy Spirit, and the graces of God that are manifested as *charisms* of the Holy Spirit, make references to the believers as πνευματικοῖς "spiritual (people)" (e.g. 1 Cor 3:1; 2:13,15; 15:46). In certain instances, Paul appears to equate πνευματικός "spiritual (person)" with προφήτης "prophet;" thus, "if anyone thinks he is a προφήτης εἶναι ἢ πνυματικός …" (1 Cor 14:37). The *charisms* of the Spirit, including prophecy, are then referred to as πνευματικῶν "spirituals" or "spiritual endowments," often translated in English versions as "spiritual gifts" (1Cor 12:1; 14:1).[299] The πνευματικῶν are also referred to as χαρίσματα "charismata" or *charisms* (e.g. Rom 12:6; 1 Cor 1:7; 12: 4, 9; 12:31).[300] It is therefore apparent, from the review of Old Testament and New Testament scriptures, that the Spirit of God is the divine agency for the manifestation of the phenomenon of prophecy.

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[298] Helmut Koester remarks that "Pentecost was an experience of overwhelming divine presence … the experience of the gift of the Spirit became closely related to the rite of entrance into the new eschatological community … that everyone experienced the gift of the Spirit implied that the Spirit functioned as a principle of democratization" and, hence everyone had prophetic potential. Idem, "Writings and the Spirit: Authority and Politics in Ancient Christianity," *Harvard Theological Review* 84 (1991): 353-372 (353-354).

[299] See also Francis A. Sullivan, *Charisms and Charismatic Renewal*, 9- 25.

[300] Francis Sullivan defines *charisms* as "the manifold ways in which the graciousness of God is manifested in the lives of individual Christians, especially by making them effective instruments of grace to others in the body of Christ." Idem, *Charisms and Charismatic Renewal*, 18. Equally, David Pytches defines *charisms* as "the expression of God's grace at work, primarily in the church, and are trans-rational manifestations of God's power dispensed by him in ministering for the common good." Idem, *Spiritual Gifts in the Local Church* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Bethany House, 1985), 57.

4.5 Charismatic Prophecy: Definition and Description

The New Testament church's spontaneous, invasive oracular prophecy manifestations which, as reported in *The Acts of the Apostles* and in the Pauline epistolary discourses (e.g.1 Cor12-14), appear to arise from an immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit and are portrayed as *charisms* of the Holy Spirit, hence the appellation "charismatic prophecy." This form of prophetic manifestations, which is also closely associated with congregational-liturgical settings, constitutes the *locus classicus* of the New Testament teaching on prophecy (1 Cor 14:1-40). [301] It is also the most commonly reported form of prophetic manifestations in the contemporary Pentecostal-charismatic movement.[302] However, as Max Turner laments, although the Pentecostal-charismatic movement has brought the question of *charisms* of the Holy Spirit, including prophecy, to the fore in contemporary Christian discourse, "surprisingly, there are no comprehensive critical discussions of prophecy in the modern church."[303]

Mark Cartledge provides one of the most comprehensive definitions of charismatic prophecy which encapsulates all the attributes noted above; he defines the

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[301] See M. J. Cartledge, "Charismatic Prophecy: A Definition and Description," 79-120.

[302] The designation "Pentecostal-charismatic movement," as already described elsewhere in the present study, is generally identified as the contemporary Christian tradition that is characterized by the spiritual experience of "Spirit Baptism" as well as exercise of the *charisms* of the Holy Spirit. See also M. J. Cartledge, "Charismatic Prophecy: A Definition and Description," 80. Although the term 'Pentecostal' is often associated with the Christian denominations which espouse the classical doctrine of 'speaking in tongues' as initial evidence of Spirit Baptism, and 'Charismatic' as a reference to the experiences of charismatic gifts outside the classical Pentecostal denominations without necessarily espousing the doctrine of initial evidence, this distinction is increasingly losing theological significance as many classical Pentecostal denominations abandon the 'initial-evidence' doctrine and even the notion of subsequence of Spirit Baptism. See, for example, Simon Chan, "Evidential Glossolalia and the Doctrine of Subsequence," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 2 (1999): 189-198(195).

[303] Max Turner, *The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts,* 315. See also David Aune who depicts prophecy as "the neglected subject." Idem, *Prophecy in Early Christianity*, 1.

contemporary Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon of prophecy as "an especially

appropriate and powerful spontaneous utterance provided by the Holy Spirit, in one's

own language, given to the group, for the moment, for purposes of up-building,

encouragement and consolation."[304] This definition characterizes charismatic prophecy

as both invasive and congregational; it is perceived as proceeding from the immediacy of

divine presence, or the Holy Spirit, and the context of the prophecy manifestations is

worship gatherings in the Christian community.[305] In what follows, the above definition

is examined from the standpoint of social-scientific and theological perspectives in order

to illumine the primary empirical- biblical perspective of the present study.

4.5.1 Charismatic Prophecy: A Social- Scientific Perspective

The portrayal of charismatic prophecy as both a numinous and a phenomenal

experiential manifestation portends the plausibility of a social scientific analysis of the

phenomenon. Social science scholars, particularly in the fields of anthropology,

sociology, and psychology have increasingly been interested in understanding the nature

and function of religio-cultural rituals and experiences which are portrayed as

transcendent divine realities manifested in existential life. The phenomenon of prophecy

and the attendant notions of spirit possession and ecstatic behavior have featured in

recent social sciences research literature.[306] However, whereas socio- scientific

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[304] M. J. Cartledge, "Charismatic Prophecy," 75. See also Daniel A. Tappeiner, "A Psychological Paradigm for the Interpretation of the Charismatic Phenomenon of Prophecy," *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 5 (1977):23-29 (25).

[305] M. J. Cartledge, "Charismatic Prophecy," 73. See also Daniel Tappeiner, *"A Psychological Paradigm,"* 256.

[306] See, for example, D. A. Tappeiner, "A Psychological Paradigm,"23-29, Meredith B. McGuire, "The Social Context of Prophecy: Word Gifts of the Spirit Among Catholic Pentecostals," *Review of Religious Research* 18 (1977):134-137, Bennetta Jules-Rosette, "Ceremonial Trance Behavior in an African Church: Private Experience and Public Expression," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 19

approaches are germane to the study of human phenomena, the study of religious experiences is ultimately a biblical-theological task because religion pertains to issues of transcendence. Nonetheless, biblical-theological reflection can utilize insights gained from other disciplines since all Christian experiences have an anthropological dimension and are situated in socio-historical and cultural contexts.

From a social sciences perspective, the phenomenon of charismatic prophecy is often explained in a variety of psycho-social dynamics, including depth psychology, altered states of consciousness, hypnagogic imagery, or transposition. Although the self-understanding of a prophetic oracular speaker is that a revelatory message is received from a transcendent divinity through a divine spirit, depth psychology explains the notion of a transcendent divine spirit in terms of the duality of human personality. [307] The psychologist Paul Bloom defines human duality in terms of developmental psychology, by which a person's identity right from childhood develops in a dualistic fashion of two identity agencies - one's own body and one's own personality.[308] The physical agency, or one's own body, relates with the physical world of sensorial perception while the

(1980): 1-16, Peggy A. Wright," A Psychological Approach to Shamanic Altered States of Consciousness," *ReVision* 16 (1994):164-171, Heather Kavan, "Glossolalia and Altered States of Consciousness in Two New Zealand Religious Movements," *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 19 (2004): 171-184, P. Connolly, "Mystical Experiences and Trance Experience," *Transpersonal Psychology Review* 4 (2000): 23-35, J. Richardson, "Psychological Interpretations of Glossolalia: A Re-Examination of Research," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 12 (1973): 199-207, Guy E. Swanson, "Trance and Possession: Studies of Charismatic Influence," *Review of Religious Research* 19 (1978): 253- 278, Emma Cohen, "What is Spirit Possession?: Defining, Comparing, and Explaining Two Possession Forms," *Ethnos* 73 (2008): 101-106, Steve Summers, "Out of Mind for God: A Social-Scientific Approach to Pauline Pneumatology," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 13 (1998): 77-106, Martin J. Buss, "An Anthropological Perspective upon Prophetic Call Narratives," *Semeia* 21 (1981): 9- 30, and I. M. Lewis, *Ecstatic Religion: An Anthropological Study of Spirit Possession and Shamanism* (Baltimore, Md.: Penguin, 1971).

[307] See Emma Cohen, "What is Spirit Possession?" 101.

[308] Paul Bloom*, 'Descartes' Baby: How the Science of Child Development Explains What Makes Us Human* (New York: Basic Books, 2004), 190-195.

psychological agency, or one's own personality, relates with the social world. Bloom

goes on to posit that the two identities of the human being never develop into a perfectly

coherent integration, hence "our intuitive dualism grounds our understanding of personal

identity."[309] Emma Cohen, in her review of Paul Bloom and related works, concludes

that "recent research is beginning to show that the perception of one's self, or person, as

distinct from one's physical matter, or body, may be less a product of a particular

philosophical tradition, and more the outcome of an intuitive dualist stance on the social

world that originates early in infant development."[310] The human duality theory therefore

argues that a prophetic speaker's apparent perception of a transcendent spirit is really a

question of the physical self- perception of the psychological self.

The state in which a person feels inspired to utter an oracular speech is also

described, from a socio-scientific perspective, as an altered state of consciousness or a

hyper-arousal dissociation of one's psychological self from the physical self.[311] Goffredo

Bartocci describes the altered state of consciousness as "a particular experience which, in

cognitive terms, is felt and described as pertaining to the realm of the 'beyond the

human,' that is, to the cultural category of the divine."[312] Bartocci goes on to observe

that "cross-cultural research on the varieties of trance shows that altered states of

consciousness can be induced by both collective and personal rituals that allow the

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[309] Paul Bloom, *Descartes' Baby*, 195.

[310] Emma Cohen, "What is Spirit Possession?," 122.

[311] See Heather Kavan, "Glossolalia and Altered States of Consciousness," 172. See also Felicitas Goodman, *Speaking in Tongues: A Cross- Cultural Study of Glossolalia* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1972), 60.

[312] Goffredo Bartocci, "Transcendence Techniques and Psychobiological Mechanisms Underlying Religious Experience," *Mental Health, Religion and Culture* 7 (2004): 171-181(172).

subject to reach the altered state of consciousness by making the whole world appear or disappear in fantasy … the aim of transcendence is usually to reach a superior state of consciousness."[313] A number of self-induced or socially-induced factors are postulated as plausible causes of the hyper-arousal dissociation state. Self-induced factors include psychedelic drugs and rhythmic drumbeat and/or dancing. Psychedelic drugs reportedly trigger neurophysiological processes which intertwine mental experiences with behavior in a dissociative fashion, while rhythmic drumbeat and/or dancing can reach a climactic state of dissociation of the physical self with the psychological or transcendental self, thereby triggering an altered state of consciousness.[314] Other social science researchers, however, argue that self-induced factors are weak triggers of altered states of consciousness; they might induce some trance behavior, but not to the point of producing coherent oracular speech. Socially-induced factors are, however, viewed as the more effective causes of altered states of consciousness; hence Bartocci's remark that "culture wins over biology in the sense that trance states are easily brought about by culturally tuned psychological techniques.[315]

In religious contexts, the most commonly acclaimed socially-induced factors are ritual ceremonies, such as prayer or worship gatherings with ecstatic song and dance, where the collective context helps individuals learn how emotions may be channeled and expressed to induce altered states of consciousness. Guy Swanson refers to the collective ritual ceremonies as "charismatic encounters" or "situations in which we feel moved

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[313] Goffredo Bartocci, "Transcendence Techniques," 171.

[314] See Pegg A. Wright, "A Psychological Approach to Shamanic Altered States of Consciousness," 164, and Goffredo Bartocci, "Transcendence Techniques," 175.

[315] Goffredo Bartocci, "Transcendence Techniques," 172.

from within by purposes that are not merely our own."[316] In the contemporary

Pentecostal-charismatic movement, the collective experiences of singing, dancing, and

praying are thus viewed, from a social scientific perspective, as charismatic encounter

hypnotic techniques of suggestion since the atmosphere "is regarded as safe and secure;

it is both gentle and relaxed; there is confidence in the leader and an expectation that

something important and exciting is about to happen, often encouraged by the leader."[317]

John Kildahl utilizes the 'hypnotizing' charismatic encounters, or 'trance-inducing

rituals,' to explain the phenomenon of spirit possession. He argues that, in a trance state,

a person's ego is suspended, and the person believes that he or she is possessed by an

agency other than his or her own self.[318] Kildahl's thesis of ego suspension, however,

raises questions of how a person with a surrendered ego can, at the same time, have a

conscious perception of not only being possessed by a spirit but also being able to utter

coherent oracular speech.[319]

The social sciences perspectives reviewed above depict charismatic prophecy

experiences as purely anthropological dynamics devoid of any experiences of a

transcendent divinity.[320] However, the notion of dualism on which the above social

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[316] Guy E. Swanson, "Trance Possession: Studies of Charismatic Influence," *Review of Religious Research* 19 (1978): 253-278 (253). Swanson's concept of "charismatic encounter" is generic and is therefore neither restricted to the Pentecostal-charismatic movement nor to religious traditions.

[317] M. J. Cartledge, "Interpreting Charismatic Experience," 119, and David Middlemiss, *Interpreting Charismatic Experience (*London: SCM, 1996*), 241-252.

[318] John P. Kildahl, *The Psychology of Speaking in Tongues* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1972), 3.

[319] See also Mark Cartledge's critique of John Kildahl's thesis in M. J. Cartledge, "Interpreting Charismatic Experience," 119.

[320] Walter Hollenweger rightly points out that "anthropologists, ethnologists and sometimes sociologists have been the first to discover Pentecostalism, however, mostly without seeing its theological and academic relevance." Idem, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Development,* 196.

scientific perspectives are based is increasingly being critiqued in contemporary

scientific thought. As LeRon Shults observes:

> The world is not composed of discrete material 'bodies' that move 'through' space and time; rather, space, time, matter and energy are all bound together in dynamic relational fields that wrap and knot in ways that we experience as bodily forms. This has made it possible for theorists in the sciences of emergent complexity to conceptualize what has traditionally been called 'spirit' (or 'form' or 'life') as in some sense a qualification of matter, that is, as related to matter in some positive way without being simply reducible to it.[321]

The social scientific notion of anthropological duality is therefore viewed as dated

reductionism and, hence, no longer a useful explanation of charismatic prophecy

experiences in terms of mere anthropologism. Charismatic prophecy experiences are,

indeed, perceived by the religious practitioners as symbolic of the practitioner's

relationship to the sacred and as participatory experiences of divine presence; hence the

notion of being under the influence of a transcendent divine spirit.[322]

4.5.2 An Empirical-Theological Perspective

A number of scholars have applied the social-scientific insights in a theological

explication of charismatic encounter experiences in a non-reductionist manner. Daniel

Tappeiner, for example, has applied social-scientific insights to the analysis of the

phenomenon of charismatic prophecy in a manner that is not only faithful to the tenets of

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[321] F. LeRon Shults, "Dialogue: Spirit and Spirituality," 284. The remark, "without being simply reducible to it," is significant in that it avoids the portrayal of divine presence in the world in pantheistic categories of fusion of divinity with nature.

[322] See Richard A. Hutch, "The Personal Ritual of Glossolalia," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 19 (1980): 255-266 (256). See also Mark Cartledge who portrays charismatic-glossolalic experiences as symbolic of divine-human encounters. Idem, "The Future of Glossolalia: Fundamentalist or Experientialist?," *Religion* 28 (1998): 233-244.

scientific inquiry but also open to interface with biblical-theological convictions.[323]

Tappeiner draws an analogy between the dynamic of the Holy Spirit in the experience of

charismatic prophecy and the Johannine narrative imagery of the Spirit's phenomenal

effects; thus "the wind blows wherever it pleases; you hear the sound, but you cannot tell

where it comes from or where it is going; so it is with everyone born of the Spirit." (John

3: 8). From the Johannine narrative imagery, Tappeiner observes that "this quality of

spirit as non-objectifiable … necessarily leaves us with phenomena or effects … from

which inferences are drawn as to causes of them."[324] Inferentially therefore, scientific

analysis of pneumatological phenomena necessarily yields adequate effects to facilitate

religious inferences about divine causes.

The specific psychological paradigm that Tappeiner utilizes is a construct from

the psychological insights of Sigmud Freud, Abraham Maslow, Carl Jung, and G.

Allport, who portray the human being as an open system, or "a unified entity with

dimensions in the somatic, psychic and noetic spheres interacting with a variety of

spheres."[325] Following Morton Kelsey, Tappeiner postulates that "man actually interacts

with two fundamentally distinct environments- the objective space-time continuum of

manifested reality and the non-objectifiable sphere of spiritual reality."[326] Although this

postulate sounds like a platonic dualism of mutually exclusive spheres, Tappeiner is

quick to point out that the two spheres are actually interfaced at the human deep

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[323] Daniel Tappeiner, "A Psychological Paradigm," 23-27. See also Mark Cartledge, "Charismatic Prophecy," 74-76.

[324] Daniel Tappeiner, "A Psychological Paradigm," 24.

[325] Daniel Tappeiner, "A Psychological Paradigm," 24.

[326] Daniel Tappeiner, "A Psychological Paradigm," 24. See also Morton Kelsey, *Encounter with God* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Bethany, 1972), 34.

unconscious level which coincides with the domain of the divine Spirit.[327] Karl Rahner

expresses the same idea that the human person is both finite and transcendent, both

material and spiritual; thus "to be human is to be spirit… to live life while reaching

ceaselessly for the absolute in openness toward God."[328]

In the Pentecostal-charismatic experiences, the notion of Spirit Baptism, or being

"filled with the Spirit" as an experience of spiritual initiation and/or empowerment, is

viewed as the onset of an enhanced openness and sensitivity to the realm of the divine

Spirit.[329] Thus "the baptism in the Holy Spirit is to be construed as the opening link … to

allow some conscious control and awareness of the dynamics and content of the

unconscious particularly as they register the specific activity of the Holy Spirit at the

deepest level of man's being."[330] The charismatic-prophecy experience is therefore

viewed as an intense moment of interface between the divine Spirit and the human deep

unconscious dimension which overwhelms the human conscious dimension with a

revelatory impulse. Johannes Lindblom observes that:

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[327] Daniel Tappeiner, "A Psychological Paradigm," 24.

[328] Karl Rahner goes on to underscore the futility of our self-transcendence without divine revelation by stating that "on account of the finite character of our knowledge, and despite the absolute, limitless range of our transcendence, God remains forever the unknown one, so far as the actual knowledge of the human spirit is concerned." Idem, *Hearer of the Word: Laying the Foundation for a Philosophy of Religion* (trans. J. Donceel; New York: Continuum, 1994), 53. Rahner's remark is, in effect, an echo of the *Qoheleth's* observation that "He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done" (Eccl 3:11b).

[329] Mark Cartledge notes that "baptism in the Spirit is understood to be the gateway into charismatic dimensions of the church." Idem, "Charismatic Prophecy," 75. See also Daniel Tappeiner, "A Psychological Paradigm," 25. The notion of "Spirit Baptism" as a distinct experience subsequent to conversion and initiation is a controvertible doctrine, even within the Pentecostal-charismatic movement. See for example, Frank Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 33- 38. Nonetheless, the essence of the above observation is that, from a self-understanding perspective, the Pentecostal-charismatics view their experience of Spirit Baptism, however defined and experienced, as the onset of their entrance into the realm of the Spirit and, hence, enhanced spiritual sensitivity.

[330] Daniel Tappeiner, "A Psychological Paradigm," 25.

Typical of the revelatory state of mind is the feeling of being under an influence external to the self, a divine power, the consciousness of hearing words and seeing visions which do not come from the self, but from the invisible divine world, into which, in the moment of revelation, an entrance has been granted. This feeling of being subject to an external influence is perhaps the most constant element in the revelatory state of mind. This feeling is analogous to the poetic experience of inspiration. The reason for preferring the expression 'revelatory state' to inspiration is that the former belongs unmistakably to the field of religion.[331]

Tappeiner utilizes the psychological hypnagogic imagery to recast Lindblom's insights in terms of transcendental psychology that is, nonetheless, open to interface with transcendent experiences. The hypnagogic imagery is:

A state of consciousness experienced by an individual which precedes and leads to another state called sleep… it is a state of consciousness in which certain ego functions (maintenance of contact with the external world and of non-regressive thought content) undergo a sequence of changes leading to recognizable sleep.[332]

In the hypnagogic state, words, voices or images, which the subject person did not generate consciously, spring up to the conscious level of the mind.[333] This, according to Tappeiner, is analogous to the oracular utterances in charismatic prophecy; thus charismatic prophecy is "the irruption of prophetic words, or images analogous to the creative imagery of the hypnagogic state."[334]

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[331] Johannes Lindblom, *Prophecy in Ancient Israel*, 173-74. See also Daniel Tappeiner, "A Psychological Paradigm," 26.

[332] D. A. Tappeiner, "A Psychological Paradigm," 27. See also M. J. Cartledge, "Charismatic Prophecy," 74-75. For a comprehensive review of the literature on hypnagogic imagery, see Daniel L. Schacter, "The Hypnagogic State: A Critical Review of Literature," *Psychological Bulletin* 83 (1976): 452-481.

[333] D. A. Tappeiner, "A Psychological Paradigm," 27 The hypnagogic analogy of prophecy has also been postulated by E. E. Green, A. M. Green and E. D. Walters, "Voluntary Control of Internal States: Psychological and Physiological," in *Biofeedback and Self-Control* (ed. T. X. Barber; Chicago: Aldine-Atherton, 1971).

[334] D.A. Tappeiner, "A Psychological Paradigm," 28.

The Pentecostal-charismatic liturgical settings, which are characterized by an atmosphere of "singing, prayers, Scripture, testimonies, teachings and other activities"[335] are said to create a charismatic encounter, or a "hyper-arousal dissociation state" in which:

> The person who prophesies in this context has been opening up to the deeper level of the Spirit's purposes and activities through worship, prayer and glossolalia. Along with this is a type of unconscious processing of the materials presented in the meeting. Then, in a 'revelatory state' this material is suddenly 'crystallized' in seed thought, 'vision' or 'beginning phrase,' all of which are suggestive of hypnagogic imagery and it emerges as an insight into the leading of the Holy Spirit and the genuine feelings and concerns of the worshipping community of the Spirit.[336]

Mark Cartledge defines the hypnagogic imagery as "pictures or words which spring to mind and are not consciously generated."[337] Utilizing the hypnagogic imagery paradigm, Cartlegde also portrays the Pentecostal-charismatic encounter settings, in which charismatic prophecy is manifested, as follows:

> Its context in the contemporary church is worship in the Christian community. Such meetings evince an openness with singing, glossolalia, and a longing to hear the word of God through Scripture and word gifts … as the person feels 'anointed' or 'agitated' spiritually, a vision or a mental picture emerges suddenly in the person's mind; or sometimes a short phrase emerges … the experience of prophecy flows out of prayer and worship as the person has a sense of 'receiving' a message from an 'external source' and which comes 'suddenly' in this context … the person who prophesies has opened up to the deeper level of the Spirit's purposes by means of worship, prayer, and glossolalia.[338]

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[335] D.A. Tappeiner, "A Psychological Paradigm," 28. See also M. J. Cartledge, "Charismatic Prophecy," 75.

[336] D.A. Tappeiner, "A Psychological Paradigm," 28.

[337] Mark J. Cartledge, "Charismatic Prophecy," 75.

[338] Mark J. Cartledge, "Charismatic Prophecy," 75.

The phenomenon of charismatic prophecy has also been visualized in terms of C. S. Lewis' metaphysical-theological concept of transposition. Lewis utilizes the concept of transposition to explain how infinite divine realities can be communicatively mediated to human finite capacity which is epistemologically limited in perception, conceptualization, and expression.[339] Lewis argues that, in the infinite-finite inequality, there cannot be any isomorphic coupling, or a one-to-one correspondence, between divine speech and human perception, conceptualization, and articulation of the same. Hence, any human experience of divine reality is a "transposition," or a translation amenable to the realm of human finitude; "transposition occurs whenever the higher reproduces itself in the lower."[340] Prophecy, as divine speech through a human finitude is, inferentially, transpositional revelation. The agency of the divine Spirit is implicit in C. S. Lewis' concept of transposition.[341] C. S. Lewis goes on to argue that, in transposition, revelation is adaptively framed in imageries from human experience, such that what the recipient of revelation perceives is not really alien; it is revelation framed in phenomenal imageries amenable to human perception, conceptualization and articulation.[342]

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[339] C. S. Lewis, *Transposition and Other Addresses* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1949), 9-20, and, Idem, *They Asked for a Paper* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1962), 166- 82. Also C.S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory and Other Addresses* (New York: HarperCollins, 1949; repr. 2001), 91-115.

[340] C. S. Lewis, *They Asked for a Paper*, 173.

[341] Although C. S. Lewis does not explicitly enunciate the role of the Holy Spirit in transposition, Leane Payne, in his study of the Holy Spirit in C. S. Lewis' works, concludes that the Holy Spirit permeates all of C. S. Lewis' works in subtle and symbolic imageries. Idem, *Real Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Works of C. S. Lewis* (Westchester, Ill: Cornerstone, 1979), 5-14. See also Tony Ritchie, "Transposition and Tongues: Pentecostalizing an Important Insight of C. S. Lewis," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 13 (2005), 122.

[342] C. S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*, 97-102.

C. S. Lewis is, however, quick to point out that transpositional revelation does not imply an anthropologism; rather, transposition is a sacramental, or a divine-human participatory dynamic in which the human spirit is drawn into an experience of divinity. Thus, in transpositional revelation, there is not only an adaptation of divine truths to phenomenal imageries but also a drawing up of the human spirit into a sacramental experience of divine presence.[343] Utilizing the analogy of the Incarnation as transpositional revelation *par excellence*, C. S. Lewis infers that:

> The Incarnation worked not only by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God. And it seems to me that there is a real analogy between this and what I have called transposition: that humanity, still remaining itself, is not merely counted as, but veritably drawn into Deity.[344]

Thus C. S. Lewis' transposition model, inferentially, portrays prophetic revelation as both divine and human. However, the human dimension is sacramentally 'divinized' (that is, drawn into the realm of divinity) to such an extent that anthropologism is ruled out; the whole process of revelation is divinely initiated and divinely actualized through human perceptions, conceptualization, and speech. [345]

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[343] "Anthropologism" is a term that is often used to denote a humanistic worldview in which the human being takes center stage in epistemology such that all knowledge, including knowledge of divine reality, is humanly acquired rather than divinely given. Thus the human being is portrayed as occupying the epistemological center of the universe. See also Deepak Mistrey, "Cited: Derrida on Anthropological Prejudices in Austin and Husserl," *South African Journal of Philosophy* 25 (2006):1-26 (2). Mark Cartledge equally infers a transpositional revelation in charismatic prophecy when he observes that "since spiritual perceptions need to be translated into the language of objective reality in the space-time continuum, the words and images used are symbolic of spiritual reality." Idem, "Charismatic Prophecy," 76.

[344] C. S. Lewis, *They Asked for a Paper*, 178.

[345] "Divinization," in this context, does not connote the doctrinaire sense of "deification of humanity or *theosis*. See, for example, Daniel B. Clendenin, *Eastern Orthodox Christianity: A Western Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 117-137, 157-159. Rather, in this context it simply refers to the human depth dimension being baptized, as it were, into a divine presence in the revelatory moment. See also Karl Rahner who posits that God's self-communication is "divinizing grace" in that grace transforms one's view of God and the world. Idem, "Mysticism," in *Encyclopedia of Theology,* Mundi (New York: Seabury, 1975), 1010.

Tony Ritchie has applied C. S. Lewis' concept of transposition to the Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon of glossolalia. Richie observes that the portrayal of transposition as the use of human media to express divine experiences, or "the adaptation of a supernatural experience of the divine Holy Spirit to the natural medium of human expression" cannot be adequately described in mere picturesque symbolism.[346] Ritchie goes on to note that:

> The concept of symbolism is inadequate to explain this phenomenon, since the picture really does not participate in the reality it portrays; therefore a sacramental understanding is preferable to the merely symbolic … In transposition not only is the higher adapted to the lower, but the lower must also accommodate to the higher. As the divine 'squeezes' itself into the human shape, the human 'stretches' itself into divine shape … the God who comes down to humanity also takes humanity up as God.[347]

Ritchie further observes that glossolalia, as a form of charismatic manifestation, is therefore "not divine or human, but divine and human; a divine-human interface occurs in a sublime partnership of experience and expression."[348]

Thus the glossolalic expression, and hence prophetic utterance, is neither purely divine (thereby reducing the human agent to a mere robot), nor is it purely human (thereby reducing the phenomenon to anthropomorphism); it is divine will expressed through human liberty where, nonetheless, "the Holy Spirit is always the leading partner in the dance; though we move together, perhaps even almost simultaneously, the Spirit's

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[346] Tony Ritchie, "Transposition and Tongues," 127.

[347] Tony Ritchie, "Transposition and Tongues," 130. See also C. S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*, 100. Ritchie's imagery of the sacramental experience is reminiscent of the incarnational model in which the divine and human natures of Christ are said to be united in one person who is neither divine without humanity, nor human without divinity, and neither half divine nor half human, but wholly divine and wholly human. See, for example, George E. Ladd*, A Theology of the New Testament* (rev. ed., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 273-89.

[348] Tony Ritchie, "Transposition and Tongues," 127.

power and will are definitely determinative."[349] The charismatic manifestation of

glossolalia, and by extension prophecy, is thus an embodiment and expression of divine

presence that is experienced through the sacramental encounter with the divine spirit.

The speaker "becomes a human channel of divine grace as the Spirit flows into and

through one in an immediate, intimate and, sometimes, intense fashion."[350] This

observation has a profound inferential significance in that, not only does the speaker

sacramentally participate in divine presence but that he or she becomes a sacrament, or a

sacramental channel of the *charism* of prophecy by whom the hearers participate,

sacramentally, in the divine presence.[351]

   The onset of a prophetic manifestation has been described variously; for

example, Daniel Tappeiner portrays the onset as follows:

> The subjective experience which generally is mentioned is that of 'an anointing'
> or a deep spiritual 'agitation'… a person begins to sense this anointing or
> agitation not knowing precisely what it is about. Generally this causes the person
> to consider prophesying and when a beginning phrase (often stylized with the
> individual) is discerned, the person begins to prophesy with no premeditated plan.
> Others receive … a 'vision' or a 'seed thought' or both … Sometimes just a short
> phrase is given which seems to persist in the person's consciousness and may
> carry a strong spiritual power, evoking emotional responses of joy, thrill surge, or
> possible deep spiritual sorrow and tears.[352]

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[349] Tony Ritchie, "Transposition and Tongues," 128. See also T. J. Corridge who argues that "human freedom is not compromised by the fact that God takes the initiative towards us… on the contrary, it is God's initiative that creates our freedom." Idem, *Discerning the Spirit: A Theology of Revelation* (London: SCM, 1990),15-16.

[350] Tony Ritchie, "Transposition and Tongues," 132.

[351] Frank D. Macchia also views Spirit Baptism and the attendant charismatic manifestations of the Spirit as sacramental experiences. Idem, *Baptized in the Spirit*, 247-56. See also Richard Hutch who postulates a sacramental dimension in glossolalia; thus "glossolalia functions symbolically in the very same way as religious rituals like the Christian Eucharist. Rituals not only describe a person's relationship to the sacred, but they also aim at eliciting some experiential sense of confirmation about one's religious beliefs." Idem, "The Personal Ritual of Glossolalia," 256.

[352] Daniel Tappeiner, "A Psychological Paradigm," 27.

The notion of an "anointing" is described by Meredith McGuire as "an important sign that a person should prophesy, give a message in tongues, or give an interpretation … a sense of urgency or expectancy."[353] This is akin to Johannes Lindblom's notion of a "revelatory state of mind" which is characterized by a sense of being under the influence of a transcendent divine power and "consciously hearing words and seeing visions which do not come from the self."[354] A visionary experience in charismatic prophecy manifestations is described as "an inner picture or 'cartoon' which simply emerges suddenly, whole, and with no previous conscious consideration of it. It is experienced out of the blue causing the one who speaks it to be as surprised and as impressed by it as any of those who listen to him."[355] Visions have also been viewed as self-explanatory symbols or pictures, or word symbols that carry an intrinsic message value "pressing inexorably toward prophetic proclamation."[356]

Meredith McGuire, in her study of the social context of prophecy among Catholic Pentecostals' prayer groups in America, describes the phenomenon of charismatic prophecy as "the gift of the Holy Spirit by which God communicates directly with the prayer group through the voices of certain members."[357] This definition underscores the invasive nature, and the congregational setting, of charismatic prophecy. McGuire observes two types of charismatic prophetic proclamations: a direct vernacular

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[353] M. B. McGuire, "The Social Context of Prophecy," 142.

[354] Johannes Lindblom, *Prophecy in Ancient Israel,* 173.

[355] Daniel Tappeiner, "A Psychological Paradigm," 27.

[356] Burke O. Long, "Reports of Visions Among the Prophets," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 95 (1976):353-365 (354).

[357] Meredith B. McGuire, "The Social Context of Prophecy,"134.

oracular utterance, that is, a prophecy uttered directly in the language native to the prayer group, and an indirect glossolalic prophetic speech that is first given in glossolalia and subsequently interpretively uttered in the vernacular of the prayer group.[358] McGuire further notes that, in both cases, the oracular utterances are invasive charismatic speech and that the glossolalic utterance is distinct from the normal "praying or praising in tongues" which may be initiated at the discretion of the speaker; "this use of tongues is to be distinguished from regular praying in tongues in which the gift of tongues was used for personal prayer and praise."[359] Of particular note is McGuire's observation, following Kevin Ranaghan and Dorothy Ranaghan, that the interpretation of the invasive glossolalic utterance was essentially a separate *charism*:

> The interpretation is not translation, nor does the interpreter purport to 'understand' the literal meaning of the tongues. Rather, he receives a distinct inspiration about the meaning or sense of what was said, without having understood the words themselves; often there were different interpretations of the same glossolalic utterance.[360]

This observation has two significant implications. First, the 'interpreter' experiences an invasive *charism* and thus brings forth a distinct prophetic utterance, though derivatively induced by the invasive glossolalic utterance. Second, there is no isomorphic coupling between the invasive glossolalic prophecy and the 'interpreted'

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[358] M. B. McGuire, "The Social Context of Prophecy," 138.

[359] M. B. McGuire, "The Social Context of Prophecy," 138. See also Mark Cartledge, "Charismatic Prophecy," 72. Heather Kavan also distinguishes invasive, spontaneous glossolalia from context-dependent glossolalia which are routinized behavioral activity. Idem, "Glossolalia and Altered States of Consciousness," 181.

[360] M. B. McGuire, "The Social Context of Prophecy," 140, See also Kevin Ranaghan and Dorothy Ranaghan, *Catholic Pentecostals* (New York: Paulist, 1969), 128. Mark Cartledge also observes that "the interpretation was not a translation but a declaration of the meaning… it is the ability to give a sense of what has been said in an unknown tongue… the dynamic equivalent of that which was spoken in tongues… there could be more than one valid interpretation of a tongue." *Idem*, "Charismatic Prophecy: A Definition and Description," 97.

prophecy utterance. There is, in effect, a surplus in the glossolalic utterance which is not exhausted by any one 'interpretive' utterance; hence the plausibility of more than one 'interpretations' of the same invasive glossolalic utterance. The inherent absence of a one-to-one correspondence between human experience of reality and human articulation of the same is also noted by Eugene Boring who remarks that "reality resists being captured completely in words."[361] Widick Schroeder also observes an "inherently vague relation between linguistic symbols and human experience."[362] The impact of charismatic prophecy on an audience is, thus, not limited to the linguistic content effect of a prophecy utterance.

McGuire's study of charismatic encounters identifies a number of contextual factors which, though interpreted as social effects of prophecy,[363] nonetheless, appear to, reciprocally, function as inducers of a charismatic encounter. The contextual factors include: an atmosphere of expectancy, a sense of mystery, and a sense of immediacy of divine presence. McGuire's observation that "the atmosphere of expectancy is directly related to the group's belief system that communication from God will be forthcoming" thus connotes a mutually-reinforcing relation between prophecy and the contextual atmosphere in which it is manifested.[364] McGuire also notes that "both the atmosphere

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[361] Eugene Boring, "What Are We Looking For?," 143.

[362] W. Widick Schroeder, "Measuring the Muse," 150.

[363] M. B. McGuire, "The Social Context of Prophecy," 144.

[364] M. B. McGuire, "The Social Context of Prophecy," 144.

of expectancy and the sense of immediacy of God promoted the other element, mystery."[365]

In an ethnographic study of ceremonial ecstatic behavior in a Central African charismatic church, Bennetta Jules-Rosette observed that the "members hold beliefs in Holy Spirit inspiration and faith healing … during their weekly worship ceremony (*kerek*), the Apostles use prayer and song to create a state of individual inspiration and of collective trance."[366] Rosette's observation reinforces the inference that the belief system that inheres in a group meeting is not only a social effect of charismatic encounter but also its conducing factor. Richard Hutch, in his ritual approach to the study of glossolalia, develops a charismatic behavioral model which, from a purely phenomenological perspective, emphasizes the significance of a charismatic encounter-conducing atmosphere:

> The production of glossolalia is due to various groups in the process of ritualizing (e.g. praying together), institutionalizing (e.g. continuing prayer fellowships), and thus, culturally elaborating upon the experiences of individuals. The locus of action is not intra-psychic processes in an individual tongue speaker, but the interaction between the social and cultural forms according to which the group stylizes the practice.[367]

It would therefore appear that belief systems which the charismatics espouse and the exultant atmosphere that is created in the charismatic gatherings, are conducive to a charismatic encounter in which prophetic manifestations occur. The prophetic utterances, in turn, enhance the atmosphere of a charismatic encounter. As McGuire goes on to observe, "speaking in tongues is mysterious simply by its unintelligibility to the hearer-

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[365] M. B. McGuire, *"The Social Context of Prophecy,"* 144.

[366] Bennetta Jules-Rosette, "Ceremonial Trance Behavior in an African Church," 1.

[367] Richard A. Hutch, "The Personal Ritual of Glossolalia," 258.

and to the speaker as well … the Pentecostal emphasis upon glossolalia constitutes a re-mystification of worship."[368] Hence Rosette's observation that a single linear causal model does not adequately account for the relationship between the social atmosphere and the attendant charismatic manifestations, but that the social context is so crucial to the charismatic behaviors and utterances that "none of these behaviors can be adequately interpreted outside of the social context."[369]

Other experiences in charismatic prophecy manifestations include pictures, subjective impressions, audible voices, scriptures coming to mind, and physical sensations. Mark Cartledge observes that "pictures were the most common experience … some felt that they usually received the interpretation simultaneously with the reception of the picture of vision."[370] Subjective impressions were described as "a prompting, a stirring within me; it wasn't entirely mental at all; it feels as if it rises up from within me and joins my mind, but it's an intuitive activity as well as an intellectual one."[371] The experiences of physical sensations and subjective impressions are best described by a respondent, in William Sneck's phenomenological study of *charisms* of the Spirit, as follows:

> When I prophesy to others, I feel minor physical manifestations, but mainly a psychological sensation of 'God wants me to say something.' I have conscious knowledge of the first word or two; after that, it's open. I have to surrender to trusting that the Lord will say what He wants. The validation is my internal sense that it's correct. I have no responsibility to see that what I say becomes law for the hearers… The message content is not my own, but it is phrased in my own

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[368] M. B. McGuire, "The Social Context of Prophecy," 145.

[369] B. Jules- Rosette, "Ceremonial Trance Behavior," 2.

[370] M. J. Cartledge, "Charismatic Prophecy: A Definition and Description," 84.

[371] M. J. Cartledge, "Charismatic Prophecy: A Definition and Description", 83.

language, experience, my understanding. The Lord uses me and my experience as a vehicle of His message.[372]

In addition to the inner dynamics that presage charismatic prophecy experiences, a number of outward, or visible, displays have also been observed, including fainting, prostration, laughing, crying, jumping, or jerking, variously described by Pentecostal-charismatics as "being slain by the Spirit," "flaking out," or "having a glory fit."[373] Lindblom views the visible displays as outward effects of ecstasy which represent a strong intensification of inspiration; "one becomes impervious to impressions from without; consciousness is exalted above the ordinary level of daily experience."[374] The ecstatic displays, or visible manifestations of trance states, are thus viewed as the human psychobiological responses to invasive divine presence. The responses may vary between individuals and contexts. As Steve Summers notes, "depending on the individual and cultural context, there are various degrees of altered states of consciousness, ranging from intense dissociation to minimal levels of arousal."[375] Felicitas Goodman's depiction of trance as a personality and context-dependent "specific state of hyper-arousal dissociation," also implies that the apparently aberrant behaviors are dependent on the hyper-arousal sensitivity of an individual and the hyper-arousal context. [376] Thus highly 'hyper-arousal' sensitive individuals are likely to respond more

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[372] William J. Sneck, *Charismatic Spiritual Gifts: A Phenomenological Analysis* (Washington, D.C.: University of America Press, 1981), 151.

[373] David Pytches, *Spiritual Gifts*, 149. See also Mark J. Cartledge, "Interpreting Charismatic Experience," 131-32.

[374] Johannes Lindblom, *Prophecy in Ancient Israel*, 4-5, 35.

[375] Steve Summers, "Out of My Mind for God," 92.

[376] Felicitas D. Goodman, *Speaking in Tongues,* 60.

ecstatically to a charismatic encounter. Likewise, a highly exultant liturgical setting is plausibly more conducive to ecstatic behavior than a less enchanted atmosphere.

The outward ecstatic behavior in charismatic prophetic manifestations is plausibly what the prophet Samuel refers to when he tells Saul, "the Spirit of Yahweh will come upon you in power… and you will be changed into a different person" (1 Sam10: 6); then, "when all those who had formerly known him saw him prophesying…they asked, 'what is this that has happened to the son of Kish?" (1 Sam10:11). Thus Saul's apparent ecstatic behavior was visible to "those who had formerly known him." However, the case of Saul "prophesying until… he stripped off his robes and… lay that way all that day and night" (1 Sam 19:23, 24) is plausibly associated with his being possessed by "an evil spirit" (1 Sam 18:10), and is not consistent with the apostolic admonition that "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the control of prophets" (1 Cor 14:32-33). [377] Felicitas Goodman's studies of glossolalia appear to indicate that ego control, or self-awareness, can be maintained even when one is in a state of ecstasy.[378] Thus the charismatic prophecy speaker is able to maintain human decency even in a state of an intense charismatic encounter. The retention of self-awareness is also illustrated in William Sneck's phenomenological study, in which one of his respondents describes the ecstatic prophetic experience as follows:

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[377] See also John R. Levinson who, in reference to 1 Samuel 19, observes that "the depiction of Saul's fall into a catatonic state occurs only here… Saul's character has so unraveled- not least as a result of his succumbing to an evil spirit- that he cannot possibly be an analogue to the Elders of Numbers 11." Idem, "Prophecy in Ancient Israel: The Case of the Ecstatic Elders," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 65 (2003):501-512 (509).

[378] F. D. Goodman, *Speaking in Tongues,* 8- 13. See also Richard Hutch, "The Personal Ritual of Glossolalia"*,* 259.

I felt the Holy Spirit in a physical sense. I had this awareness even when my eyes were closed… there were no boundaries: I sensed that I could reach out around myself to infinity. I knew it was the Lord. I felt words coming, but the words weren't mine. I felt elated. Now I understand why the Apostles appeared to be drunk. I had no idea whether I was talking or not. I felt like I was floating.[379]

Charismatic prophecy, as a category in the biblical-theological rubric of revelation, is the specific case of revelation in which the immediacy of God's self-disclosure is experienced. However, as Avery Dulles observes, prophecy as the immediacy of God's revelatory presence "reaches its perfection in the person of Jesus Christ who mediates to us his own communion with God."[380] This observation is consistent with the scriptural declaration that, "In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his son, whom he has appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe" (Heb 1:1-2). Inferentially, therefore, Old Testament prophecy anticipates its ultimacy in the revelation of Jesus Christ while, in the New Testament era, prophecy participates in the ultimacy of the revelation of Jesus Christ. Thus, the ultimacy of prophecy in the person of Jesus Christ does not do away with God's continuing self-disclosure through prophecy; rather, Jesus' continuing presence in the church through the Holy Spirit implies a continuing prophetic voice in the church.[381]

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[379] William J. Sneck, *Charismatic Spiritual Gifts*, 132.

[380] Avery Dulles, S.J., *Models of Revelation* (Maryknoll, N.Y: Servant Books, 1992),74- 75.

[381] See also G. W. H. Lampe who, following G.B. Caird, notes that the Early Church's pneumatology of martyrdom understood the Spirit as the one who inspired believers to prophetically give witness to Jesus. Thus "the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit that inspires the prophets. It is the word spoken by God and attested by Jesus that the Spirit takes and puts into the mouth of the Christian prophet." Idem, "The Testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy (Rev19:10)," in *The New Testament Age, Vol.1: Essays in Honor of Bo Reicke* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1984), 249. Also G. B. Caird, *A Commentary on the Revelation of St. John the Divine* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), 238.

Eugene Boring also notes that "the church always finds itself with the double task of bearing witness to the once-for-all revelation given to the world in the there-and-then event of Jesus of Nazareth, and of mediating the continuing voice of the living Lord."[382] Charismatic prophecy, as the dominant mode of prophecy in the incipient New Testament church can, therefore, be viewed as a continuing voice of Jesus in the church which manifests his revelatory presence.[383] The Holy Spirit, which is depicted as the agency of divine presence, reveals, by virtue of the human spirit's sacramental experience of the divine presence, the thoughts of God to the human spirit and inspires the human spirit with revelatory utterance:[384]

> The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us… the man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned (1 Cor 2:10b-14).

It is, however, noted that the Spirit of God is not the only transcendent agency that might be present to the human spirit; the presence of other spirits is also possible, as instantiated in the case of king Saul who "prophesied" when "an evil spirit" came upon him (1 Sam 18:10), or king Ahab's prophets who proclaimed oracles while under the influence of a "deceiving spirit" (1 Kgs 22:19- 28). Daniel Tappeiner observes that a

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[382] M. Eugene Boring, *The Continuing Voice of Jesus*, 272.

[383] See also David E. Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity*, 200, and Eugene Boring, *The Continuing Voice of Jesus,* 59.

[384] As Eugene Boring notes, the notion of inspiration is "intended to express the claim that a spirit or power from or identical with the deity causes the prophet to speak." Idem, "What Are We Looking For?," 147. See also LeRon Shults who portrays inspiration as the "empowering divine presence." Idem, Dialogue," 271.

charismatic prophecy manifestation "does not necessarily imply the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit even in the Christian context."[385] It is therefore instructive that the mention of the *charism* of prophecy in the apostolic writings is nearly always accompanied by a reference to the *charism* of discernment, or the ability to know and distinguish spirits (e.g. 1 Cor 12:10; 14: 29; 1Thess 5:20, 21; 1 John 4:1). This observation contributes to a Christian theology of religions; it accounts for occurrences of prophetic phenomena in non-Christian traditions.

4.6 Charismatic Prophecy: Voices of the Pentecostal-Charismatics

A basic presupposition of the present study is that the voices of the Pentecostal-charismatic are, indeed, biblical-theological expressions; they represent the Pentecostal-charismatics' reflections on their experiences in the light of Scripture. Douglas Jacobsen notes that:

> Pentecostal theology is grounded in experience, but experience guided by biblical truths … Pentecostals have used songs, sermons, prayers, and testimonies to express their theological convictions but that predilection does not mark Pentecostal theology as unique; all Christian traditions have used those forms of communication for theological purposes … the point is that while Pentecostal theology does indeed have a different center of gravity than many other kinds of theology, Pentecostal theology does not exist in a class by itself."[386]

Walter Hollenweger laments that academic theologians have largely ignored and/or failed to integrate Pentecostal theology into mainstream academic theological discourse; "the greatest revival movement of our time is largely ignored by professional theologians, probably because its strongest side is its oral theology." [387] However, as

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[385] Daniel Tappeiner, "A Psychological Paradigm," 24.

[386] Douglas Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit*, 2, 7.

[387] Walter, *Pentecostalism*, 196.

Hollenweger goes on to observe, Pentecostal oral theology can no longer be treated as a side-track exotic study; it has to be integrated into mainstream academic theological discourse. Since the Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon has virtually permeated every Christian tradition, the incorporation of the voices of the Pentecostal-charismatics into any critical biblical or theological study is an imperative.[388]

There is hardly any popular literature on prophecy by the Kenyan Pentecostal-charismatics. A perusal of the church bookstalls and pastorate libraries in the congregations studied, as well as a perusal of internet sources, did not yield any significant literature on charismatic prophecy native to Kenya. The following observations are therefore based, mainly, on the literature of a number of Pentecostal-charismatics who appear to be the icons of the global Pentecostal-charismatic movement and whose literature was observed to be commonly available in the bookstalls and pastorate libraries of the congregations studied. Pentecostal-charismatics premise their prophetic experiences on their view of the nature of Christian faith. Steve Sampson, a Pentecostal-charismatic 'prophet,' argues that "Christianity is far more than a set of beliefs – it is a personal covenant with God through Jesus Christ. And this covenant promises fellowship and communication with the Holy Spirit."[389] Prophecy, in this respect, is therefore viewed as the voice of God in an ongoing communicative fellowship with the church.

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[388] Walter Hollenweger goes on to observe that the traditional mainline churches must come to grips with the reality of the Spirit's work not only in the worldwide Pentecostal movement but also its permeation in the entire Christendom, and that Pentecostalism can no longer be viewed as a fringe study. Idem, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Development*, 196-198. See also, Idem, "Pentecostalism and Academic Theology: From Confrontation to Cooperation," *EPTA Bulletin* 10 (1992): 42-49.

[389] Steve Sampson, *You Can Hear the Voice of God* (Tonbridge, U.K.: Sovereign Word, 1993), 13.

Prophecy is described variously in the popular literature of the Pentecostal-charismatics. It is, however, observed that many Pentecostal-charismatics do not appear to draw clear distinctions between charismatic prophecy and prophetic ministry. A renown America Pentecostal-charismatic 'prophet,' Morris Cerullo, whose books on charismatic experiences were available in the bookstalls of all the congregations studied, simply defines prophecy as the revelation of Jesus, who is "the word of God," and then observes that the continuing prophecy in the church is an "unveiling of truths within the Scriptures:"

> The Word of God is God's complete revelation to man; from Genesis to Revelation it is filled with prophecies which have been fulfilled, are in the process of being fulfilled, or will be fulfilled in the future … prophets today have the ministry of unveiling truths within the Scriptures.[390]

Austin Sparks, a renown Pentecostal-charismatic teacher of yesteryear, also gives a generic description of prophecy; he states that prophecy is "spiritual interpretation … it is the interpretation of everything from a spiritual standpoint; the bringing of the spiritual implications of things past, present, and future, before people of God, giving them to understand the significance of things in their spiritual value and meaning."[391] A similar description of prophecy is given by Kim Clement, another Pentecostal-charismatic 'prophet' who writes that prophecy is God's voice which "reveals the desire of God's heart" for his people in contextual situations.[392] Clement goes on to state that "one of the basic principles of prophecy is that God's voice creates something new in our lives; there is a creative power associated with his speech, and when his word comes to us, it comes

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[390] Morris Cerullo, *The Prophetic Mantle* (San Diego, Calif.: World Evangelism, 2000), 59.

[391] T. Austin Sparks, *Prophetic Ministry,* 2.

[392] Kim Clement, *Secrets of the Prophetic,* 52.

with dynamic energy."[393] Clement's description of prophecy places emphasis on the

inspirational-experiential impact, rather than on the revelatory significance, of prophecy.

Lester Sumrall, a Pentecostal-charismatic pastor, however, appears to delineate

charismatic prophecy with referential specificity; he states that "prophecy is the greatest

of the three gifts of inspiration. In 1 Corinthians chapters 11-14, the gift of prophecy is

referred to a total of 22 times, which seems to reveal its importance … God specifically

limits this gift to three beautiful exercises – edification, exhortation, and comfort."[394]

The experience of charismatic prophecy is also described variously by the

Pentecostal-charismatics. Douglas Jacobsen recounts the testimony of an early twentieth

century Pentecostal leader, William Durham, who narrated his glossolalic-prophetic

experience as follows:

> I was overcome by the mighty fullness of power and went down under it. For
> hours He wrought wonderfully in me … finally my throat began to enlarge and I
> felt my vocal organs being, as it were, drawn into a different shape … and last of
> all I felt my tongue begin to move my lips to produce strange sounds which did
> not originate in my mind.[395]

Similarly, Kenneth Hagin recounts his own prophetic experiences of awareness, in the

literal sense of the word ἐκστάσις, of "displacement" or "standing outside oneself." Thus

"sometimes when you are prophesying, it seems as if there were two of you. It seems as

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[393] K. Clement, *Secrets of the Prophetic*, 64.

[394] Lester Sumrall, *The Gift and Ministries of the Holy Spirit* (New Kensington, Pa.: Whitaker House, 1982), 111.

[395] Narrated in Douglas Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit*, 1.

if I am standing right beside myself. You see, it is coming from my inward man where the Spirit of God who is prophesying abides."[396]

The Pentecostal-charismatic icon, Oral Roberts, whose literature was available in all the congregations studied, points out the necessity of an appropriate belief system and an atmosphere of expectancy for charismatic manifestations to happen. He not only emphasizes the significance of his introductory clarion call "expect a miracle" in his evangelistic 'healing' meetings, but also states that "my best work was done when I worked with 'believing' believers…I learnt to reinforce my preaching of the word of God by my personal testimony." [397] Steve Sampson also concurs that "expectation is the key to the move of the Holy Spirit among the saints. When saints gather with anticipation, the Holy Spirit moves in response."[398] These observations corroborate the social scientific observations and the insights from empirical literature that the belief ethos of a group and the charismatic encounter atmosphere in their congregational settings are germane to charismatic prophecy experiences and manifestations.

The experience of hearing a voice at the onset of a prophetic experience is described by many Pentecostal-charismatics as a common occurrence. Kenneth Hagin draws a distinction between the voice of one's conscience and the voice of the Holy Spirit; "when the Holy Spirit within you speaks, it is more authoritative; sometimes it is so real it almost seems to be an audible voice; you may even look around to see who said

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[396] Kenneth E. Hagin, *How You Can be Led by the Spirit of God (2d. ed., Tulsa, Okla.: Kenneth Hagin Ministries*, 2006),101.

[397] Oral Roberts*, Expect a Miracle: My Life and Ministry: An Autobiography* (Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 354, 358.

[398] Steve Sampson*, You Can Hear the Voice of God*, 22.

it … but then you realize it was in you."[399] Kim Clement also describes his experiences

of hearing the voice of God as follows:

> People constantly ask: Kim, do you actually hear audible words when God speaks
> to you? That has happened on occasions, but the vast majority of the time, He
> speaks to my spirit, and I have learned to recognize His voice. God certainly has
> the capacity of speaking with an audible voice. But those who tell you they have
> heard 'the voice of God' will almost always say that the communication has been
> Spirit to spirit.[400]

Visionary experiences are also described as other onsets of charismatic prophecy

manifestations. Steve Swanson describes a visionary experience as "an extremely vivid

experience; the person seeing the vision may well see it with eyes wide open; in fact it

appears as real life."[401] The visionary experiences are said to be presaged by an

'anointing' of the Holy Spirit. Bruce Yocum describes the 'anointing' as "a sense of

urgency … a sense of the message … a clear, even precise, understanding of the specific

message the Lord is giving," with a compulsion to speak the message. [402] The visionary

experiences occur, in most cases, in prayer. Sampson notes that:

> Much of what we pray is prophetic as the words being prayed are given by the
> Holy Spirit. Many times it is clear that a prayer offered is actually equivalent to
> prophecy because there is an awareness of the Holy Spirit anointing every word.
> Following such prayers, it is not uncommon to hear the person comment, 'as I
> was praying, the Lord showed me a picture of …'"[403]

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[399] Kenneth E. Hagin, *How You Can be Led by the Spirit of God* , 71.

[400] Kim Clement, *Secrets of the Prophetic,* 61- 62. See also Steve Sampson who recounts that "I
would hear a phrase that I felt I was to prophecy, but was too timid to give it forth. Then seconds later,
another person would give the same, or very similar message." Idem, *You Can Hear the Voice of God,* 75.

[401] Steve Swanson, *You Can Hear the Voice of God,* 81.

[402] Bruce Yocum, *Prophecy: Exercising the Prophetic Gifts of the Spirit in the Church Today* (Ann
Arbor, Mich.: Servant Books, 1976), 77.

[403] S. Sampson, *You Can Hear the Voice of God*, 81.

Another reported experience which presages charismatic prophecy manifestations is a revelatory impulse. According to Kim Clement, a revelatory impulse is "like a flash of light that comes so quickly that the mind cannot take time to dissect and define the word; it is spoken before it is even fully perceived."[404] Kim Clement goes on to observe that the prophetic word is "meant to give hope and to help God's people understand that he has put eternity in their hearts because he has a destiny for their lives."[405] Thus, according to this view, prophecy encourages the hearers with eschatological hope.[406]

The voices of the Pentecostal- charismatics recounted above generally resonate with the social scientific insights as well as the biblical and empirical literature observations noted above, namely that charismatic prophecy is a revelatory experience of divine presence in congregational-liturgical settings; it is often presaged by visionary experiences, voices within or words coming to mind, that a charismatic encounter is a prerequisite for charismatic prophecy manifestation, and that charismatic prophecy serves to enliven congregations with revelatory edification, encouragement and consolation. These observations are, however, made by Pentecostal-charismatic icons from the Western world. Since the observations resonate with the perceptual experiences observed in the exploratory case study, it not clear whether the observations coincide with the African perceptual experiences or whether they influence the African perceptual experiences of prophetic manifestations. Thus, are the observed perceptual experiences

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[404] Kim Clement, *Secrets of the Prophetic*, 75.

[405] Kim Clement, *Secrets of the Prophetic*, 82.

[406] See also Lester Sumrall who expresses a similar view. Idem, *The Gifts and Ministries of the Holy Spirit,* 111-119.

of charismatic prophecy in the exploratory case study native spiritual experiences, or are they induced by external influence in the form of the Western Pentecostal-charismatic popular literature? This question begs a causal-relational investigation which is beyond the scope of the present study. However, from the researcher's empirical observations and impressionistic judgment, it is surmised that the external literature served to help the African charismatics reflect, conceptualize and articulate their own native charismatic prophecy experiences.

4.7 Charismatic Prophecy: Emerging Theoretical Constructs

The insights which emerge from the above review of literature have helped to clarify and concretize the observations made in the inductive case study, together with the heuristic pre-understandings which motivated the study in the first place. The clarified and concretized observations and heuristic pre-understandings constitute broad theoretical constructs which are summarized as follows:

First, charismatic prophecy is an invasive oracular utterance which arises from a perceptual immediacy of divine presence and is thus viewed as a *charism* of the Holy Spirit; hence the appellation 'charismatic prophecy.' Charismatic prophecy is thus a powerful spontaneous oracular speech uttered under an immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit in one's own language, usually uttered at a group gathered for worship.

Second, in the Pentecostal-charismatic movement, charismatic prophecy is most prevalent in congregational-liturgical settings in which the rituals of exultant singing, dancing, prayer, glossolalic utterances, as well as extemporaneous recitations of Scripture and 'testimonies,' or personal narrative accounts, create a charismatic encounter, or a hyper-arousal dissociation state, conductive to irruptions of physical

sensations, images, voices or words. The charismatic encounter is also conditioned by the congregants' longing for, and expectancy of, an immediacy of divine presence and divine revelatory communication.

Third, the charismatic prophecy experience is perceived as an intense moment of a sacramental interface between the divine spirit and the human deep unconscious dimension, which overwhelms and infuses the human conscious dimension with a revelatory impulse. The experience is analogically viewed as a psychological hypnagogic state in which words, voices or images, which the subject did not create consciously, spring up to the human conscious dimension and are then uttered in human language.

Fourth, the charismatic prophecy experience is also analogically viewed as transpositional revelation in which there is an infinite- finite inequality, or an absence of isomorphic coupling between infinite divine disclosure and finite human perception, conceptualization and articulation. Therefore the prophetic revelation is adaptively framed in phenomenal imageries amenable to human perception and articulation. Charismatic prophecy is, hence, neither purely divine, thereby reducing the human agent to a mere robot, nor is it purely human, thereby reducing the phenomenon to anthropomorphism; rather, it is an immediacy of divine will expressed spontaneously through human liberty.

Fifth, charismatic prophecy can either be a direct vernacular utterance, that is, prophecy uttered directly in the language native to a congregation, or a glossolalic prophetic utterance which is subsequently invasively 'interpretively' uttered in vernacular. The invasive 'interpretation' of a glossolalic prophetic utterance is viewed as a separate *charism* from the original glossolalic utterance in the sense that there is no

isomorphic coupling, or a one-to-one correspondence, between the invasive glossolalic utterance and the derivative-invasive 'interpretation;' hence the possibility of more than one prophetic 'interpretation' of the same glossolalic utterance.

Sixth, the onset of a charismatic prophecy experience is usually accompanied by such visible signs as agitated jerking, fainting and prostration or 'being slain by the spirit,' laughing, crying, jumping, and other ecstatic manifestations. The subject might see visions in the form of images or words, hear audible voices, feel or see scriptures coming to mind, or experience physical sensations as signifiers of a revelatory impulse. The prophetic message might either be received some time before the actual utterance, or only part of the message might be received in advance with the rest of the message coming to mind as the subject begins to speak, or the subject might simply feel a sense of compulsion to speak and then the revelatory message is received simultaneously with the utterance.

Seventh, the primary function of charismatic prophecy is *paraklesis*; it serves to edify, encourage, and console a congregation in contextual situations. It is thus a *kairological* word for a specific people in a specific context and, hence, does not have the same universal and abiding significance as Scripture. Nonetheless, the *parakletic* function of charismatic prophecy is viewed, not only as a manifestation of the immediacy of divine presence but also, as a real-time divine word spoken to specific situational contexts in the life of the church and thus enlivens the church with the assurance of providential divine presence and eschatological hope. In what follows, the emerging theoretical constructs are further subjected to an evaluative analysis through

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deductive-explanatory case studies in order to show whether the evaluative empirical

data confirms or disconfirms the validity of the theoretical constructs.

CHAPTER FIVE

DEDUCTIVE-EXPLANATORY CASE STUDIES

5.1 Introduction

Whereas the inductive-exploratory phase of the empirical-biblical cycle entailed exploratory generation of descriptive categories for understanding the phenomenon of charismatic prophecy, the deductive-explanatory phase investigates the validity of the interpretation and meaning that the emerging theoretical constructs ascribe to the phenomenon under study. The deductive-explanatory phase is therefore a cross-validation process which considers the consistency between observations made in the exploratory case study, confirmed or otherwise by the evaluative case studies, and the theory that attempts to explain them.[407]

The evaluative case studies utilize focus group as the main data gathering method. Although focus group research has been questioned as to its scientific validity in theory confirmation,[408] Edward Fern argues that "in some instances, focus groups may produce knowledge that is more scientific than gained from quantitative surveys … because a

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[407] See also D. E. Polkinghorne, "Two Conflicting Calls," 103- 114. See also N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln, as well as M. Q. Patton and P.K. Feyerbend who challenge the narrowness of deductive experimental causal testing in the study of social phenomena. In particular, they emphasize the complex symbiotic relationship between the researcher, the object of study and the context that influences social inquiries and which cannot be exhaustively explained by positivistic causal testing investigations. Instead they propose a flexible application of the deductive approach that eschews simplistic causal relationships but, instead, explores and explains the complex relationship between social phenomena and our conceptualization of the same. N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln, *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials (Thousand Oaks, Calif.*: Sage, 1988), M. Q. Patton, *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods* (Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage, 1990), and P.K. Feyerbend, *Philosophical Papers, Vol. 1: Realism, Rationalism and the Scientific Method* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981). See also D. T. Campbell, "Qualitative Knowing in Action Research," 366-376, and Edward F. Fern, *Advanced Focus Group Research,* 10.

[408] B. J. Calder, for example, argues that experimental focus group research provides everyday knowledge that is neither scientifically derived nor valid for scientific evaluation. Idem, "Focus Groups and the Nature of Qualitative Marketing Research," *Journal of Marketing Research* 14 (1977): 353-364.

theory can never be proved, repeated disconfirmation from a series of focus groups may

have more scientific meaning than the quantitative survey method, which is commonly

believed to be more scientific."[409] Edward Fern further argues that focus groups can be

used deductively "to evaluate the reliability, validity and generalizability of findings."[410]

Equally, Richard Krueger notes that, although generalization can be a controversial issue

in focus group studies, it is generally accepted that focus group research can be used

evaluatively to gain a more complete understanding of a particular phenomenon and the

transferability of the findings into other environments.[411] The theory to be confirmed or

disconfirmed is encapsulated in the observations which emerged from the inductive case

study and subsequently clarified and conceptualized into concrete theoretical constructs

in the light of the body of knowledge emerging from the survey of literature.

5.2 Participant Observation

Two congregations for the deductive-explanatory case studies were selected from

the same Pentecostal-charismatic denomination in which the exploratory case study was

conducted. The selection criteria were strategic and practical considerations, including a

reported prevalence of charismatic prophecy manifestations in the congregations and

ease of access to the congregations' locations. However, the two congregations were

located in different cities from each other and also in different cities from the exploratory

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[409] Edward F. Fern, *Advanced Focus Group Research*, 10-11. See also D. T. Campbell, *Qualitative Knowing in Action Research,* 366-376, and J. C. Turner, "Some Considerations in Generalizing Experimental Social Psychology," in *Progress in Applied Social Psychology* (ed. G. M. Stephenson and J. M. Davis; New York: John Wiley, 1981), 3-34.

[410] Edward Fern, *Advanced Focus Group Research*, 176.

[411] Richard A. Krueger, *Analyzing and Reporting Focus Group Results*, 69-70. See also E. G. Guba and Y.S. Lincoln who note that transferability is akin to the positivistic concept of generalizability. Idem, *Fourth Generation Evaluation* (Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage, 1989), 27.

case study congregation. After the necessary protocols with each congregation's leadership, in terms of study authorization and meetings attendance scheduling, the studies began with informal attendances at each congregation, for purposes of participant observation, for a period of four weeks in each congregation during the months of September to December 2010. Thus sixteen visits were made to each congregational live worship meetings from September to December 2010. The congregational gathering times were the denomination's standard Sunday Morning and Evening worship meetings, Wednesday Evening prayer meeting, and Friday 'Watch Night, *'Kesha,* prayer meeting. The 'Watch Night' prayer meeting on the first Friday of each month, in both congregations, was known as a "prophetic *Kesha,*" and was devoted to "the ministry of prophecy" whereby congregants gave and received words of prophecy concerning individual, congregational, or the wider community issues.

With the permission of the Senior Pastor in each congregation, electronic recordings were made of each and every prophecy utterance during the participant observation phase. It was observed that the format of the worship gatherings in each congregation was the standard liturgical order of the denomination, as also observed in the worship gatherings of the exploratory case study congregation. The typical unwritten liturgical order included introductory prayer, followed by exultant singing, dancing and hand-clapping, coupled with extemporaneous scriptural locutions, more prayers with glossolalic utterances, rising to a heightened moment when prophetic messages were uttered, and then followed with prayers for healings and deliverance form 'demonic possessions,' a time of giving 'tithes and offerings,' a sermon, an altar call for salvation, for Spirit Baptism, and for any other need. The membership sizes of the two

congregations were about one thousand five hundred and one thousand eight hundred members, respectively.

5.3 Focus Groups

After the four-week participant observation in each congregation, it was decided to constitute focus groups as the principal data gathering strategies for the evaluative case studies. Invitations were sent to thirty two (32) and thirty five (35) adults (age 18 and above) in the first and second congregations, respectively. A sample of the invitation letter is enclosed as Appendix 2. The invitees had been sampled from the churches' membership registers, in conjunction with the Senior Pastors in each congregation, on a stratified selection basis that was representative in terms of gender, age cohort, education, marital status, and social class. However, since the research interest was a specific population group whose common characteristic was experience of charismatic prophecy manifestations, the sampling procedure was strategic with respect to the shared experience.

The Senior Pastor in each congregation was instrumental in the identification of congregants who often exercised the *charism* of congregational prophecy utterances. The rationale for the selection of the thirty two and thirty five adults, respectively, was the researcher's negotiatory discussions with the Senior Pastors which ensured that the identified congregants were the only ones who were deemed to be genuinely and frequently exercised in the *charism* of congregational prophecy. Thus the pastors' gate-keeper role of screening the members to participate in the study was counterbalanced with the researcher's active involvement in the screening process. The participant

background information (Appendix 8) portrays a fairly balanced representation in terms of gender, age cohort, education, marital status, and social class.

Following the invitations, there were thirty (30) and twenty nine (29) positive responses, respectively, in the two congregations. The first congregation respondents comprised fourteen (14) male and sixteen (16) female participants, while the second congregation respondents comprised fifteen (15) male and fourteen (14) female participants. The first congregation's respondents were organized into five focus groups of six participants each, while respondents in the second congregation were organized into four focus groups of six participants each and one focus group of five participants. In total, there were ten focus groups comprising fifty nine participants altogether.

Each focus group session began with the same protocols as in the exploratory case study focus group sessions (Appendices 3-5) in strict compliance with the University of Birmingham-approved Ethical Review (Appendix1). However, in the evaluative case studies, the interview schedule comprised standardized questions consistent with the knowledge gained from the exploratory phase of the study. The interview schedule is enclosed at Appendix 9. The standardized questions were supplemented with follow-up probing questions. Moreover, in order to gain in-depth insights into perceptions and experiences of the phenomenon of charismatic prophecy, it was decided to elicit further perceptual and experiential narratives by carrying out in-depth interviews with one key participant in each focus group. Each in-depth-interviewee was selected from each focus group on the basis of being, in the researcher's view, the most exercised in charismatic prophecy utterances in the group.

The study approach was, in effect, a multilayered approach which ranged from congregational participant observation, narrowed down to specific focus group discussions, and then to individualized in-depth interviews. The following main questions were put to each selected key participant in the in-depth interviews:

I. Explain in detail how you receive prophetic messages?

II. How do you deliver prophetic messages?

III. What physical or other signs do you experience when receiving or uttering prophetic messages?

IV. What impact has the experience of charismatic prophecy had on your life?

The above questions were supplemented with further probing questions in order to obtain exhaustive answers and/or to seek clarifications to responses. In addition, each in-depth interviewee was asked to recount any prophecy utterances which they could recollect.

At the end of each focus group session there was a debriefing session at which the participants were invited to make any final submissions or comments. Also, at the end of the focus group studies in each congregation, there was a final debriefing session to which all focus groups' participants, pastors and church elders were invited. The purpose of the final debriefing sessions was to give a summary of the researcher's main observations, to invite any comments or any final submissions from any of the invitees to the debriefing sessions, and to appreciate the cooperation and support of the pastors, elders and study participants in the conduct of the study.

5.4 Analytical Approach

The approach adopted for the analysis of the evaluative case studies is a full transcript-based analysis in which all the tape recordings in the congregational

participant observation sessions, the focus group discussions, the in-depth interviews, the field notes, and the debriefing discussions, were fully transcribed. The transcripts were then carefully and exhaustively analyzed manually for emerging themes. The focus was on emerging thematic syntaxes as the units of analysis and, thus, words were considered to have significance only in their thematic narrative context rather than their frequency of usage *per se*.[412] This approach, which is amenable to manually manageable data, is also informed by Richard Krueger's observation that "the challenge to the researcher is to concentrate on the meanings as opposed to the words."[413] In analyzing the transcripts manually, the researcher was able, with the aid of field notes and debriefing notes, to recall the tones and nuanced inflections conveying meaning in the transcripts' narratives, a factor that might have been lost in a mere word frequency analysis. Moreover, in the subjective analysis of manually manageable data, the researcher was able to focus on responses that, in the researcher's view, were based on experiences rather than value-laden and relatively impersonal expressions.[414]

The transcribed focus group discussions, field notes, in-depth interviews, and debriefing notes were subjected to an iterative process of reading and re-reading. The respondents' perceptions were then reported in the order of the interview schedules, as shown at Appendix 10. The code "SD" indicates the chronological sequencing of paraphrased respondents' statements in the deductive case studies, while the code "R" indicates the degree of extensiveness in terms of the number of respondents who uttered

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[412] The merits of this approach are discussed exhaustively by Carl Roberts, "Other Than Counting Words," 147-177, and Kent Lindkvist, "Approaches to Text Analysis," 23-41.

[413] Richard A. Krueger, *Analyzing and Reporting Focus Group Results*, 32.

[414] See also Richard A. Krueger, *Analyzing and Reporting Focus Group Results*, 37.

the statement or supported it. As already pointed out in the exploratory case study report, the degree of extensiveness differs from frequency of words or phrases in the sense that, in extensiveness, the measure is how many different people share the same perception, rather than simply how many times the perception was expressed regardless of whether one person might have expressed the perception several times.[415] In order to make the analysis manageable, only the five most extensive respondents' perceptual responses, in each interview schedule category, are reported in the order of extensiveness.

In what follows, the empirical-analytic results are discussed in accordance with the final phase of Van der Ven's process cycle, as adapted for the present study. The final phase of the cycle is thus an evaluative process in which the empirical-analytic results are related back to the research problem and goal. It is thus a hermeneutical move which seeks to interpret the results of the empirical study in the context of the research problem that gave rise to the empirical-biblical enquiry and the goal that the study sought to achieve.[416] The evaluative phase, as adapted for the present study, entails interpretation, reflection, and methodological reflection. However, for purposes of the present study, interpretation and reflection are considered to be closely related and, indeed, overlapping tasks; the two tasks are therefore discussed together.

5.5 Interpretation and Reflection

The empirical-analytic results, as presented in Appendix 10, are now subjected to a detailed interpretation and reflection utilizing Clodovis Boff's "correspondence of

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[415] Also Richard A Krueger, *Analyzing and Reporting Focus Group Results*, 36.

[416] See Van der Ven, *Practical Theology: An Empirical Approach,* 153, and Chris A. M. Hermans, "Epistemological Reflections on the Connection Between Ideas and Data in Empirical Research into Religion," 81-82.

relations" model in which the results are evaluated in the light of Scripture, Church praxis in historical perspective, and other contemporary observations and reflections on experiences of charismatic prophecy.[417] For purposes of the present study, the Clodovis Boff's "correspondence of relations" model interrogates the empirical-analytic results with the following questions: first, does the relation between the participants' perceptions, expressions, convictions, beliefs or actions regarding charismatic prophecy in their current context correspond to the relation between similar expressions of convictions, beliefs, perceptions as well as actions in Scripture and its context? This question relates charismatic prophecy to Scripture.

Second, does the relation between the respondents' perceptions, expressions, convictions, beliefs or actions regarding charismatic prophecy in their current context correspond to the relation between similar perceptions, expressions, beliefs, convictions or actions in Church history and its context? This question relates charismatic prophecy to Church praxis in historical perspective. Third, does the relation between the respondents' perceptions, expressions, convictions, beliefs or actions regarding charismatic prophecy in their current context correspond to other contemporary empirical-biblical reflections and experiences of charismatic prophecy in their context? This question relates charismatic prophecy to other contemporary empirical-biblical reflections on experiences of charismatic prophecy.

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[417] Clodovis Boff, *Theology and Praxis*, 146-153. See also Van der Ven, "An Empirical or a Normative Approach to Practical-Theological Research?," 18.

5.5.1 Empirical-Analytic Results and Scripture

As already stated in the methodology of the present study, biblical-hermeneutical explication of the empirical results is not limited to textual exegesis only; rather, it is also an interaction with the scriptural inter-texts in terms of the experiences and reflections of biblical readers and their context, as well as with other pertinent experiences and reflections. The participant background information, as presented at Appendices 6 and 8, reveals a fair gender balance in the exercise of the *charism* of prophecy in the congregations studied. This observation contrasts sharply with the gender imbalance observed in the church leadership where none of the female participants held any leadership position in terms of pastoral ministry or church eldership; only one female, out of the forty one female participants in the three case studies, held a church deacon position.

The paradox of gender balance in the exercise of the *charism* of prophecy vis-à-vis gender imbalance with respect to church leadership in the congregations studied is not unlike the paradox found in the New Testament Church, where gender equality with respect to prophesying is stated axiomatically that "every man who prays or prophesies … and every woman who prays or prophesies …"(1 Cor 11:4-5), but where, in matters of church leadership, it is categorically stated that "as in all the congregations of the saints, women should remain silent in the churches" (1 Cor 14:33-34), or "I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent" (1 Tim 2:12). It is in the light of the gender imbalance in the church leadership that the exercise of the *charism* of prophecy was perceived, by the women, as a divine affirmative action (SD.56) and divine gender empowerment (SD.58).

On the other hand, the perception of a divine interventionist gender empowerment and, hence, the allurement of women into Pentecostalism highlights an irony observed by Harvey Cox that women have been drawn to Pentecostalism in disproportionately large numbers while, paradoxically, Pentecostalism espouses a literalist and tendentiously androcentric biblical worldview.[418] The irony is brought into sharper focus in the African androcentric society with an evident patriarchal church polity as observed in the congregations studied. However, as Harvey Cox surmises, the ability to prophesy gives women a voice to be heard. Cox likens prophesying to telling a story and notes that, "feminist scholars have written a lot about how important 'telling my story' is to all women, especially to those who have been deprived of a voice; hearing oneself tell the story and seeing that it is confirmed by those who hear it gives the narrative a firmer place in one's own identity."[419]

The women involvement in the congregations was not, however, limited to the exercise of charismatic prophecy; the participant background data at Appendices 6 and 8 also shows that women were involved in such, apparently ancillary, church activities as counseling, Sunday school teaching, congregational worship leadership, prayer group leadership and evangelism team leadership. This resonates with Harvey Cox's observation that women:

> [p]articipate fully, even in churches where the pastor is a man. They sing and testify, prophesy and heal, counsel and teach. In fact, it often appeared that the part men play in some Pentecostal churches is more shadow than substance. It

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[418] Harvey Cox, *Fire From Heaven,* 125-133.

[419] Harvey Cox, *Fire From Heaven*, 133.

also became evident to me that women, far more than men, have been the principal bearers of the Pentecostal gospel to the four corners of the earth.[420]

This observation also corroborates the observation by R. L. Blumberg that women participate in church leadership in ways that are rarely recognized or documented as leadership, such as ministry-facilitating activities, welfare services and social action which often influence positive changes.[421] Mark Cartledge interprets the gender paradox to mean that:

> Pentecostal men have been 'domesticated' and restrained, even if the *de jure* system of patriarchal authority in church and home remain intact. This greater shift in gender equality can be accommodated provided that women do not usurp men's authority, especially in the public domain. Therefore, while gifts of the Spirit enable a radical egalitarianism, it is carried inside a formal patriarchal casing. It appears to suit both men and women that this gender paradox remains unresolved.[422]

The evaluative case studies therefore corroborate the observation made in the exploratory case study, and in the survey of literature, that the *charism* of prophecy is a pervasive phenomenon in the Pentecostal-charismatic congregational worship gatherings, that it opens avenues for women involvement in leadership in subtle ways that are rarely recognized as such, that it enriches women with the apperception of being divinely affirmed and empowered and, hence, the apparent disproportionate allurement of women into the Pentecostal-charismatic movement.

Charismatic prophecy was understood, mainly, as the "voice of God by the Holy Spirit through a believer" (SD.11). It was also described as "God's revelation through an individual" (SD.12), "God's specific word for a specific purpose" (SD.13),

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[420] Harvey Cox, *Fire From Heaven*, 125.

[421] Rhoda L. Blumberg, "Reconstructing Social Protest From a Feminist Perspective," 9.

[422] Mark J. Cartledge, *Practical Theology: Charismatic and Empirical Perspectives* (Carlisle, U.K.: Paternoster, 2003), 161-162.

"revelation of God's presence through the spoken word" (SD.14), or "Scripture made alive through God's voice" (SD.15). These understandings appear to represent second-order reflections on the primary experiences and perceptions of the phenomenon of charismatic prophecy. All the above statements, which represent the most extensive perceptual understandings of charismatic prophecy, invoke the name of God as the divine initiator of prophetic revelation and utterance while the believer is portrayed as the human instrument through which God's revelatory message is conveyed. Thus charismatic prophecy is understood as a divine-human, numinous-phenomenal, dynamic. This observation resonates with the conceptual theory, emerging from the exploratory case study and the survey of literature, that charismatic prophecy is a proclamation of divine message to human audience through a human medium. The direction of the prophetic intermediation is divine- to- human, and therefore the initiative is always divine. This observation is also attested in the scriptural discourses on charismatic prophecy; the Corinthian church, for example, is instructed that "two or three prophets should speak, and others should weigh carefully what is said; and if a revelation comes to someone who is sitting down, the first speaker should stop" (1 Cor 14:29-30).[423]

The perception noted in the present study that inspired prayer is also a form of prophecy implies that prophecy can also be a human- to- divine intermediation. It is pertinent to note that much of the "Writings" texts, or the *Kethuvim* portion, of the Old Testament, which includes *Psalms* and *Proverbs*, is an integral part of the "prophecy of

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[423] John Short remarks that the 1 Corinthians 14: 29-30 pericope affirms that prophetic revelation "has its place in public worship." Idem, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. The Interpreter's Bible, Vol. X (ed. G. A. Buttrick; Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1981), 210. Gordon D. Fee, likewise, notes that "the use of the verb 'reveal' in this context suggests that for Paul this was the essential character of what was spoken in a prophecy." Idem, *God's Empowering Presence*, 253.

Scripture" (2 Pet 1:20) although many of the psalms and proverbs are words uttered in prayer to God (e.g. Ps 51:1-19; Prov 30:7-9). The apparent prophetic worship leadership of Miriam "the prophetess" (Exod 15:20), or the apparent liturgical prophecy of the Davidic temple singers dedicated "for the ministry of prophesying, accompanied by harps, lyres and cymbals" (1 Chr 25:1) also portray prophecy in terms of prayer or worship uttered to God in congregational settings. The notion of 'prophetic prayer' is also witnessed in the New Testament Church. For example, In Luke 1:67-79, both Zechariah and Simeon "prayed prophetic prayers through which God revealed his plan of salvation."[424]

A similar apparently prophetic prayer is recorded in Acts 4:24-30 where the locutionary utterance to "enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness" (Acts 4: 29b) had a perlocutionary effect; "after they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly" (Acts 4: 31). In the congregations studied, there were observed instances of manifestly invasive glossolalic utterances which were 'interpretively' uttered as prophetic prayer.[425] For example, a prophetic utterance warning about "infidelity in the church" was followed by an apparently invasive glossolalic utterance which was then 'interpreted' by the same speaker in the form of a prayer of repentance. The tone of the penitential prayer sounded as ecstatically "inspired" as the glossolalic utterance itself.

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[424] S. Fourie, *Prophecy: God's Gift of Communication,* 33. See also M. J. Cartledge, "Charismatic Prophecy," 80, and Kenneth E. Hagin, *The Ministry of a Prophet* (Tulsa, Okla.: Hagin Evangelistic Association, 1978), 16.

[425] Walter Hollenweger draws a distinction between "hot tongues" and "cool tongues." According to him, the "hot tongues" are those uttered invasively in a state of ecstasy, while the "cool tongues" are those uttered volitionally as prayer and praise at the discretion of the speaker. Idem, *The Pentecostals* (trans. R.A. Wilson; Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg, 1972), 344.

This observation resonates with the conceptual postulate emerging from the survey of literature that prayers to God can at times express "words that God has put in our mouth."[426]

The biblical portrait of a prophet as one who feels "forced to perform actions and proclaim ideas … in a mental state of intense inspiration" was also expressed by the participants in the evaluative case studies' congregations. The feeling of compulsion to 'proclaim' was expressed as follows:

SD.22.An overwhelming compulsion to speak.

SD.25.Impressions/ideas in mind that flesh out as prophecy.

SD.34.A sense of being physically overpowered.

SD.35.A feeling of overwhelming excitement.

SD.36.Physical sensations and shaking.

SD.61.I feel impressed with ideas from which I utter prophecy.

SD.63.I feel compulsion to speak.

The New Testament admonition that "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the control of the prophets" (1 Cor 14:32), gives the impression that the early Church charismatics were also under a perceptively uncontrollable sense of being overpowered and an intense compulsion to speak. The sense of "intense compulsion to speak" resonates with the theoretical construct, emerging from the exploratory case study and the review of literature, that prophecy does not originate from the human mind; rather, it originates in the mind of God and is inspired by the Spirit of God. The divine inspiration motif is highlighted in the experiences of participants who, in particular, perceived intense moments of inspiration resulting in ecstatic, or almost out- of- body experiences: "It is

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[426] Amos Hakham, *The Bible Psalms,* xv- xvi.

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like being caught up to heaven and hearing words" (S59), "My mind is no longer aware of earthly things"(S73). Therefore, as F. A. Sullivan points, "the essential difference, then, between prophecy and any other kind of speaking by which the community can be built up is the element of inspiration that is proper to prophetic speech."[427]

Some of the prophetic messages in the evaluative case studies were received earlier on before a worship gathering time, either as impressions or ideas which then fleshed out in the course of time into concrete prophetic messages. However, the majority of participants reported that they received their prophetic messages during worship gathering sessions and uttered the messages instantaneously. This observation not only corroborates the observation made in the exploratory case study but also resonates with experiences in the New Testament Church where, in some instances, prophetic messages were apparently received earlier on and then delivered later at gatherings of believers. For example, Peter received a revelation while alone (Acts 10: 9-16) which he later delivered at a gathering in the house of Cornelius (Acts 10: 28). Likewise, Agabus gave a prophecy, in the form of symbolic action, which he appears to have received earlier on (Acts 21:10-11). At other times, however, prophecy appears to have been invasively uttered at a gathering of believers, such as when "Agabus stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe famine would spread all over the entire Roman world" (Acts 11: 28), or in the Church at Antioch where, "while they were worshipping … the Holy Spirit said … (Acts 13: 2). The observation of both invasive and apparently non- invasive prophecy in the congregations studied, therefore, corresponds with the scriptural evidence for invasive and non- invasive prophecies.

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[427] F. A. Sullivan, *Charisms and Charismatic Renewal,* 101. See also S. Fourie, *Prophecy: God's Gift of Communication to the Church* (Pretoria: University of South Africa Press, 1990), 29.

However, both in the New Testament church and in the congregations studied, invasive charismatic prophecy appears to be the more dominant form.

The evaluative case studies showed a close association between charismatic prophecy and glossolalia, as expressed in the following participant responses:

SD.16.Glossolalia opens my spirit to receive prophetic revelation.

SD.17.Glossolalia tunes my spirit to hear God's voice.

SD.18.Glossolalia - prophecy are two sides of communion.

SD.19.Glossolalia edifies self; prophecy edifies the church.

SD.20.Glossolalia is worship; prophecy is received in worship.

These expressions corroborate the observation made in the exploratory case study that, although the question of glossolalia was not part of the exploratory case study discussions, it, nonetheless, featured prominently in the participants' responses. Moreover, as observed both in the exploratory case study and in the explanatory case studies, there were frequent locutionary exhortations by the worship leaders to the congregants to "speak in tongues" and thus "open up to the presence of the Spirit." These observations reinforce the view emerging from the review of literature that glossolalia is the *sine qua non* language of prayer and worship in many of the contemporary Pentecostal-charismatic congregations and that the atmosphere of glossolalic prayer and worship is the catalytic context for charismatic prophetic manifestations.

The Pauline discourses on the *charisms* of the Holy Spirit also portray a close association between glossolalia and charismatic prophecy; both glossolalia and prophecy are *charisms* of the Holy Spirit that are available to believers in the Church (1 Cor2:4-11), and both are *charisms* for edification; thus "he who speaks in a tongue edifies

himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church" (1 Cor 14:4). Both *charisms* are

portrayed in Scripture as essential endowments for the believer and for the church; "I

would like every one of you to speak in tongues … I would rather have you prophesy …

be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak in tongues" (1 Cor 14:5a, 5b, 39). At the

epochal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, the disciples of the risen

Jesus "began to speak with tongues as the Spirit enabled them" (Acts 2:4) and,

implicitly, prophetically "declared the wonders of God" (Acts 2:11b). Also when "the

Holy Spirit came on all who heard" Peter's message at the house of Cornelius in

Caesarea, "they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God" (Acts 10:44-45). The

"praising" here is, plausibly, similar to the prophetic "declaration of the wonders of God"

on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:11b). Again, when the Holy Spirit came upon the

Ephesian believers, "they spoke in tongues and prophesied" (Acts 19: 6). The close

association of glossolalia with prophecy in Scripture also corroborates the conceptual

premise emerging from the survey of literature that the Spirit of God is the agency of

divine revelatory presence in the believer which, by virtue of the human spirit's

glossolalic-sacramental experience of the divine Spirit, reveals the mind of God to the

human spirit. [428]

The content of the charismatic prophecy utterances in the evaluate case studies

was mainly 'forth-telling,' rather than 'fore-telling,' in the sense that the prophetic

messages expressed present concerns rather than predicted future events. The following

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[428] This is reminiscent of Mark Cartledge's observation that glossolalia is symbolic of *theosis*, whereby the human subject sacramentally participates in divine nature and both God and the human subject speak the same utterance; "the person is speaking while God gives the content to the utterance. Therefore it is symbolic of *theosis* (participation in the divine nature). The speaking out in glossolalia is an extension of the spirit's indwelling presence and causes inner knowledge of God to grow … It becomes a path to a vivid awareness of things divine." Idem, *Charismatic Glossolalia,* 189.

prophetic utterances, which were recorded during the participant observation phase of the

evaluative case studies, illustrate the present concerns of the prophetic utterances:

> I. Thus says the Lord, there is infidelity in the church. My children are not faithful to me. They have more allegiance to their tribes than to me and my Word. If you do not repent, I will give you over to your desires. You cannot put the new wine of my Spirit in to the old wineskins of your tribal traditions. Come out from among them, says the Lord, and be ye transformed in your minds. And I will be your God, and you will be my children, says the Lord.

> II. I the Lord in the midst of thee is mighty; mighty to save and mighty to heal. Mighty to meet every need and mighty to renew your strength. Is any lost? Look to me and be ye saved. Is any afflicted? Look to me and be ye healed. Is any weak? Look to me and be ye strengthened. Is any lacking? Look to me and be ye supplied. For I the Lord in the midst of thee is mighty. I am your Redeemer and your Shepherd. Amen.

The expressed present concerns in the above charismatic prophecy utterances

comport with the goal of charismatic prophecy in the New Testament Church in terms of

"strengthening, encouragement, and comfort" of the Church (1 Cor14:3). B. Gaybba, in

his commentary on 1 Corinthians 14: 3, argues that the purpose of prophecy in the

church is "to address a word to the community concerning its present life, its present

needs."[429] Nonetheless, as C. Winter argues, addressing present concerns has an

eschatological dimension in the sense that charismatic prophecy manifests divine

presence and thus brings the hearers into eternal presence.[430]

There were, however, reports of a few prophetic utterances which concerned

"forthcoming events" (SD.5). For example, one predictive prophetic utterance concerned

civil strife and bloodshed in the country; the predictive prophecy was, reportedly, uttered

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[429] B. Gaybba, *The Spirit of Love* (London: Chapman, 1987), 233.

[430] C. Winter, "The Style and Content of Modern Prophecy," in *The Burden of Prophecy* (ed. N. McIlwraith; Birmingham, U.K.: SCM, 1982), 70.

a year before it actually happened in the period December 2007 to February 2008. The actual prophecy recollection was narrated as follows:

> I see bloodbath; I see the whole country covered with blood. People are killing one another because there is none to intercede. I see brother killing brother; the country is perished, because there is none to intercede. The Lord is seeking people to stand in the gap. But the church is also drunk with tribalism. Repent, my people, before it is too late, and stand in the gap for your country, says the Lord.

Another apparently predictive prophecy concerned an attempted breakup of one of the congregations studied. The prophecy was, reportedly, uttered in January 2004 and the actual attempt to break away part of the congregation by one of the pastors occurred in May 2005. Significantly, it was reported that the prophecy was given before the pastor, who attempted the breakaway, had joined the pastorate of the church. The actual prophecy recollection was narrated as follows:

> Fear not, for I am with thee, says the Lord. I am the Lord thy Redeemer and thy Shepherd. The Enemy has desired to sift you like wheat; there will come ravenous wolves to tear the sheep apart. But those who watch and pray, those who keep the bond of unity, yea, those who walk in love with one another, will never be scattered. I will be their shield and their covering. Watch and pray that the ravenous wolves will not scatter the sheep. Keep the bond of unity; walk in love with one another, lest the enemy take advantage of you, says Jehovah God.

The apparent predictive dimension of charismatic prophecy serves to disabuse the notion that charismatic prophecy is mere religious anthropomorphism; the revelation of unforeseeable future events, mysteries or secret things, belongs to the realm of divinity: "the secret things belong to the Lord our God "(Deut 29: 29) and it is God who "revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7 KJV; cf. Dan 2:28- 29).

The significance of charismatic prophecy was stated variously by the participants in the evaluative case studies. The following statements represent the participants' domain perceptions of the significance of charismatic prophecy:

SD.39.Encouragement and assurance.

SD.41.Warnings against sin in the church.

SD.42.Confirmation of Scripture.

SD.43.Revelation knowledge of secret things.

SD.56.That God values me by using me to prophesy.

SD.57.Guidance in life.

SD.58.Gender empowerment.

SD.75.Godly fear.

SD.76.Drawn closer to God.

SD.77.Restored lives and families.

SD.78.God's word made real.

The above domain perceptions of the significance of charismatic prophecy resonate with the scriptural *parakletic* function of edification, encouragement and consolation (1 Cor14: 3). The notion of *paraklesis* will be explicated in detail in the next chapter.

From the foregoing discourse, it is apparent that the relation between the participants' perceptions, expressions, convictions, beliefs or actions regarding charismatic prophecy in their context correspond fairly well with the relation between similar expressions of convictions, beliefs, perceptions, and actions in Scripture and its context. Niels Hvidt visualizes the close correlation between contemporary charismatic prophecy and Scripture in terms of elucidation; he notes that "post-canonical Christian prophecy can indeed serve to elucidate points of Scripture that are not clear or that Scripture contains in an implicit way only, and as such it can play a very important role

in the correlation and actualization of our understanding of revelation."[431] This correlation between contemporary charismatic prophecy and Scripture is perhaps what some Pentecostal-charismatics denote in their use of the terms of *Rhema* (denoting "the spoken word") and *Logos* (denoting "the written word" or Scripture). However, the use of the terms *Rhema* and *Logos* in this sense is an apparent modern semantic development which is not explicit in Scripture.[432]

5.5.2 Empirical-Analytic Results and Praxis in Church History

Following Clodovis Boff's correspondence of relations model, a comparative analysis is now carried out between the characteristics of charismatic prophecy observed in the congregations studied and the experiences, praxis, and perceptions of charismatic prophecy manifestations in post-biblical church history. The purpose here is to show whether the experience and understanding of charismatic prophecy, as observed in the present study, has been the experience and understanding of the church in its historical

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[431] Niels C. Hvidt, *Christian Prophecy,* 78.

[432] See also M. J. Cartledge who notes that in a certain Church movement had "developed, if not created, a *Rhema/Logos* distinction … prophecy is referred to by the term *rhema* (the Greek word for 'word' in speech). As such it is understood to refer to a message which is particular, temporal and subjective. The Bible, however, is identified as *Logos* (another Greek and philosophical term meaning 'word') which refers to that which is universal, eternal and objective." Idem, "Charismatic Prophecy: A Definition and Description," 90- 91. See also D. McBain, *Eyes that See* (Basingstoke, U.K.: Marshall Pickering, 1981), 73- 112. It is, however, observed that the terms *Rhema* and *Logos* are used interchangeably in the texts of the New Testament. William D. Mounce's Greek Lexicon, for example, notes that the word λόγος is used in the New Testament to denote "a word, a thing uttered, Matt 12:32, 37; 1 Cor.14:19 , … speech, language, talk, Matt 2:15; Luke 24:17 … a saying, speech, Mark 7:29; Eph 4:29" while the word ῥῆμα refers to "that which is spoken, declaration, saying, speech, word, Matt12:36; 26:75 … a prediction, a prophecy, 2 Pet 3:2; … a doctrine, John 3:34; 5:47;… a matter, Matt18:16; Lke1:65." Idem, *The Analytical Lexicon to the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993), 303, 407. Nonetheless, the contemporary use of the terms λόγος and ῥῆμα in some quarters of the Pentecostal-charismatic movement to refer to universal-eternal-objective word and particular-temporal-subjective word in speech, respectively, represent a semantic development akin to that which the two words underwent from the pre-Socratic times to the first century CE. See also J. Bialecki and E. H. del Pinal, "Beyond Logos: Extensions of the Language Ideology Paradigm in the Study of Global Christianity," *Anthropological Quarterly* 84 (2011):575-594 (575- 578).

perspective or whether the observed experience and understanding are simply novel

phenomena and a modern hermeneutical move.

The question of whether charismatic prophecy continued or ceased altogether in

the post-biblical church has been discussed variously. Some of the early textual evidence

portraying a cessation of prophecy emanate from rabbinic Judaism after the destruction

of the Jerusalem temple in 70 CE. [433] The argument for a cessation of prophecy appears

to have been "an apologetic to undermine the prophetic claims of the early

Christians."[434] In particular, the rabbinic argument that "since the destruction of the

temple, prophecy has been taken from the prophets and given to the sages … until that

time the prophets spoke prophecies through the holy spirit; from that time on, incline

your ear and listen to the words of the sages" (b. *B. Bat*. 12a; S. *Olam Rab*. 86b), inferred

that, with the advent of the Hebrew canon as the full and final revelation, there was no

need of any further prophetic revelation.[435]

The rabbinic argument appears to have influenced some post-apostolic Church

Fathers who equally argued that, since the Christian canon contained the full and final

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[433] See, for example, Benjamin D. Sommer, "Did Prophecy Cease?: Evaluating a Reevaluation," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 115 (1996): 31- 47, and Frederick Greenspahn, "Why Prophecy Failed," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 108 (1989): 37- 49, for a discussion of the rabbinic arguments for the cessation of prophecy in post-biblical Judaism and, impliedly, in early Christianity.

[434] David E. Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity,* 104. Samuel Sandmel observes that the rabbinic argument that "After Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, who were the last of the prophets, prophecy had ceased" has little credibility because "outside the circle of the rabbinic sages, the view that prophecy had ended simply did not exist." Idem, *Judaism and Christian Beginnings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 174. David Aune also notes that "apart from rabbinic Judaism, Jewish sects of the late Second Temple period do not appear to have regarded either prophecy or the Holy Spirit as completely absent from Jewish religious experience." Idem, *Prophecy in Early Christianity*, 104. See also Max Turner, *Power From on High,* 86- 137.

[435] See Frederick Greenspahn, "Why Prophecy Failed," 38, and Benjamin D. Sommer, "Did Prophecy Cease?," 33.

word of revelation, any prophetic utterances occurring after the closure of the Christian canon contradicted the church's faith in the sufficiency of Scripture.[436] There is, however, ample evidence from multiple sources of historical accounts to show that, whereas some quarters of the church have, over the centuries, both denied and tried to quench the manifestations of the *charism* of prophecy, the manifestations of the *charism* has been evident in other quarters of the church throughout its historical existence.[437] Since a detailed account of the manifestations of charismatic prophecy throughout church history is beyond the scope of the present study, in what follows, the study seeks to highlight a few epochal moments in the history of the church which illustrate a continuing presence of charismatic prophecy in the church. The highlighted epochal moments include the early post-apostolic period, the late second century Montanist movement, the sixteenth century Reformation movement, and the eighteenth-nineteenth century Wesleyan movement.

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[436] See Richard B. Gaffin, "A Cessationist View," in *Are Miraculous Gifts for Today?: Four Views* (ed. W. A. Grudem; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 207, and Niels C. Hvidt, *Christian Prophecy,* 77. Many church historians note that the idea of cessation of prophecy and other ecstatic *charisms* of the Spirit was connected to the flawed evolutionary thesis of canonical theology in which "the concept of a closed canon of Scripture necessarily implied that no further revelation could take place." James L. Ash, "The Decline of Ecstatic Prophecy in the Early Church," *Theological Studies* 37 (1976): 227-252 (227). However, as Niels Hvidt aptly observes, "the mystery of God is not exhausted in the written words of Scripture … the Spirit's continuing voice cannot contradict, reduce or add to the written Scripture; the prophetic voice illuminates Scripture." Idem, *Christian Prophecy*, 78. Other church historians, however, point out that "the development of the ecclesiastical offices – namely, those of bishops, presbyters, and deacons – in the post-apostolic period signified the end of the spirit- empowered democratic understanding of the Christian communities … this development initiated an age in which the authority of the institutional office holder took precedence over the inspired activities of members of the communities." Helmut Koester, "Writings and the Spirit," 354. See also Hans von Campenhausen, *Ecclesiastical Authority and Spiritual Power in the Church of the First Three Centuries* (trans. J. A. Baker; Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1969), 97- 106.

[437] See, for example, Stanley M. Burgess, *The Holy Spirit: Ancient Christian Traditions* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1984), 3, M. J. Cartledge, *Encountering the Spirit*, 33 -50. David E. Aune, in particular, demonstrates that congregational prophecy was an important and valued phenomenon in the early post apostolic church. Idem, *Prophecy in Early Christianity*, 291- 338. See also Christopher Forbes*, Prophecy and Inspired Speech in Early Christianity,* 300-301.

Quite a number of literary sources attest the presence of charismatic prophecy in the early post-apostolic church.[438] The form of the prophecy witnessed in the late first century- early second century post- apostolic church was charismatic, or congregational, prophecy which was "always an activity within a Christian community, whether the smaller circle of *pneumatics* or the larger structures of the church as a whole."[439] This observation resonates with the observations made in the congregations studied that charismatic prophecy was usually uttered in congregational settings, either in gatherings of the whole church or in prayer groups. The content of charismatic prophecy in the early post-apostolic church was, mainly, present concerns in the life of the church and in the lives of individual adherents. For example, Ignatius, the early Bishop of Antioch (c.112 CE), in his letter to the church at Philadelphia, reminds them of his prophecy which he had uttered while in their congregation:

> I cried out while I was with you; I spoke with a great voice, with the voice of God. 'To the Bishops give heed, and to the Presbytery, and to the Deacons.' Apart from the Bishops do nothing. Guard your flesh as the temple of God. Love unity. Flee divisions. Be imitators of Jesus Christ as he was of the Father.[440]

Ignatius then explains that "some suspected that I said these things because I already knew the division caused by certain people … I learnt nothing from any human being,

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[438] See, for instance, *David Aune,* "The Presence of God in the Community: The Eucharist in Its Early Christian Cultic Context," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 29 (1976): 451- 459, and G. S. Shogren, "Christian Prophecy and the Canon in the Second Century: A Response to B. B. Warfield," *Journal of Evangelical Theological Studies* 40 (1997):609-626.

[439] E. Earle Ellis, "Prophecy in the New Testament and Today," in *Prophetic Vocation in the New Testament and Today* (ed. J. Panagopoulos; Leiden: Brill, 1977), 57. See also J. Reiling, *Hermas and Christian Prophecy: A Study of the Eleventh Mandate* (Leiden: Brill, 1973), 10, and Francis A. Sullivan, *Charisms and Charismatic Renewal*, 95.

[440] See Henry Bettenson and Chris Maunder, *Documents of the Early Church* (3d ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 32.

but the Spirit was proclaiming by speaking in this manner."[441] Ignatius thus claims that

his prophecy was invasive, inspired by the Holy Spirit and uttered in a congregational

setting. His claim that "the Spirit was proclaiming by speaking in this manner," conveys

the same perception which is voiced by participants in the present study that prophecy

was the "voice of God by the Holy Spirit through a believer" (SD.11).

The motif of warnings against sin, which is apparent in the Ignatius' prophetic

utterance, "guard your flesh as the temple of God," correlates with the expressions made

by the participants in the present study that "warnings against sin in the church" (SD.4)

were a significant component of the prophecies uttered in the congregations. Another

early church leader, Tertullian (c.160- 240 CE) reports that "we have among us now a

sister who has been granted gifts of revelations, which she experiences in church during

the Sunday Services through ecstatic vision in the Spirit."[442] Tertulian's perception of

prophecy as a revelatory *charism* experienced during church services "through ecstatic

vision in the Spirit" resonates remarkably well with the perceptual expressions made by

participants in the present study that prophecy was "God's revelation through an

individual" (SD.12), or "Revelation of God's presence through spoken word" (SD.14)

which was received, mainly, "during church service" (SD.31) and in states of ecstasy; "a

feeling of overwhelming excitement" (SD.35), or a "feeling of excitement and joy"

(SD.72).

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[441] H. Bettenson and C. Maunder, *Documents of the Early Church*, 32. See also David E. Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity*, 291-292.

[442] H. Bettenson and C. Maunder, *Documents of the Early Church*, 85.

The Montanist movement of the late second century CE is often portrayed as an early antecedent of the contemporary Pentecostal-charismatic movement. [443] It arose in Asia Minor Christian settings at a time when the Church was beginning to be "a rigid ecclesiastical organization; faith which had been inward trust and immediate response to a living Christ became 'the faith' – a fixed and often lifeless dogma of orthodoxy … the free and spontaneous exercise of spiritual gifts gave place to an inflexible system of form and ritual."[444] The Montanist movement was also described as "the New Prophecy;"[445] it castigated the hierarchical ecclesiasticism of the day and emphasized the freedom and spontaneity of the Holy Spirit. It was also characterized by ecstatic glossolalic-prophetic utterances in its congregational settings.[446] It soon spread throughout Asia Minor and into North Africa with spiritual fervency.[447] The Montanists emphasized the primacy of

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[443] Although the Montanist movement is sometimes portrayed as having had its origins in the pagan religions of Asia Minor, Dennis E. Groh has demonstrated that the Montanist movement had its background in the second century Christian Asia Minor where the Gospel of John, with its promise of the paraklete, and the eschatological prophecy of the *Apocalypse of John* were highly treasured. Idem, "Montanism," In *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity* (ed. E. Ferguson; New York: Garland, 1991), 616-622. Whereas the Montanist movement was anathematized by a number of church leaders of the time, many of them do, nonetheless, acknowledge the existence of prophetic manifestations in the church. For example, Eusebius (c. 260- 339 CE), an ardent critic of the Montanists, acknowledges that there were people who still manifested prophetic gifts in the church. See M. J. Cartledge, *Encountering the Spirit*, 35. See also Henry B. Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the Ancient Church: A Study of the Christian Teaching in the Age of the Fathers* (London: McMillan & Co, 1912; repr. Pasadena, Calif.: Wipf & Stock, 1996), 110-114.

[444] Maurice Barnett, *The Living Flame: A Study of the Gifts of the Spirit in the New Testament* (London: Epworth, 1953), 117.

[445] See Stanley M. Burgess, "Montanism," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (ed. S. M. Burgess, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 903.

[446] See also Ronald N. Kydd, *Charismatic Gifts in the Early Church*, 34-35.

[447] See Cecil M. Robeck, *Prophecy in Carthage: Perpetua, Tertullian and Cyprian* (Cleveland, Ohio: Pilgrim, 1992), 101- 105, and Ronald N. Kydd, *Charismatic Gifts in the Early Church*, 34- 35. See also Christine Trevett, *Montanism: Gender, Authority and the New Prophecy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 86-91.

prophetic revelation, but this emphasis caused their detractors to accuse them of creating

their own inspired writings.[448]

Montanus, the founder of the movement, was accused by the Church Fathers of

calling himself "the *paraklete*."[449] This is, however, a plausible pejorative reference to

the characteristic use of the first person formulae in prophetic oracles, a practice which

was not only commonly reported among the Montanists but, as Stanley Burgess

observes, was also common in the Old Testament and New Testament prophecies.[450] The

frequent use of first person formulae, such as "I am the Lord that speaks to you," in

prophetic utterances was also observed in the congregations of the present study. James

Ash argues that the evidence for the negative portrayal and rejection of the Montanist

movement by the institutional church "suggests that the ecstatic prophecy of Montanism

was rejected because of developments more sociological than theological; the church

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[448] The Fourth Century Church Fathers, Eusebius and Epiphanius, in particular, accused the Montanists of having created their own "new scriptures." See Eusebius, *Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History* (trans. C. F. Cruce; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1993), 5- 16. See also F. E. Vokes, "The Use of Scripture in the Modernist Controversy," in *Studia Evangelica: Papers Presented to the International Congress of the Four Gospels* (ed. F.E. Vokes, Berlin: Akademie, 1959), 317- 320. However, as Nicola Denzey points out, since the Christian canon was not yet fixed by the Second Century CE, the categories of what was canonical and non-canonical are not helpful. Idem, "What Did the Montanists Read?," *Harvard Theological Review* 94 (2001): 427-448 (427).

[449] See Nicola Denzey, "What Did the Montanists Read?," 427.

[450] See Stanley M. Burgess, "Montanism and Patristic Perfectionism," in *Reaching Beyond: Chapters in the History of Perfectionism* (ed. S. M. Burgess; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1986), 120, and G. F. Hawthorne, "The Role of Christian Prophets in the Tradition," in *Tradition and Interpretation in the New Testament (*ed. G. F. Hawthorne and U. Betz; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 119-133. It is, however, noted that no statement of Montanus himself or of his close followers has survived to date. See also David Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity*, 314. Allan Anderson also notes that all records about Montanist New Prophecy come from detractors of the movement. Idem, *Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 19-20. Likewise, John Penney notes that "although Montanism was a late Second Century phenomenon originating in Phrygia, most evidence for it derives from fourth and fifth century Christian writers and heresiologists who have a decidedly critical stance." Idem, "The Testing of New Testament Prophecy," 76. Furthermore, as Nicola Denzey remarks, the reported Montanist oracles "are neither nonsensical nor obtuse, confounding the heresiological insinuation that Montanist prophecy was mere nonsense speech." Idem, "What Did the Montanists Read?," 442.

was undergoing the profound changes of becoming an establishment."[451] Although the

Montanist movement was declared heretical by the institutional church and

excommunicated by the Synod of Iconium in 230 CE, the spiritual fervor and the

charismatic prophecy manifestations of the movement, which are remarkably similar to

the charismatic prophecy manifestations observed in the congregations under study,

appear to have had a continuing influence in Christendom over the centuries.[452] The

eighteenth century revivalist, John Wesley, for example, remarked that the Montanists

had revived a dying church and rekindled the fire of the Spirit in the church.[453]

The historical accounts of the fifteenth-sixteenth century church Reformation

movement are replete with numerous instances of experiences of charismatic prophecy in

some quarters of the Church. However, the notion of experiential manifestations of the

charisms of the Spirit was spurned in other quarters of the Church at the time. The

Protestant Reformers accentuated a new relationship with God, "not a new doctrine, but

a new relationship to God … the relationship is not an objective management between

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[451] James L. Ash, "The Decline of Prophecy in the Early Church," 249.

[452] In the Medieval church, for example, manifestations of the *charisms* of the Holy Spirit were witnessed. Gregory the Great (540- 604 CE), for instance, wrote about *charisms* of the Holy Spirit and took note of miracles that were witnessed in his time. See Henry B. Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the Ancient Church,* 349- 350. Later on in the ninth century, the Eastern Church monk, Simeon the New Theologian (949-1022 C.E) was reputed for his exercise of the *charisms* of the Holy Spirit. See Stanley M. Burgess, *The Holy Spirit: Eastern Christian Traditions* (2d. ed., Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1993), 60. Still further on in the Middle Ages, there were notable exemplars of charismatic prophecy manifestations in the Western church. For example, St. Bonaventure (1217-1274 CE), the most distinguished Franciscan theologian of his time, was renown for his espousal of a life of faith and divine empowerment through mystical union with the Holy Spirit. See Paul Tillich, *A History of Christian Thought,* 181. Yves Congar, in his review of evidence for the manifestations of the *charisms* of the Holy Spirit in the Middle Ages, observes that "the *charism* of prophecy has continued to be manifested in the church, no longer in the form of the inspiration of the canonical books of Scripture, but in the form of God's action on souls and on the church." Idem, *I Believe in the Spirit* (trans. D. Smith; New York: Crossroad, 1983),121. See also Alasdair C. Heron, *The Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit in the Bible, the History of Christian Thought, and Recent Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1983), 85.

[453] John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley* (3d. ed., ed. G. R. Cragg; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1978), 11:485.

God and man, but a personal relationship of penitence first, and then faith."[454] Although

Martin Luther (1483-1546 CE), the most prominent icon of the Reformation movement,

did not believe that the visible manifestations of the *charisms* of the Spirit were

necessary or extant in his time, there were, within the Reformation movement,

'evangelical radicals' or 'enthusiasts' who put emphasis on the experiential presence of

the Holy Spirit. [455] They believed that "the Spirit may be present in an individual in every

moment, even giving counsels for activities of daily life."[456]

Thomas Müntzer (c.1488/9-1525 CE), the leading 'evangelical radical' or

'enthusiast' of the Reformation movement, had a following of:

> [a] pneumatic community of believers imitating the primitive church … unlike
> the reformers, he believed in the powerful working of the Holy Spirit through
> dramatic experiences … the believer was able to read the Bible correctly,
> illuminated by the Spirit, and was free to prophesy and receive revelations via
> dreams and visions.[457]

The evangelical radicals' embrace of a subjective experience of the Holy Spirit with

visible manifestations of the *charisms* of the Spirit and revelations about "matters of

daily life" is consistent with the observations made in the congregations of the present

study that charismatic prophecy was perceived as "God's revelation through an

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[454] Paul Tillich, *A History of Christian Thought*, 240.

[455] As Mark Cartledge notes, "Luther believed that gifts such as speaking in tongues and (outer) miracles are no longer needed as confirmatory signs of the Gospel." Idem, *Encountering the Spirit*, 45. Paul Tillich also notes that when Martin Luther speaks of the presence of the Spirit, he does so in objective terms of conviction and repentance, not in subjective-experiential terms. Idem, A *History of Christian Thought*, 240.

[456] Paul Tillich, *A History of Christian Thought*, 240.

[457] M. J. Cartledge, *Encountering the Spirit*, 46. Paul Tillich equally notes that "Thomas Müntzer, who was the most creative of the evangelical radicals, said that it is always possible for the Spirit to speak through individuals … when this happened to him, he can receive special revelations; he can have personal visions, not only about theology as a whole, but about matters of daily life." Idem, *A History of Christian Thought*, 239.

individual" (SD.12), or "God's specific word for a specific purpose" (SD.13), and that the function of prophecy included such matters of daily life as "warnings against sin in the church" (SD.4, SD.41), "revelation knowledge of secret things" (SD.43), or "restored lives and families (SD.77). Thomas Müntzer's concept of a *pneumatic* community of believers imitating the primitive church also resonates with the convictions expressed by the present study participants that the New Testament Church was the *modus operandi* for their congregations and for the whole of the contemporary communities of the Pentecostal-charismatic movement.

Martin Luther's pejorative portrayal of the 'evangelical radicals' as "fanatical enthusiasts who flatter themselves that they have the Spirit independently of the Word or before it and who consequently judge, interpret and extend Scripture or the word of the mouth according to their will," was, plausibly rhetorical hyperbole; Christian charismatics have always had a high view of Scripture and have always used the scriptures as the authoritative pattern for their experiences.[458] The congregations examined in the present study were also observed to hold a high view of Scripture. For example, "Scripture is made alive through God's voice" (SD.15), prophecy is "confirmation of Scripture" (SD.42), or "God's word is made real through prophecy" (SD.78). Moreover, Scripture was portrayed as the most significant influence in the exercise of the *charism* of prophecy (SD.49, SD.53), and, indeed, Scripture was the key evaluative tool of prophecy: "whether it agrees with Scripture" (SD.46). Nonetheless, as Kenneth Archer observes, contemporary Pentecostal-charismatics differ from dogmatic

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[458] See, for example, Alasdair C. Heron, *The Holy Spirit,* 76-89.

fundamentalists, or biblicists, in that "whereas the latter read the Bible as a past inspired revelatory document, the former read the Bible as a presently inspired story."[459]

In the post- Reformation era, manifestations of the *charisms* of the Holy Spirit were observed in a number of Christian movements, particularly in the mystical Pietistic movement which actually predated Martin Luther's sixteenth century Reformation. The Pietistic movement placed emphasis on "a personal religious relationship to God."[460] The movement was, reportedly, the catalyst for Luther's Reformation theology.[461] The Pietistic tradition persisted throughout the Reformation and post- Reformation periods in the form of sectarian and revivalist movements, many of which claimed manifestations of the *charisms* of the Holy Spirit. Notable personalities of the Pietistic tradition include the icon of the Great Awakening in America, Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758 CE), who was noted for his "religious affections of love and joy" which he described as experiences of the indwelling Holy Spirit.[462] Jonathan Edward's ecstatic religious affections, which were often manifested in "tears, trembling, groans, loud cries, and religious noise during encounters with the Spirit,"[463] resemble the ecstatic manifestations of fainting, prostration, loud screams, trembling, and cries of joy, observed during charismatic encounters in the congregations examined in the present study.

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[459] Kenneth J. Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic,* 69. See also Walter Hollenweger who remarks that "the strength of the Pentecostal hermeneutics is in fact that it takes into consideration the *hermeneute* and his experience." Idem, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Development,* 321.

[460] Paul Tillich, *A History of Christian Thought*, 284.

[461] Paul Tillich goes to note that "already in the period of the Reformation, there were elements that we must call mystical, and which became pronounced again in the anti-orthodox movement of Pietism ... Luther was very much influenced by the mystical elements." Idem, *A History of Christian Thought*, 311.

[462] Jonathan Edwards, *The Religious Affections* (1746; repr. Carlisle, Pa.: Banner of Truth, 1961), 24, 130.

[463] M. J. Cartledge, *Encountering the Spirit,* 48.

John Wesley (1703-1791 CE), the founder of the eighteenth century Methodist revivalist societies, is often billed as one of the most significant figures in Christian history. The nineteenth century Holiness movement, which ensued from the Wesleyan Methodist revivalist societies, is often billed as the forerunner of the twentieth century Pentecostal-charismatic movement.[464] John Wesley was noted, not so much for his systematic theology but, for his theological method which sought to balance Scripture, reason, and tradition with experience in a manner that foreshadows the contemporary Pentecostal-charismatic hermeneutical approach of relating Scripture to experience. John Wesley's theological method was a kind of synthesis "drawing from a wide range of traditions – the Greek Fathers, the Medieval spiritual writers, the Reformers, the Pietists and Puritans, and the seventeenth century 'holy living' school of the Church of England."[465] Thus Wesley sought, *inter alia*, to recover the charismatic fervor in church history which was waning in his time. Henry D. Rack observes that "Wesley's pneumatology emphasized actual spiritual experience of God coming to us by the Holy Spirit."[466]

The 'spiritual experience' recovery motif is viewed as the most significant theological contribution of John Wesley; he states that "a great evangelical truth has been

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[464] See Thomas A. Noble, "John Wesley as a Theologian: An Introduction," *Evangelical Quarterly* 82 (2010): 238-257 (238), and Winfield H. Bevins, "A Pentecostal Appropriation of the Wesleyan Quadrilateral," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 14 (2006): 229-246 (233-239). See also Paul Shrier and Cahleen Shrier, "Wesley's Sanctification Narrative: A Tool for Understanding the Holy Spirit's Work in a More Physical Soul," *Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 31 (2009): 225-241(229).

[465] Thomas A. Noble, "John Wesley as a Theologian," 239.

[466] Henry D. Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiasm: John Wesley and the Rise of Methodism* (London: Hepworth, 1989), 240. See also Rex Matthews, *Religion and Reason Joined: Spiritual Experience and the Knowledge of God in the Theology of John Wesley* (Th.D. diss. Harvard University, 1986), 240-245, and Albert C. Outler, "The Wesleyan Quadrilateral in John Wesley," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 20 (1985): 7-18, who developed a theological schema to portray Wesley's theological method as a quadrilateral synthesis of Scripture, Tradition, Reason and Experience.

recovered, which had been for many years well- nigh lost and forgotten."[467] Wesley goes

on to express an overriding concern for spiritual presence in the future of his movement:

> I am not afraid that the people called Methodists should ever cease to exist … but I am afraid lest they should only exist as a dead sect, having the form of religion without the power; and this undoubtedly will be the case, unless they hold fast, both to the doctrine, spirit, and discipline with which they set out.[468]

Although John Wesley was not personally overly given to enthusiasm, he, nonetheless,

tolerated the 'enthusiasts' in his Methodist movement who manifested experiences of the

Holy Spirit, "including dreams, visions, healings, revelations, and prophecies."[469]

Wesley, nonetheless, understood himself to be possessed by a quest for the primitive

Christianity of the New Testament Church:

> The nature of the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit is taught both by Scripture and the writings of the early church fathers … All were given to enable Christians who experienced or witnessed them to run with patience the race set before them, through all the storms of persecution, which the most continual prejudice, rage, and malice could raise. Since that time, some have attempted to prove: no miracles occurred in the early church after the apostolic age … To agree with these objections would be to ignore both Scripture and history.[470]

Donald Dayton observes that "the primitivistic note in Wesley invites immediate

comparison with the Pentecostal concern for the restoration of the Apostolic faith."[471]

John Wesley's quest for spiritual- experiential faith, particularly his doctrine of a

'second moment' spiritual experience subsequent to and different from the conversion

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[467] John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley,* 5: 124.

[468] John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 5: 258.

[469] See also Albert C. Outler and Richard P. Heitzenrater who note that the Wesleyan movement was said to have laid "claim to almost every Apostolic gift, in a full and ample manner, as they were possessed of old." Idem, eds., *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1991), 98.

[470] John Wesley, *The Holy Spirit and Power* (rewritten; updated; Clare Weakley; Gainesville, Fla.: Bridge-Logos, 2003), 107-109.

[471] Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, 40-41.

experience, gave rise to the notion of Spirit Baptism, and hence the *charisms* of the Holy

Spirit, in the twentieth century Pentecostal-charismatic movement, particularly in

America.[472]

   The Redeemed Gospel Church denomination, from which the congregations

examined in the present study were sampled, derives both its roots and continuing

momentum in from the American Pentecostal-charismatic movement. Thus the

Redeemed Gospel Church was not only a breakaway from the American Pentecostal

Evangelistic Fellowship of Africa (PEFA), but that there has been a continuing American

Pentecostal-charismatic influence on the Kenyan Pentecostalism, including the

Redeemed Gospel Church. Sung Kyu Park observes that:

> Kenya hosted itinerant evangelists such as Billy Graham, Oral Roberts, and T. L.
> Osborn during the 1960s, and they were followed by other itinerant televangelists
> such as Reinhart Bonnke, Morris Cerullo, Harry Das, Benny Hinn, and Joyce
> Meyer. Generally these evangelists were not affiliated with any specific
> denomination and claimed to have "spiritual gifts" and charismatic power of
> preaching and healing. Thus under the guidance from North America and Europe,
> dozens of new Pentecostal and charismatic churches have been formed since
> 1963. Examples of these churches include … Redeemed Gospel Church.[473]

The congregations examined in present study also echo the Wesleyan doctrine of 'second

moment' of spiritual experience, which is understood, in the congregations studied, as

Spirit Baptism, a post-conversion experience of Holy Spirit suffusion which imparts

charisms of the Holy Spirit. The congregations also espouse the Wesleyan emphasis on

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[472] See Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism*, 182, and Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots*, 35-80.

[473] Sung Kyu Park, "Charismatic Spirituality," 9. See also J. N. K. Mugambi, Evangelistic and Charismatic Initiatives in Post-Colonial Africa," in *Charismatic Renewal in Africa* (ed. M. Vahakangas and A. A. Kyomo; Nairobi, Kenya: Acton, 2003), 121, and Philomena Mwaura, "African Instituted Churches: A Perspective from Kenya," in *Religions in Eastern Africa Under Globalization* (ed. J. N. K. Mugambi and M. N. Getui; Nairobi, Kenya: Acton, 2004), 107.

holiness, as intimated in the prophetic utterances of "warnings against sin in the church"(SD.4, SD.41), and the prophetic inculcation of "Godly fear" (SD.75).

The historical exemplars explored above illustrate, and indeed confirm, that there is evident correspondence between the present study participants' perceptions, convictions, beliefs, expressions and actions, with similar perceptions, convictions, beliefs, expressions and actions of church praxis in historical perspective. Nonetheless, since experiences and manifestations of Christian spirituality are always spatio-temporally contextualized, there are bound to be contextual disjunctures in the perceptual expressions and responses to the experiences of the *charisms* of the Holy Spirit.[474] K. A. Busia's observation that Christianity has "universal elements that cannot be nationalized or regionalized" but which "find expression in human relations and institutions,"[475] implies that the phenomenon of charismatic prophecy that is witnessed in church history and in the contemporary global Pentecostal-charismatic movement is bound to have universal characteristics as well as spatio-temporal and culture-specific expressions of the universal characteristics.

5.5.3 Empirical-Analytic Results and Contemporary Praxis

Following Clodovis Boff's correspondence of relations model, this section examines whether there is any correspondence between the present study participants' perceptions, convictions, beliefs, and experiences of charismatic prophecy in other contemporary contexts. However, given the looping- cyclical nature of Van der Ven's

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[474] See also Sung Kyu Park, "Charismatic Spirituality," 2.

[475] K. A. Busia, "The Commitment of the Laity in the Growth of the Church and the Integral Development of Africa," *Laity Today* (1972):235-249 (241). See also J. S. Pobee and G. Ositelu, *African Initiatives in Christianity,*9.

model, there are bound to be repetitions of some of the material covered in earlier stages of the process cycle. Nonetheless, the repetition is intended to be a "repetition-with-variation" process which, according to Pamela Kinlaw, suggests "movement and progression" and hence an accretion of nuanced meanings.[476]

The depiction of charismatic prophecy as a congregationally-contextualized phenomenon in which glossolalia is a concomitant prayer language has also been attested by Meredith McGuire in her study of charismatic prophecy among contemporary American Catholic charismatics. She observes that charismatic prophecy was perceived by the Catholic charismatics as a "gift of the Holy Spirit by which God communicates directly with the prayer group through the voices of certain members."[477] McGuire's particular observation that a definite characteristic of the Catholic charismatics was their emphasis on the concomitance of speaking in tongues and prophecy correlates with the observation made in the present study that glossolalia and charismatic prophecy were viewed as concomitant *charisms*.[478]

In a similar contemporary study closer to the cultural context of the present study, Bennetta Jules- Rosette observes, in a Central African charismatic congregation, that "ecstatic states are private forms of religious expression which are induced in public ceremonies … prayer and song create a state of individual inspiration and of collective trance."[479] Thus the central African charismatic congregational worship settings were

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[476] Pamela E. Kinlaw, "From Death to Life: The Expanding *Ruach* in Ezekiel." *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 30 (2003): 161-172 (163).

[477] Meredith B. McGuire, "The Social Context of Prophecy," 146.

[478] Meredith B. McGuire, "The Social Context of Prophecy," 135.

[479] Bennetta Jules- Rosette, "Ceremonial Trance Behavior," 1.

observed to create charismatic encounters, through "prayer and song," which induced individual experiences of ecstasy. Rosette also notes the concomitance of prophecy and glossolalia; "once these mystical experiences begin, the members seem to focus totally on the spiritual messages that they claim to receive … the trance behaviors, including speaking in tongues … are dependent upon the social context in which they are experienced."[480]

Rosette's further observation that the charismatic prophecy speaker is perceived "to be in direct contact with the source of inspiration, the Holy Spirit,"[481] correlates with McGuire's observation among the American Catholic charismatics that charismatic prophecy had a special significance in that it was perceived as "the gift of the Holy Spirit by which God communicates directly with the prayer group through the voices of certain members."[482] The observations made in the present study that charismatic encounters were created through exultant singing and glossolalic praying, and that the ensuing charismatic prophecy manifestations were believed to be God speaking to the congregations, resonate remarkably well with Rosette and McGuire's observations. Inferentially, therefore, the observations of the present study are not unique to the congregations studied; rather, they appear to be common experiences in different cultural contexts of the contemporary Pentecostal-charismatic fraternity.

Whereas Mcguire and Rosette's observations correlate with the observations made in the congregations under the present study, a feature that appears to be

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[480] Bennetta Jules- Rosette, "Ceremonial Trance Behavior," 2.

[481] Bennetta Jules- Rosette, "Ceremonial Trance Behavior," 4.

[482] Meredith B. McGuire, "The Social Context of Prophecy,"134.

contextually specific to the African Pentecostal-charismatic settings is the manifestation

of "demonic spirits" in tandem with manifestations of the *charisms* of the Spirit. In the

congregations studied, it was observed in every congregational worship gathering that, at

the heightened moment of glossolalic prayer and praise when the congregants appeared

to transcend themselves and enter into an ecstatic mode, some congregants manifested

what the pastors believed to be indications of demonic possession. Similarly, Rosette

observed that, in the Central African charismatic congregation, "it is through trance that

the Holy Spirit is invoked, and ancestral and 'demonic spirits' are recognized and

removed."[483] The phenomenon of 'demonic exorcism' is plausibly culture-specific with

respect to the African context. As John S. Pobee and Gabriel Ositelu note, the African

worldview is radically religious and bound up with the world of good and evil spirits;

"African communal activities and their social institutions are inextricably bound up with

religion and the spirit world."[484] It is therefore surmised that, in the African contextual

worldview, whenever there is a breakthrough into the spirit world, there is an inevitable

perception of encounter with both good and evil spirits.

This perception is, however, not alien to Scripture, particularly the New

Testament Church which portrays exorcism of 'evil spirits' as a common practice.[485] The

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[483] Bennetta Jules- Rosette, "Ceremonial Trance Behavior," 3.

[484] J. S. Pobee and G. Ositelu, *African Initiatives in Christianity*, 9.

[485] An exhaustive view of the practice of exorcising demons, both in the New Testament and in contemporary Pentecostal-charismatic world, is given by Francis Frangipane, *The Three Battlegrounds: An In-depth View of the Three Arenas of Spiritual Warfare: The Mind, the Church, and the Heavenly Places* (rev. ed., Cedar Rapids: Iowa: Arrow Publications, 2006). M. J. Cartledge also notes that the *charism* of discerning spirits is viewed by classical Pentecostals as a prophetic-revelatory experience of "insight into the spirit world, especially with respect to exorcisms … however, more recent charismatic interpretation is less dependent than it once was upon classical Pentecostalism." Idem, "Charismatic Prophecy: A Definition and Description," 95.

Gospel accounts of Jesus' earthly ministry are replete with instances of exorcisms of evil spirits (e.g. Mark 1:23-26; 5:2-8; Luke 4:33-35; 8:27-33; 11:14-15). There are also instances in the New Testament church of demon exorcism (e.g. Acts 16:16-18). The *charism* of "distinguishing between spirits" which is mentioned in tandem with the *charism* of prophecy (e.g.1 Cor12:10; cf.1John 4:1- 6) would appear to intimate the plausibility of demonic manifestations in charismatic encounters and, inferentially, this constitutes a plausible biblical basis for explaining aberrant charismatic prophecy manifestations.

The perception of charismatic prophecy, by participants in the present study, as an immediacy of revelatory divine disclosure: "the voice of God by the Holy Spirit through a believer" (SD.11), or "God's revelation through an individual" (SD.12), is also consistent with observations made by Mark Cartledge in his study of the contemporary Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon of prophecy in general; he notes that charismatics believe "prophecy is not the same as preaching since they believe that the message comes directly from God rather than being mediated through exposition of Scripture … the term 'prophet' is generally applied to an individual Christian who is seen as a spokesperson for God."[486] Likewise, Daniel Tappeiner's study of the Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon of prophecy in general also leads him to conclude that charismatic prophecy "is not preaching, teaching, or prediction, but an especially

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[486] M. J. Cartledge, "Charismatic Prophecy: A Definition and Description," 89, 99.

powerful spontaneous utterance provided by the Holy Spirit, in one's own language, given to the group."[487]

The portrayal of the content of charismatic prophecy, in the congregations studied, in terms of present concerns, such as "encouraging the church" (SD.1), "giving assurance of God's presence" (SD.2), or "warnings against sin in the church" (SD.4) is consistent with the characterization of the content of prophecy in Daniel Tappeiner's theoretical model which posits that the functional content of prophecy is "up-building, encouragement, and consolation" of a congregation.[488] Similarly, both McGuire and Rosette observe that the content of charismatic prophecy was always portrayed in terms of present concerns; thus "the idea of prophecy among Catholic Pentecostals is that it is a 'forth-telling' rather than a 'fore-telling' … all the prophecies observed and recorded were directed toward personal interior spirituality, and occasionally there were prophecies referring to interactions within the prayer group."[489] Rosette also observed that the prophetic messages "give advice to other members and review the morality of their behavior."[490]

The present study's observation that the onset of charismatic prophecy was signaled by such perceptions as physical sensations, compulsion to speak, words forming

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[487] D. A. Tappeiner, "A Psychological Paradigm," 23, 25. The disposition of the prophetic speaker in which he or she is able to hear God's voice is described by Carolyn Osiek as a liminal state, or being "at the boundary between the human and the divine." Idem, "Christian Prophecy: Once Upon a Time?" *Currents in Theology and Mission* 17 (1990): 291-297 (292).

[488] D. A. Tappeiner, "A Psychological Paradigm," 25. Carolyn Osiek also describes the functional content of charismatic prophecy as "the living word that impels to constructive action that rends our hearts and pushes us to deeper connectedness with life." Idem, "Christian Prophecy," 296-97.

[489] Meredith B. McGuire, *"*The Social Context of Prophecy," 136, 144.

[490] Bennetta Jules-Rosette, "Ceremonial Trance Behavior," 14.

inside, pictures coming to mind, impressions or ideas in one's spirit, or word of

knowledge revealed in the heart, is consistent with the prophecy onset experiences

observed in Mark Cartledge's study of charismatic prophecy; he notes that the onset of

the experience is marked by "words coming to mind," "a word in their mind's eye," "a

very clear sense of the message God wants spoken," "dreams," "picture," "physical

sensation," "thoughts impress themselves on the mind," "a sense of knowing

something," or "compulsion to speak."[491] The perceived onset experiences are also

consistent with the contemporary psychological paradigm of a hypnagogic state in which

the experimental subjects perceived "pictures or words which they (the experimental

subjects) did not consciously generate or manipulate, but which sprang into the mind

'full blown,' so to speak."[492]

The perceived onset experiences of charismatic prophetic manifestations are

also consistent with the contemporary metaphysical-theological paradigm which utilizes

the Platonic-Jungian model to portray the human being as an open system, "a unified

entity with dimensions in the somatic, psychic, and noetic spheres, interacting with a

variety of environments corresponding to his complex nature; as an open system man

receives stimuli from his various environments, responds to them, strives to maintain a

sense of equilibrium (homeostasis) while in a developmental process of gaining higher

and higher levels of personal integration."[493] The present study participants' perception

of "a sense of being physically overpowered" (SD.34), or "a sudden rush of energy into

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[491] M. J. Cartledge, "Charismatic Prophecy: A Definition and Description," 83- 87, and Idem, "Charismatic Prophecy," 79-82.

[492] E. E. Green, A. M. Green, and E. D. Walters, "Voluntary Control of Internal States,"15. See also D. A. Tappeiner, "A Psychological Paradigm," 27, and Mark Cartledge, "Charismatic Prophecy," 75.

[493] D. A. Tappeiner, "A Psychological Paradigm," 24. See also G. Allport, *Personality and Social Encounter* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1960), 43.

body" (SD.37), portray a perceptual receipt of stimuli from an external environment. In addition, the perceptual experiences connote a sense of 'gaining higher levels of personal integration,' or what is portrayed in the Platonic-Jungian model as "the sphere of spiritual reality" which coincides with the deep unconscious dimension of a person. [494] Hence the perceptions expressed, by participants in the present study, of "being caught up to heaven" (SD.59), and "being submerged in the Holy Spirit" (SD.60),

The functional significance of charismatic prophecy, which is portrayed in the present study as *paraklesis* in terms of edification, encouragement, and consolation, is also noted in Mark Cartledge's study; "the prophet is understood to be of foundational importance for the contemporary local church … thus the prophets inspire and encourage the local church community with a vision of God … the prophets not only encourage but also rebuke. They challenge the status quo and exhort the church along a certain line of action."[495] Daniel Tappeiner also notes that "the impact on those present can be exceedingly powerful."[496] Carolyn Osiek, in her theological study of contemporary Christian prophecy, also notes that upon being confronted with prophecy, the hearer is "struck to the heart … so that such a person will recognize the presence and identity of

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[494] D. A. Tappeiner," A Psychological Paradigm," 24. Also M. J. Cartledge, "Charismatic Prophecy," 74. The Platonic-Jungian interpretation model is enunciated in Morton T. Kelsey, *Tongue Speaking* (New York: Doubleday, 1968), and Idem, *Encounter with God* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Bethany Fellowship, 1972).

[495] M. J. Cartledge, "Charismatic Prophecy: A Definition and Description," 100-101.

[496] D. A. Tappeiner, "A Psychological Paradigm," 28.

the true God."[497] Both McGuire and Rosette also observe similar perceptual impacts of prophecy in their respective contextual studies.[498]

5.6 Charismatic Prophecy: Emerging Concepts

Viewed from Van der Ven's "attestatory judgment" point of view, the empirical-analytic results of the present evaluative case studies, as interpreted and reflected above, confirm the validity of the theoretical constructs emerging from the exploratory case study and the review of literature. [499] The theoretical constructs help to clarify the empirical-analytic results while, reciprocally, the latter illumine the theoretical constructs. The theoretical constructs, as illumined by the evaluative case studies' empirical-analytic results, are now re-stated, as empirical-biblical concepts, as follows:

First, the contemporary Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon of prophecy is viewed as an invasive oracular utterance inspired by a perceived immediacy of divine presence, or the Holy Spirit. Since the utterance is perceived as an enabling of the Holy Spirit, it is viewed as a *charism* of the Holy Spirit, and hence the appellation "charismatic prophecy." Although the *charism* is imparted to an individual, it functions to edify, encourage, and comfort both the individual speaker and the group, or congregation, at which the prophecy is uttered. Charismatic prophecy is thus viewed as a

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[497] Carolyn Osiek, "Christian Prophecy," 294.

[498] Meredith B. McGuire, "The Social Context of Prophecy," 144, and Bennetta Jules-Rosette, "Ceremonial Trance Behavior," 1.

[499] As already noted, Van der Ven's "attestatory judgment" is "a valid, well- considered- albeit fragile judgment, based not on mathematical proof, but on rational insight; based not on a logical conclusion but on reflective decision; not intended for all eternity but based on currently available data and insights, and that it will come up for review when new data or insights become available." Idem, "An Empirical or a Normative Approach?," 19.

particular case of the *paraklesis* function of the Holy Spirit, and is, therefore, a ministry *charism*.

Second, the context for charismatic prophecy manifestations is congregational or worship settings in which hyper-arousal rituals, such as exultant singing, prayer, and glossolalic utterances create a charismatic encounter. The charismatic encounter is also catalyzed by the congregants' longing for, and expectancy of, divine presence and revelatory communication.

Third, charismatic prophecy is viewed as an intense-ecstatic moment of a sacramental participation of the human deep unconscious dimension, or the human spirit, in the Holy Spirit which overwhelms and infuses the human conscious dimension, or the mind, with a revelatory impulse. The revelatory impulse is thought to induce words, voices, or images/pictures which the subject did not create consciously and which spring up to the conscious mind.

Fourth, charismatic prophecy is also visualized in terms of a transpositional revelation in which an infinite-finite inequality negates any isomorphic coupling between infinite divine speech and finite human perception, conceptualization, and utterance. The divine speech is therefore adaptively framed in phenomenal imageries amenable to human conceptualization and articulation. Charismatic prophecy is thus neither purely divine nor purely anthropological; rather, it is an immediacy of divine will and speech transpositionally expressed through human liberty and utterance.

Fifth, charismatic prophecy can either be a direct utterance in the language native to, or understood by, a congregation, or it can be, in the first instance, a glossolalic

utterance which is subsequently 'interpretively' uttered in a vernacular. The invasive-'interpretive' utterance is viewed as a separate *charism* from the original glossolalic utterance; hence the plausibility of more than one 'interpretive' proclamation of the same glossolalic utterance.

Finally, the critical functional significance of charismatic prophecy is *paraklesis*; it serves to edify, encourage, and console a congregation in contextual situations. It is thus a *kairological* word for a specific people in specific contextual situations. Unlike Scripture, charismatic prophecy is not viewed as a universal and abiding normative. However, the *paraklesis* effect of charismatic prophecy is thought to impact the hearers with eschatological hope in the sense that human finitude is, perceptually, brought into an intense sacramental experience of eternal divine presence.

5.7 Methodological Reflection

The last phase of van der Ven's process cycle is methodological reflection. It is a review of the presumptions implicit in the methodology adopted for the empirical-biblical research and their implications for the study as a whole. The overarching methodology of the present study is hermeneutical; it is an empirical-biblical interpretation of the phenomenon of charismatic prophecy that is manifested in a contextual setting of Pentecostal-charismatic congregations. A basic presupposition in biblical hermeneutics is that the extra-scriptural world, or the contextual world of religious praxis, is germane to the task of hermeneutics since religious praxis is contextual. Therefore the extra-scriptural world of praxis, viewed from scriptural, theological and socio-cultural perspectives, is brought into the empirical-biblical hermeneutical task. However, the resulting hermeneutical outcome is irreducibly a

biblical-theological understanding since the process is a quest for understanding divine reality in human experience.[500]

The hermeneutical 'theory↔praxis↔theory' model presupposed in the present study is assumed to be an epistemological, or a creative meaning-making, process.[501] Thus the meanings emerging from the present empirical-biblical study are creative interpretations of the empirical data in the light of Scripture. The interpretation of the empirical-analytic results does not, therefore, necessarily conform to any particular theological viewpoint or particular ecclesial tradition since the hermeneutical- praxis model is, by definition, a dialectic in which data is not only interpreted from particular presuppositional perspectives but that the data also critiques the presuppositional perspectives.[502] Nonetheless, the emerging empirical-biblical model represents a dialogic template for critical-reflective interaction with various theological and ecclesial traditions.

The specific methodological process adopted for the present study, the Van der Ven's empirical-theological cycle, is basically a theological-hermeneutical model designed for quantitative research approaches. Although necessary modifications were made to accommodate the empirical-biblical and qualitative approaches of the present study, the basic framework of the model is still a theological- quantitative design. It is conceivable that this might have had a vitiating effect on its applicability to biblical-hermeneutical and qualitative approaches. It is therefore recommended that the results of

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[500] See also Hans- Gunter Heimbrock, "From Data to Theory," 276.

[501] See also Peter C. Phan, "Method in Liberation Theologies," 54.

[502] See also Van der Ven, "An Empirical or a Normative Approach?," 19.

the present study be replicated in future research utilizing purely biblical and qualitative study designs in order to reconfirm the validity of the results.

Van der Ven's empirical-theological cycle presupposes that religious experience is integral to theological epistemology. However, because of the contextual nature of religious experiences, a plausible implication of this presupposition for the present study is that biblical hermeneutics might be viewed as a subjective discipline lacking objectivity. Nonetheless, the perception that the increasing incorporation of religious praxis into biblical-theological hermeneutics could be an influence of contemporary situational pragmatism and its attendant situational spirituality which tendentiously divinizes experience, is countered by the argument that the original meaning of *theologia* is reflection on personal experiential knowledge of divine self disclosure, as revealed in Scripture, and therefore the incorporation of praxis into biblical hermeneutics is imperative. [503] The *theologia* notion of personal-experiential knowledge of divine self-disclosure is also implicit in Scripture. For example, the Johannine 'word-of-life' discourse connotes an experiential dimension of encounter with the divine; "that which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched"(1 John 1:1). However, the rigorous methodological process that is employed in the present empirical-biblical investigation and the subjection of the empirical-analytic results to theoretical critique guard against any capricious subjectivism in the hermeneutical task.[504]

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[503] See Edward Farley, *Theologia,* 7. See also Hans Geybels, "Experience Searching for Theology," 33.

[504] E. Farley, "Interpreting Situations: An Inquiry into the Nature of Practical Theology," in *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology* (ed. S. Pattison and J. Woodward; Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 118-127.

Whereas Van der Ven's hermeneutical cycle is a fairly robust heuristic process, the cycle phases tend to overlap, particularly between the induction and deduction phases as well as between the interpretation and reflection phases. The effect of the overlaps is a looping cycle that is inevitably repetitive in the research process. Mark Cartledge, who has utilized the Van der Ven's empirical-theological cycle in his study of charismatic glossolalia, also notes that "it was impossible to keep these phases distinct in practice."[505] However, as already pointed out, the repetitions are strategically managed in such a way that they represent a 'repetition-with-variation' strategy for an accretion of nuances in the hermeneutical process.

The use of the case study method implies, according to Robert Yin, that contextual factors were highly pertinent to the phenomenon of study.[506] This is particularly true in the present study since, as already argued, congregational settings are not only germane to charismatic prophecy experiences and manifestations but are also the contextual conditions for the experiences and manifestations. Although contextual conditions could be construed as limiting the case study results to discrete and highly localized knowledge, the resonance of the observations from the different case studies and the congruence of the empirical-analytic results with Scripture, Church praxis in historical perspective, and charismatic prophecy experiences observed in other contemporary contexts, confirm both internal and external validity of the case study approach. The results of the present study, therefore, provide fairly robust material for comparative analysis with results from other contextual studies and for the advancement

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[505] M. J. Cartledge, *Charismatic Glossolalia*, 216.

[506] Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research*, 18.

of biblical understanding of the Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon of prophecy. In particular, the study makes a significant contribution to an understanding of the Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon of prophecy from an African context, which has been lacking in Pentecostal studies. In what follows, the study utilizes the material from previous chapters and the concretized empirical-biblical concepts to present a particular thesis of the nature and significance of the Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon of prophecy.

CHAPTER SIX

CHARISMATIC PROPHECY: AN EMPIRICAL-BIBLICAL MODEL

The purpose of the present chapter is to utilize the material from previous chapters to present a particular thesis of the nature and significance of the Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon of prophecy in congregational settings in an African context. The thesis is presented in the form of an empirical-biblical model of charismatic prophecy.

6.1 Review of Empirical-Biblical Process

The present study is an empirical-biblical investigation of the nature and significance of the Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon of prophecy in congregational settings in an African context. The process is thus an empirical descriptive analysis and biblical-hermeneutical evaluation of the praxis of charismatic prophecy. The study was motivated by the researcher's observation that the manifestations of the *charism* of prophecy were reportedly common place in the Pentecostal-charismatic movement and that, in the African context, the *charism* of prophecy appeared to have a particular appeal in that it echoed the traditional African prophetic spirituality which accentuates ecstatic 'spirit possession,' or 'divine seizure,' and 'supernatural' revelations.[507] However, the observed appeal of the *charism* of prophecy in the African context was incidental; the study was not intended to examine any causal or associative relations between Pentecostal-charismatic prophecy and the African prophetic spirituality; rather, it was

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[507] See also Nathaniel I. Ndiokwere, *Prophecy and Revolution: The Role of Prophets in the Independent African Churches and in Biblical Tradition* (London: SPCK, 1981), 239-243, and K. Appiah-Kubi, "Indigenous African Christian Churches: Signs of Authenticity in African Theology," in *African Theology En- Route* (ed. K. A. Kubi and S. Torres; Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1979), 117-125.

limited to examining the nature and significance of the Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon of prophecy in an African context.

Van der Ven's empirical-theological cycle, which was adapted as the hermeneutical process model for the present study, was considered to be a particularly appropriate model in that it is intra-disciplinary; it allows empirical-biblical or theological research to be carried out on the basis of biblical or theological hermeneutical theory.[508] As already noted in Chapter 2, alternative empirical process models in religious research entail biblical scholars and theologians either borrowing insights from empirical research in the social sciences, or cooperating with the social scientists to do empirical-biblical or theological research. These alternative models, however, necessitate biblical-theological reinterpretation of empirical data since social sciences research is aimed at sociological, rather than biblical-theological, theory building. As Hermans and Moore have noted, religious research needs religiously-driven empirical research methods "in order to develop a critical, methodologically verifiable theological theory of today's religious praxis."[509]

A basic presupposition of the empirical-biblical process adopted for the present study is that there is a dialectical relation between theory and praxis. This presupposition is in contradistinction to a deductive relation in which theory is applied to praxis. The preference for the dialectical relation was premised on the argument that praxis is,

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[508] See also C. A. M. Hermans and M. E. Moore, "The Contribution of Empirical Theology," 4.

[509] C. A. M. Hermans and M. E. Moore, "The Contribution of Empirical Theology," 4.

indeed, hermeneutical action and is, hence, epistemological.[510] The implication of the

dialectical relation between theory and praxis for the empirical-biblical process is that the

starting point of the theory emerging from the study was, seemingly, the living faith

praxis of the Pentecostal-charismatics as heuristically perceived by the researcher in

literature and in spatio-temporal contexts. However, since the living faith of the

charismatics was inevitably informed by their historical- ecclesial and cultural traditions,

the starting point of the emerging theory was, in reality, a dialectic between theory and

praxis; hence the 'theory ↔ praxis ↔ theory' hermeneutical model proposed in Chapter

2.[511]

The methodological process implication of the above presupposition, for the

present study, is that the theory implicit in the researcher's pre-understanding of the

experiences of charismatic prophecy was empirically explored by way of an exploratory-

inductive case study. The emerging empirical-heuristic postulates were then subjected to

critical dialectical review in the light of empirical-theoretical literature and the data of

Scripture. The critical review was dialectical in the sense that the critique was reciprocal

between the emerging postulates and the empirical- biblical literature. The theoretical

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[510] See Paul Ricoeur, *Hermeneutics and the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 188-207, and Van der Ven, "An Empirical Approach to Practical Theology," in *Practical Theology: International Perspectives* (ed. F. Schweitzer and Van der Ven; Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1999), 323-340.

[511] H. G. Gadamer has argued that human consciousness, and hence faith consciousness and practice, is historically affected. Utilizing the metaphor of 'horizon' for historical traditioning, Gadamer argues that "the horizon of the present is continually in the process of being formed … the horizon of the present cannot be formed without the past." Idem, *Truth and Method,* 306. Although John D. Caputo's radical hermeneutic critiques Gadamer's historical traditioning and, instead, argues that human noetic finitude implies a radical rapture with history, the general consensus in scholarship is that our faith practice is, to a considerable degree, historically traditioned. See John D. Caputo, *More Radical Hermeneutics: On Not Knowing Who We Are* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 2000), 42- 47. See also C. A. M. Hermans, "When Theology Goes Practical," 30-33.

constructs emerging from the dialectical-critical review were, next, evaluated by way of explanatory-deductive case studies, with the aim of disconfirming or otherwise validating the theoretical constructs and, hence, deriving empirical-biblical concepts from the explanatory-deductive analytic results.[512]

6.2 Charismatic Prophecy: A Sacramental-Experiential Model

Based on the derived empirical-biblical concepts, it is argued that charismatic prophecy, as manifested in the congregational settings in the African context of the Pentecostal-charismatic movement, is a normative feature of the Pentecostal-charismatic spirituality. It also appears to be a particularly cherished manifestation of the *charisms* of the Holy Spirit in that it is not only an experience of an immediacy of revelatory divine presence but is also a spontaneous ministry of the immediacy of the revelatory divine presence to a congregation. Thus whereas other *charisms* of the Holy Spirit, such as glossolalia, healing, or miracles (e.g.1 Cor 12:8-10), are individual experiences of divine presence and grace, charismatic prophecy manifestations go beyond individual experiences of divine presence and grace, and powerfully impacts a congregational worship gathering with an immediacy of the revelatory divine presence, for the purpose of edification, encouragement, and comfort (1 Cor 14: 3). Consequently, the thesis of the present study is that charismatic prophecy is a sacramental experience in its nature and *parakletic* in its functional significance. The notion of *paraklesis* will be explicated presently under Section 6.3.

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[512] As Chris Hermans observes, theological theory is reflected practice because theology is reflection on God's action in the world. Idem, "When Theology Goes 'Practical:' From Applied to Empirical Theology," in *Hermeneutics and Empirical Research in Practical Theology*, 22.

It was observed, from the empirical-analytic results in Chapter 5, that charismatic prophecy was perceived as an intense moment of a participatory interface between the divine spirit, or Holy Spirit, and the human deep unconscious dimension, or the human spirit, and that the divine spirit overwhelmed and infused the human conscious dimension, or the mind, with revelatory impulses. Such an intense participation of the human spirit in the divine Spirit is deemed to be a sacramental experience.

In many ecclesial traditions a sacramental experience is viewed as a participation in rituals, such as the elements of the Eucharist, which are viewed as either outward signs of an inward spiritual grace of one's union with Christ and with the church communion, or as efficacious conveyers of grace in themselves.[513] However, as Wolfgang Vondey and Chris Green observe, there is need to free sacramentality from an immediate connection with particular rituals and celebrations and to approach the idea from an understanding of the Christian life as a whole.[514] David Watson laments that sacramentalism has been regarded as an institution of the church and within the church instead of seeing the church itself as "the sacrament of Christ's presence and action in the world."[515] Thus the real presence of Jesus Christ by his Spirit in the church may have

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[513] See, for example, Ronald S. Wallace, "Sacrament," in *Baker's Dictionary of Theology* (ed. E. F. Harrison; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960), 465- 466. See also Allan Cairns who notes that "a sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ wherein by sensible signs, Christ and the benefits of the covenant are represented, sealed and applied to believers." Thus according to Cairns, a sacrament includes and indicates an outward visible sign, an inward spiritual grace, a union between the sign and the grace it signifies, as well as a union between the grace and the participant in the sacramental rite. Idem, *Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Belfast, N. Ireland: Ambassador- Emerald International, 1998), 321-322.

[514] Wolfgang Vondey and Chris W. Green, "Between This and That: Reality and Sacramentality in the Pentecostal Worldview," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 19 (2010): 243-264 (245). See also Lewis-Marie Chauvet who portrays the totality of the Christian experience as a sacrament. Idem, *Symbol and Sacrament: A Sacramental Representation of Christian Existence* (trans. P. Madigan and M. Beaumont; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1995), 8-17.

[515] David Watson, *I Believe in the Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 225.

been reduced, through ecclesial traditioning of the sacramentum, to ritual re-enactments of historical sacramental events.[516] However, as Matti Kärkkäinen, following Mary Fatula, notes:

> Since Vatican II, sacramental theology has taken a pneumatological course with the idea of the church as the sacrament of the Spirit and revelation, in its most basic sense, as God's own self-communication to human beings through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit, through whom humanity comes to share in the divine nature.[517]

However, since the methodological focus of the present study is an empirical-biblical investigation, explication of the notion of sacramental experience is limited, primarily, to biblical perspectives. An explication of the plethora of different ecclesial sacramental traditions and practices, many of which, as Robert Daly notes, have no direct bearing on Scripture, is beyond the scope of the present study.[518]

From a biblical perspective, sacramental ontology is best understood as an account of human experiences of divine presence, as well as how phenomenal realities can be viewed as signs of inward experiences of divine presence, or even as efficacious conveyers of the grace of divine presence. Hans Boersma notes that at the heart of sacramental ontology is a deep seated desire of the human spirit for a sacramental or

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[516] The same critique is expressed by Ralph P. Martin, *Worship in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 126, and Jean-Jacques von Allmen, *Worship: Its Theology and Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 34.

[517] Veli Matti Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit in Ecumenical, International, and Contextual Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002),76-77, and Mary Anne Fatula, *The Holy Spirit: The Unbounded Gift of Joy* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1998), 89- 90. See also Hans Urs von Barthasar for a detailed explication of the pneumatological implications of Vatican II on Roman Catholic sacramental theology. Idem, *Explorations in Theology, Vol. 3: Creator Spirit* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993), 245-267.

[518] Robert J. Daly argues that the forms of most of the extant ecclesial sacramental practices have no direct bearing on Scripture, but that they have evolved over the centuries as traditioning processes of the church. Idem, "Eucharistic Origins: From the New Testament to the Liturgies of the Golden Age," *Theological Studies* 66 (2005): 3-22(4).

perichoretic union with God.[519] Charismatic prophecy is at the heart of sacramental ontology in the sense that, as noted in Chapters 3 and 5, it was conduced by the congregants' longing for, and an expectancy of, immediacy of experiential revelatory divine presence.[520] In order to appreciate fully the sacramental nature of charismatic prophecy from a biblical perspective, it is deemed necessary to explicate in detail the concept of sacramental ontology from a biblical-etymological perspective.

The word *sacramentum* is the Latin Vulgate translation of the Greek New Testament word μυστήριον which is usually rendered in the English translations of the New Testament as "mystery."[521] The apparent use of the word μυστήριον in the Greek New Testament is in reference to divine mysteries in revelatory encounter, either with creation in general or with the church in particular (e.g. Rom 16:25; Eph1:9-10; 3:3-5, 9; Col 1:26-27). The primary μυστήριον was the incarnation in which God manifested his reconciling encounter presence in the world through Jesus Christ; "beyond all question the μυστήριον of godliness is great; He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory" (1Tim 3:16). E. Schillenbeeckx remarks that "the man Jesus, as the

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[519] Hans Boersma, *Nouvelle Théologie and Sacramental Ontology: A Return to Mystery* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 115.

[520] Frank Macchia suggests that the notion of sacramentality provides an illuminating analogy for the Pentecostal experience of glossolalia. Idem, "Tongues as a Sign: Towards a Sacramental Understanding of Pentecostal Experience," *Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 15 (1993): 61-76. Mark Cartledge also notes that "a number of Pentecostal and Charismatic writers have considered glossolalia in sacramental terms." Idem, *Charismatic Glossolalia,* 195. The portrayal of glossolalia in sacramental terms strengthens the case for a sacramental ontology of charismatic prophecy since, as already observed both in the review of literature and in the empirical case studies, glossolalia was often a concomitant of charismatic prophecy manifestations.

[521] See also R. S. Wallace, "Sacrament," 465.

personal visible realization of the divine grace of redemption, is the sacrament."[522] This

remark resonates the biblical portrayal of Jesus Christ as the "μυστήριον of godliness" (1

Tim 3:16).

Jesus Christ, through the incarnational outpouring of his Spirit at Pentecost,

manifested his experiential presence in the incipient church (Acts 2:1- 4). Schillenbeeckx

goes on to suggest that, by the Holy Spirit, the life of the church is sacramental in the

sense that the presence of Christ is experientially encountered in union with the church

just as the presence of God was encountered in union with Christ; "if Christ is indeed the

sacrament of God, and he is being represented through the church by the Holy Spirit,

perhaps we should consider the church herself as a sacrament."[523]

The inference that the church can be viewed a sacrament is an apt ratiocination in

the sense that the church is not only called the body of Christ (e.g.1 Cor 12:27; Eph 5:30)

but is, indeed, sacramentally portrayed as such in the *Last Supper* 'bread' and 'cup.'

Thus "Jesus took the bread… and gave it to his disciples saying, this is my body. Then

he took the cup … and offered it to them, saying … this is my blood …" (Matt 26:26-27;

cf. Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:17-20; 1 Cor 11:23-25). Hence the Pauline portrayal of the

union between husband and wife as a μυστήριον, or a sacramental sign of the union

between Christ and the church: "for this reason a man will leave his father and mother

and be united to his wife, and the two will become one (body) flesh. This is a profound

μυστήριον - but I am talking about Christ and the Church" (Eph 5:31-32).

Analogically therefore, charismatic prophecy can be viewed as a sacramental experience

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[522] E. Schillenbeeckx, *Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1963), 19.

[523] E. Schillenbeeckx, *Christ the Sacrament*, 45.

in the sense that it is a heightened ecstatic moment of an interpenetrating, or *perichoretic*, encounter between Christ's Holy Spirit presence and the human deep unconscious dimension, or the human spirit, in which the Holy Spirit overwhelms and infuses the human conscious dimension, or the mind, with revelatory impulses and promptings to speak forth.

The semantic range of the New Testament Greek word μυστήριον includes a reference to hidden or inexpressible enigmatic realities. This is the sense conveyed in the New Testament with reference to the enigmatic, μυστήρια, nature of the kingdom of heaven (e.g. Matt 13:11; Luke 8: 10), the enigmatic, μυστήριον, nature of iniquity (e.g. 2 Thess 2:7), or the enigmatic, μυστήριον ,nature of the seven stars in the *Apocalypse of John* (Rev 1:20). In this sense therefore, charismatic prophecy, as a sacramental experience, is an otherwise enigmatic-ecstatic participatory union between the Holy Spirit and the human spirit. This is the sense expressed by participants in the present study that "prophecy is still a mystery to me" (SI.18). The charismatic prophecy sacramental model emerging from the present empirical-biblical study is diagrammatically represented in Figure 6.1 as follows:

Figure 6.1

Increasing Intensity of ecstatic sacramental experience

Deeper dimension of divine presence (Holy Spirit)

Decreasing intensity of human consciousness

Deep human unconscious dimension (Central Arena of Sacramental Experience)

Human conscious dimension (Arena of revelatory impulses and promptings to speak)
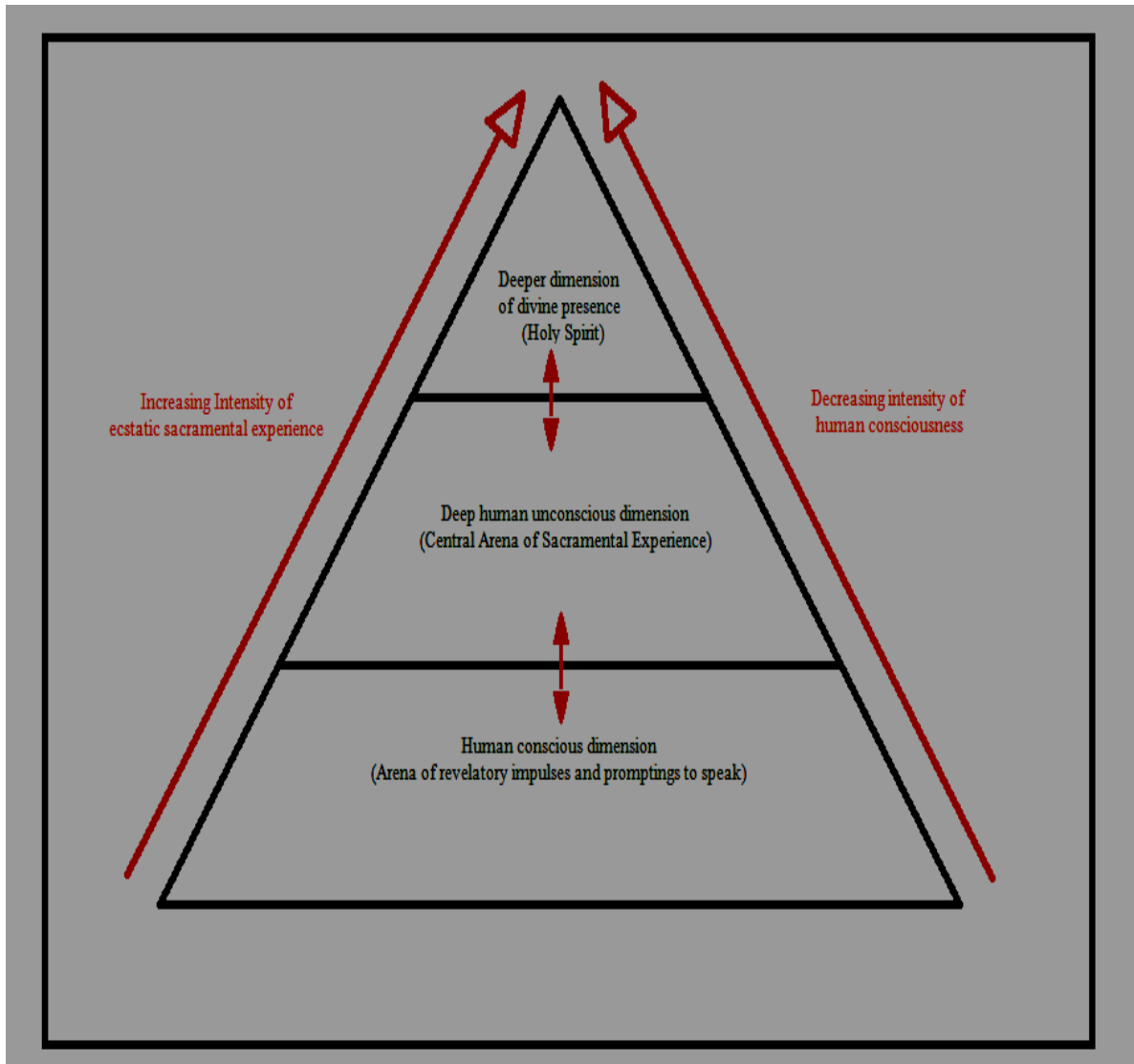
(Charismatic Prophecy: Sacramental-Experiential Model)

The broadening of the diagram towards the base suggests that the most prominent perceptual experience in charismatic prophecy manifestations is in the human conscious dimension. The empirical-analytic results (Appendix 10) indicate that, during the charismatic prophecy manifestations, the participants were more conscious of activity in

their human conscious dimension than the actualities of the divine presence; they thus
felt:

> SD.21. Physical sensations.
>
> SD.22. Overwhelming compulsion to speak.
>
> SD.23. Words forming inside; word of knowledge coming to mind.
>
> SD.24. Dreams, pictures, appearing in mind.
>
> SD.25. Impressions/ideas in mind that flesh out as prophecy.
>
> SD.34. A sense of being physically overpowered.
>
> SD.35. A feeling of overwhelming excitement.
>
> SD.37. A sudden rush of energy into body.
>
> SD.38. An overwhelming joy.

However, in relatively fewer cases, participants appeared to have perceptions of the more
intense episodes of the sacramental experience which could be interpreted as ecstatic
(being out of their conscious dimension) moments in which they momentarily entered
into the central arena of the sacramental experience and perhaps also into the deeper
arena of divine presence; thus:

> SD.59. It is like being caught up into heaven and hearing words.
>
> SD.60. I feel like being submerged in the Holy Spirit.
>
> SD.69. I feel the presence of the Lord overwhelming me.
>
> SD.73. My mind is no longer aware of earthly things.

From the empirical-analytic results, it appears that the degree of intensity of the
sacramental experience in the charismatic prophecy manifestations was dependent on
two key factors: the 'spiritual' intensity of the individual prophecy utterer and the

'spiritual' intensity of the congregational charismatic encounter.[524] First, the 'spiritual' intensity, or the extent of eagerness for the experience of divine presence, of the individual was perceived by the participants to be dependent on one's prayerfulness and dedication to God. As was expressed by a number of participants, "prayer and fasting is very important if you want to hear God's voice" (SI.37). Second, the 'spiritual' intensity, or the extent of the eagerness for the experience of divine presence, in the congregational charismatic encounter sessions was perceived by the researcher to be dependent on both the eagerness of the congregants for experiences of divine presence and the congregants' spontaneous, exultant singing, dancing, praying in 'tongues,' together with passionate scriptural exhortatory locutions by the worship leaders to expect divine visitation.

It is, however, conceivable that the visible manifestations of expressive passions as signs of individual or congregational 'spiritual' intensity could as well be a cultural factor in African spirituality and that, in other cultural settings, the eagerness for experiences of divine presence might not necessarily be indicated by external expressive passions. Nonetheless, a number of scholars have observed that Pentecostal-charismatic spirituality has, throughout its history worldwide, been characterized by deep convictions and visible expressive passionate desire for the manifestation of divine presence.[525]

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[524] Although it is acknowledged that the *charism* of prophecy is a divine discretionary initiative, "to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given … and he gives to each one, just as he wills"(1 Cor 12:7-11), it is, nonetheless, observed that the divine initiative is set in dialectical tension with human responsibility or human eagerness for the manifestations of the *charisms* of the Holy Spirit; thus "follow the way of love, and eagerly desire πνευματικά "charisms," especially that you may προφητεύητε 'prophesy'" (1Cor 14:1).

[525] See, for example, Steven J. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality,* 9-11, Kenneth J. Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic,*18-29, Mark Cartledge, *Charismatic Glossolalia*, 4, Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism,* 1-15, and Harvey Cox, "Foreword," in *Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Healing* (ed. C. G. Brown; New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), xvii- xxi.

Although the diagrammatic representation of the charismatic prophecy

sacramental model is, on the face of it, reminiscent of the medieval mystical-apophatic

and other models of spirituality which portray a mystic's ascension into a divine

"mountain summit cloud of unknowing" and "contemplating God in his naked

inexpressible transcendence,"[526] there are, nonetheless, rather contrastive features.

First, whereas some of the mystical-apophatic models visualize divine grace as

a substance infused into the human soul and which elevates the soul beyond the natural

realm into some transcendent mystical realms, or ascension into divine essence, the

charismatic prophecy sacramental model visualizes an incarnational experience; [527] it

denotes divine transcendence experienced as divine immanence and is therefore a

Christological-incarnational model; hence Philip Butin's remark that, "we do not ascend

but, as in the incarnation, God descends to us."[528] Moreover, unlike the mystical

apophatic models, the charismatic prophecy sacramental experience does not portray

divine presence as a substance flowing into the human soul and blurring the distinction

between the divine and the human essences.[529] Rather, charismatic prophecy is a

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[526] Ross Thompson, *Christian Spirituality,* 142- 143. See also Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology,* 105- 133, for an explication of mystical-apophatic models.

[527] See Paul L. Gavrilyuk for a detailed discussion of the theosis or deification theology which visualizes divine grace as a substance infused into the human soul. Idem, "The Retrieval of Deification: How a Once Despised Archaism Became an Ecumenical Desideratum," *Modern Theology* 25 (2009), 651. It is noteworthy that Karl Barth viewed the notion of deification, in terms of infusion of substance into the soul and elevating the soul into transcendent realms, as "high pitched anthropology." Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics IV. 2: The Doctrine of Reconciliation* (ed. G.W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance; Edinburgh: T & T Clark,1958), 81- 82.

[528] Philip W. Butin, *Revelation, Redemption and Response: Calvin's Trinitarian Understanding of the Divine-Human Relationship* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 69. See also J.T. Billings, "United with God through Christ: Assessing Calvin on the Question of Deification," *Harvard Theological Review* 98 (2005): 315-334.

[529] See Myk Habels, "Reforming Theosis," in *Theosis: Deification in Christian Theology* (ed. E. Finland and V. Kharlamov; Eugene, Ore.: Pickwick, 2006), 148.

sacramental experience in the sense that the human spirit participates in divine spiritual presence without obfuscating the divine and the human essences. Thus there is no divinization in the sense of the human essence being dissolved into a divine essence; rather, the experience of divine presence is transcendence inhering in immanence with a powerfully inspirational and revelatory impact on the human spirit.

Second, whereas the apophatic models are uni-directionally ascending, the charismatic prophecy sacramental model is bi-directional; not only is divine presence experienced immanently but, at the same time, the Spirit of God draws the charismatic prophetic utterer into an intense experience of divine presence. The drawing into an intensity of divine presence, during the charismatic prophecy manifestation, was perceptually experienced as "being caught up to heaven and hearing words." (S.59). Thus the bi-directional (↕) arrows in the charismatic prophecy diagrammatic model denote both the aspect of the incarnational divine inherence in immanence and the aspect of being drawn into an intense experience of divine presence.[530]

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[530] Scriptures that were frequently cited by participants as warrants for incarnational divine presence as well as being drawn into divine presence included, particularly, Psalm 22:3 and 1 Corinthians 14:2. Thus the psalmist's portrayal of God as inhabiting the praises of Israel (Ps 22:3) was hermeneutically viewed by participants as a promise to expect divine inherence in congregational worship. The psalmist's declaration that "in the congregation I will praise you" (Ps 22:22), which the writer of the *Epistle to the Hebrews* attributes to Jesus (Heb 2:12), was also hermeneutically viewed as Jesus' spiritual presence in congregational worship, helping the congregants, in accordance with Romans 8:26, to pray and worship aright. The Old Testament story of the prophet Elisha drawing divine revelatory presence through music (2 Kgs 3:11-19) was also frequently cited as an illustration of the hermeneutical import of Psalm 22:3. The incarnational inherence sense of Psalm 22:3 is most articulately brought out in the *Authorized Version* of the English Bible translation thus: "But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel." However, other English translations, such as the *New International Version* (NIV), blur the incarnational sense of the verse: "You are enthroned as the holy one; you are the praise of Israel." Nonetheless, the NIV does acknowledge in the margin that Psalm 22:3 can also be rendered as "You are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel." The Masoretic Text of the Hebrew Bible does indeed portray a definite incarnational motif in Psalm 22:3(4), thus: וְאַתָּה קָדוֹשׁ יוֹשֵׁב תְּהִלּוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל "But you are holy, enthroned upon the praises of Israel." The "drawing up" of the charismatic prophetic speaker into divine presence was based on a hermeneutical argument that, as a congregant engaged in glossolalic worship, he or she was being

Third, whereas the mystical apophatic models' starting point is usually natural theology, and progressively ascends in to a mystical 'cloud of unknowing' according to one's degree of ascetic spirituality, or what Karl Barth calls "high pitched anthropology,"[531] the starting point of the charismatic prophecy sacramental experiential model is incarnational divine grace. The charismatic prophecy speaker believes that he or she is able to experience revelatory divine presence because of having been regenerated χάριτί "by grace"- the δώρον "gift" of God (Eph 2:8), and having been spirit-baptized or received the δωρεάν "gift" and χαρισμάτων "charisms" of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2: 28; 1 Cor 12:4). The degree of intensity of the ecstatic experience in the charismatic prophecy manifestation is thus not dependent purely on one's natural asceticism, but primarily on one's thirst for, and expectation of, divine presence as well as a conducing congregational charismatic encounter. Furthermore, whereas the mystical apophatic models represent highly individuated spiritualities, the charismatic prophecy sacramental experience has a congregational-*koinonia* dimension in that charismatic prophecy is a revelatory proclamation to a congregation gathered for worship. The revelatory proclamation has a *paraklesis* significance. In what follows, the *parakletic* significance of charismatic prophecy is critically explicated.

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caught up, as it were, in to the mystery of divine presence where "no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit"(1 Cor14:2b). See also Ralph P. Martin, *The Spirit and the Congregation: Studies in 1 Corinthians 12-15* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 66, who expresses a similar hermeneutical view of congregants being drawn into divine mystery as they engage in glossolalic worship.

[531] Karl Barth, *The Doctrine of Reconciliation*, 82.

6.3. Charismatic Prophecy: The *Paraklesis* Significance

Before explicating the significance of *paraklesis in* charismatic prophecy, it is *a propos* to preface it with a consideration of the form, and hence the content, of charismatic prophecy since this has a bearing on the functional significance of the prophecy.

6.3.1 The Form of Charismatic Prophecy

Unlike Old Testament prophetic literature which preserves prophetic speech forms, there is hardly any preserved speech forms in the New Testament relating to prophecy.[532] Typical Old Testament prophetic speech forms include introductory formulaic expressions, such as "thus says Yahweh" (e.g. Isa 7:7; 10:24; Jer 2:2; 4:3; Ezek 3:11; 5:5), which frame the speech as divine communication. The main frame of the oracles is either a revelatory discourse (e.g. Isa 11:1-16), a prophetic judgment speech (e.g. Isa 24:23), an oracle of comfort and encouragement (e.g. Isa 40:1-5; 43:1-28), or an oracle of disputation in which Yahweh reasons with or protests against the faithlessness of his people, or challenges a particular viewpoint held by the people (e.g. Jer 2:1-19; Ezek 18:1-32).[533] It is also noted that quite a number of Old Testament prophetic oracles are poetic in their literary structure while others are prosaic discourses.

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[532] See also David E. Aune, who remarks that "no collections of oracles have been preserved from the First Century Christian history." Idem, *Prophecy in Early Christianity,* 247. Max Turner also notes that New Testament prophecies, which are characteristically congregational, do not disclose any distinct forms. Idem, "Spiritual Gifts Then and Now," *Vox Evangelica* 15 (1985): 12-14. Also M. J. Cartledge, "Charismatic Prophecy," 77.

[533] See also Marvin Sweeney, *The Prophetic Literature* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2005), 33-42, and David L. Petersen, "The Basic Forms of Prophetic Literature," in *The Changing Face of Form Criticism for the Twenty First Century* (ed. M.A. Sweeney and E. Ben Zvi; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 269-75.

The ubiquity of poetic oracles in Old Testament prophetic literature has led some scholars to equate prophecy with poetic inspiration and to postulate that the poetic material represents the *ipsissima verba* of the prophets while the prosaic material represents redactional layers.[534] David Aune, for instance, applies the criterion of poetic structure in his attempt to identify prophetic oracles in the New Testament incipient Church.[535] However, the view that the literary structure of prophetic speech is poetic has not gained any consensus in scholarship. Robert Wilson, for example, notes that "the general tendency of contemporary scholars is to recognize the importance of non- poetic material and to challenge the notion that the prophets only wrote (or spoke) poetry."[536] Thus a prophetic speaker need not wax poetic in order to sound inspired; prosaic speech can be equally inspired. Although David Aune, utilizing the dated poetic-prophecy theory, identifies the structures of a number of revelatory oracles in the Pauline Epistles,[537] the scholarly consensus is that there are hardly any congregational prophetic oracular forms recorded in the New Testament.[538]

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[534] See, for example, Robert R. Wilson, "The Prophetic Books," in *Biblical Interpretation* (ed. John Barton; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 217-18.

[535] Nonetheless, Aune does acknowledge that "the poetic form of the oracle, however, does not in itself suffice to prove the presence of prophetic speech." David Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity*, 251.

[536] Robert R. Wilson, *The Prophetic Books*, 217.

[537] David Aune states, "with varying degrees of confidence, we suggest that the following passages contain oracular sayings: 2 Cor 12:9; 1 Cor 15:51- 52; Rom 11:25- 26; 1 Thess 4:16- 17a; 1 Cor 12:3; 1 Cor 14:37- 38; Gal 5:21; 1 Thess 3:4; 1 Thess 4:2- 6; 2 Thess 3:6, 10, 12. Idem, *Prophecy in Early Christianity*, 261.

[538] The only apparent congregational prophecy of the early Church recorded in Scripture is in the Antiochian congregation: "While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabbas and Saul for the work to which I have called them,'"(Acts 13:2). It is, however, not clear, from the text, whether the prophecy was given in a setting of congregational worship or whether the Holy Spirit spoke to the leadership of the church during a season of prayer and fasting. The prophecies of Agabus at Antioch (Acts 11:28) and at Caesarea (Acts 21:10-11) do not appear to arise in congregational

The question of form, and hence content, of charismatic prophecy does not appear to have received much attention in scholarship. Eugene Boring, for example, simply notes that the content of the prophetic message "may well include material taken from tradition and the prophet's own reflection, consciously or unconsciously."[539] This observation is echoed by William Abraham who notes that the prophet's word content is "either identical with or derived from the word of God."[540] W. H. Lampe simply states that "Jesus is the content of the prophetic message, the witness borne to Jesus"[541] Max Turner remarks that "the content of prophetic pronouncements is rarely, if ever, primarily doctrinal, but operates in the area of specific knowledge and guidance."[542] Mark Cartledge synthesizes the various eclectic forms of contemporary charismatic prophecy and then observes that:

> Modern contemporary prophecy would appear to be lacking distinct 'forms,' apart from the stereotyped openings 'thus says the Lord'… Nevertheless, there are particular elements which are common. The prophecy contains what might be called God's perspective, that is, how God understands the situation, event or person(s), and often this is the first element. On the basis of that perspective, there is usually some form of exhortation. This may be a call to repentance (which is common), and an outline of a course of action, therefore containing a prescriptive element. There may be a promise, which may be conditional on the course of action stipulated. Within the prophecy there may be a predictive element. This is commonly linked to God's judgment for failure to carry out the stipulated course of action. Most prophecies end with a message of hope, encouragement and comfort, thus assuring the group of God's ultimate concern

worship settings; rather, they are rendered as reports of prior revelations. Also, the prophetic letters to the seven churches in *The Apocalypse of John* (Rev 2- 3) are written reports of prophecies that do not arise in congregational worship settings; the revelations were, according to Scripture, received by John while he was alone in the island of Patmos (Rev 1:9-11).

[539] Eugene M. Boring, "What Are We Looking For*?"* 149.

[540] William J. Abraham, "The Offence of Divine Revelation: Aversion Toward Appeal to Revelation," *Harvard Theological Review* 95 (2002):248- 257 (251).

[541] G.W. H. Lampe, "The Testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy," 246-47.

[542] Max Turner, "Spiritual Gifts Then and Now," 7-15.

for them. Not all these elements are necessarily found in every prophecy, but they are commonly seen in contemporary examples.[543]

The variegated forms of the several charismatic prophecy utterances observed in the congregations of the present study are consistent with Cartledge's synthesis.

The question why charismatic prophecies, which were evident in the New Testament church congregational worship settings, are not fully recorded in the New Testament scriptures may be dismissed as inconsequential.[544] It is, however, argued that the conspicuous absence of congregational prophetic forms, and hence content, in New Testament Scripture is rhetorically significant; the lacuna appears to signify that congregational prophecy neither constitutes archetypal scriptural revelation nor does it override Scripture. As Hans Urs Von Barthasar observes, the church continues to participate in the archetypal prophetic revelation of God in Christ, to which the Old Testament and the Apostolic writings belong. The continuing participation is through the Holy Spirit, but in a manner that reflects, rather than surpasses, the archetypal revelation:

> There is no reason why the church's participation in the fullness of revelation, as it took shape in the biblical period, should not also be a participation in the prophetic and charismatic experiences of biblical man … It is clear, however, that such participation can no longer be archetypal in the biblical sense, since essentially and by definition it no longer moves within the second, but the third trinitarian dimension, namely, within the explication and interiorization of the revelation of the Logos by the divine Spirit. But within his infinite means of explication, this Spirit is free to make use also of the biblical modes of archetypal experience in order to demonstrate in the Church of all centuries the continual reality of revelation- not as something past, but as something present.[545]

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[543] M. J. Cartledge, "Charismatic Prophecy: A Definition and Description," 110.

[544] David Aune notes that "congregational prophecy (and glossolalia) is strikingly emphasized in the Book of Acts." Idem, *Prophecy in Early Christianity*, 199. Eugene Boring likewise observes that in the Early Church, "prophecy was a function of the community gathered for worship." Idem, *The Continuing Voice of Jesus,* 108.

[545] Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics Vol. 1: Seeing the Form* (trans. E. Leiva-Merikakis; ed. J. Fessio and J. Riches; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1982), 408- 409.

The inference from Balthasar's observation is that the continuing presence of prophecy in the church serves situational congregational functions, or what Niels Hvidt refers to as the "*cairological* character" of Christian prophecy. Hvidt observes that "one important feature of prophecy is its *cairological* relevance; prophecy is always a word for the *kairos*- for the specific time of the prophet."[546] The *cairological* relevance, nonetheless, reflects the continuing *parakletic* presence of Jesus Christ in the church. In what follows, the notion of *paraklesis*, with respect to charismatic prophecy, is critically explicated.

6.3.2 Paraklesis

The basic function of charismatic prophecy is *paraklesis.* [547] In the Johannine programmatic portrayal of the function of the παράκλητος (John 14:16; 15:26; 16:7; 1 John 2:1) as the Spirit of prophecy,[548] the characteristic function is παράκλησις."[549] The παράκλησις function is primarily and ultimately Christocentric, for "he will testify about

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[546] Niels Hvidt, *Christian Prophecy,* 156.

[547] As David Aune points out, "the most obvious meaning of 'function' is characteristic activity." Idem, *Prophecy in Early Christianity*, 19.

[548] There is a general consensus in Johannine scholarship that the *paraklete* in the Johannine community is portrayed as the *charism* of prophecy, as also stated in the Johannine *Apocalypse* (Rev 19:10). See, for example, Crinisor Stefan, "The Paraklete and Prophecy in the Johannine Community," *Journal for the Society of Pentecostal Studies* 27 (2005):272-288(274), and George Johnston, *The Spirit-Paraklete in the Gospel of John* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 127. David Aune also notes that "the primary characteristic of the Johannine community is precisely that of a prophetic, charismatic or pneumatic community." Idem, *The Cultic Setting of Realized Eschatology in Early Christianity* (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 89.

[549] The semantic range of παράκλησις includes "a calling upon, exhortation, incitement, persuasion, hortatory instruction, entreaty, solace, consolation, supporting influence." William D. Mounce, *The Analytical Lexicon to the Greek New Testament,* 353. It is, however, noted that the precise meaning of the term παράκλητος is often controverted. While some exegetes understand it in the forensic sense of a prosecuting attorney (John 16:8) or an advocate with the Father (1John 2:1), the essence of παράκλητος is best understood in the reference to ἄλλον παράκλητον "another counselor or encourager" (John 14:16). Thus the παράκλητος' function is to continue the "presence" ministry of Jesus Christ to his disciples; hence Jesus' remark that "I will not leave you as orphans." (John 14:18). See also George E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament,* 330.

me … he will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you" (John 15:26; 16:14).[550] The provenance of the παράκλησις motif is to be found in the Johannine farewell address in which Jesus assures the disciples of his continuing presence with them through the παράκλητος; "I will ask the father, and he will give you another παράκλητον to be with you forever, the Spirit of truth … I will not leave you as orphans" (John 14:16-18).

The Pauline archetypal exposition on charismatic prophecy in 1 Corinthians 14 contains inter-textual echoes from the Johannine programmatic παράκλησις function, which is then portrayed as οἰκδομὴν καί παράκλησιν καί παραμυθίαν "edification, exhortation, and comfort" (1 Cor 14: 3, 4, 5, 12, 26, 31). Eskil Franck remarks that "In 1 Corinthians 14, παράκαλειν – παράκλησις' ground in prophecy finds its most significant expression."[551] The παράκλησις function is also delegated to Jesus' disciples; "when the παράκλητος comes … he will μαρτυρήσει 'bear witness' about me, and you also must μαρτυρεῖτε 'bear witness,' for you have been with me from the beginning" (John 15:26-27).[552] Likewise Paul ascribes the παράκλησις function to the believers who are now called πνευματικοῖς "spiritual ones" (1 Cor 3:1). Thus "you are also sons of the light and sons of the day … therefore παρακαλεῖτε ἀλλήλους "encourage one another" and οἰκοδομεῖτε "edify" each other … do not put out the Spirit's fire; do not treat prophecies

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[550] See also Dongsoo Kim who underscores the centrality of the Christocentric function by observing that "the function of the *paraklete* is Christocentric because the *paraklete's* work will be related to none other than what Jesus had said." Idem, "The *Paraklete*: The Spirit of the Church," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 5 (2002), 266.

[551] Eskil Franck, R*evelation Taught: The Paraklete in the Gospel of John* (Malmo, Sweden: CWK Gleerup, 1985), 34.

[552] As already noted, the semantic field of the word παράκλησις appears to include, but not limited to "encouragement, edification, exhortation, comforting," as well as bearing witness to Jesus. See W. D. Mounce, *The Analytical Lexicon to the Greek New Testament,* 353.

with contempt (1Thess 5: 5,11,19- 20). George Johnston argues that the imperative παρακαλεῖτε ἀλλήλους "encourage one another" in 1 Thessalonians 5: 11 means that "each member is to act as a παράκλητος to the others."[553] This, indeed, is the essence of Paul's exhortation to the believers to desire to prophesy for the purpose of οἰκοδομὴν καί παράκλησιν καί παραμυθίαν "edification, exhortation, and comfort" of the Church (1 Cor 14: 3, 4, 5, 12, 26, 31).

The quintessential παράκλησις function is therefore to reveal the continuing "edifying, exhorting and comforting" presence of Jesus in the church, and the expression οἰκοδομὴν καί παράκλησιν καί παραμυθίαν appears to constitute the *sine qua non* of charismatic prophecy function in the Pauline prophetic discourse (1 Cor 14). Any exegetical understanding of the above expression should, however, be in the context of the overarching Christological- παράκλησις function of making Jesus Christ present to the believers gathered for worship.[554] Carolyn Osiek notes that "Jesus the *parakletos* … gives the Holy Spirit as personal representative to carry on as principle of unity in Jesus' absence in the same way that Jesus himself did when present."[555] Nonetheless, the παράκλησις sense of the above expression in the Pauline prophetic discourse (1Cor 14) is, specifically, prophetic.

The terms οἰκοδομὴν "building up, edification," παράκλησιν "encouragement, comfort, exhortation," and παραμυθίαν "consolation, comfort" (1 Cor14: 3) cover a

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[553] George Johnston, *The Spirit- Paraklete,* 128.

[554] The continuing presence of the risen and ascended Jesus to the believer, through the Holy Spirit, does not, however, imply modalism, or a modal transformation of Jesus into the Holy Spirit. Jesus is, indeed, the παράκλητος and the Holy Spirit is ἄλλον παράκλητον "another παράκλητον" (John 14:17). See also G. E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, 331.

[555] Carolyn Osiek, "Christian Prophecy," 296.

more-or-less common semantic range such that, exegetically, it is not clear whether Paul denotes three distinct παράκλησις functions or whether it is one function that is nuanced through linguistic enrichment for rhetorical effect. As Carolyn Osiek observes, "the three meanings are so similar that one could question whether Paul really meant to say three different things; yet each has a slightly different nuance."[556] Francis Sullivan also notes that the generic character of the term παράκλησις, its conjugations as well as its cognates, is such that "it is difficult to translate the verb *paraklein* by just one English word, because it can mean to encourage, to exhort, or to console. Likewise the noun *paraklesis* can mean encouragement, exhortation or consolation."[557] The Pauline prophetic discourse in 1 Corinthians 14 goes on to state that "for you can πάντες προφητεύειν "all prophesy" in turn so that everyone may μανθάνωσιν "learn, be instructed" and παρακαλῶνται "be encouraged"(1 Cor 14: 31). This appears to be a further nuance of παράκλησις, which portends the prophethood of all believers.

The significance of the παράκλησις function of encouragement, by which faithfulness and hope are sustained through prophecy, is also portrayed in the Old Testament Wisdom tradition: "Where there is no prophetic vision the people cast off restraint" (Prov 29:18). A vivid illustration of this proverbial insight is given in the reign of Asa, king of Judah, who, with the people of Judah, had cast off moral restraint and erected idols in their land. However, when they heard a prophetic word from the prophet Azariah, they "took courage … and … removed the detestable idols from the whole land of Judah" (2 Chr 15:1-8). Thus the "strengthening, encouraging, and comforting" function of charismatic prophecy can serve as a moral restraint in the lives of the

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[556] Carolyn Osiek, "Christian Prophecy," 293.

[557] Francis A. D. Sullivan, *Charisms and Charismatic Renewal,* 99.

believers by virtue of the prophetic manifestation of the edifying, encouraging and comforting divine presence (1 Cor 14: 3, 24-25). The moral restraint motif implicit in the παράκλησις function of charismatic prophecy was expressed by the participants in the present study as follows:

> SI.31. There is fear of God in our lives and in the church because God is real and present.
>
> SI.32. There is fear of God in the community around here; they know God is real here.
>
> SI.35. People fear living in sin because prophecy has been exposing sin in brethren.
>
> SI.39. Prophecy has changed my life … I cannot fool around anymore.
>
> SI.49. The Bible says without revelation the people perish…
>
> SD.75. There is Godly fear.
>
> SD.76. We are drawn closer to God.

Although other ministries in the church are also portrayed as παράκλησις, such as λόγος παρακλήσεως "a word of encouragement" (Acts 13:15; Heb13: 22), ἐπιστολήν παρακλήσει "an epistle of encouragement" (Acts 15: 31), or παρακλήσεως τῶν γραφῶν "encouragement of Scripture" (Rom 15: 4), the unique feature of the παράκλησις function of charismatic prophecy is the spontaneous sacramental experience of the immediacy of divine presence; there is a real-time experience of the presence of Jesus by both the prophecy utterer and the congregational audience. Meredith McGuire underscores this observation by remarking that "prophecy, with its characteristic use of the first person, impresses the hearer with a sense of the immediate presence of God and with a feeling of one-to-one highly personal communication."[558] This is reminiscent of

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[558] Meredith B. McGuire, "The Social Context of Prophecy," 144.

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Jesus being revealed afresh, with an awe-inspiring effect, to some of his disciples at the "breaking of bread" on the road to Emmaus; "he took bread…began to give it to them; then their eyes were opened and they recognized him …Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?" (Luke 24:30-32). Analogically, Jesus is revealed afresh to his disciples in the "breaking of bread" (symbolic of the sacramental experience of charismatic prophecy). The παράκλησις effect of the awe-inspiring immediacy of divine presence in charismatic prophecy is also highlighted by Carolyn Osiek as follows:

> *Paraklesis*, the effect of prophecy, can best be understood as the power of connectedness with life. It is what Jungians call 'feeling,' which is by no means the same as feelings or emotions, though these human functions can support the direction taken. It is the ability to value and to be engaged in the process of living. It is the passion that enables us to recognize truth and value it enough to pursue it … prophecy then is the living word that impels to constructive action that rends our hearts and pushes us to deeper connectedness with life.[559]

Of particular note is Paul's use of the word σημεῖόν "sign" with respect to glossolalia and prophecy: "tongues, then, are a σημεῖόν, 'sign' not for believers but for unbelievers; prophecy, however, is for believers, not for unbelievers" (1 Cor 14: 22).[560] It is argued that, in terms of semiotic theory, the notion of σημεῖόν in the context of charismatic prophecy is not a mere sign or pointer to a referent without a sacramental participation in the reality of the referent; rather, the charismatic prophecy experience is a symbolism that sacramentally participates in the referent. As Paul Tillich points out:

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[559]Carolyn Osiek, "Christian Prophecy," 297.

[560] The pericope, nonetheless, indicates that the charismatic prophecy manifestation of divine presence also affects unbelievers; they would be convicted by the presence of God in the congregation and "fall down and worship God, exclaiming 'God is really among you" (1 Cor14:25). Carolyn Osiek equally remarks that "Certainly this is not to say that only outsiders or unbelievers are susceptible to such a response to prophecy… what the passage is really saying is that prophecy produces the effect of conversion, even in unbelievers who were not disposed for it to happen." Idem, "Christian Prophecy," 294.

> Special emphasis must be laid on the insight that symbol and sign are different; that, while the sign bears no necessary relation to that to which it points, the symbol participates in the reality of that for which it stands. The sign can be changed arbitrarily according to the demands of expediency, but the symbol grows and dies according to the correlation between that which is symbolized and the persons who receive it as a symbol. Therefore, the religious symbol, the symbol which points to the divine, can be a true symbol only if it participates in the power of the divine to which it points.[561]

Thus charismatic prophecy, as a σημεῖόν, is a revelatory sacramental symbol which brings both the prophecy utterer and the hearers into a sacramental experience of divine presence. This comports with Niels Hvidt's depiction of congregational prophecy as an "epiphanic model of revelation" in which both the prophecy utterer and the hearers experience an immediate presence of God.[562]

The quest for the immediacy of divine presence in the assembly of believers is the ethos of Pentecostal-charismatic spirituality. Walter Hollenweger emphasizes this ethos by defining Pentecostalism as "a movement which expects manifestations of the Spirit in the normal worship service."[563] Kenneth Archer also describes the Pentecostal-charismatic movement as "a protest against secularized theologies and spiritual sterility of mainline denominations, and an ardent desire for the unmediated experience of God."[564]

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[561] Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology,* 1, 239. See also Amos Yong, who utilizes Charles Peirce's semiotic theory and Karl Rahner's theology of symbolism to portray a sacramental significance of pneumatological symbols. Idem, *Spirit- Word- Community,* 200- 202.Robert C. Neville also remarks that "religious symbols on the one hand engage us in what they symbolize and yet are different from that and hence no easy substitute." Idem, *The Truth of Broken Symbols* (Albany: N.Y: State University of New York Press, 1996), x.

[562] Niels Hvidt, *Christian Prophecy*, 149.

[563] Walter Hollenweger, "An Introduction to Pentecostals," 125.

[564] Kenneth J. Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic,* 17-18. The so- called "secularized theologies," which are based on the Enlightenment scientism, are articulated by Rudolf Bultmann as follows: "Modern science does not believe that the course of nature can be interrupted or, so to speak, perforated, by

The Pentecostal-charismatics' quest for an immediate sacramental experience of divine presence has ample precedence in Scripture.[565] The story of Moses pleading with God at Sinai not to send the Israelites to their land of promise without God's presence is illustrative; "If your presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us?" (Exod 33:15-16). The Hebrew word for "presence" in this passage is actually פָּנִים "face," which signifies Moses' quest for an intimate, face-to-face, encounter with God. Moses' plea for divine presence is, apparently, a protest against an earlier promise of an angel as a substitute for God's presence: "I will send an angel before you" (Exod 33:2). Analogically, the Pentecostal-charismatic apparent protest against the substitution of divine presence with the mere letter of Scripture, or propositional spirituality, appears to echo Moses' protest.

Moses' quest for divine presence leads to a further quest for an experience of God's glory, or כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה "the glory of Yahweh," which often appeared as a cloud that

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supernatural powers … The same is true of the modern study of history, which does not take into account any intervention of God or of the devil or of demons in the course of history… Modern men take it for granted that the course of nature and of history, like their own inner life and their practical life, is nowhere interrupted by the intervention of supernatural powers." Rudolf Bultmann, *Jesus Christ and Mythology* (New York: Charles Scribners, 1958), 15-16. Although Bultmann does not espouse the radical deistic view of God's unrelatedness to the world, his non-interventionist view of God, even in "the inner life of the soul" is plausibly what Pentecostal-charismatics deem as "spiritual sterility."

[565] Kenneth Archer's definition of Pentecostalism as "a paramodern revivalistic, restorational movement held together by its common doctrinal commitment to the Full Gospel message," who read the Bible as "a presently inspired story," underscores the centrality of Scripture in Pentecostal-charismatic spirituality. Idem, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic*, 35, 69. However, although the Pentecostal-charismatics are sometimes portrayed as "a people of the book," they are not simplistic biblicists; their commitment to the "book" is, in effect, a hermeneutical dialectic between Scripture and experience. See G. L. Anderson, "Pentecostals Believe More Than in Tongues," in *Pentecostals from the Inside Out* (ed. H. B. Smith; Wheaton, Ill: Victor Books, 1990), 57-58.

filled the "tent of meeting" and was experienced as Yahweh's immanent presence (Exod 40:34-35):

> Now show me your glory. And Yahweh said, I will cause my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, Yahweh, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion (Exod 33:18-19)." [566]

Moses thus experienced a divine presence which included a revelatory utterance, akin to the revelatory sacramental experience of divine presence that is implicit in charismatic prophecy. Likewise, king David, whose quest for the 'heart,' or presence, of God earned him the appellation: "a man after my own heart" (Acts 13: 22b; cf. 1 Sam 13:14),[567] pleads with God thus: "do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me" (Ps 51:11). The Davidic supplication, in effect, equates divine presence with the presence of the Holy Spirit and, in a sense, prefigures the Pentecostal-charismatics' portrayal of the Holy Spirit as divine presence in their midst.

The Johannine high priestly prayer of Jesus echoes the same quest for a continuing divine presence among the disciples:

> I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them … My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but … that the world may believe that you have sent me …Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory (John 17:13- 24).

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[566] The Hebrew word כָּבוֹד "glory" is usually defined as "the aspect of a person, or God, worthy of praise, honor or respect; often associated with brightness or splendor in theophanies." David N. Freedman, ed. *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 507. The quest for God's glory is thus a desire to be in, or experience, God's manifest presence.

[567] The expression "a man after my own heart" could, as well, signify that David was God's choice as opposed to king Saul who is portrayed in Scripture as the people's choice (e.g. I Sam 8:1-22). Nonetheless, the nature of David's spirituality, as portrayed in the Psalms ascribed to him (e.g.Ps1- 41, 51), depict him as a man who treasured experiences of divine presence in his life.

The high priestly prayer, therefore, not only intercedes for a continuing presence of God among Jesus' disciples in the world, but also intimates a missiological function of the manifest divine presence, "so that the world may believe" (v. 21). The missiological motif in this pericope resonates with the Pauline portrayal of an unbeliever or enquirer being convicted by the manifestation of divine presence through a charismatic prophecy utterance (1 Cor 14:24-25).[568]

The foregoing explication not only illustrates scriptural quest for experiences of revelatory divine presence but also serve as exemplars of the Pentecostal-charismatics' hermeneutical approach to Scripture. Kenneth Archer notes that Pentecostal-charismatics embrace their religious experiences as "a necessary component to their hermeneutical approach to Scripture."[569] This, in effect, echoes Paul Tillich's theology of correlation which posits that:

> The Christian message provides the answers to the questions implied in human existence. These answers are contained in the revelatory events on which Christianity is based … their content cannot be derived from the questions, that is, from an analysis of human existence. They are 'spoken' to the human from beyond it … but the relation is more involved than this, since it is correlation; there is a mutual dependence between question and answer.[570]

The Pentecostal-charismatics' hermeneutic of correlation is exemplified in the Lukan Pentecost narrative in which the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the attendant

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[568] The missiological impact of Pentecostal-charismatic spirituality has been noted by Harvey Cox who portrays Pentecostalism as "a spiritual hurricane that has already touched half a billion people, and an alternative vision of the human future whose impact may only be at its earliest stages today." Idem, *Fire From Heaven,* 65. Alister E. McGrath equally notes that many perceptive seekers of truth are beginning to take Pentecostalism seriously and are drifting towards its spirituality in search for authentic experiences of God. Idem, *The Future of Christianity,* 106-109. Elsewhere, Harvey Cox intimates the plausibility of a phenomenal missiological impact of Pentecostal-charismatic spirituality. Idem, *The Future of Faith,* 211.

[569] Kenneth Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic*, 71.

[570] Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* I, 64.

charismatic manifestations are hermeneutically correlated with Scripture: "This (the charismatic experience of the disciples on the day of Pentecost) is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel" (Acts 2:16; cf. Joel 2:28). The disciples' experience on the day of Pentecost thus served to illumine Scripture while Scripture provided the *raison de'tre* for the disciples' charismatic experiences, in mutual inter-dependence. Essentially, therefore, charismatic prophecy not only substantiates the reality of God through the sacramental experience of his revelatory presence, but also appears to translate the propositional letter of Scripture (2 Cor 3: 6) into an experiential παράκλησις word of God (John 6:63; Heb 4:12).[571]

The implicit distance between the 'written word of God' and the 'speaking or experiential word of God' is reminiscent of Jacques Derrida's critique of John Austin's speech-act theory in which he argues that utterances in a text are generally removed from their original situation and audience. Therefore any direct relationship between the speaker and the hearer becomes indeterminate in the text and interpretation is more-or-less open-ended.[572] Analogically, the relationship between written Scripture and the Christian experience can be viewed as indeterminate with respect to specific situational contexts. Charismatic prophecy can therefore be viewed as a hermeneutical move that

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[571] As already noted in Chapter 3, in some quarters of the Pentecostal-charismatic movement, the propositional "Letter of Scripture" and the experiential p*aracletic* "Living Word" are referred to as *Logos* and *Rhema*, respectively. Scripture is identified as *Logos* while the charismatic prophecy proclamation is identified as *Rhema*. The inference is that the *Logos'* Scripture has a universal, abiding character while the *Rhema* prophecy has a spatio-temporal character. However, since the terms *Logos* and *Rhema* appear to be used interchangeably in Scripture, the Pentecostal-charismatics' use of the said words as distinct referents can only be viewed as a semantic development of the words *Logos* and *Rhema*. See also Carolyn Osiek who observes that the work of the Holy Spirit in prophecy is always to provide a complementarity to what is propositionally stated in Scripture and what is out of balance in human experience of divinity. Idem, "Christian Prophecy," 297.

[572] Jacques Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy* (trans. A. Bass; New York: Harvester, 1982), 307- 30.

bridges the gap between written Scripture and the hearer in specific contextual situations; the Holy Spirit animates the dynamic of life that is latent in Scripture (e.g. John 6: 63) and then prophetically applies it to the church in contextual specificity. However, this analogy does not imply that charismatic prophecy becomes a substitute for the scriptural exhortation to live by faith (e.g. Rom 1:17b). Rather than being a substitute for faith, charismatic prophecy simply instantiates a παράκλησις faith reassurance.

The παράκλησις function of charismatic prophecy is not limited to the form or content of the prophetic utterance and its epistemic effect. As Matthias Wenk comments, "prophetic speech is not intended to inform but rather to transform."[573] The prophetic utterance is, in effect, a performative. Viewed from the perspective of speech-act theory, a prophetic utterance has locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary dimensions. The locutionary dimension is the prophetic utterance itself; it is an utterance which has a meaning that is intelligible to the hearers; hence the Pauline preference for prophecy over glossolalia in congregational settings since the latter has no locutionary effect, or transaction of meaning to the hearers (1 Cor 14:6-18). The illocutionary dimension is the intended effect of the prophetic utterance, such as the intention to cause repentance, encouragement, or comfort. The perlocutionary dimension is the actual effect of the prophetic utterance; it is the actualization of the illocutionary intention. [574]

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[573] Matthias Wenk, "Dialogue: The Creative Power of the Prophetic Dialogue," *Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 26 (2004): 118-129 (119).

[574] For a detailed account of the speech-act theory, see John L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words,* (2d. ed., Oxford: Clarendon, 1975), and J.R. Searle, *Speech-Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

Speech-act theorists, however, point out that "words in and of themselves have no 'magical power,' for whoever performs a speech-act must be authorized to do so."[575] In prophetic utterances, the perception that the speaker is God's authoritative spokesperson or mouthpiece contributes to the perlocutionary effect of the utterance.[576] However, the perlocutionary dimension is effected by more than the divine forensic authorization. Unlike ordinary speech-acts in which the perlocution is effected by forensic authorization only, in prophetic speech-acts, the perlocution is effected, additionally, by the power of the Holy Spirit which works creatively. Thus prophetic utterances work both forensically and creatively. The creative power of God-speech is illustrated in the creation narrative where the Spirit of God "hovers over the waters" and then God says, "'Let there be light,' and there was light" (Gen 1:1-3). The Old Testament prophet Isaiah emphasizes the creative power of God-speech act through prophecy, thus: "My word that goes out of my mouth …will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it" (Isa 55:11).[577]

The perlocutionary effect of a prophetic utterance is more than the illocutionary intention that is conveyed in the content of the utterance. Prophetic utterance is a linguistic reductionist transposition of an otherwise irreducible communicative presence of the Spirit of God. It is, therefore, argued that the παράκλησις effect of charismatic

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[575] Walter Houston, "What Did the Prophets Think They Were Doing?," 172-174. See also Jacqueline Grey, "Acts of the Spirit: Ezekiel 37 in the Light of Contemporary Speech-Act Theory," *Journal of Biblical and Pneumatological Research* 1 (2009):69-82 (70-71).

[576] Jacqueline Grey notes that "what gives the prophets legitimacy in their speech act is their authority as the spokespersons of Yahweh." Idem, "Acts of the Spirit," 73. Equally, Meredith McGuire observes that the perception that God is speaking directly through the prophet contributes to the believers' assurance and encouragement. Idem. "The Social Context of Prophecy," 145-46.

[577] See also J. Grey, "Acts of the Spirit," 73, and Walter Houston, "What Did the Prophets Think They were Doing?," 169.

prophecy is a speech-act that goes beyond what may be deciphered from an exegetical analysis of the linguistic content of the prophecy utterance. There is thus a παράκλησις surplus that causes an unbeliever, who is not a direct referent of a congregational prophecy linguistic utterance, to be convicted of sin and to exclaim "God is really among you" (1 Cor 14: 24-25). The Pauline exhortations to "eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy … I would rather have you prophesy… try to excel in gifts that build up the church … for you can all prophesy … be eager to prophesy… do not treat prophecies with contempt" (1 Cor 14:1, 5, 12, 31, 39; 1 Thess 5:20), convey the impression that charismatic prophecy has a greater function in the church than can be gleaned from a cursory exegetical analysis of Scripture, or from uncritical perceptions of, and reflection on, the charismatic-prophecy utterances. It is therefore plausible that charismatic prophecy has far reaching παράκλησις effects on individual and congregational lives than is hitherto acknowledged both in the academy and in the church.

6.4 Charismatic Prophecy: A Critical Review

In this section the empirical-analytic results as well as the emerging empirical-biblical model are subjected to a final critical review. However, the critical review is consistent with the empirical-biblical approach of the study and is therefore carried out in the light of empirical observations and the data of Scripture. Charismatic prophecy, as a sacramental experience, is a proleptic eschatological experience; it is both a foretaste and an anticipation of the resurrection life. It is a "groan inwardly as we await eagerly for our

adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies" (Rom 8:23b).[578] Glossolalia, as a

concomitant of charismatic prophecy and as speech that "no one understands," an

utterance of "mysteries in the spirit" (1 Cor 14:2), can, inferentially, be viewed as the

eschatological "groans that words cannot express" which anticipate eschatological

redemption (Rom 8:23-26). The close association of glossolalia with charismatic

prophecy, therefore, implies that the latter has an ineffable inward groan which not only

participates in divine presence but also anticipates eschatological redemption.

It is, however, observed, from the empirical-analytic results, that the notion of

eschatology as a future expectation hardly featured in the charismatic prophecy focus

groups' discourses and the in-depth interviews. Paul Gifford, who has studied African

Christianity extensively, also observes that "in most African Pentecostal churches there

is not much idea of any subsequent life at all … theirs is a this-worldly religion, a

religion of abundant life and the fullness of days, and they neither pretend to know, nor, I

think, do they care what happens to them after death."[579] Gifford goes on to observe that

the most common characteristic of the African Pentecostalism is "victorious living" with

a focus on the present life.[580]

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[578] Frank Macchia argues that glossolalia is an inward groaning akin to the Pauline portrayal of the Holy Spirit interceding within the believer "with groans that words cannot express (Rm. 8:26) … a cry for redemption, and even a foretaste of this redemption in the here-and-now." Idem, "Groans Too Deep for Words: Towards a Theology of Tongues as Initial Evidence," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 1 (1998): 149-173 (163). See also M. J. Cartledge who notes that glossolalia is "a sign of renewed language and relationships which unite, even require, our participation for the breaking in of the kingdom in the world." Idem, *Charismatic Glossolalia,* 197.

[579] Paul Gifford, "Healing in African Pentecostalism: The Victorious Living of David Oyedepo," in *Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Healing* (ed. C. G. Brown; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 252. See also, Idem, "African Christianity and the Eclipse of the Afterlife," in *The Church, the Afterlife and the Fate of the Soul* (ed. P. Clark and T. Claydon; Rochester, N.Y.: Boydell Press, 2009), 413- 429.

[580] P. Gifford, "Healing in African Pentecostalism," 251- 252.

However, the tendency to define eschatology exclusively in terms of events of the 'end-of-the-present-age' and the afterlife is not only reductionist but is tendentiously apocalyptic speculation.[581] The African Pentecostal-charismatic focus on 'victorious living' in the present life, a focus that is well served by the charismatic prophecy παράκλησις function of edification, encouragement and comfort, resonates with Jesus' portrayal of eschatology in terms of the present; "whoever believes in the Son has eternal life … I am the resurrection and the life" (John 3:36; 11:25)."[582] It is therefore argued that the παράκλησις focus on 'the present' in charismatic prophecy, as well as the African Pentecostal-charismatics' quest for 'victorious life' in Christ in 'the present,' are indeed eschatological quests.

Whereas some scriptures portray a futuristic dimension of eschatology in terms of the 'end-of-the-present-age' events (e.g. Matt 24: 1-51; Mark 13:1-37; Luke 21:5-36), and resurrection afterlife (e.g. 1 Cor 15:12- 49; Rev 20:1-15), the whole purpose of Jesus' enigmatic futuristic eschatological discourses appears to be the need to sustain hope in the present (Matt 24:13-31; Mark 13:26- 27; Luke 21:27-28) and to motivate spiritual readiness for the *eschaton* (Matt 24:42; Mark 13:33-37; Luke 21:34-36). Eschatological focus should, therefore, be on the biblical imperative to be spiritually ready in terms of Christ-likeness in the present life (2 Cor 3:17-18) more than on futuristic eschatological speculation. As Mark Cartledge aptly counsels, "instead of

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[581] See, for example, Frederick F. Bruce who notes that, whereas Old Testament eschatological motifs were futuristically forward-looking, the emphasis of New Testament eschatology is that of fulfillment in Jesus Christ, that is, "Jesus is himself the fulfillment of the hope of the people of God." Idem, "Eschatology," in *Baker's Dictionary of Theology* (ed. E. F. Harrison; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960), 189-190.

[582] It is particularly instructive that Jesus' statement in John 11:25 was a kind of rebuttal of the futuristic eschatological posturing by Jesus' interlocutor, Martha, who had said that "I know he (Lazarus) will rise again in the resurrection at the last day" (John 11:24).

focusing on end time speculation, Pentecostals should focus on the eschatological trinitarian presence."[583] As observed from the empirical-analytic results, there was, indeed, a strong perception by the study participants that charismatic prophecy conduced Christ-likeness. Thus the impact of charismatic prophecy was perceived as a transformational experience of divine presence in terms of inculcating godly reverence, and drawing people closer to God (SD.74- SD.77).

A critical issue that emerges from the empirical-analytic results is the impact of charismatic prophecy on church leadership authority. As noted in Chapter 3, some of the church pastors in the congregations studied expressed concerns about some prophetic utterances that appeared to exert control over other congregants' lives and even over the church's leadership. The tension between "the free and spontaneous exercise of spiritual gifts" and institutional-hierarchical ecclesiasticism has been a thorn-in-the-flesh of the church since antiquity.[584] Although the church leadership in the congregations studied embraced, and indeed encouraged, free and spontaneous exercise of the *charism* of prophecy, the potential conflict between the freedom of the spirit and institutional church polity still lurks. Therefore potential risk of anarchy from unchecked carnal prophetic excesses, on the one hand, and an intolerant hierarchical church polity which could stifle the freedom of the spirit, on the other hand, still persists. The congregations studied did not appear to have any formal mechanisms for evaluating charismatic prophecy utterances in accordance with the scriptural imperatives (e.g.1 Cor 14:29; 1Thess 5:21).

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[583] Mark J. Cartledge, *Charismatic Glossolalia*, 199.

[584] Maurice Barnett, *The Living Flame,* 117. See also Nicola Denzey who notes that the apparent demise of charismatic prophecy in the church since the second century CE was, essentially, a sociological conflict between the freedom of the spirit in the exercise of prophecy and the relatively inflexible institutionalism of church polity. Idem, "What Did the Montanists Read?," 427.

However, the observed pastoral emphasis on teaching and instruction on how to exercise the *charisms* of the spirit is considered to be a vital component in the overall framework of moderating and evaluating charismatic prophecy. It is considered imprudent to allow unfettered freedom to uninstructed congregants to exercise the *charisms* of the spirit in congregational settings, as this appears to have been the major problem in the Montanist movement of the second century CE church.[585]

Another issue that is germane to the manifestations of charismatic prophecy is its impact on the society at large. The Pentecostal-charismatic movement in Africa, and particularly in East Africa, has been portrayed as a movement preoccupied with individual salvation of the soul within the church and hardly having any prophetic role for the society at large. Marko Kuhn notes that "within the movements of Evangelicalism, Pentecostalism and within the very influential East African Revival, social and political concerns take second place behind the concept of individual salvation and are often regarded as getting involved in the impure matters of a sinful world, or as the opposite of 'being of the spirit.'"[586] On the other hand, the prophetic role of the church in the wider society has often been narrowly defined in terms of political activism. This narrow definition of the prophetic role of the church for the wider society is evident in Marko Kuhn's portrayal of the Pentecostals' "exclusive focus on individual salvation" as an "anti-political stand."[587]

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[585] See also Dennis E. Groh, "Montanism," 616-622, and Christine Trevett, *Montanism: Gender, Authority, and the New Prophecy,* 86-91.

[586] Marko Kuhn, *Prophetic Christianity in Western Kenya: Political, Cultural and Theological Aspects of African Independent Churches* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2008), 122.

[587] Marko Kuhn, *Prophetic Christianity in Western Kenya*, 123. See also R. N. Nzeki, a Kenyan church leader, who argues for the church's involvement in political activism by stating that In recent years

The African Church's role in the society at large, particularly in the African

struggles for liberation from such vices as Colonialism, Apartheid, and other societal

injustices, has sometimes been viewed in terms of a bifurcation between the 'spiritual'

churches, such as the Evangelicals and the Pentecostal-charismatics, on the one hand,

who view their role in society as purely 'prophetic,' and the 'mainline' or 'nationalist'

churches such as the Anglican, the Methodist, or the Presbyterian churches, on the other

hand, whose role in society is viewed by the 'spiritual' churches as 'political.' T. J.

Padwick, for example, observes that:

> The churches confronted the colonial and missionary regimes in two different but
> related ways. The spiritual churches created distinct social and religious
> communities in which their own faith and values ruled, but generally confronted
> the dominant political and economic models through religious or 'spiritual'
> means. The nationalist churches identified the issue of political power that lay
> behind colonial oppression and sought to deal with it by mobilizing popular
> forces in the church.[588]

The 'prophetic' role, according to the 'spiritual' churches, entails changing society

through prayer and evangelization, taking care of the needy in society and speaking out

for their rights, as well as critiquing injustices in society and in political leadership. The

'political' role, on the other hand, is viewed as either forming political alliances with the

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the church both in Kenya and in the world at large, has shifted her perspective from purely religious matters to the secular domain … God hates and resents our worship- our cultic performances when and if they are separated from our secular obligations." Idem, "Church and State in Kenya," in *Kenya Churches Handbook: The Development of Christianity in Kenya 1798-1973* (ed. D. B. Barrett, G. K. Mambo, J. McLaughlin and M.J. McVeigh; Kisumu, Kenya: Evangel Publishing, 1973), 46. Nzeki's statement was actually an apologetic for the church's involvement in sectarian politics in Kenya at the time.

[588] T. J. Padwick, "Spirit, Desire, and the World: *Roho* Churches of Western Kenya in the Era of Globalization," (Ph.D. diss. University of Birmingham, UK, 2003), 57. See also Marko Kuhn who notes that one of the reasons for the 'spiritual' churches' disdain of the mainline churches' approach to societal concerns was that the former viewed the latter as being in league with the colonialists and subsequently as "state churches" in league with the post-colonial African ruling elite. Idem, *Prophetic Christianity in Western Kenya,* 126-127.

political elite of the day, or confronting the political elite with political activism such as mass protest actions or resistance movements, or even engaging in opposition politics.[589]

The Redeemed Gospel Church, to which the congregations studied belong, firmly espouses the 'prophetic' role of the church in its engagement with the society at large. The denomination is heavily involved in feeding, clothing, educating, and equipping the poor people living in the Kenyan cities' slums, and the founder of the denomination attributes this social concern to a prophetic vision: "God gave me a vision to feed the poor, and to educate the poor children."[590] Thus the Redeemed Gospel Church believes that it is through the παράκλησις of charismatic prophecy that the church is inspired and guided in its role in society. The Redeemed Gospel Church's notable impact in feeding, clothing, educating and empowering the poor in the city slums in the Kenyan society is thus viewed as a social impact of charismatic prophecy.

From a biblical perspective, the model of church engagement with the wider society is variegated. The Old Testament presents a 'political-prophetic' model of engagement with society, while the New Testament presents an almost exclusively

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[589] See Washington Ngende for a detailed apologetic of the 'prophetic' role, as opposed to the 'political' role, of the church in Kenya. Idem, *Faith that Changes the World: The Man Who Changed Political Landscape through Prayer* (Kisumu, Kenya: Power of Jesus Around the Church Press, 1999), 1-59. Ngende appears to derive much of his ideas from Derek Prince, a missionary scholar during the late colonial and early post-colonial days in Kenya, who argues that the early post-colonial history of Kenya was shaped by the 'spiritual' churches purely through prayer and fasting. Derek Prince, *Shaping History Through Prayer and Fasting* (New Kensington, Pa.: Whitaker House, 1973), 47-92.

[590] Bishop Arthur Kitonga, "Taking a Different Path," n.p. Online: http://www.redeemedgospel.org. Cited 29th October 2010. The title "Taking a Different Path," denotes the adoption of a 'prophetic' role for the Redeemed Gospel Church in its engagement with society, rather than a 'political' role which was being advocated by the 'mainline' churches in Kenya at the time. See also Marko Kuhn, *Prophetic Christianity in Western Kenya*, 123-135, for an account of the debate which was taking place in the early post-colonial Kenya concerning the role of the Church in society.

'prophetic' model of social engagement. From an Old Testament perspective, Nathaniel Ndiokwere notes that:

> In Israel, the charismatics and prophets appeared, from Moses to John the Baptist, as opponents of tyrants … that long rejection of tyranny occasioned the vocation of Moses, the Judges, Samuel, the two charismatic kings- Samuel and David, and soon the prophets were to rise against the despotism of their very rulers.[591]

It is, however, arguable that the leaders of Israel before the period of the classical prophets were designated as political-cum-religious leaders and, hence, not prophets *per se.* The classical prophetic guild in Israel appear to have been less involved any 'political' roles, in terms of political-ideological or militaristic confrontations with the political rulers of the day, and more engaged in the 'prophetic' role of speaking against ethical and social injustices both within the Israelite society and leadership, and in the wider society of the ancient Near East.[592] For example, Isaiah uttered a prophetic critique against ethical and social injustices within Israel (Isa 1- 6) and in the wider society of the ancient Near East (Isa 13- 23). Likewise, Jeremiah and Ezekiel condemned ethical and social injustices within Israel (Jer 21- 24; Ezek 6- 24) and in the wider society of the ancient Near East (Jer 46- 51; Ezek 25- 32).[593]

In the New Testament incipient church there is hardly any apparent 'political' role played by the church leaders of the day. The few instances, such as Paul's confrontation with a political leader-cum- sorcerer in Pamphos, his brief altercation with the City Magistrates at Philippi, or his defense submissions before the Roman Governors

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[591] Nathaniel I. Ndiokwere, *Prophecy and Revolution,* 138.

[592] For a detailed role of the pre-classical prophetic leaders in Israel, see Willem A. VanGemeren, *Interpreting the Prophetic Word,* 27- 40.

[593] See also B. Vawter, *The Conscience of Israel: Pre- Exilic Prophets and Prophecy* (London: SPCK, 1973), 45-51.

at Caesarea (Acts 13: 6-12; 16:35-39; 24:1-26:32), do not constitute any pattern of 'political' engagement in the sense of the bifurcation schema noted above. Rather, the Apostolic Epistles appear to enjoin prayer for, and submission to, all authority (Rom 13:1-7; Titus 3:1-2; 1 Pet 2:13-14). However, as argued in the methodological approach of the present study, biblical hermeneutics must be informed by the contextual situations in which it is interpreted. Moreover, the bifurcation schema noted above which tends to categorize the church's role in society in terms of 'political' or 'prophetic' is simplistic; what is viewed as 'political' from one standpoint or context can also be viewed as 'prophetic' from another standpoint or context, and vice versa. In the final analysis, the prophetic role of the church in society should be judged on the basis of the contextual hermeneutic of, for instance, "speaking up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute; speaking up and judging fairly; defending the rights of the poor and needy" (Prov 31:8-9), being "peacemakers" (Matt 5:9), and generally being "the salt of the earth … the light of the world" (Matt 5:13-14).

6.5 Summary

The present chapter has presented a particular thesis of the nature and significance of the Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon of prophecy in congregational settings in an African context. The thesis, which is presented in the form of an empirical-biblical model, posits that charismatic prophecy is a spontaneous and revelatory sacramental experience of an immediacy of divine presence, and that its significance is a παράκλησις in the sense that it edifies, encourages and comforts the church in contextual situations.

It is, nonetheless, acknowledged that the sacramental model which is posited as the thesis of the present study is a particular interpretation of biblical sacramentalism and

that it does not necessarily exhaust the wide variety of sacramental theologies since different theological schools of thought and different ecclesial traditions understand the notion of sacramentalism variously. However, the sacramental model proposed in the present study is not significantly different from the systematization of the Augustinian Eucharist theology in many Western church traditions in which the sacramental elements of the Eucharist are generally portrayed as instruments of union; they "make real, renew or strengthen man's union with Christ … make real, renew or strengthen his union with the Christian community."[594] Thus the central feature of the sacramental theologies of many Western church traditions is the unitive aspect of the sacramental elements of the Eucharist. Hence Lubac's remark that the Eucharist "is worthy of the name of 'communion' given to it."[595]

The sacramental model proposed in the present study equally underscores the unitive aspect of sacramentalism; it argues that the heart of sacramental ontology, as observed in charismatic prophecy manifestations, is a deep-seated desire of the human spirit for a sacramental or *perichoretic* union with Christ through the Holy Spirit. It is, however, reckoned that the church communion aspect of the proposed sacramental model is implicit rather than explicit; the model tendentiously individualizes the sacramental union between an individual and the Holy Spirit and is thus less focused on the sacramental union of the church community. The latter is only implicit in the *paraklesis* impact that charismatic prophecy has on the congregation gathered for worship.

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[594] Henri de Lubac, *Catholicism: A Study of Dogma in Relation to the Destiny of Mankind* (trans. L. C. Sheppard; London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne, 1950), 35. See also Lisa Wang, "Sacramentalism *Unitatis Ecclesiasticae*: The Eucharistic Ecclesiology of Henri de Lubac," *Anglican Theological Review* 85 (2003): 143-158 (145).

[595] Henri de Lubac, *Catholicism*, 41.

It is further acknowledged that the sacramental model proposed in the present study is not necessarily the understanding of the congregations studied. The congregations did not appear to perceive charismatic prophecy as a sacramental experience of one's union with the Holy Spirit and with one another in the church community gathered for worship. Moreover the congregations' understanding of the notion of sacramentalism, as observed in their Holy Communion and Water Baptism enactments, appeared to accentuate the mystical dimension of the sacraments rather than their unitive aspect. There is therefore an observed need in the congregations studied to recognize the sacramental significance of charismatic prophecy and to embrace a holistic unitive aspect of sacramentalism, namely that "to be made one with Christ is to be made one with His body."[596]

In what follows the whole study is brought together by way of synthesis and summarization; the main findings and conclusions of the study are highlighted and, arising from the findings and conclusions, suggestions are made for future research.

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[596] Lisa Wang, "Sacramentum *Unitatis Ecclesiasticae*," 145.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Summary

The present study began by noting the prominence of the phenomenon of prophecy both in Scripture and in the Church, and particularly in the contemporary global Pentecostal-charismatic movement. The concept of prophecy was shown to be a nuanced feature both in Scripture and in the way it is understood in the church in general. However, the focus of the study was on the nature and significance of charismatic prophecy, or the prophecy phenomenon commonly manifested in congregational settings of the contemporary Pentecostal-charismatic movement.

The study began with an introductory review of the origin and development of the twentieth century Pentecostal-charismatic movement in order to situate the phenomenon of charismatic prophecy in spatio-temporal contextual perspective. The specific contextual setting for the study, an African Pentecostal-charismatic congregational context, was also outlined. The selection of the particular African context for the study was strategic in terms of accessibility as well as the researcher's heritage and experience in the socio-cultural and Pentecostal-charismatic traditions of the selected contextual setting.

The approach of the study was an empirical-biblical investigation of a religious experiential phenomenon, and the overarching methodology of the study was a hermeneutical paradigm, with a basic presupposition that religious praxis is hermeneutical in the sense that it illumines and illustrates the theory of faith convictions,

while the latter dialectically informs and critiqued praxis. Utilizing the case study method and an adaptation of Van der Ven's empirical-theological cycle, the study began with an inductive-exploratory case study of a selected congregation in the African Pentecostal-charismatic setting, in order to clarify the researcher's pre-understandings and *a priori* assumptions about charismatic prophecy and in order to generate heuristic postulates. The latter were refined, through a review of empirical literature and the data of Scripture, and then reformulated into theoretical constructs which were subsequently evaluated by way of deductive-explanatory case studies in the African Pentecostal-charismatic setting. The emerging empirical-analytic results were, next, subjected to biblical-hermeneutical reflection, utilizing Clodovis Boff's correspondence-of-relations model, in terms of the results' correlation with Scripture, with Church praxis in historical perspective, and with critically-reflected charismatic prophecy experiences in other contemporary contexts.

7.2 Main Findings and Conclusions

The main findings of the study were that charismatic prophecy is an invasive oracular utterance inspired by a perceived immediacy of divine presence, or the Holy Spirit, which, perceptually, impacted the human deep unconscious dimension with revelatory impulses. Since the inspiration and the utterance were perceived to be impartations of the Holy Spirit, charismatic prophecy was viewed as a *charism* of the Holy Spirit, hence the appellation 'charismatic prophecy.' The contextual settings for charismatic prophecy experiences and manifestations were observed to be congregational worship gatherings at which hyper- arousal rituals, such as exultant singing, passionate prayer, and glossolalic utterances, created a charismatic encounter, or an ecstatic

atmosphere which was also catalyzed by the worshippers' longing for, and expectancy of, divine presence and revelatory manifestations.

The nature of the charismatic prophecy experience was viewed as an intense ecstatic moment of a sacramental participation of the human deep unconscious dimension, or the human spirit, in the immediacy of divine presence, or the Holy Spirit which overwhelmed and infused the human conscious dimension, or the mind, with revelatory impulses. The revelatory impulses were, perceptually, thought to induce words, voices, images, or pictures, which the subject did not create consciously and which sprang up as promptings to speak forth. Charismatic prophecy was also viewed, conceptually, as a transpositional revelation in which an infinite-finite inequality negated any isomorphic coupling between infinite divine disclosure and finite human perception, conceptualization and articulation. The divine disclosure was therefore adaptively framed, consciously or unconsciously, into phenomenal imageries amenable to human conceptualization and articulation.

Thus charismatic prophecy was considered to be neither purely divine nor purely anthropological; rather, it was an immediacy of divine will and speech transpositionally expressed through human liberty and language. The utterance of charismatic prophecy was either a direct speech in a language native to, or understood by, a congregation, or a glossolalic utterance which was subsequently invasively uttered in vernacular as an 'interpretation' of the glossolalic prophecy. However, there appeared to be no isomorphic coupling between the glossolalic utterance and the subsequent 'interpretive' utterance; hence the plausibility of more than one 'interpretive' utterance of the same glossolalic prophecy.

The critical functional significance of charismatic prophecy was observed to be παράκλησις; it served to edify, encourage, and console a congregation in contextual situations. Charismatic prophecy was therefore viewed as a *kairological* word for specific people in specific contextual situations. Thus, unlike Scripture, the charismatic prophecy utterances were not viewed as having universal and abiding authority. However, the παράκλησις effect of charismatic prophecy was perceived as impacting the hearers with an abiding-eschatological hope in the sense that human finitude was brought into an intense sacramental experience of eternal-eschatological divine presence.

In the Pentecostal-charismatic tradition studied, charismatic prophecy was the most treasured *charism* of the Holy Spirit because it brought about a real, rather than simply a propositional-doctrinal, presence of God which, perceptually, impacted both the prophecy speaker and the hearers with powerfully inspirational and transformational revelatory words of edification, encouragement, and consolation. The use of scriptural language in the charismatic prophecy utterances was perceived as a revelatory-auditory application of the letter of Scripture to specific contextual situations in real life. Hence the portrayal, in some quarters of the Pentecostal-charismatic movement, of Scripture as *Logos* (Written Word) and charismatic prophecy as *Rhema* (Speaking Word).

The main findings summarized above appeared to correlate fairly well with the nature and significance of charismatic prophecy as portrayed in Scripture, in Church praxis in historical perspective, and as observed in other contemporary Pentecostal-charismatic contexts. The study findings therefore provide fairly robust empirical-biblical data which not only contributes to the repertoire of empirical-biblical knowledge

of the phenomenon of Pentecostal-charismatic prophecy in general, and in the African context in particular, but also provides material for critical theological reflection.

7.3 Implications of Study Findings for Ministry in African Context

The findings of the present study have significant implications for ministry in the African Pentecostal-charismatic church context. First, the observation that charismatic prophecy is a sacramental experience should enrich the African Pentecostal-charismatic sacramental theology by viewing the charismatic prophecy experience as a sacrament. Second, the African Pentecostal-sacramental ontology should no longer be visualized in terms of the mystical aspect of the sacraments only; rather, all sacraments and sacramental experiences should be viewed as instruments or means of union, not only with the Holy Spirit but also with the church community. The *paraklesis* significance of charismatic prophecy should serve to accentuate the sacramental aspect of union with the church community.

Third, the observation that charismatic prophecy can conceptually be viewed as transpositional revelation, or an immediacy of divine will and speech adaptively framed and expressed through human liberty and language, should serve to temper the mystical, or tendentiously superstitious, awe with which prophecy utterances are sometimes esteemed in the African Pentecostal-charismatic context. Thus prophecy should be viewed as both divine and human utterance. The anthropological dimension of the prophecy utterances should therefore invoke biblical-critical and theological evaluation of the utterances in accordance with the scriptural admonishment to "weigh carefully what is said" (1 Cor 14:29b). Thus there should be concrete mechanisms or arrangements in congregational settings for evaluating prophetic utterances.

Finally, the observed significant *paraklesis* effect of charismatic prophecy on the congregations studied, in terms of the felt divine presence which infuses congregations with encouragement, comfort, building up, and which appears to impact the congregations significantly in terms of numerical growth, congregants' faithfulness, commitment, and prolific lay ministry, implies that the exercise of the *charisms* of the Holy Spirit, especially the *charism* of prophecy, should be encouraged in accordance with the scriptural patter in 1 Corinthians 14.

7.4 Suggestions for Future Research

Although the case study method adopted for the present study yielded observational results which correlate fairly well with observations in other contexts, some quarters of scholarship opine that the contextual nature of the case study method demands that case study results be replicated widely before they can be generalized as theory. Nonetheless, the fact that the study results were corroborated by observations already made in other contexts implies that the study results are generalizable to a considerable extent, and thus contribute to the repertoire of empirical-biblical knowledge of the Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon of prophecy. However, since epistemology is an ongoing process, the observational results of the present study should also be viewed as providing data for future research on charismatic prophecy.

The methodological process adopted for the present study, the Van der Ven's empirical-theological cycle, was designed, primarily, for an empirical- theological and quantitative methodological approach. However, the methodological approach of the present study was empirical-biblical and qualitative. A biblical approach is closely premised on scriptural hermeneutics while a theological approach has, conceivably,

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wider latitudes of conceptualization and traditioning. Therefore the adoption of a theologically designed process for a biblical approach might be viewed as having an adverse effect of shaping biblical hermeneutics in a theological mold. Nonetheless, Van der Ven's theological cycle is basically hermeneutical and is, conceivably, adaptively amenable to biblical hermeneutics.

Moreover, biblical hermeneutics entails theological reflection since the biblical hermeneutist approaches the texts of the bible from a particular theological position or tradition. On the other hand, Christian theology cannot be divorced from the truth claims of Scripture. As Alister McGrath argues, Christian experiences of spirituality should never be conceptualized as valid Christian theology apart from the biblical truth claims that undergird the spiritual experiences.[597] It is also conceivable that a qualitative approach provides relatively wider latitudes of judicial interpretation of qualitative data than a quantitative approach whose interpretative latitude is limited by the relative objectification of variables. Although the foregoing are conjectural views, it is, nonetheless, recommended that the empirical-analytic results of the present study be replicated in future research utilizing purely empirical-biblical and qualitative study process designs.

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[597] A. McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 147.

Appendix 1

Ethical Review Summary

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL REVIEW

[Not available in the digital version of this thesis]

Appendix 2

Recruitment Advertisement

Date_____

Dear (Name) _____

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A GROUP STUDY

I am carrying out a study of congregational prophecy, or prophecy that is uttered in church worship gatherings. The study is part of my Doctoral Research at the University of Birmingham, UK.

At this stage in the study, I wish to conduct focus group interviews, or discussion groups comprising six to eight participants per group, in order to hear, first hand, what people perceive and understand concerning congregational prophecy. I am particularly interested in interviewing people who have been exercised in giving prophecies at church worship gatherings, and the Senior Pastor has identified you as one of the key people who are instrumental in the exercise of the gift of prophecy.

Participation in the focus groups is entirely voluntary and the Senior Pastor and the overall Ministry Leadership have kindly given permission for the conduct of the study.

 I therefore wish to invite you to a meeting with me, along with other church members who have also been invited, at the church sanctuary on (date) _____ at (time) _____

Sincerely,

Samuel Muindi (Doctoral Student)   Approved_____

University of Birmingham, UK.   Pastor_____

Email: �   Date_____

Appendix 3

Information for Participants

I am carrying out a study of congregational prophecy, or prophecy that is uttered in church worship gatherings. The study is part of my Doctoral Research at the University of Birmingham, UK.

At this stage in the study, I wish to conduct focus group interviews, or discussion groups comprising six to eight participants per group, in order to hear, first hand, what people perceive and understand concerning congregational prophecy. I am particularly interested in interviewing people who have been exercised in giving prophecies at church worship gatherings.

Thus the research project aims to understand how people perceive their experience of congregational prophecy; it entails participant observation in worship gatherings, focus groups and analysis of any publicly available church documents or other information such as cassette tapes, DVDs and Videos.

I will be glad to share the findings with the participants and the church leadership once the research is complete. Please note that the participants' names will not be associated with the research findings in any way, and their identities as participants will be known only to the researchers, the pastors, and of course, their fellow participants in the respective sessions.

There are no foreseeable risks, whatsoever, associated with this study or anyone's participation in it.

The expected benefits associated with one's participation in this study are that participants will be able to listen to other participants tell their experiences about congregational prophecy, and how they relate their experiences to the Scriptures and the life of the Church. It is hoped that participation in the focus groups will be an encouragement to each one and that it will deepen each one's understanding of the charism of prophecy in relation to their Christian faith.

Participation in the study is volitional and participants will need to give their written consent. Moreover, participants will be at liberty to withdraw, in writing, their participation and any contribution they have made, during and even after the Focus Group session.

Samuel Muindi (Doctoral Student)

University of Birmingham, UK.

Email:

Appendix 4

Consent Form

The following information is provided for you to decide whether you wish to participate in the study. You are free to decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with the Researcher, the Church or the University in any way.

This is a study of congregational prophecy, or prophecy that is uttered in church worship gatherings. The study is part of my Doctoral Research at the University of Birmingham, UK. At this stage in the study, I wish to conduct focus group interviews, or discussion groups comprising six to eight participants per group, in order to hear, first hand, what people perceive and understand concerning congregational prophecy. I am particularly interested in interviewing people who have been exercised in giving prophecies at church worship gatherings.

Thus the research project aims to understand how people perceive their experience of congregational prophecy; it entails participant observation in worship gatherings, focus groups and analysis of any publicly available church documents or other information such as cassette tapes, DVDs and Videos.

During this focus group, data will be collected by recording the conversations and by the researcher and his assistant taking some notes.

Please do not hesitate to ask any questions either before the focus group starts or afterwards. However, once it has begun it would be best to let the focus group finish before raising any further questions regarding the project. I will be glad to share the findings with you once the research is complete. Please note that your name will not be associated with the research findings in any way, and your identity as a participant in this focus group will be known only to the researchers, the pastors, and of course, your fellow participants in this session.

There are no foreseeable risks, whatsoever, associated with this study or your participation in it.

The expected benefits associated with your participation in this study are that you will be able to listen to other participants tell their experiences about congregational prophecy, and how they relate their experiences to the Scriptures and the life of the Church. It is hoped that your participation in this focus group will be an encouragement to you and that it will deepen your understanding of the *charism* of prophecy in relation to your Christian faith.

After having read the information on this Consent Form, if you are happy to proceed with participation, I would ask you to sign the Consent Form with full knowledge of the nature of the project and its procedures. You are also at liberty to withdraw from the Focus Group participation and any contribution you have made, during and even after the Focus Group session. However, any subsequent withdrawal, after the initial consent, will need to be in writing. A copy of this Consent Form will be given to you to keep.

Print Name_____

Signature of Participant_____

Date_____

Appendix 5

Questionnaire: Participant Information

1. Name_____

2. **Gender**: Male__/ Female___

3. **Age:**

.Under 25_____

.25- 34_____

.35- 44_____

.45- 54_____

.Over 55_____

4. **Marital Status**: Single__ /Married__ /Divorced__ /Widowed__

5. **Education:**

.Primary Sch. Certificate_____

.High Sch. Certificate_____

.Post-High Sch. Diploma_____

.University Degree_____

6. **Occupation**_____

7. **For how many years have you been attending this church?** _____

8. **What other church denominations have you attended in the past?**

._____

._____

9. **What other churches do you attend as well as this church, if any?**

._____

._____

10**. Are you involved in any church ministry or leadership position? Give details**:

._____

Appendix 6

Participant Information Summary: Inductive Case Study

INFORMATION	MALE	FEMALE
1. Age Cohort		
Under 25	1	0
25- 34	6	5
35- 44	5	4
45- 54	0	2
Over 55	0	0
2. Marital Status		
Single	4	5
Married	8	5
Divorced	0	0
Widowed	0	1
3. Education		
Primary School Certificate	0	0
High School Certificate	7	8
Post- High School Diploma	3	2
University degree	2	1
4. Profession		
Teaching	4	5
Medical	0	3
Accounting	4	0
General management	2	0
Office Secretary	0	2
Technology	2	0
Home maker	0	1
Other	0	0
5.Years Attended Present Church		
Less than 1 year	0	0
1- 5 years	3	2
6- 10 years	7	8
Over 10 years	2	1

6. Past Church Attendance		
Pentecostal- Charismatic	2	1
Protestant Evangelical	1	0
Protestant non-Evangelical	0	1
Catholic	0	0
Other	0	0
7. Involvement in Church Ministries		
Church Elder	2	0
Church Deacon	4	0
Counseling	3	2
Ushering	10	11
Sunday school teaching	2	3
Prayer Group leadership	3	4
Evangelism team leadership	2	3
Other	0	0

Appendix 7

Participant Responses Summary: Inductive Case Study

I. The Experience of Prophecy

SI.1. My experience of prophesy is like when I was baptized in the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues (R23).

SI.2. As I worship, a sudden Holy Ghost power fell on me, and I started speaking in tongues (R23).

SI.3. When I am worshipping in tongues, a sudden power comes on me, and I start prophesying (R21).

SI.4. Prophesying is like translating a message which I was speaking within myself in tongues (R21).

SI.5. When I was worshipping in tongues, suddenly I felt an explosion of new tongues out of me (R19).

SI.6. Then someone else interpreted my tongues (R19).

SI.7. Prophesying is like being baptized with the Spirit again and again and speaking in tongues (R18).

SI.8. I feel a sudden energy overpowering me, and words begin to rise from deep within (R18).

SI.9. I felt like my inside was being possessed by a power from outside, which paralyzed my body (R17).

SI.10. I felt unusual calmness inside, the something began to bubble into words from inside me (R16).

SI.11. I felt compelled to speak; I just opened my mouth, but then I began to prophesy (R16).

SI.12. I felt like I had released all the power that had possessed me, to the church (R16).

SI.13. In worship I suddenly felt numb and collapsed to the floor, then words began to flow out (R15).

SI.14. We were worshipping, the power of God was so real, words began to appear in my mind (R15).

SI.15. In worship I felt lifted up into God's presence, His presence put words in me, and I spoke (R15).

SI.16. I felt like I was preaching in tongues; then, without realizing, I began to preach in English (R14).

SI.17. Worshipping in tongues, I began to understand my tongues; it was a message to the church (R14).

SI.18. Prophecy is still a mystery to me; I begin to worship and then words begin to form inside me (R13).

SI.19. I usually see words appear in my mind like pictures; I feel a compulsion to speak then out (R13).

SI.20. Words begin to form in my stomach, and they well up to my mouth and I speak (R13).

SI.21. I feel compulsion to speak, and as I open my mouth, words begin to flow out of me (R12).

SI.22. I feel impressed to speak, I open my mouth and it is like God fills it with words (R12).

SI.23. I was leading in worship; as I opened my mouth to pray, then prophecy words came out (R12).

SI.24. Sometimes revelation comes in a dream; then at church I feel pressure to share it (R10).

SI.25. At worship my lips begin to tremble strangely, then the trembling turns into words (R10).

SI.26. A revelation appears in my mind; it develops into a message which I feel I must speak out (R9).

II. The Impact of Prophecy

SI.27. Prophecy makes me feel the presence of God; He is so real to me (R23).

SI.28. God values women because He uses them to prophesy (R23).

SI.29. Women are not recognized in the church as men, but in prophecy God recognizes them (R23).

SI.30. The church is alive because of prophecy; God's presence is real in practice, not theory (R23).

SI.31. There is fear of God in our lives and in the church, because God is real and present (R23).

SI.32. There is fear of God in the community around here; they know God is real here (R23).

SI.33. Prophecy has made my faith strong because God is no longer a theory (R23).

SI.34. The Bible is real now, because many prophecies use Bible words to speak about now (R20).

SI.35. People fear living in sin because prophecy has been exposing sin in brethren (R20).

SI.36. Prophecy has made devote more time to prayer and fasting in order to hear God's voice (R20).

SI.37. Prayer and fasting is very important if you want to hear God's voice (R19).

SI.38. I am now more devoted to worshipping, because it is through worship that prophecy comes (R18).

SI.39. Prophecy has changed my life; God is so real and present; I cannot fool around anymore (R18).

SI.40. Baptism in the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues is a must in order to receive prophecy (R16).

SI.41. People around see that we are serious (because of prophecy) and they respect our church (R15).

SI.42. The church is growing very fast; people come from all over to hear God speak about now (R15).

SI.43. There is more love in the church because we feel bound together by God's voice in prophecy (R15).

SI.44. Without the gifts of the Holy Spirit, especially prophecy, the church is dead (R15).

SI.45. Employers recognize that our members are serious Christians and very faithful at work (R14).

SI.46. Other churches are longing for prophecy because they see our church is growing fast (R13).

SI.47. Prophecy has clarified many Scriptures as they are applied (in prophecy) to real life situations (R13).

SI.48. Prophecy has made my faith strong because I know the God I am trusting is real and present (R13).

SI.49. The Bible says without revelation the people perish. Revelation in prophecy makes us alive (R13).

SI.50. Prophecy has made me experience heaven on earth as God's presence is felt here on earth (R13).

Appendix 8

Participant Information Summary: Deductive Case Studies

INFORMATION	CASE STUDY ONE		CASE STUDY TWO	
AGE	**M**	**F**	**M**	**F**
-under 25	2	1	1	0
-25- 34	5	6	5	4
-35-44	6	7	6	8
-45- 54	1	2	3	2
-over 55	0	0	0	0
MARITAL STATUS				
-single	6	7	5	4
-married	8	7	10	10
-divorced	0	0	0	0
-widowed	0	2	0	0
EDUCATION				
-primary school certificate	0	0	0	0
-high school certificate	9	13	10	9
-post- high school diploma	2	2	2	4
-university degree	3	1	3	1
OCCUPATION				
-teaching	4	5	2	4
-health profession	3	4	2	5
-accounting	3	0	1	1
-general management	2	2	3	1
-technical	1	0	5	0
-office secretary	0	5	0	3
-self- employed	1	0	2	0
-Other	0	0	0	0
YEARS ATTENDED CHURCH				
-less than 1 year	0	0	0	0
-1- 5 years	2	5	2	4
-6- 10 years	5	9	9	8
-more than 10 years	7	2	4	2
PAST CHURCHES ATTENDED				
-Pentecostal- charismatic	6	3	5	4
-protestant	2	1	2	1

-catholic	0	1	1	1
-other	0	0	0	0
INVOLVEMENT IN CHURCH MINISTRIES				
-ushering	8	9	7	8
-counseling	5	3	3	2
-church elder	2	0	1	0
-deacon/deaconess	4	1	2	0
-Sunday school teaching	3	3	2	5
-prayer group leadership	3	3	2	2
-evangelism team leadership	4	2	2	1
-other	0	5	0	2

Appendix 9

Interview Schedule: Deductive Case Studies

1. Can you remember any prophecy that you have heard or uttered?

2. What impact did it have on you?

3. What is your understanding of prophecy?

4. Is there any relation between prophecy and speaking in tongues?

5. Explain the process of receiving a prophecy. What happens?

6. Explain the process of delivering a prophecy. What happens?

7. Was there any key person or people who encouraged you to prophesy?

8. Do you usually receive the message for prophecy before or during a church service?

9. Are there any physical accompaniments which you associate with uttering a prophecy?

10. How would you characterize the message(s) of your prophecy: Encouragement? Warning?
    Disclosure of hidden things to the church? Revelation of future events/things? Any
    other?

11. Explain the process of reception/evaluation of prophecy by the church. Have there been any
    rejected prophecies.

12. What Scriptural texts and other literature or media have been influential or helpful to
    concerning prophecy?

13. What is the significance of prophecy for: you personally? For your church? For the
    Pentecostal- charismatic movement? For the wider Christian church? For the local
    community? For the wider society?

Appendix 10

Participant Responses Summary: Deductive Case Studies

(Focus Group and In- Depth Interviews Responses)

A. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS		
1. Recollection of Charismatic Prophecies Uttered	R	Percentage
SD.1.Encouraging and comforting the church	58/59	98
SD.2.Prophecy giving assurance of God's presence	54/59	92
SD.3. Assurance of God's protection and provision	42/59	71
SD.4.Warnings against sin in the church	40/59	68
SD.5. Prophecy about forthcoming events	38/59	64
2. Impact of Charismatic Prophecy		
SD.6.Faith strengthened by prophetic encouragement	59/59	100
SD.7.Repentance of exposed sin	56/59	95
SD.8.Godly fear because of divine presence	55/59	93
SD.9.Received guidance in difficult situations	41/59	70
SD.10.Miracles happen because of power in prophecy	35/59	59
3. Understanding of Charismatic Prophecy		
SD.11.Voice of God by the Holy Spirit through a believer	57/59	97
SD.12.God's revelation through an individual	52/59	88
SD.13.God's specific word for a specific purpose	39/59	66
SD.14.Revelation of God's presence through spoken word	39/59	66
SD.15.Scripture made alive through God's voice	38/59	64
4. Relation Between Prophecy and Glossolalia		
SD.16.Glossolalia opens my spirit to receive prophetic revelation	59/59	100
SD.17.Glossolalia tunes my spirit to hear God's voice	59/59	100
SD.18.Glossolalia-prophecy are two sides of communion	51/59	86
SD.19. Edify: glossolalia edifies self; prophecy edifies church	40/59	68
SD.20.Glossolalia is worship; prophecy is received in worship	40/59	68
5. Process of Receiving and delivering Prophecy		
SD.21.Physical sensations	59/59	100
SD.22.Overwhelming compulsion to speak	58/59	98
SD.23.Words form inside, word of knowledge comes to mind	49/59	83
SD.24.Dreams, pictures appearing in mind	37/59	63
SD.25.Impressions/ideas in mind that flesh out as prophecy	32/59	54
6. Key Persons or People who Encouraged Prophecy		
SD.26.The pastors	59/59	100
SD.27.Prophetic speakers in church gatherings	55/59	93
SD.28.Fellow believers in church prayer groups	51/59	86

SD.29.Christian television	41/59	70
SD.30.Books on prophecy	40/59	68
7. Receipt of Prophecy: Before or During Service?		
SD.31.During church service	58/59	98
SD.32.Before church service	41/59	70
SD.33.Impressions received earlier; message clarifies at service	39/59	66
8. Physical Experiences in Prophecy		
SD.34.A sense of being physically overpowered	56/59	95
SD.35.A feeling of overwhelming excitement	53/59	90
SD.36.Physical sensations and shaking	53/59	90
SD.37.A sudden rush of energy into body	52/59	88
SD.38.An overwhelming joy	50/59	85
9. Characterization of Prophetic Message		
SD.39.Encouragement and assurance	59/59	100
SD.40.Manifestation of God's presence	59/59	100
SD.41.Warnings against sin in the church	47/59	80
SD.42.Confirmation of Scripture	45/59	76
SD.43.Revelation knowledge of secret things	42/59	71
10. Process of Reception/Evaluation of Prophecy		
SD.44.Pastors' comments, clarifications, or refutations	59/59	100
SD.45.Pastors' teaching using past prophecies as examples	55/59	93
SD.46.Whether it agrees with Scripture	55/59	93
SD.47.Whether it agrees with our spirits	54/59	92
SD.48.Whether the (predictive) prophecy is fulfilled	50/59	85
11. Influential Scripture/Literature/Media in Prophecy		
SD.49.Book of Acts and 1 Corinthians 12- 14	59/59	100
SD.50.Christian television	55/59	93
SD.51.Audio/Visual records of prophecies/teaching on prophecy	55/59	93
SD.52.Books on prophecy by Kenneth Hagin and others	37/59	63
SD.53.Stories of prophets in the Old Testament	33/59	60
12. Significance of Prophecy		
SD.54.Assurance of God's presence/reality	59/59	100
SD.55.Makes the church come alive	59/59	100
SD.56.That God values me by using me to prophesy	43/59	73
SD.57.Guidance in life	41/59	70
SD.58.Gender empowerment	30/59	51
B. IN- DEPTH INTERVIEWS		
1. Experience of Receiving Prophecy		
SD.59.It is like being caught up to heaven and hearing words	10/10	100
SD.60.I feel like being submerged in the Holy Spirit	10/10	100
SD.61.I feel impressed with idea, from which I utter a prophecy	10/10	100

SD.62.I see visions of pictures/words	9/10	90
SD.63.I feel compulsion to speak/words coming to mind/mouth	9/10	90
2. Experience of Delivering Prophecy		
SD.64.As I open my mouth words begin to flow out	9/10	90
SD.65.Words form one after another as I speak	9/10	90
SD.66.My voice changes involuntarily into loud and excited	9/10	90
SD.67.When prophesying I feel more fluent than normally	8/10	80
SD.68.There is such excitement and joy when prophesying	8/10	80
3. Physical Experiences When Uttering Prophecy		
SD.69.I feel the presence of the Lord overpowering me	10/10	100
SD.70.I feel like being possessed by a power	10/10	100
SD.71.Feeling of joyful sensations all over as I speak	10/10	100
SD.72.Feeling of excitement and joy	10/10	100
SD.73.My mind is no longer aware of earthly things	9/10	90
4. Impact of Prophecy		
SD.74.Transforming experience of God's presence	10/10	100
SD.75. Godly fear	10/10	100
SD.76. Drawn closer to God	10/10	100
SD.77. Restored lives and families	10/10	100
SD.78. God's word made real	9/10	90

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