

**THE PROPHETIC VOICE OF THE CLERGY IN GHANA ON NATION-BUILDING:
AN EXEGESIS ON JEREMIAH 1:5-10**

BY

EMMANUEL TWUMASI ANKRAH

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES, KWAME
NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF**

**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY
(RELIGIOUS STUDIES)**

AUGUST 2014

DECLARATION

I declare that apart from the sources specially acknowledged in the thesis, this work constitutes the results of my research in the subject and it has not been submitted in part or whole to any other Seminary or College for the award of any academic degree.

Emmanuel Twumasi Ankrah

.....
Student's Name	Signature	Date
20259063		PG7385212
.....	
Student's No.		Examination No

Certified by:

Very Rev. Frimpong Wiafe
(Supervisor)	Signature	Date

Certified by:

Rev. J.E.T Kuwornu Adjaottor
(Head of Department)	Signature	Date

Certified by:

Prof. Prince Conteh
(External Examiner)	Signature	Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my children, Hephzi-bah Twumasi Ankrah, Benson Idahosa Twumasi Ankrah and Lady Didaskalos Osahemaa Twumasi Ankrah

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am very grateful to God for the opportunity He gave to me to enroll in the programme and the wisdom and strength He has bestowed unto me from the beginning up to this time.

I acknowledge the mentorship and the fatherly love of Very Rev. Frimpong Wiafe for inspiring and guiding me right from the beginning to the end.

Also, I thank my lovely wife for her emotional support and her fervent prayer for me throughout my study.

I acknowledge my research assistants, David Boakye Dankwa, Mrs. Richlove Owusu, and Ibrahim Sarlice.

Finally, Mr. Karikari Apau is highly acknowledged for his immense contribution toward the success of this study especially at the data collection and presentation stage.

ABSTRACT

In recent times, a section of politicians in particular and some non-politicians have tried to reduce the role of the Clergy in Ghana to ecclesiastical and spiritual matters. They have capitalized on the misinterpretation of Luther's two-kingdom theory to mean an absolute separation of church from the state. This has resulted in the vilification of the Clergy that share their views on the governance process of the people.

We set out to sensitize the Ghanaian public about the prophetic role of the Clergy in the nation. The study also sought to motivate the Church led by the Clergy to brace themselves up and show the willingness to serve God and mankind by seeking for the well-being of others.

The study falls into the Martin Luther's two-kingdom theory that has been interpreted to suggest a total separation of church from the state, sacred from the secular and heavenly things from earthly things. An exegesis on Jeremiah 1:5-10 was done to examine the biblical mandate of the Clergy to engage in rhetoric concerning national issues. Questionnaires were distributed to 200 respondents while 10 personalities were interviewed for data collection. The respondents were of Clergy, Laity, Media, Politicians and General Public categories. This was done to provide both internal and external assessment of the prophetic voice of the Clergy in Ghana.

At the end of the study, it was realized that majority of both the internal and external respondents agree that the Clergy has the mandate to participate in the governance process of the people. However, a few of the respondents, mostly, the Politicians preferred that the Clergy concentrated on spiritual and clerical matters. Also, majority of the respondents

advised against the Clergy being partisan on political or national issues. Again, it was discovered that currently, the prophetic voice is essentially silent following the bashings and vilifications.

Indeed the study was very significant as it sensitized both the Church and the General Public about the prophetic role of the Clergy in the governance process in Ghana through rhetoric.

TABLE OF CONTENT

Declaration.....	i
Dedication.....	ii
Acknowledgement.....	iii
Abstract.....	iv

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Content

Page

1.0 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background.....	2
1.2 Statement of Problem.....	3
1.3 Objective of the Study	3
1.4 Methodology.....	4
1.5 Scope of the Study	4
1.6 Significance of the Study	5
1.7 Organization of the Study.....	5
1.8 Literature Review.....	5

CHAPTER TWO

BACKGROUND STUDY OF THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH AND EXEGESIS ON 1:5 -

10

2.0 Introduction.....	27
2.1 Date and Authorship.....	27

2.2 Literary Features.....	28
2.3 The Socio-Political and Religious Setting at the Time of Jeremiah.....	29
2.4 Hebrew Text and English Translation (Jer. 1:5-10).....	30
2.5 Syntactical, Morphological and Exegetical Analysis of the Pericope.....	31

CHAPTER THREE

DATA PRESENTATION

3.0 Introduction.....	49
3.1 Background of the Respondents.....	49
Figures, Tables and Charts.....	51
In-depth Interviews.....	59

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA INTERPRETATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction.....	75
4.1 Research Findings.....	77
4.2 Political Participation of the Clergy.....	77
Internal Assessment	77
External Assessment.....	80
4.3 The Prophetic Voice of the Clergy.....	89
Internal Assessment.....	90
External Assessment.....	102

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Summary of Findings.....121

5.1 Conclusion.....123

5.2 Recommendations.....126

BIBLIOGRAPHY127

APPENDICES

Appendix A (Interview List).....130

Appendix B (Questionnaires).....131

Appendix C (Interview Guide).....151

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

The role of religion in shaping social and political life around the world, including its capacity to organize people into cohesive social groups and maintain the order necessary to preserve societal functioning has become part of the conventional wisdom in both lay and academic discourses.¹ Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is arguably the most religious region of the world, as well as the region facing the most profound difficulties in enacting an effective programme of state-building and instituting stable democratic systems.²

Throughout history, the Church through its clergy (leaders) has affected and been affected by the state in one way or the other. In Ghana, one may say that the Church has been and is a partner of the state in development. The Church claims to affect in one way or the other the economic, educational, health, democratic, trade and industrial life of the nation. However, some people are of the view that the Church has a limit as to what extent it is expected to get involved in secular matters of the state. Others too posit that the message and deeds of the Church should be holistic – affecting every aspect of the community in which it operates.

This research seeks to examine “The Prophetic Voice of the Clergy in Ghana on Nation-Building”. That is, the Clergy by way of speaking, to take part in the decision-making process of the nation.

¹ Wale Adebani, “The Clergy, Culture, and Political Conflicts in Nigeria”, *African Studies Review*, Vol.53, No.3, (2010): 123.

² Nicolette D. Manglos and Alexander A. Weinreb, “Religion and Interest in Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa”, *Social Forces*, Vol.92, No.1, (2013): 214.

This introductory chapter encompasses the background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, research questions, methodology, scope of the study, significance of the study, organization of the study and literature review.

1.1 Background to the study

In biblical times, prophets were God's voice on earth. They comforted, praised, counselled, rebuked and condemned kings, priests and the people of the lands³. The prophet Jeremiah for instance, executed his prophetic role in the reigns of about five kings over four decades.⁴ Jeremiah's prophetic ministry affected, and was affected by the political milieu in and around Judah to the extent that on several occasions he was arrested, vilified and persecuted by the powers that be.

In recent times in Ghana, especially prior to the '2012 Presidential and Parliamentary elections, a section of the Clergy whose voice was heard on topical issues of national debate was bashed by some members of the various political divide. The verbal war between the two leading political parties – the ruling National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the opposition New Patriotic Party (NPP) was so aggravating that the Clergy in its attempt to exercise its prophetic role ended up becoming a 'punching bag' for both the NDC and the NPP parties in the run up to the 2012 elections.

The Clergy displayed and expressed their frustrations and anxieties through the sermons they preached, press conferences and issuance of communiqués and statements at their various conferences and meetings. The Concerned Clergy Association of Ghana for instance, used a press release to register their displeasure. The Clergy decries as follows:

³Ben Bosomprah, "PCG as God's Voice for the Nation", *Christian Messenger Vol.26 No.2*, March/April, 2012, 19.

⁴ Internal evidence found in the book of Jeremiah shows that Jeremiah ministered as a prophet in the reigns of King Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah (Jer. 1:1ff).

We have observed with heavy hearts and great worry, recent happenings in our beloved country Ghana with respect to the way ‘men of God’ are being harangued, insulted, maligned and vilified by a cross – section of the Ghanaian populace for doing nothing but our God –given duty of setting the nation on the right course.⁵

It is apparent that a section of the Clergy was unhappy about the turn of events. They were in the state of dilemma as to how the people of Ghana expected them to execute their prophetic role. It is in the midst of this recent development that we set out to engage our thinking on whether or not the Clergy in Ghana have a say in public discourse on nation-building.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Very often one hears people especially politicians lamenting: “Religion should not mix with politics”. They prefer a clear separation of the Church and state. Even those who appear to be a bit charitable to the Clergy have sometimes questioned whether or not the Clergy should adopt the approach of the so –called *serial callers*.⁶ Others advocate for the Clergy to have a say in the governance process of the nation.

The problem this study sought to examine was whether or not the Clergy have a biblical mandate to be prophetic in matters of nation-building by engaging in rhetoric that could inform decision-making in Ghana with the Bible as their foundation. We set out to get a deepened understanding of the challenges the Clergy go through or anticipate to face when they execute their prophetic role in the nation.

⁵<http://www.peacefmonline.com/Gh> Posted on November, 26th 2012 at 8:56am. [Accessed on 22nd February, 2013 at 2:15pm].

⁶In Ghana serial callers are party faithful who contribute by way of phone-ins to political shows on several radio stations. They are fanatic party members who would go all out to defend their party and condemn their opponents on air. Their telephone numbers and voices are well known by radio presenters of political shows. In fact, it has now become a sort of employment for some party fanatics. It is an open secret that many of such people are on the pay-role of their various political parties.

1.3 The Objective of the Study

The study sought to examine the interplay between the Church and politics in the governance of the people of Ghana.

1.4 Methodology

The researcher employed qualitative research method in this work. This method helped to understand the behaviour of the Clergy, Christians, Non-Christians, Politicians and the General public when it comes to sharing of views on nation-building and the reasons that govern such behaviour. The research rests on the pericope of the call and commission of Jeremiah the Prophet, as captured in the book of Jeremiah (Jer.1:5-10). Firstly, the text was placed in context. Secondly, an exegesis of the text was done to determine the contextual meaning and its application to the call and commission of the Clergy in Ghana.

Furthermore, the researcher interviewed ten personalities in this country to collect data from them. Two hundred respondents comprising the Clergy, Politicians, Media practitioners, Christians, Non-Christians, and the General public were sampled. In addition, the researcher conducted a survey of existing work in the field.

1.5 Scope of the Study

Inasmuch as the researcher recognizes the enormous contributions of the Islamic and traditional leaders on nation-building, this study focuses on that of the Clergy (Church). The Church is one body which has partnered and continues to partner government in the building of the nation especially in the area of infrastructure and logistics for education and health.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study has sensitized politicians, Christians, non-Christians and the general populace about the prophetic role of the Clergy on national discourse. Also, the study has helped to minimize church-state tensions in Ghana. More importantly, the exegesis done in this study area has given further insight into the biblical mandate of the prophetic voice of the Clergy.

1.7 Organization of the Study

The study is made up of Five Chapters. Chapter One gives a general overview of the issue under discussion, the statement of the problem, the objective of the Study, methodology of the research, the scope of the study, significance of the study, organization of the study as well as literature review. Chapter Two constitutes the analysis of the syntax and morphology, and the exegesis on Jeremiah 1: 5 -10. Chapter Three is the presentation of the field report. Chapter Four contains the analysis and discussions on findings. Chapter Five, captures the summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations.

1.8 Literature Review

Some scholars worldwide have attempted by way of books and articles to examine the role of religion in shaping the socio-political life around the world. For instance most of the American scholars in this area have concentrated on religion and morality – gay rights, abortion, drug peddling, terrorism and invasion of nations. African scholars especially those from the SSA have looked at the role of religion in the establishment of democratic rule, conflicts and the interactions between religion and culture in the sub-region. It is therefore prudent and expedient for the researcher to engage their writings to make a point in the prophetic voice of the Clergy in Ghana on nation-building.

Simms in assessing Kwame Nkrumah's use of religion employs the Gramscian theory (analysis) to explain that the ruling class adopts a leadership type called *Hegemony* where a worldview is created and sustained that convinces the oppressed that their subordination is appropriate, inevitable and just. In this manner, the masses are socialized to believe that their political situation cannot be altered and should not be opposed. He explains further that the hegemony would obviously lead to counter-hegemony where the intellectuals from the exploited class would create a psychocultural ideology in order to overturn the standing capitalist order and replace it with democratic socialism. He argues that these ideologies have to create a counter-hegemonic vision through anti-ruling class institutions and lead the masses in staging a universal revolution through cultural subversion as opposed to violence.

Simms is of the view that Ghana before independence was organized along hegemonic ideologies where the people unconsciously felt that the Whites were created to rule the Blacks and their survival was so dependent on them that their presence in the Gold Coast was in the interest of the people of Ghana. The intellectuals, especially the Big Six from the oppressed Ghanaians created a counter-hegemony led by Kwame Nkrumah to press for independence. However, Nkrumah's government ended up creating the same hegemonic society so anti-ruling class institutions emerged and created counter-hegemonic ideas which led to the fall of Nkrumah's regime.⁷

The theoretical framework of this study is not based on Gramscian Hegemonic theory but based on the Lutheran's "Two-Kingdom theory". Martin Luther describes two realms: the kingdom of the world which is for non-Christians governed by the law and the kingdom of

⁷Rupe Simms, "I am a Non-Denominational Christian and a Marxist Socialist:" A Gramscian Analysis of the Convention People's Party and Kwame Nkrumah's Use of Religion", *Sociology of Religion*, 64:4, (2003): 465.

God reserved for true believers or Christians governed by the gospel. Although Christians belong to both realms, Luther states that non-Christians belong only to the world, while the kingdom of God is reserved only for true believers.

To Deifelt, Luthers description can be misconstrued to enforce the notion that there are two mutually exclusive types of citizenship, one heavenly (for Christians) and the other one earthly (for unbelievers). The fact that Luther employs a dualistic language to describe his theory, it can create the false assumption that human beings are divided into two categories: those concerned with heavenly matters, and those concerned with worldly affairs.⁸

Indeed, some people have misapplied Lutheran's theory to mean that there should be an absolute separation of the Church from the state. A case in point in Ghana is about an incident that occurred between Johnson Asiedu Nketiah, the General Secretary of the ruling NDC and Emmanuel Martey, the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana prior to the '2012 General Elections. It was reported that the former had in a way of response, retorted that the latter (Clergy) to take their Bible and leave the Constitution to the Politicians.⁹ As if that was not enough, the boss of the Ghana Free Zones Board, Kojo Twum Boafo, who claimed to be a member of the Presbyterian Church publicly resigned from the church accusing its leadership of dabbling in politics.¹⁰

⁸ Wanda Deifelt, "Advocacy, Political Participation and Citizenship: Lutheran Contributions to Public Theology", *Dialog: A Journal of Theology*, Vol.49, No.2, (2010): 109-110.

⁹ Reports were all over the social media especially myjoyonline.com 14th September, 2012, that Mr. Asiedu Nketiah, the General Secretary of the ruling NDC had accused Rt. Rev. Prof. Emmanuel Martey of being in bed with the opposition party. He questioned why the Church must get involved in such a controversial matter. However, after some few days, President Mahama apologized to the Moderator of Presbyterian Church of Ghana for that unfortunate statement from his General Secretary. The Moderator had led his church leadership to call on the Electoral Commission to reconsider his intention of creating 45 new constituencies which had sparked a hot of controversies ahead of the 2012 national elections.

¹⁰<http://www.myjoyonline.com>, 14th September, 2012, [Accessed on 11th January, 2013].

Kudadjie and Aboagye Mensah examine the whole issue of church-state relations from the biblical perspectives. They posit:

Since the Bible is the basic and supreme authority for action by the Church, we must find out what the Bible teaches on this issue. The opposing views seem to be suggested in the Bible: one favours involvement in the state affairs, but the other does not.¹¹

They allude to the view of a Christian sect such as ‘Jehovah’s Witness’ which advocates for the Church’s total disassociation from all matters of the state. This view relies on some passages in the Bible: John 12:31 and 1John 5:19 to suggest that the world is under the rule and control of the devil. Just as the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ does not belong to this world (John 18:33-36), so Christians do not belong to the world (John 15:18-19). The citizenship of Christians is in heaven (Philippians 3:20).

Bible passages such as those referred to above, have been used to formulate a biblical principle that Christians or the Church must not be involved in the political affairs of the state.¹² The two scholars agree that it is possible to work out such a principle. They however call this view “The negative view”. Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah seem to think that inasmuch as there are some biblical passages suggesting that the Church should not mingle with the state, there are even more biblical passages encouraging church – state relations.

They state:

Many Bible passages and personalities can be cited to support this view. Many Old Testament leaders like Moses, Joshua and David combined the functions of spiritual and political leadership. In fact the society itself was so organized that there was no separation between religion and politics.¹³

They further argue that the Bible has records of cases when God himself appointed people to overthrow tyrannical and ungodly kings (1Kings 19:6; 2Kings Chapters 9 -10). An examination of these cases clearly establishes a biblical principle that individual Christians as well as the Church as an organized body have a role to play in state affairs. The actual roles

¹¹J.N. Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah, *Christian Social Ethics* (Accra: Asempra Publishers, 1991), 31.

¹² J.N. Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah, *Ethics*,

¹³ J.N. Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah, *Ethics*, 32.

that the Church can be called to play, and how those roles may be played will depend on the particular context in which the Church finds itself.¹⁴

It is in the midst of these opposing views playing out in the Ghanaian religious, political and social milieu that we seek to understand deeply why a segment of the Clergy in Ghana seek to or seek not to be involved in the governance process of the nation by way of sharing their views, and why a section of the people especially the Politicians behave the way they do toward the Clergy's involvement in national discourse.

Deifelt contends that the spiritual and earthly governments constitute two realms but both belong to God. They are not in opposition to one another, since both contend against the devil. God rules over both kingdoms and institutes two kinds of government. One is spiritual, and the other earthly. The two realms however, are interdependent. They testify that God rules over the whole world and does so in two ways.¹⁵

This simply implies that in the sight of God there is no difference between heavenly issues and earthly issues, both are God's concern. Good governance and well-being are instituted by God. Indeed, God is the author of politics and the ruler of state and society. Christians, being God's children are first and foremost the heirs of this two but one kingdom. Therefore a good Christian is among other things a good citizen.

Manglos and Weinreb, quoting Trinitapoli and Weinreb, observes that Afrobarometer data show that religious leaders are generally held in higher regard in SSA than other types of leaders or public officials. It is thus not surprising that religion would influence politics in

¹⁴J.N. Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah, *Ethics*, 34.

¹⁵ Deifelt, "Advocacy," 110.

SSA.¹⁶ A similar observation has been made by Adebani as he examines how the three well-known clerics: Emmanuel Gbonigi, Ayo Ladigbolu and Emmanuel Oladipupo have repeatedly been invited by politicians and traditional rulers to help in the resolution of cultural-political conflicts in Yorubaland.¹⁷ Phiri shares a classic Zambian example with us. He says:

In July, three months before the country's decisive elections, the Church leaders finally persuaded Kaunda and Chiluba to meet in a neutral place –an Anglican Church Cathedral. This meeting is as a result of lengthy private consultations with Kaunda and Chiluba by church leaders. Anglican bishop Stephen Mumba chaired the six-hour meeting, which finally resolved the constitutional disagreement between the two parties and paved the way to the October 1991 election...¹⁸

All of this goes to justify how relevant it is for this study to examine the prophetic voice of the Clergy in Ghana on nation-building. We argue that if religious leaders are held in high esteem in SSA, one will expect that when the Clergy in Ghana share their views concerning the governance process of the people, their contributions will be highly respected. The three clergymen who are always consulted for conflict resolution in Yorubaland is a good thing. However, one would wonder if they would still be considered relevant should they criticize the government or the traditional rulers.

In Ghana, the politicians use the Clergy as utility group whose services are sought for only when an interest group badly needs their backing for an action. According to Simms, the Christian church had become the most culturally influential institution of the Gold Coast by mid-1900s. Christianity exercised a strong influence on every aspect of Ghanaian sociopolitical and religious life. It impacted the worldview and affected the decision-making of the educated and the uneducated, the Christian and the non-Christian, the affluent and the poor, and the young people and their elders. The CPP capitalized on this phenomenon by

¹⁶ Nicolette D. Manglos and Alexander A. Weinreb, "Religion and Interest in Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa", *Social Forces*, Vol.92, No.1, (2013): 196.

¹⁷ Wale Adebani, "The Clergy, Culture, and Political Conflicts in Nigeria", *African Studies Review*, Vol.53, No.3, (2010): 123.

¹⁸ Isaac Phiri, "Why African Churches Preach Politics: The Case of Zambia", *Journal of Church and State*, Vol.41, No.2, (1999): 342.

making Christianity an instrument of counter-hegemony, adapting its language, imagery, and symbolism to validate its leadership and popularize its message¹⁹. Similar to what the Church leaders in Zambia did in ensuring the introduction of a multi-party system and ushering the leadership of Chiluba, but were severely persecuted later by Chiluba's government when they became critical on his policies, the Clergy in Ghana are called upon in times of difficulties by both the government and the opposition but when the Clergy criticize them, they are reminded not to meddle in politics. Pobee recalls that an attack was launched at Bishop Bronk of Kumasi by the *Ghanaian Times* on 20th December, 1961. The Bishop was bashed when he openly commented on the fact that the CPP government was sending Ghana's youth to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe for education and expressed fear for Communist indoctrination of the youth. Pobee says:

Whether the Bishop's conclusions were right or not is not our concern here. But the sharp reaction of the editorial to the Bishop's comments argues that the political issues should be left to the politicians to decide and the religious leaders to stick to religious issues and under no circumstances comment on government action, unless, of course, it is favourable to the government.²⁰

To Pobee, It is needless to say that the position adopted by the paper is unacceptable to authentic Christian conscience. He is of the view that the Clergy and the State ought to mutually co-operate for nation-building. He intimates that God is interested in the totality of life. Consequently, there should be no sharp distinction between the sacred and the secular. A religious person lives in the world and is willy-nilly in politics. There can be no escape from politics.²¹ He adds:

Those who promote the distinction between religion and politics, to our mind are trying in effect to get rid of religion altogether because they do not wish religion to interfere with the way they live. And a society which treats religion as unrelated to the conduct of public life is soon swallowed up in corruption, violence and sin...²²

¹⁹Rupe Simms, "I am a Non-Denominational Christian and a Marxist Socialist:" A Gramscian Analysis of the Convention People's Party and Kwame Nkrumah's Use of Religion", *Sociology of Religion*, 64:4, (2003): 475.

²⁰John S. Pobee, *Religion and Politics in Ghana*, (Accra: Asempa Publishers 1991), 75.

²¹ Pobee, *Religion and Politics*, 75.

²² Pobee, *Religion and Politics*, 77.

This implies that people with the mentality of separating the Church from the State entirely are only trying to insulate themselves in order to perpetuate their evil deeds in public life with impunity.

Asante, agrees with Adebani, Manglos and Phiri that on the political front, the Church cannot be found wanting.²³ He asserts that right from the inception of the history of the Church “the Church or individual Christians, either supported or opposed, government.”²⁴ This means that to Asante, the Church as a body has collectively, and some Christians as individuals have played their prophetic role in the state. This view confirms Yirenkyi’s findings. He says, “Religion has a double function of legitimating both the status quo and protest... the Church has played the latter role as an instrument of social change”²⁵. To Yirenkyi, the Church during the military regimes in Ghana insisted on its prophetic role as a social critic in the political arena and challenged the unparalleled military violence as well as educated Christians about their civil rights and motivated them to participate in the democratic process.²⁶ Among other things, he discovered that almost half of the Clergy in Ghana was reluctant to use the pulpit to address political issues. He argues that it indicates the inherent difficulties involved in political participation. He however, indicates that some of the Clergy and Laity respondents had declared their willingness to be actively involved in politics despite the problematic nature of involvement since they see their political activism

²³Emmanuel Asante, *Culture, politics and Development: Ethical and Theological Reflections on the Ghanaian Experience*, (Ghana: Challenge Enterprise, 2007), 25.

²⁴ Emmanuel Asante, *Culture*, 25.

²⁵Kwasi Yirenkyi, “The Role of Christian Churches in National Politics: Reflections from Laity and Clergy in Ghana”, *Sociology of Religion*, Vol.61, No.3, (2000): 335.

²⁶ Yirenkyi, “The Role of Christian Churches in National Politics”, 335.

from a social justice perspective as crucial. In that context, Yirenkyi discovered that the Laity had a much broader perspective than the Clergy in Ghana.²⁷

We agree with Yirenkyi on the fact that the prophetic role of the Clergy is to encourage things done in the society that are in keeping with the will of God and protest against the rots. Yirenkyi examined the prophetic role of the Clergy and Laity. His conclusion that the Church has played well its prophetic role was primarily based on the Christian bodies such as the CCG, NCS and CBC. His research was based on quantitative and qualitative analysis. The respondents sampled were largely from the Church, making his assessment internal.

This study deploys quantitative, qualitative and exegetical analysis in order to understand the biblical mandate of the prophetic voice of the Church using Jeremiah 1:5 -10. The focus of this study is to examine the prophetic role of the Clergy only, excluding the Laity. However, it focuses on the collective voice of the Clergy but not the individual Christian bodies (i.e. CCG, NCS, CBC, etc.) as well as that of the individual Clergy ministering in the various communities across the country. Notwithstanding the fact that Yirenkyi's assessment population was principally internal (i.e. the Clergy and Laity), it provides some useful insights about the Church's attitude toward national politics. This study however, employs both internal (the Clergy and Laity) and external (the Media, Politicians and General Public) assessment of the prophetic role of the Clergy with the view that it would build on these earlier studies such as Yirenkyi's and Assimeng's.

Deifelt in examining Martin Luther's public theology states that Luther's two-kingdom theory should not be misinterpreted to justify passivity and obedience toward civil authorities but rather it ought to be seen as a theology which applies to the everyday life of politics, economics, and religious affairs. In the context of nation-building, he says, "A Lutheran

²⁷ Yirenkyi, "Churches in National Politics", 336.

theology fosters citizenship not only as individual rights and responsibilities, but as active participation in civil society.”²⁸

Indeed, citizenship, reduced to the pursuit of one’s rights and responsibilities would deepen the woes of humanity especially in SSA where everyday lifestyle of the majority of the civil servants and the national leaders is synonymous to that of the jungle –the survival of the fittest. We foresee greediness and selfishness carrying the day in the region. Deifelt explains citizenship from a different angle: the Christian as a participant of the body politic, one who looks out not only for his or her own interest but for the well-being of all.²⁹ He opines that citizenship cannot be reduced to the ballot a citizen casts every so often (which still can defer the responsibility of decision-making to others) or being elected to public office, but reflects the extent to which one is a participant in the decision-making process.³⁰

Sometimes one hears some clergymen say theirs is simply to cast their votes during elections and what happens afterwards are not a bother to them because they believe that for them they live and operate not in the economy of Ghana but the economy of Heaven. Another angle of citizenship that Deifelt suggests is advocacy. He states that citizenship includes advocacy on behalf of social groups, communal causes, or collective efforts for the promotion of the common good. When advocacy is not seen as citizenship it is reduced to charity. It is easier to join efforts to promote self-interests than it is to advocate for others. It is easier to be self-involved than it is to be attentive to the needs of the neighbour. And yet, that is the challenge of the Christian life. It takes intentionality to move beyond citizenship solely as exercising individual rights and duties, and willingly engage in sustained debates on how we organize

²⁸ Wanda Deifelt, “Advocacy, Political Participation, and Citizenship: Lutheran Contributions to Public Theology”, *Dialog: A Journal of Theology*, Vol.49, No.2, (2010): 108.

²⁹ Deifelt, “Advocacy,” 109.

³⁰ Deifelt, “Advocacy,” 112.

ourselves as society, how we treat the environment, what entails fair wages, or how we educate the younger generations and the need for justice.³¹

Deifelt sees the prophetic voice of the Church in the light of good citizenship. Indeed, citizenship goes beyond casting of one's ballot, willingness to accept public office, showing respect for the national anthem and flag and so on. It is about being genuinely concerned about the environment that God has provided for all of us, advocate on behalf of people who are unfairly treated, brainstorming, researching and sharing of views on national debates for national good, the willingness to expose perpetrators of evil and to adore what is good for all. It is about offering one's all (i.e. substance and whole being) for nation-building. If the Clergy in Ghana is really the conscience of society, then advocating for the well-being of all should be paramount.

Okyerefo et al reveal that sometime before the 2008 general elections, concerns were raised about the fact that the Election Day fell on Sunday, which was the day of worship for most Christians. There were fears that many Christians would be in church at that time. In an unprecedented manner the Catholic Bishops' Conference granted a general dispensation that the priests ensured that the Eucharist be celebrated on Saturday instead of Sunday. A number of other churches voluntarily issued statements that they were not holding any church services on Election Day.³²

The prophetic role of the Clergy in Ghana is mostly seen prior to national elections. Obviously, we expect the Church to preach about the need for peace before, during and after elections. However, it is remarkable for the Church to decide not to hold church services on Sunday just because the 2008 Election Day happened to fall on Sunday. In addition to that

³¹ Deifelt, "Advocacy," 113.

³² Michael P. K. Okyerefo, Daniel Yaw Fiaveh and Kofi Takyi Asante, "Religion as a Tool in Strengthening the Democratic Process in Ghana", *Journal of African Studies and Development*, Vol.3, No.6, (2011): 127.

the Church as it were trained and dispatched election observers across the country to ensure the credibility and authenticity of the elections. Many polling stations in Ghana are located in church premises. This indeed shows how the Church becomes involved in the electoral processes of the country. The question is having helped to ensure peaceful and credible elections in the country, is the Clergy expected to keep mute on the governance processes? Is the Clergy not expected to play its advocacy role as the conscience of society and the voice of the voiceless?

Mugambi in Kamaara states that the mission of the Church is to liberate mankind on the socio-political plane and to save them spiritually. As is evident in the Holy Bible, Jesus' primary mission was to serve the total human being –his spiritual as well as economic, social and political needs. Jesus did not simply preach to his followers. He attended to all their needs: He fed them when they were hungry, healed them when they were sick; and spoke against social injustices of the time³³. According to Kamaara “The Church must not only seek to serve people spiritually through conversion to the faith but it must also cater for their economic, social and political needs. For the Church in Kenya today, the job is not only to pray with the people, but also to help them realize their economic and political aspirations. In bringing the Good News about Jesus Christ to the people, the Church must also speak out against political oppressions, poverty, homelessness, prostitution, crime and violence, suffocation of civil society by the government, and continued marginalization of weaker and vulnerable groups and communities within the Kenyan nation.”³⁴

The Church led by the Clergy is not called to pray only but also to preach for the total transformation of the total human race. This includes the spiritual, moral, physical, economic,

³³ J. N. K Mugambi, *African Christian Theology: A definition*, (1989): 1, Quoted in Eunice, Kamaara, “The Role of the Christian Church in Socio-Economic and Political Development in Kenya”, *Journal of Third World Studies*, Vol.17, No.1, (2000): 166.

³⁴ Eunice Kamaara, “The Role of the Christian Church in Socio-Economic and Political Development in Kenya”, *Journal of Third World Studies*, Vol.17, No.1, (2000): 166.

political, social, psychological and emotional life of the people in the state. The Clergy should know that the word of God (the Bible) they hold, they hold in trust of the people. It is the public map and the believers' constitution. The guidance and the direction the state needs should not be withheld from them by the Clergy. Jesus said, "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations ...and teaching them..."³⁵ This implies that the Clergy (Church) has been commissioned to pursue public theology. They are expected to influence the public with their moral principles so that the psychological make-up of the people in the state is shaped. Radoli on the other hand, argues that as long as poverty, hunger, political and economic insecurity, fear, violation of human rights, marginalization etc. are still the realities of the majority's life experiences, the Good News will continue to fall on deaf ears throughout the African continent.³⁶

In many nations in SSA, a segment of the people especially the politicians do all they can by way of vilification, bashing, persecution and insults in order to screw the Clergy up. In the view of Yirenkyi the reluctance on the part of almost half of the Ghanaian Clergy respondents to use the pulpit to address political issues or for clergy direct involvement in politics is an indication of the inherent difficulties involved in political participation.³⁷

Pobee reveals that during Acheampong's regime, there were times when members of his government angrily greeted the criticisms of the NCS, GBC and CCG with regards to Union Government (Unigov). One of the members of the government, himself a local preacher of the Methodist Church, attempted to fight the bishops on their own grounds. According to Pobee, in the *Ghanaian Times of March 27, 1978*, Joe Appiah in a rally at Teshie quoted Malachi 2 verses 7 – 9 to denounce the criticisms of the Clergy.³⁸

³⁵ Matthew 28: 19-20.

³⁶ A. Radoli, *How Local is the Local Church?* (1993): Preface, Cited in Eunice, Kamaara, 167.

³⁷ Yirenkyi, "Churches in National Politics", 336.

³⁸ Pobee, *Religion and Politics*, 66-67.

Kamaara recalls how Bishop Muge of Kenya died mysteriously after criticizing the government of Arap Moi. She alludes that when the ruling African National Union met in 1987, it unanimously condemned Bishop Muge and his attempt to democratize Kenyan politics. In response, the cleric proclaimed that if he would not be allowed to protest against the violation of human rights in his own country there was no point to protest against the violation of human rights going on in South Africa. The comparison of Arap Moi's government with the exploitative and racist apartheid regime in South Africa was considered by many Kenyans, including those outside the government as extremely harsh. Many members of the pro-democracy movement, however, considered the remark quite accurate and a reflection of the way many of them felt about the government's continued suffocation of civil society. The persecution of the pastor continued as the government attempted to find ways to minimize his acerbic remarks. The cleric was however, not shaken by such intimidation and continued to pressure the government for change. At an open-air sermon delivered in Luhya district in August 1990. Bishop Muge condemned the government for its continued violation of human rights of Kenyans and the unwillingness of political leaders to effectively address issues of critical concern to the people. Following the service, he was killed in a mysterious traffic accident on his way home.³⁹

There is no denying the fact that being prophetic as a clergy in the political arena in Africa is very risky. However, in the words of Yirenkyi, "The Clergy and Laity who support political involvement are very much aware that the democratic experiment in Ghana and elsewhere in Africa remains fairly tenuous. Thus, despite the problematic nature of involvement, these respondents see their continued political activism from a social justice point perspective as

³⁹ Kamaara, "The Christian Church in Socio-Economic and Political Development," 169.

crucial.⁴⁰ Phiri postulates that churches must resist being made irrelevant by the political parties and movements that have mushroomed in pluralist Africa, and instead, focus their resources on teaching and challenging members and leaders of these organizations to integrate Christ's Law of Love into their political practice.⁴¹ Phiri argues that political parties in Africa make attempt to render the Church irrelevant in the public sphere. Apart from the hostilities posed by the politicians, the emergence of civil societies has extinguished the prophetic voice of the Church. The coming of plural politics has created a sense of optimism for the continent. The assumption is that pluralism will diffuse the political conflict that have plunged the continent into endless upheavals. Yet pluralism, especially operating in an environment where there are no strong democratic institutions, traditions, and facilities could foster conflicts. He contends that churches should come back to the political arena and infuse Africa's emerging surge of pluralism in politics with love.⁴²

We agree with Phiri that the Clergy in Africa have reneged their prophetic role to civil society groups some of which are pro-government and others pro-opposition. We think that the role of civil society groups cannot be considered as a substitute to the prophetic voice of the Clergy. The prophetic voice of the Clergy is divine. It is non-partisan. It has the word of God as its foundation. It cannot be compromised. It has no interest in personal gains but the well-being of the people. It has no personal agenda. It is not vindictive. Indeed, the prophetic voice has to come back to the political arena. The Clergy should use the pulpit they once used to address the problems inherent in the one-party governments to diffuse the pluralist governments with Love. Another recommendation from Phiri is to engage in rhetoric on the need for love on TV and radio. Inasmuch as Phiri's suggestions appear to be fantastic, we argue that the Clergy in Ghana and elsewhere in Africa undoubtedly, engage in the preaching

⁴⁰ Yirenkyi, "Churches in National Politics," 336.

⁴¹ Phiri, "Proclaiming Peace and Love: A New Role for Churches in African Politics", *Journal of Church and State*, Vol.42, No.4, (2000): 782-783.

⁴² Phiri, "Proclaiming Peace and Love," 801-802.

of love for one another in this century more than any other time especially in the political arena, yet the political vindictiveness and conflicts abound. We suggest that under the circumstances, the best approach is for the Clergy to be critical and expose the wrong political tactics and deeds of politicians. This would sensitize the masses as to which leadership they should endorse and eventually, many politicians will change their ways.

The problem of Church -State tensions is as universal as the sun. M^cGuire tells about the Americans' dimension of the Church -State tensions. He says:

Complications arise as to which aspects of religious group's actions deserve protection. Most modern religious organization are extensively involved in activities that are not purely spiritual -running hospitals and schools, investing in real estate and stocks, operating T.V, radio, and film studios, offering life insurance, and so on. Many court cases have had to delineate which aspects of religious organization deserve protection under the "free practice" clause.⁴³

Another reason M^cGuire gives for the religious -state tensions in America is the steady increase of government regulation of a wide range of activities affecting religious groups.

He states:

In recent years, religious groups have been subject to many new tax laws, labor regulations for institutions and personnel. The increasing internal power of the centralized state has made the boundary between Church and State yet more problematic.⁴⁴

M^cGuire relates that the push of the state to expand the boundaries of its influence has brought a political response from numerous religious groups of varying theological and political persuasions. Public issues such as sex education in the schools, "gay rights" or "the right to die" have become arenas for political battles in which various religious groups assert their diverse moral judgement and argue that the state is not the proper agency for deciding the matter.⁴⁵

⁴³ Meredith B. M^cGuire, *Religion: The Social Context*, (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1981), 250.

⁴⁴ M^cGuire, *Religion: The Social Context*, 250.

⁴⁵ M^cGuire, *Religion*, 250.

The writer intimates that when it comes to national issues the Americans look at what their laws say and what their traditions and values are as a nation. According to him, answers to these questions have profound religio-moral implications. They ask:

Are we as a nation, the kind of people who protect a “little guy,” support ruthless dictators, retaliate against terrorists, invade countries that disagree with us, stand up for our value- and if so, what are the values that our nation collectively holds dear enough to fight for? And internally should ours be the kind of nation whose laws permit drinking, birth control, divorce, gambling, abortion, homo-sexuality, pornography, or possession of handguns?..... Public issues, thus reflect the working out of national value judgement, but rarely are the specific moral and civil religious implications of such judgements made explicit.⁴⁶

Every nation and every generation has specific issues that the prophetic voice of the Clergy is called upon to deal with. In America many of the issues that confront the nation bother on morality. The Clergy become critical on moral issues that government actions and policies seem to undermine in that nation. In Ghana, what the prophetic voice is called to address currently are issues of corruption, economic mismanagement, labour agitations, ‘winner takes all’, politics of insults and the need for a national agenda or programme.

There are arguably more scholars who advocate for the Clergy’s active participation in the governance process of the people than those who oppose. The extent to which they ought to be involved is still not clearly outlined by scholars. Some propose total involvement (i.e. be partisan, form political parties and run for presidency). Others prescribe partial involvement (i.e. stay neutral but critical). Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah state that in more recent times the churches as institutions have been involved in the political life of the country. For example during Nkrumah’s regime (1951 to 1966) and even later, some clergymen and devout laymen entered Parliament on political party tickets. Some became cabinet ministers and others were appointed as ambassadors to foreign nations.⁴⁷ Pobee recounts the co – operation that existed between the Church and state at the time of Acheampong. According to him, Acheampong went further to cultivate Clergymen in his government. For example

⁴⁶ M^cGuire, *Religion*, 251.

⁴⁷ Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah, *Ethics*, 29.

Kwasi Sarpong, the Catholic Bishop of Kumasi was made the Chairman of the Council of the University of Science and Technology and also a member of the National Charter Committee. The writer also claims that one Brother Yeboa-Korie of Eden Revival Church was a close ally of Acheampong. For the President in 1996 helped to arrange a visit for him to USA in the summer. Brother Yeboa- Korie later accepted the President's invitation to serve on the committee of the National Charter.⁴⁸ Brother Yeboa-Korie had become partisan on the *unigov*.⁴⁹

Pobee appears to make use of historical approach and content analysis of newspaper editorial. The researcher on the other hand employed the use of questionnaires to gather data from a wide range of people. Interviews were also conducted in order to find out from the Clergy, Politicians and Non-Christians why they behave the way they do toward national discourse. In addition, the researcher used biblical exegesis on the text in Jeremiah 1:5 – 10 to establish the basis for what he expects the various players (i.e. is the Clergy, Politicians, Christians and Non-Christians) to do in terms of national discourse.

In reviewing Pobee, one may find his findings and conclusions a bit shaky since he did not capture the views of non-Christians and the general populace on how the Clergy co – operated cordially with the state during Nkrumah and Acheampong's regimes. Again, it seems to the researcher that Pobee did not bother to find out the reasons behind the Clergy's

⁴⁸ Pobee, *Religion and Politics*, 83

⁴⁹The Union Government (Unigov) was a policy proposed by the then government of General I.K. Acheampong in 1978. It was to be made up of the Army, the Police and Civilians in equal proportions. The campaign did not give room for opposing views. It was also clear from all signs that General Acheampong wanted to be the president of the new government, if it came into being. It was reported that anyone who was publicly against the idea of the 'Unigov' was persecuted by the surrogates of General Acheampong. John S. Pobee recalls that Brother Yeboa-Korie was so immersed in the policies of Acheampong that on several occasions he preached sermons and organized services to urge the faithful to support Acheampong's Union Government. On one occasion he spoke against a delegation of which he was a member sent to Acheampong on how ruthless his government was dealing with the opponents of his 'Unigov'. Thus embarrasses the other members of the delegation.

involvement in Politics under Nkrumah and Acheampong. What he did was to bring out the reasons why the Politicians were ready to co-operate with and cajole the Church into partnership. Lastly, Pobee appears to be too conclusive on the Clergy. Perhaps, it is because he himself was one of them. In fact, he appears to speak from the perspective of the Clergy. This study is intended to consider the perspectives of all the players (politicians, clergy, laity, media and general public) as far as national discourse is concerned.

In dealing with the general question of the church and state and in particular with the relationship between the church and the state in Ghana, Asante could not ignore the relationship between the Clergymen of the churches and the state. He argues that the church undoubtedly is not the Clergy. Yet the church is often judged by its leadership. In the minds of the public, there can be no distinction between clergyman and the church.⁵⁰

Asante observes that under the first republic, the CPP adopted a populist approach by identifying with the lower class termed as ‘grassroots’ or ‘veranda boys’ who were antagonistic to the elite in the society. The Clergy were unfortunately seen to belong to the elite class brought up to fit the mould of the missionaries in dress, in the use of English and the expression of faith. This image of the Clergy at once puts the historic churches at the opposite side of the ‘veranda boys’ of the CPP who through ideological indoctrination saw themselves to be in mortal combat with the elite. As a result of this elitist image of the Clergy, many of them came to side and sympathize with those who opposed the CPP. Thus for the CPP the Church could hardly be trusted. The party was suspicious of the Church. Similarly, the Church was suspicious of the antireligious state.⁵¹ According to him, in that context of mutual mistrust between the Church and the State, the Church was faced with three

⁵⁰ Asante, *Culture, politics and Development*, 25.

⁵¹ Asante, *Culture*, 26.

options. He says:

Sharp distinction between religion and politics where the Church or Christians adopt an apathetic attitude toward politics, collaborating with the state, compromising her position as an institution representing a faith and thereby loses her prophetic role and mutual and critical involvement in state affairs.⁵²

He explains further that some Christian groups and sects who tend to underplay the God-ward dimension in the mould of humanity went for the first option. African Independent Churches (AICs) like the Musama Disco Christo Church, the African Universal Church, and the Church of Africa tended to be more nationalistic in character and collaborated with the state. The third option, which was strong but critical involvement in state affairs, was aptly adopted by the historic churches. The Catholic Church was represented by the CBC through which the Church spoke. The recognised voice of the Protestants was the CCG established in 1929. The aim of CCG disposes it to active involvement in the political life of the nation. In 1969, 1978 and 1979 and 1992, the CCG and the NCS issued pastoral letters advising Christians to participate fully in the general elections, the letter gave them advice on how to choose their parties and vote for the right candidates. Again, in 1969 and 1979, the government gave the CCG and NCS and the Muslim Representatives Council seats in the Constituent Assemblies that prepared the 1969 and 1979 constitution for the nation.⁵³

Pobee shows clearly how President Nkrumah made use of some elements of the Church for his political aggrandizement. It appears by the accounts of Pobee that the main cause of the Church's confrontation with Nkrumah's government was based on those activities of the government which were seen to be directly in contravention with the doctrines and principles of the Church. For example Nkrumah was portrayed by the members of his government as the 'African Messiah' – he was reported to have had an hour of transfiguration like Jesus Christ and seven days in the wilderness. Again, Nkrumah's slogan, "seek ye first the political

⁵² Asante, *Culture*, 26.

⁵³ Asante, *Culture*, 27.

power...”was repugnant to the Church. Nkrumah is reported to have ordered branches of his party to be established in the Churches. He also introduced lottery draws in the country. His party followers tried to institutionalize and deify him. Obviously the Church would register their indignation at such moves since they challenged and undermined the very doctrines and principles of the Church.⁵⁴

One may say that the Clergy spoke and confronted the government of Nkrumah because the latter got on the doctrinal nerves of the Church. The question is did the Clergy engage the government with the same level of concern and conviction when it came to national issues? Even though Pobee cites few instances where pockets of the Clergy spoke into national issues in Nkrumah’s era, on hindsight the number comparatively, is far less than when the Clergy realized that the government’s action had the potency to undermine the doctrines of the Church. Pobee elucidates further his understanding of the Clergy being involved in politics. To him, to say that the Clergy should be concerned with politics is not the same thing as saying that the Church as an institution should constitute herself into a political party. He postulates that the concern of the Clergy should be to work for viable political institutions which make for justice, order and peace, and require neither nationals nor anyone else to deny God by word or deed.⁵⁵ Pobee obviously does not advocate for the Clergy to be involved in partisan politics but rather, they should position themselves in such a way that they shall support any political party whose ideologies, actions and deeds culminate to ensure justice, peace order and does not cause the citizens through force or coercion to deny God. The difficulty one finds with Pobee’s view is the inability to determine which action of the Clergy constitutes partisanship and vice versa. Also, to what extent should the Clergy work for a viable political institution? To attempt to unravel the difficulties, the researcher studied

⁵⁴ Pobee, *Kwame Nkrumah and the Church 1949 -1966*, (Accra: Asempa Publishers 1988), 124-127.

⁵⁵ Pobee, *Religion and Politics*, 78.

the reason behind the behaviour of the Clergy, politicians and non-Christians when it comes to national discourse.

CHAPTER TWO

BACKGROUND OF THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH AND EXEGESIS ON 1:5 -10

2.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter which dealt with the Background of the study, Statement of the problem, Objectives of the study, Methodology, Scope of the study, Organization of the study and Literature review, we observed that the Church led by the Clergy has been and is a partner of the state in development. This chapter undertakes a background study of the book of Jeremiah which encompasses the date and authorship, literary forms and setting. An attempt is made to present an exegetical analysis on Jeremiah 1:5 -10 taking into consideration the syntax and the morphology.

2.1 Date and Authorship

The book preserves an account of the prophetic ministry of Jeremiah, whose personal life and struggles are shown to us in greater depth and detail than those of any other Old Testament (OT) prophet.⁵⁶ According to Thompson, the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah in the days of Josiah *ben* (son of) Amon king of Judah in the thirteenth year of his reign, which would be 627 B.C., five years prior to the finding of the Book of the Law in Josiah's eighteenth year in 622 B.C.⁵⁷ Feinberg on the other hand places the date of Jeremiah's call in 626 B.C. He says:

Jeremiah was born at Anathoth about 646 B.C. and died, probably in Egypt, not long after 586 B.C. He was called to the prophetic office in 626 B.C.....and served in it for more than forty years.⁵⁸

Bewer, who completely agrees with Feinberg on the date of Jeremiah states, "The four decades of Jeremiah's activity (626 – 586 B.C.) embraced a period of history-making events

⁵⁶ Notes in *NIV Study Bible* (Fully Revised), (Michigan: Zondervan, 2002), 1132.

⁵⁷ J. A. Thompson, *The Book of Jeremiah*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), 50 -51.

⁵⁸ Charles L. Feinberg, *Jeremiah: A Commentary*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1982), 3.

clustered about the crumbling of the Assyrian empire after Assurbanipal's⁵⁹ death (625), ending in its fall (612) and the rise of the Neo-Babylonian empire under the Chaldeans"⁶⁰. This is intimated by Harrelson that in the year 626 B.C., Jeremiah, a young man from the small village of Anathoth (just north of Jerusalem), was confronted with the summons of God to be a prophet.⁶¹

2.2 Literary Features

Jeremiah is considered as one of the Major Prophets. It is the longest book in the Bible, containing more words than any other book. Although a number of chapters were written mainly in prose (chs.7; 11; 16; 19; 24 -29; 32 -45), including appendix (chapter 52), most sections are predominantly poetic in form. Jeremiah's poetry is lofty and lyrical.⁶²

Jeremiah made use of a wide range of literary devices to convey his message to his audience. For example, the occurrence of רָאִיתִי *I looked*⁶³ in four consecutive verses of chapter 4, and the phrase, וְנִפְצֵי בְךָ *and with thee I will break in pieces* found in Chapter 51: 21 -23 show an effective use of repetition. Alliteration and assonance were part of his literary style, examples being זָרִים וְזָרוּהָ *foreigners...to winnow her*⁶⁴ and פַּחַר וּפְחָת וּפֶה *Terror and pit and snare.*⁶⁵

Also at play is Metaphor as in *Today I have made you a fortified city, an iron pillar and bronze Wall...*(1: 18), *You are a swift she-camel running here and there...*(2: 23), Simile, as

⁵⁹ Assurbanipal was an emperor of Assyria. He was the last of the great Assyrian rulers. He died in 633 BC.

⁶⁰ Julius A. Bewer, *The Prophets in the King James Version with Introduction and Critical Notes*, (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1955), 167.

⁶¹ Walter Harrelson, *Jeremiah: Prophet to the Nations*, (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1959), 11.

⁶² *NIV Study Bible*, 1135.

⁶³ Jeremiah 4: 23 -26

⁶⁴ Notes in *NIV Study Bible*, 1135.

⁶⁵ Jeremiah 48: 43.

in *Your sword has devoured your prophets like a ravening lion* (2: 30), ...*like a woman unfaithful to her husband, so you have been unfaithful to me, O house of Israel, declares the LORD* (3: 20), Personification, found in *Your wickedness will punish you; your backsliding will rebuke you* (2:19), Rhetorical questions, examples are: ...*what fault did your fathers find in me, that they strayed so far from me?, Has a nation ever changed its gods?* (2:5, 11, 28, 29, 36 etc.). Symbolic value is also seen in the Lord's commands to Jeremiah not to marry and raise children (16: 1-4), not to enter a house where there is feasting (16: 5-9), and to buy a field in his hometown, Anathoth (32: 6-15).⁶⁶

2.3 The socio-political and religious setting in Prophet Jeremiah's time

Jeremiah began prophesying in Judah halfway through the reign of Josiah (640 -609 B.C) and continued throughout the reigns of Jehoahaz (609), Jehoiakim (609 -598), Jehoiachin (598 - 597) and Zedekiah (597 -586).⁶⁷ It was a period of storm and stress when the doom of entire nations –including Judah itself –was being sealed. The smaller states of Western Asia were often pawns in the power plays of such imperial giants as Egypt, Assyria and Babylon, and the time of Jeremiah's ministry was no exception.⁶⁸ In the words of Harrelson, "Jeremiah had grown up in the period of the decline of Assyrian control over Mesopotamia, Syria-Palestine, and Egypt. Shortly before his call, the last of the great Assyrian rulers, Assurbanipal⁶⁹ (663 - 633), had died. The centre of power was shifting to Babylonia. Shattering events lay ahead for the land of Judah, and Jeremiah was to be a participant in them."⁷⁰ Feinberg's description of Jeremiah's time is more graphical. He says, "Jeremiah's ministry was carried on in a chaotic era politically, socially, morally, and spiritually. The glorious days of reformation under Hezekiah in the eighth century were eclipsed by the long, ungodly reign of Manasseh,

⁶⁶ *NIV Study Bible*, 1135.

⁶⁷ *NIV Study Bible*,1135.

⁶⁸ *NIV Study Bible*, 1132.

⁶⁹ Assurbanipal was an emperor in the Assyrian Empire.

⁷⁰ Harrelson, *Jeremiah*, 11.

אֲנֹכִי:
I am

7 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלַי אַל-תֹּאמַר נֶעֱר אֲנֹכִי כִּי עַל-כָּל-אֲשֶׁר
that all to for I am unqualified say not to me, the Lord But said
אֲשַׁלְּחֶךָ וְתֵלֵךְ וְאֵת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר אֶצְוֶךָ תִּדְבֹר:
you should say. I command you, whatever and you should go I send you

8 אַל-תִּירָא מִפְּנֵיהֶם כִּי-אֶתֶּךָ אֲנִי לְהַצִּילָךְ נֹאמַר-יְהוָה:
the Lord said. to deliver you, I am with you for in their presence Be afraid not

9 וַיִּשְׁלַח יְהוָה אֶת-יָדוֹ וַיַּגֵּעַ עַל-פִּי וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלַי הִנֵּה
See! unto me, the Lord and said, my mouth and touched his hand the Lord and stretch out
נָתַתִּי דְבָרַי בְּפִיךָ:
in your mouth. my words I have put

10 רְאֵה הַפְּקַדְתִּיךָ הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה עַל-הַגּוֹיִם וְעַל-הַמְּמַלְכוֹת
the kingdoms, and over over the nations this day I have set you See,
לְנִתּוֹשׁ וְלִנְתוּץ וְלְהַאֲבִיד וְלְהָרוֹס לְבָנוֹת וְלִנְטוֹעַ:
and to pull down, and to root out, and to destroy, and to overthrow, and to plant, to build,

2.5 Syntactical, Morphological and Exegetical analysis of the pericope

(I) verse 5

5 בְּטֶרֶם אֶצְוֶךָ בְּבֹטֵן יַדְעִתִּיךָ וּבְטֶרֶם תֵּצֵא מִרַחֵם הַקִּדְשִׁיךָ גִּבִּיא לְגוֹיִם
נתתִּיךָ:

(a) בְּטֶרֶם

According to Greenberg, the above word which is translated *before* is used with imperfect.⁷⁵ To Strong, the word is from an unused root apparently meaning to *interrupt* or *suspend*...; used adverbially, *not yet* or *before*.⁷⁶ The word *before* as used by the author in verse 5, is an adverb denoting an earlier time; in the past. This indicates that the Lord was disclosing the very things He did, the plans and preparations He made concerning Jeremiah long before he was born. In fact, He wanted to tell Jeremiah that He (the Lord) was the source and the

⁷⁵ Moshe Greenberg, *Introduction to Hebrew*, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1965), 201.

⁷⁶ James Strong, *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of The Bible*, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1890), 60.

beginning of his beginning. (b) אֲצַוְרָךְ to *mould* into a form; especially as a potter; figuratively, to *determine* (i.e. form a resolution), to *fashion, form, frame, make, purpose*.⁷⁷ It is a Qal perfect active verb and a second masculine singular.

(c) בְּבֶטֶן (i) בִּ which is a prefix, is a contraction, a definite article, and an inseparable preposition. It can be translated as *in, with or by*. In the context above it may best be translated *in*. (ii) בֶּטֶן is from an unused root probably, meaning the *belly*, especially the *womb*; also the *bosom* or *body* of anything.⁷⁸ It denotes a feminine singular noun.

(d) יָדַעְתִּיךָ (i) The root word is יָדַע to *know*. It is a Qal perfect active verb and a first masculine singular. The NIV translates the word as to *choose*.⁷⁹ This verb occurs about 1,040 (*sic*) times (995 in Hebrew and 47 in Aramaic) in the Bible.⁸⁰ To Jamieson et al, the word implies *approved of thee as my chosen instrument*.⁸¹ Blackwood agrees with Jamieson et al that the word as used in the text should be translated *chose*. However, he states that the word alludes to the mystery of predestination. He adds that the word denotes a *marital union*. He believes that God's "knowledge" is not just acquaintance, but loving approval.⁸² (ii) אֲנִי a suffix functioning as a first person common singular pronoun which is translated as *I*. (iii) כָּ is a suffix functioning as a second masculine singular pronoun translated *thee* or *you*.

(e) וּבְבֶטֶן (i) וּ is a prefix serving as a conjunction. It can be translated as *and* or *but*. In the context above *and* is preferable. (ii) בְּבֶטֶן the same as in (a). (f) יָצָא is a second masculine singular Qal perfect verb meaning to *come out, to come forth, to go out, begotten, to break*

⁷⁷ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 67.

⁷⁸ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 24.

⁷⁹ *NIV Study Bible*, 1137.

⁸⁰ W.E. Vine, *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*, (Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1985).

⁸¹ Robert Jamieson et al, *A Commentary on the Old Testament*, (Grand Rapids: Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993), 596.

⁸² Andrew W. Blackwood, *Commentary on Jeremiah*, (Waco: Texas, Word Books, 1980), 37.

out.⁸³ (g) מִרְחֵם (i) מִ comes from the root מָרַח a preposition which means *from*. The *hireq* and the *nun* changed to *sere* because of the laryngal, ר. (ii) רִחֵם the *womb* the root is from מִרְחֵם to *fondle*.⁸⁴ It denotes a singular feminine noun. (h) הִקְדִּישְׁתִּיךָ (i) The root word is קִדַּשׁ to be ceremonially or morally *clean, holy, consecrated, dedicated, purified, sanctified, appointed*.⁸⁵ Jeremiah's call was not based on the fact that he was from the family of priests. His call had nothing to do with the influence of man but was orchestrated by the Lord himself long before he was born. Jamieson et al use *separated*. To them, the primary meaning is *to set apart* from a common to a special use. They argue that the word as used in the text does not mean that Jehovah cleansed Jeremiah from original sin or regenerated him by His Spirit; but separated him to his peculiar prophetic office.⁸⁶ (ii) הִ is a prefix, characteristic of *Hiph'il* perfect which serves as a causative of the Qal.⁸⁷ (iii) הִיָּ and (iv) הִי are the same as in (d.(ii) and (iii) respectively. (i) נְבִיא a *prophet* or an *inspired man*.⁸⁸ The word functions as a common masculine singular noun. According to Vine, the word occurs about 309 times in biblical Hebrew.⁸⁹ Vine relies on the role of Aaron in the ministry of Moses (Exodus 4:10 - 16; 7:1) to explain that the word *prophet* could mean the *mouthpiece* or *spokesman* of God.⁹⁰ Indeed Jeremiah was called to be the spokesman of God. This role can vividly be seen in the statements, "...You must go to everyone I send you and say whatever I command you" and "...Now, I have put my words in your mouth" (Jer.1:7; 10) respectively. (j) לְגוֹיִם (i) The לְ is a prefix which serves as a preposition. It could be translated as *to, unto, for, towards*.

⁸³ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 67.

⁸⁴ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 143.

⁸⁵ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 135.

⁸⁶ Jamieson et al, *A Commentary on the Old Testament*, 596.

⁸⁷ Page Kelly, *Biblical Hebrew*, (WBE Publishing Company, 1965), 116.

⁸⁸ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 99.

⁸⁹ Vine, *Expository Dictionary of Old Testament Words*, 1985.

⁹⁰ Vine, *Expository Dictionary*, 1985.

(ii) גוּי is the root word meaning, *nation* or *people*.⁹¹ (iii) ם is a suffix indicating the plurality of the noun. גוּיִם therefore functions as a common masculine plural noun, meaning *nations* or *people*. To Blackwood, the word has two implications. First, that God’s message through one man and one nation is for every man in every nation. Second, that God cares not only about individual morality but about national and international morality.⁹² Faith is concerned with the whole man, and man, as Aristotle remarked, is “a political animal.”⁹³ (k) :גַּתְּיָךְ
 This is from the Hebrew verb גַּתְּ a Qal perfect which means, to *appoint, assign, ascribe* or *give*.⁹⁴ The suffixes תְּי and ךְּ function as in (d.(ii) and (iii)) respectively. The word could therefore be translated as *I appointed you*. The prophet was appointed out of a number of people to become the spokesman of God in Judah as well as the rest of the nations. As it were, he was supposed to declare the intents of God for the nations.

One would agree with Keil and Delitzsch that:

Jeremiah’s appointment to be a prophet for the nations follows upon a decree of God’s, fixed before he was conceived or born. God in His counsel has not only foreordained our life and being, but has predetermined before our birth what is to be our calling upon this earth; and He has accordingly so influenced our origin and our growth in the womb, as to prepare us for what we are to accomplish on behalf of His kingdom. This is true of all men, but very especially of those who have been chosen by God to be the extraordinary instruments of His grace, whom He has appointed to be instruments for the carrying out of the redemptive schemes of His kingdom.⁹⁵

Indeed, anytime God chooses a man for a special purpose, it becomes incumbent on Him to equip him with the gifts and graces necessary for the exercise of his functions.

(II) Verse 6

וַאֲמַר אֶתָּה אֲדַנִּי יְהוָה הַגִּדְלֵא-יַדְעֹתַי דְּבַר כִּי-נִעַר אֲנֹכִי:

⁹¹ Vine, *Expository Dictionary*, 33.

⁹² Blackwood, *The Word*, 38.

⁹³ Blackwood, *The Word*, 38.

⁹⁴ Blackwood, *The Word*, 107.

⁹⁵ C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes*, (Grand Rapids: Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing), 39.

(a) וְאָמַר

(i) וְ is a prefix and a *waw- consecutive* functioning as a conjunction meaning, *and*. (ii) וְאָמַר from the root word אָמַר meaning to *say, answer, declare, speak*.⁹⁶ It is a Qal perfect verb and a first common singular. (b) אֶהְיֶה in Hebrew is an Interjection.⁹⁷ It may be translated as *Ah* expressing *pain* exclamation; *Oh!, Alas*.⁴⁰ (c) אֲדֹנָי is a proper noun designated for the *Lord* used as a proper name of God only.⁹⁸ (d) יְהוָה a proper noun used after and pronounced by Jews as *God/gods* in order to prevent the repetition of the same sound.⁹⁹ (e) הִנֵּה an interjection.¹⁰⁰ It may be translated as *Lo! Behold! See!* (as expressing surprise).¹⁰¹ (f) לֹא-יַדְעֵתִי (i) לֹא It is a Hebrew negative particle translated *not, no, cannot*.¹⁰² (ii) ׀ joins the words together but puts the stress on the last word. (iii) יִדְעֵתִי it is from the root word יָדַע meaning to *know*.¹⁰³ It functions as a Qal perfect verb. The יִ is a suffix functioning as a first person common singular *I*. (g) דַּבֵּר to *speak, say, announce, command, commune* is an Hebrew verb from the root דָּבַר is in *Pi-el* form and an Infinitive construct.¹⁰⁴ (h) כִּי-נֶעַר (i) כִּי is a particle and a conjunction translated as *for, because, that*.¹⁰⁵ (ii) נֶעַר is a common masculine singular noun in an absolute state¹⁰⁶. It is translated

⁹⁶ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 17.

⁹⁷ *Westminster Parsing Definitions*, Electronic Database, BibleSoft, 2001.

⁹⁸ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 9.

⁹⁹ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 62.

¹⁰⁰ *Westminster Parsing Definitions*, Electronic Database, BibleSoft, 2001.

¹⁰¹ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 43.

¹⁰² Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 76.

¹⁰³ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 62.

¹⁰⁴ *Westminster Parsing Definitions*, Electronic Database, BibleSoft, 2001.

¹⁰⁵ Dale M. Wheeler, *Wheeler's Hebrew Syntax Notes*, (Electronic Database, BibleSoft, 1988 -2006).

¹⁰⁶ *Westminster Parsing Definitions*,

as a *boy, child, lad, damsel, servant*.¹⁰⁷ Keil and Delitzsch on the other hand interpret נַעַר in this context as *young and inexperienced*.¹⁰⁸ (i) אֲנֹכִי is an Independent Pronoun and a first person common singular denoting I¹⁰⁹. The divine call throws Jeremiah into terror. Knowing too well his great weakness for such an office.¹¹⁰ Similarly, Calvin intimates that Jeremiah at first refused the call to the prophetic office because its difficulty frightened him.¹¹¹ Keil and Delitzsch attempt to explain why Jeremiah refused the call at first. They say:

This excuse shows that לֹא יָדַעְתִּי דְבַר means something else than לֹא אִישׁ דְּבָרִים, by which Moses sought to repel God's summons. Moses was not ready of speech, he lacked the gift of utterance; Jeremiah on the other hand, only thinks himself not yet equal to the task by reason of his youth and want of experience.¹¹²

According to Calvin, לֹא יָדַעְתִּי דְבַר admits two meaning. *I have not known word, or, I know not word*. The phrase may signify, *I have no word to say, or, I know not how to say a word*. The first meaning is what the context seems to countenance.¹¹³ Calvin also says that when Jeremiah thought of himself, he felt that he was wholly unequal to undertake an office so arduous. Hence, the excuse that is added is that of modesty...that he thought himself not sufficiently qualified to undertake the prophetic office, and that he wished to be excused, and that another should be chosen endued with more courage and with better qualifications.¹¹⁴ He adds that he thought himself unequal to the work; and for this reason he called himself a child, not in age, but in knowledge. Hence the word “child” is to be taken metaphorically; for thereby the prophet confessed that he was not sufficiently qualified as to knowledge and practice. Some unwisely applied this to his age. Though then he was of a mature age, yet he called himself a child, because of his unskillfulness, and because he possessed not the gifts

¹⁰⁷ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 104.

¹⁰⁸ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary*, 40.

¹⁰⁹ Westminster *Parsing Definitions*,

¹¹⁰ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary*, 40.

¹¹¹ John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentaries*, PC Study Bible formatted electronic database, Biblesoft Inc., 2005.

¹¹² Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentaries*, 40.

¹¹³ Calvin, *Commentaries*,

¹¹⁴ Calvin, *Commentaries*,

necessary for the office so important.¹¹⁵ Conversely, Blackwood indicates that Jeremiah exclaimed this reluctance *I do not know how to speak...I am only a youth*¹¹⁶ because of his age at the time God called him.¹¹⁷ To him, since Jeremiah's subsequent career was lengthy, it is assumed that he was in his late teens or early twenties¹¹⁸. Bewer agrees with Blackwood that Jeremiah was perhaps only twenty years old, if not younger, for he was not married and early marriage was customary.¹¹⁹ However, he differs a little from Blackwood by admitting that the phrase *I am only a youth* implies *young and inexperienced*.¹²⁰

Craigie et al also seem to concur with Bewer and Blackwood by saying that Jeremiah's excuses were in fact sound reasons for refusal. With respect to subject matter, he had no particular message at that point in his life for his own nation, much less other nations.¹²¹ In addition, the fact that he was presumably in his late teens or early twenties made him too young to perform such a formidable task.¹²² Jamieson et al on the other hand assume that Jeremiah at the time of his call was under twenty-five years of age taken the long duration of his office into consideration.¹²³

We agree with scholars such as Calvin, Bewer, Keil and Delitzsch who admit that the protest by Jeremiah, *I do not know how to speak; I am only a child* implies that he thought of himself as inexperienced, unskillful, unqualified, young and amateur for such an arduous but important office and task. This initial reluctance is common with many inspired ministers of God. Moses (Exodus 4:10; 6:12, 30), Gideon (Judges 6:15), Saul and many others showed

¹¹⁵ Calvin, *Calvin's Commentaries*,

¹¹⁶ Jeremiah 1:6.

¹¹⁷ Blackwood, *The Word*, 38.

¹¹⁸ Blackwood, *The Word*, 38.

¹¹⁹ Bewer, *The Prophets*, 175.

¹²⁰ Bewer, *The Prophets*, 175.

¹²¹ Peter C. Craigie et al, *Word Biblical Commentary Volume 26: Jeremiah 1 -25*, (Dallas: Texas, Word Books Publishers), 10.

¹²² Craigie et al, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 10.

¹²³ Jamieson et al, *A Commentary*, 1596.

some sort of reluctance to the call of God. As Jamieson et al put it, the reluctance often shown by inspired ministers of God to accept the call, shows that they did not assume the office under the impulse of self-deceiving fanaticism, as false prophets often did.¹²⁴ The answer the Lord gave Jeremiah *Do not say 'I am only a child'. You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you*¹²⁵ clearly shows that his reason for the reluctance was not about his age as Blackwood and others have alluded but rather it was about the risk, magnitude and challenges involved in the task and his own low self-esteem and perhaps his initial lack of trust in the one (God) who called him.

(III) Verse 7

נִיאָמַר יְהוָה אֵלֵי אֵל-תֹּאמַר נַעַר אֲנֹכִי כֹל-אֲשֶׁר
 אֲשַׁלְּחֶךָ תֵּלֵךְ וְאֵת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר אֲצַוְךָ תִּבְרַב:

(a) נִיאָמַר

(i) ךְּ is a prefix and a *waw- consecutive* functioning as a conjunction meaning, *and, but* .

(ii) אִיאָמַר from the root word אָמַר meaning to *say, answer, declare, speak, avouch,*

challenge.¹²⁶ It is a Qal third person masculine singular.¹²⁷ (b) יְהוָה This is the Hebrew

national name of God meaning *the Self-Existent* or *Eternal*.¹²⁸ It is translated by versions such

as King James and New International Version as *The Lord*.(c) אֵלֵי (i) אֵל functions as a

¹²⁴ Jamieson et al, *A Commentary*, 597.

¹²⁵ Jer. 1:7 -8, *NIV Study Bible*.

¹²⁶ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 17.

¹²⁷ Westminster *Parsing Definitions*,

¹²⁸ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 62.

preposition. It is a primitive particle properly, denoting motion *towards*, but occasionally used of a quiescent position, i.e. *near, to, unto*.¹²⁹ (d) אֶל-הָאָמַר (i) אֵל A negative particle, *not*. The King James Version (KJV) translates it as *nay, neither, never*.¹³⁰ (ii) (־) joins the two words. (iii) הִי Is the Jussive, expressing a negative command from a superior (God) to an inferior (man).¹³¹ By inference, it seems that the Lord was not pleased with Jeremiah's initial reluctance. It appears He might have retorted or shouted at him the moment he tried to give an excuse of his inabilities and weaknesses. (iv) אָמַר It is a Qal imperfect second person masculine singular¹³² *to say*.¹³³ (e) נֶעֱרַר is a common masculine singular noun in an absolute state.¹³⁴ It is translated as a *boy, child, damsel, lad, servant*.¹³⁵ (f) אֲנֹכִי is an Independent Pronoun and a first person common singular denoting *I*.¹³⁶ (g) כִּי Is a particle and a conjunction translated as *for, because, that*¹³⁷. (h) אֶל Is a preposition *to*. (i) כָּל-אִשָּׁר (i) כָּל- is a common masculine singular noun in construct state¹³⁸ translated, *all*. אֶל-כָּל after אֶל is not neuter, but refers to *persons, or people*.¹³⁹ Jamieson et al explain כָּל- in context as *to all against whom*; in the hostile sense.¹⁴⁰ Such was the perversity of the rulers and the people of Judea at that time, that whoever would desire to be a faithful prophet, needed to arm himself with an intrepid mind.¹⁴¹ Jeremiah was reminded that his prophetic ministry as it were was going to be characterized by bashings, castigations, vilifications, hostilities and above all

¹²⁹ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 14.

¹³⁰ King James Version

¹³¹ Wheeler, *Hebrew Syntax*,

¹³² Westminster Parsing Definitions in BibleSoft 2001.

¹³³ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 17.

¹³⁴ Westminster

¹³⁵ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 104.

¹³⁶ Westminster

¹³⁷ Wheeler's *Hebrew Syntax*,

¹³⁸ Westminster

¹³⁹ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary*, 40.

¹⁴⁰ Jamieson et al, *A Commentary*, 597.

¹⁴¹ Jamieson et al, *A Commentary*, 597.

persecutions from the people he was called to minister to. Indeed, Jeremiah faced all these challenges and sometimes complained to the extent of cursing the day he was born.¹⁴² Be it as it may, the question is did he give up? The Clergy in Ghana in their bid to exercising their prophetic mandate face similar challenges. Do they give up? Should they give up? One would agree with Adams Clarke at saying, “Those who are really called of God to the sacred ministry are such as have been brought to a deep acquaintance with themselves, feel their own ignorance, and know their own weakness. They know also the awful responsibility that attaches to the work; and nothing but the authority of God can induce such to undertake it.”¹⁴³

(ii) אֲשֶׁר Is a Relative pronoun or particle denoting *that, which, who, what*.¹⁴⁴ (j) אֲשֶׁלְךָ Is from the root שָׁלַח which is translated as to *send away, for or out*.¹⁴⁵ It is a Qal imperfect first person common singular.¹⁴⁶ (ii) ךְּ is a suffix functioning as a second masculine singular pronoun translated *thee or you*. (k) הֲלֹךְ Is a Qal imperfect second masculine singular translated *you shall go*. The word comes from the root word הָלַךְ to *walk away*.¹⁴⁷ (l) וְ is a conjunction translated, *and* אֵת functions as an object marker. According to Wheeler, it is normally used with כֹּל (m) אֲשֶׁר Is a Relative pronoun or particle denoting *that, which, who, what*.¹⁴⁸ (n) אֲצִוֶּה the root word is צָוָה to *command, enjoin, charge*.¹⁴⁹ It is an imperfect first person common singular in *Pi-el* form.¹⁵⁰ To Vine, the word can be used of a *commission or charge*, such as the act of sending someone to do a

¹⁴² Jeremiah 20: 14.

¹⁴³ Adams Clarke, *Adams Clarke's Commentary*, Electronic Database: BibleSoft Inc., 2005.

¹⁴⁴ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 22.

¹⁴⁵ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 154.

¹⁴⁶ Westminster *Parsing Definitions*,

¹⁴⁷ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 65.

¹⁴⁸ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 22.

¹⁴⁹ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 130.

¹⁵⁰ Westminster *Parsing Definitions* in BibleSoft 2001.

particular task.¹⁵¹ Jeremiah was commanded or commissioned by God to whosoever he would be sent to and say whatever he would be told to without delay, compromise, fear nor favour. (o) **תַּנְבִּיר**: It is from the root **נָבַר** which means to *speak* or *say*.¹⁵² To Bewer, Jeremiah was not called to serve as God's missionary to the nations but as his spokesman, to tell them God's intentions with them¹⁵³. According to Craigie et al if Jeremiah were worried about the substance of his message on the basis of lack of experience, he need have had no concern, for he would be told what to say at the appropriate time¹⁵⁴. They further state that if Jeremiah's fears were based on his youthfulness, he could be assured of God's protection.¹⁵⁵ As a result, this excuse of Jeremiah and others like him, God holds no accounts of. Keil and Delitzsch intimate that as the prophet to the nations, Jeremiah was not to make known his own thoughts or human wisdom, but the will and counsel of God which were to be revealed to him.¹⁵⁶ Harrelson also agrees with us that the prophet's objections raised were actually beside the point.¹⁵⁷ He states further that Jeremiah was to go where he was sent, and speak what he was commanded to speak. Moreover, wherever he went, the Lord would also be there¹⁵⁸. This is a word which cuts two ways. It is a rejoinder of the Lord's active presence which will bring deliverance when necessary; but it is also a warning that the Lord will be there to mark Jeremiah's words and deeds.¹⁵⁹

(IV) Verse 8

אֱלֹהֵי תִירָאמְפְּנֵיהֶם כִּי־אַתָּה אָנִי לְהַצִּילָךְ נְאֻם־יְהוָה:

¹⁵¹ Vine, *Expository Dictionary*,

¹⁵² Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 37.

¹⁵³ Bewer, *The Prophets*, 175.

¹⁵⁴ Craigie et al, *Word*, 11.

¹⁵⁵ Craigie et al, *Word*, 11.

¹⁵⁶ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary*, 40.

¹⁵⁷ Harrelson, *Jeremiah*, 18.

¹⁵⁸ Harrelson, *Jeremiah*, 18.

¹⁵⁹ Harrelson, *Jeremiah*, 18.

(a) אַל־תִּירָא (i) אַל־ is a negative particle, *not, never, nay*. (ii) תִּירָא is from the root word יִרָא which means to *fear*.¹⁶⁰ (b) נִפְנִיחֶם (i) פְּנִימָה *face* is from the root word פָּנָה panah meaning to *face*, that is to *appear* or to *look*.¹⁶¹ The word is a common masculine plural noun in construct state.¹⁶² It seems that Jeremiah was admonished by God not to appear before the people frightened, timidly, nor allow the hostile reactions of the people to terrify him. Clarke, commenting on the statement indicates that, *Be not afraid of their faces* refers to the Jews, whom he knew would persecute him because of the message which he brought.¹⁶³ Blackwood is fascinated by the prophet Ezekiel who makes the phrase more vivid by saying, *I have made your face hard against their faces, and your forehead hard against their foreheads* (Ezekiel 3:8). He postulates that the allusion is probably to a pushing ox which nudged carts along a rutty road, and developed a durable forehead thereby¹⁶⁴. Indeed, the prophet was expected to develop the spirit of fearlessness, put up an *all die be die*¹⁶⁵ attitude in the discharge of his prophetic mandate. We are of the view that one cannot be frightened by another if he himself is intrinsically not intimidated by the mere thought of that person. To use the battle between the Israelites' army led by Saul and the Philistines' army led by Goliath (1Sam. 17:1ff) to make a case, one would say that the army of Israel was not only terrified by the appearance of Goliath but also by the thought of him through the information concerning his might and experience circulating among the army.¹⁶⁶ In contrast, David said to Saul, *Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him*.¹⁶⁷ David regarded

¹⁶⁰ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 68.

¹⁶¹ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 126.

¹⁶² *Westminster Parsing Definitions*,

¹⁶³ Clarke Adams *Commentary*,

¹⁶⁴ Blackwood, *The Word*, 39.

¹⁶⁵ *All die be die* is a transliterated expression from the Akan (Twi) Language of Ghana, *owuo biara dan owuo* which literally implies that when one has to die, the means to death ought not be worried about –he/she would die anyway. This expression is normally used to encourage people to be fearless and daring in the face of an inevitable threatening situation. Perhaps this is what the lepers meant by saying, *If we say, we will go...we will die. And if we stay here, we will die. So let's go...*(2Kings 7:4)

¹⁶⁶ 1Samuel 17: 4 -7; 24, 33.

¹⁶⁷ 1Samuel 17: 32.

neither the appearance nor the biography of Goliath; he programmed his mind that the battle was the Lord's. The Lord wanted Jeremiah to make his face as strong as an iron pillar and a fortified city against the people¹⁶⁸. (ii) הֵמָּה is a third person masculine plural functioning as a suffix. It is translated as *their*. (c) כִּי־אֲתָנֶה (i) כִּי is a conjunction translated as *for* or *because*. (ii) אֵת can be translated as *with, by, near, among*¹⁶⁹. It functions as a preposition (iii) אַתָּה *you*, is a second masculine singular. (d) אֲנִי is a first person common singular and an Independent pronoun translated, *I*. (e) לְהַצִּילָהּ (i) the root word is נָצַל which is translated as *to deliver, rescue, rid, snatch away, save, preserve* without fail.¹⁷⁰ This Hebrew verb functions as a *Hiph-il* infinitive construct¹⁷¹. (ii) ל is a prefix *to* functioning as a preposition. (iii) אַתָּה is a common masculine singular translated *you* or *thee*. (f) נֹאמַרְיָהוּ (i) נֹאמַר the root word is נָאֵם a common masculine singular noun in construct meaning to *whisper, say*. In context it should be translated *said*. (ii) יְהוָה a proper noun translated *the Lord*.

(V) Verse 9

וַיִּשְׁלַח־יְהוָה אֶת־יָדוֹ וַיִּנְעַע עַל־פִּי וַיֹּאמְרִיהוָה אֵלַיְהִנֵּה
נִתְחַדְּבְרִי בְּפִיךָ:

(a) וַיִּשְׁלַח the root word is שָׁלַח which could be translated as *to send forth, stretch out, put forth*.¹⁷² (b) יָדוֹ the root word is יָד which means *hand* indicating power.¹⁷³ This functions

¹⁶⁸ Jeremiah 1: 18

¹⁶⁹ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 22.

¹⁷⁰ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 105.

¹⁷¹ *Westminster Parsing Definitions*,

¹⁷² Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 154.

¹⁷³ Strong, *Hebrew Concordance*, 62.

as a common feminine singular noun in construct state¹⁷⁴. The ך is a suffix translated as *his*. It functions as a third masculine singular.¹⁷⁵ (c) ךִּינֵע this is from the root word נֵע which means to *touch*.¹⁷⁶ The word is a *Hiph-il waw consecutive* third person masculine singular.¹⁷⁷ It also has an apocopated suffix.¹⁷⁸ The word in context may denote to *lay the hand upon*. According to Vine, the word illustrates a physical touch as used in Genesis 3:3.¹⁷⁹ This implies that the Lord laid his hand upon the mouth of Jeremiah. The touching of Jeremiah's mouth reminds us of the cleansing ceremony of Isaiah as recorded in Isaiah 6:6 -7. Harrelson argues that the point made here in Jeremiah has nothing to do with cleansing a sinful prophet for a holy task.¹⁸⁰ Craigie et al agree with Harrelson by saying that the divine touch does not symbolize cleansing but rather the imparting of the divine word.¹⁸¹ Henry posits that by that sensible sign the Lord conferred upon him so much of the gift of the tongue as was necessary for him and with that touch sweetly conveyed His words into his mouth, to be ready to him upon all occasions, so that he could never want words.¹⁸² To Wiersbe, when God's hand touched Jeremiah's mouth, it gave him power and authority.¹⁸³ Indeed the awareness of and the belief in this power and authority from God, caused Jeremiah to confront powerful kings and rulers as well as the obstinate people of Judah and the neighbouring nations. (d) פִּי The root word is פִּה which means the *mouth*.¹⁸⁴ (e) וַיֹּאמֶר and *said*. (f) יְהוָה the *Lord*. (g) אֱלֹהֵי

¹⁷⁴Westminster Parsing Definitions,

¹⁷⁵Westminster Parsing Definitions,

¹⁷⁶ Strong, *Hebrew Concordance*, 100.

¹⁷⁷Westminster Parsing Definitions,

¹⁷⁸Westminster Parsing Definitions,

¹⁷⁹ Vine, *Expository Dictionary*,

¹⁸⁰ Harrelson, *Jeremiah: Prophet*, 19.

¹⁸¹ Craigie et al, *Word*, 11.

¹⁸² Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, (PC Study Bible Formatted Electronic Database, Biblesoft Inc., 2006).

¹⁸³ Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary: Old Testament*, (Warren W. Wiersbe, 2001), 18.

¹⁸⁴ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 123.

.. unto me. (h) הַגִּדְהוּ is the prolongation of the root word הִגַּד which means *lo, behold, see*.¹⁸⁵ It functions as an interjection. (i) נָתַתִּי This comes from the root word נָתַן which means to *put, give, make*.¹⁸⁶ נָתַתִּי is a Qal perfect first person common singular meaning *I give*.¹⁸⁷ (j) דְּבָרִי is from the root word דָּבַר a *word or thing*.¹⁸⁸ It functions as a common masculine plural noun in construct state.¹⁸⁹ is therefore properly translated as *my word*. (k) בְּ (i) בְּפִי: (k) an inseparable preposition *in, into*. (ii) פִּי a common masculine singular noun in construct state translated as *mouth*. (iii) ךְּ is a suffix functioning as a second masculine singular *your* or *thy*.

(VI) Verse 10

רְאֵה הַפְּקִדְתִּיךָ הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה עַל־הַגּוֹיִם וְעַל־הַמַּמְלָכוֹת
 לְנִתּוֹשׁוֹלְנֵתוֹיךָ וּלְהַאֲבִידוֹלְהֵרוֹס לְבָנוֹת וּלְנִטְוֵעַ:

(a) רְאֵה is from the root word רָאָה which denotes *to see*.¹⁹⁰ In the text, it functions as a Qal imperative masculine singular verb.¹⁹¹ (b) הַפְּקִדְתִּיךָ the root word is פָּקַד which by analogy could mean, to *oversee, care for, charge, muster*¹⁹², *appoint*¹⁹³, *set*.¹⁹⁴ The word הַפְּקִדְתִּי has been used in the text as a *Hiph-il* Qal perfect first person common singular and

¹⁸⁵ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 43.
¹⁸⁶ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 107.
¹⁸⁷ *Westminster Parsing Definitions*,
¹⁸⁸ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 37.
¹⁸⁹ *Westminster Parsing Definitions* in BibleSoft 2001.
¹⁹⁰ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 140.
¹⁹¹ *Westminster Parsing Definitions*,
¹⁹² Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 127.
¹⁹³ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 127.
¹⁹⁴ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 127.

the suffix, ךְ used as a second person masculine singular translated, *you* or *thee*.¹⁹⁵ (c) הַיּוֹם (i) הַ is a definite article, *the*. (ii) יוֹם is from an unused root denoting *a day*.¹⁹⁶ It is common masculine singular noun in an absolute state.¹⁹⁷ (d) הַיּוֹם הַ is an article and יוֹם is an adjective masculine singular¹⁹⁸ translated, *this* or *that*.¹⁹⁹ (e) עַל-הַגּוֹיִם (i) עַל is used as a preposition denoting, *over, above, upon* or *against*.²⁰⁰ (ii) גּוֹיִם is from the word גּוֹי which is translated as a *foreign nation*.²⁰¹ The word is a common masculine plural noun in an absolute state.²⁰² (f) וְעַל-הַמַּמְלָכוֹת (i) וְעַל- and *over*. (ii) הַ *the*. (iii) מַמְלָכָה comes from the root word מָלַךְ translated to *reign, ascend the throne*.²⁰³ מַמְלָכָה can be translated as the *estate, dominion, reign, kingdom*.²⁰⁴ In the text the word as used functions as a common feminine plural noun in an absolute state.²⁰⁵ To Jamieson et al, Jeremiah was to have his eye upon the nations, and to predict their destruction, or restoration, according as their conduct was bad or good.²⁰⁶ Calvin is of the view that *See I have set thee*, is a way of encouraging the prophet to be magnanimous in spirit.²⁰⁷ He was to remember, and not timidly or servilely to flatter men, or to show indulgence to their lusts and passions.²⁰⁸ Henry also considers the prophet's commission and job description to be great. He says, "This sounds very great and yet Jeremiah is a poor despicable priest still; he is not set over the kingdoms as

¹⁹⁵ *Westminster Parsing Definitions* in BibleSoft 2001.

¹⁹⁶ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 63.

¹⁹⁷ *Westminster Parsing Definitions* in BibleSoft 2001.

¹⁹⁸ *Westminster Parsing Definitions* in BibleSoft 2001.

¹⁹⁹ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 44.

²⁰⁰ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 116.

²⁰¹ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 33.

²⁰² *Westminster Parsing Definitions* in BibleSoft 2001.

²⁰³ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 88.

²⁰⁴ Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, 89.

²⁰⁵ *Westminster Parsing Definitions* in BibleSoft 2001.

²⁰⁶ Jamieson et al, *A Commentary*, 597.

²⁰⁷ Calvin, *Calvin's Commentaries*,

²⁰⁸ Calvin, *Calvin's Commentaries*,

a prince to rule them with sword, but as a prophet by the power of the word of God.”²⁰⁹ Blackwood asserts that Jeremiah as an individual had little authority; representing God, he spoke with total authority.²¹⁰ Indeed, Jeremiah had no portfolio in the political administration of the nation, yet he had divine authority to challenge how God’s nation ought to be governed. Many a time, some Ghanaians have wondered about the silence on the part of the Clergy on national issues. One would assume that the seeming silence probably, stems out of the feeling that the Clergy has no or little authority in the day to day political administration of the nation. Be it as it may, the text under study suggests that people like the Clergy have a great role to play in the affairs of the nation. In fact, they have a divine authority as spokespersons of God, and a constitutional right as citizens of the nation to speak into the issues of the state.

However, as Henry intimates concerning Jeremiah, he was set over the nations not to demand tribute from them, nor enrich himself with the spoils, but *to root out and pull down, destroy and overthrow, and to build and plant*. The Clergy is expected to attempt to reform the nation, stamp out those vicious habits and inhumane customs that have plagued the nation, as well as do their best to establish virtue in the nation. Of the six verbs used, four are negative and destructive and only two are positive and constructive.²¹¹ Craigie et al explain that the four negative verbs over against the two positive verbs in the verse immediately show the unpleasant nature of the prophet’s task.²¹² Keil and Delitzsch commenting on the verse posit that the destroying is not set down as a mere preliminary, but is expressed by means of four different words, whereas the building is given only in two words, and these standing after the four; in order, doubtless, to indicate that the labours of Jeremiah should consist, in the first

²⁰⁹ Henry, *Matthew Henry’s Commentary*,

²¹⁰ Blackwood, *The Word*, 39.

²¹¹ Craigie et al, *Word*, 11.

²¹² Craigie et al, *Word*,

place and for most part, in proclaiming judgement upon the nations²¹³. They elucidate that the assonant verbs נִתַּן and נִתְּן are joined to heighten the sense; for the same reason לְהַרְוֵם added to לְהַאֲבִיד, and in the antithesis לְנִטּוֹעַ is joined with לְבְנוֹת²¹⁴ Jamieson et al seem to have the same inclination about the nature of the prophet's task as described in the verse. They assert that Jeremiah's predictions were to be chiefly, denunciatory; therefore the destruction of the nations is put first, with a greater variety of terms than their restoration.²¹⁵ It is instructive to state that the fact that the prophet was first and foremost commissioned to pronounce judgement on the nations does not mean that he was a prophet of doom. We must understand that judgement is supposed to have two outcomes. That is to denounce unacceptable acts and commend acceptable acts. Therefore Jeremiah was expected to point out to the nations, their wrongs and encourage acts of virtue. In fact, his prophetic intention was to help build the nation; otherwise, neither the wrongs nor the rights of the nations should be a bother to him.

Now, the issue is, having perused the text under study, how would one describe the prophetic voice of the Clergy in Ghana on nation-building? In the next chapter, we would present a report on the responses from people on how people see the prophetic voice of the Clergy in Ghana when it comes to national issues.

²¹³ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary*, 42.

²¹⁴ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary*,

²¹⁵ Jamieson et al, *A Commentary*, 597.

CHAPTER THREE

DATA PRESENTATION

3.0 Introduction

The preceding chapter dealt with the exegesis of the pericope (Jeremiah 1:5-10) as a framework to advance the argument on the biblical mandate of the prophetic voice of the Clergy in Ghana on nation-building. This chapter deals with the presentation of the data gathered in the study. The demographic characteristics of respondents and the data obtained through field work have been presented in the form of tables, graphs, charts as well as in statement form. The data was gathered through a survey and in-depth interviews. Two Hundred respondents answered the survey questions while ten (10) selected personalities were interviewed on a variety of Clergy and State issues.

3.1 Background of the Respondents

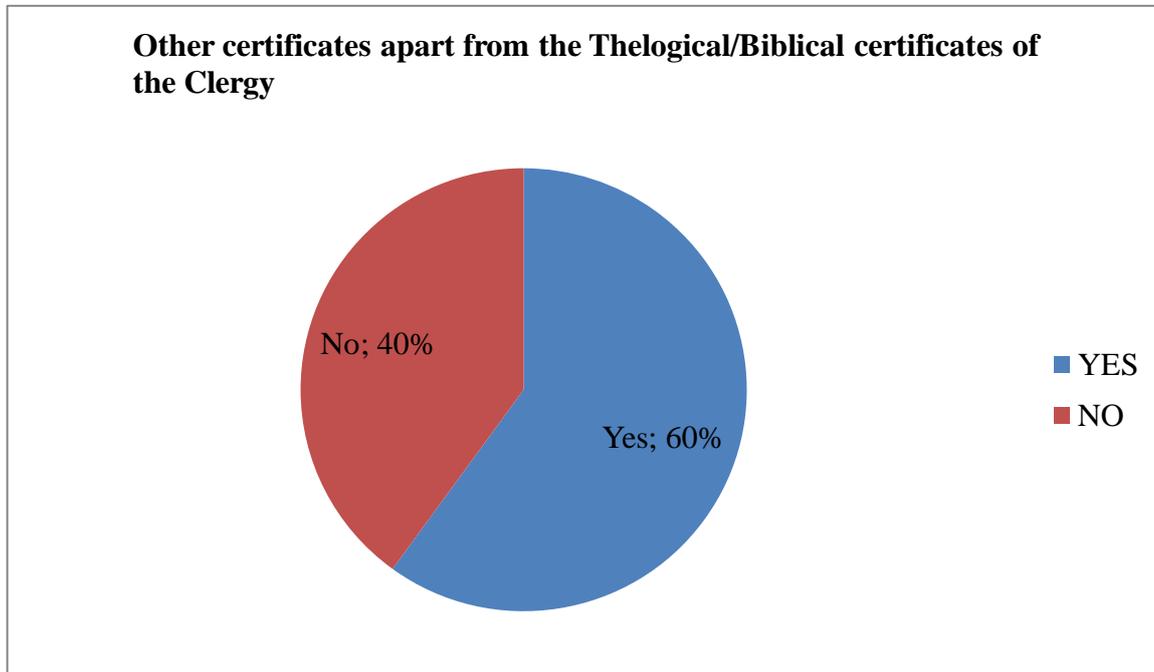
Normally, people's background in terms of their age, sex, education, religion, exposure and experiences in life affect their perception. It is against this backdrop that we explored the background of all our respondents. Our respondents were of varied backgrounds. The ages of the respondents spanned between 19 -70 years. There were males as well as females among all the categories of respondents. The educational background of the respondents covered Middle School Level Certificate (MSLC) to Doctorate (PhD) level. All the Clergy and Laity respondents were Christians whereas the Media, Politicians and the General Public were from varied religious groups in Ghana. The ten personalities interviewed were selected based on their exposure and experience as far as the study is concerned. This, we hoped could give the study diverse shades of knowledge and insights.

Table 3.1 : Qualification of respondents

Categories of Respondents	Responses									
	MSLC		WASSCE		Diploma / HND		First Degree		Master's Degree	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Clergy	5	12.5	7	17.5	3	7.5	18	45.7	7	17.5
General Public	3	7.5	9	22.5	4	10.0	18	45	6	15
Laity	9	22.5	8	20	7	17.5	10	40	6	15
Media	2	5	3	7.5	18	45	14	35	3	7.5
Politicians	4	10	4	10	7	17.5	17	42.5	8	20

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Figure 3.2: Other certificates the Clergy have apart from the one from the seminary



3.2 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Table 3.3 : Clergy belong to particular political parties

Categories of Respondents		Yes		No	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Clergy	6	15		34	85
General Public	18	45		22	55
Laity	20	50		20	50
Media	17	42.5		23	57.5
Politicians	32	80*		8	20

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table 3.4: Clergy do influence members on voting for particular political candidate/party

Categories of Respondents	Yes		No		Not sure	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Clergy	-	-	40	100	-	-
General Public	2	5	38	95	-	-
Laity	-	-	40	100	-	-
Media	17	42.5	23	57.5	-	-
Politicians	12	30	15	37.5	13	32.5

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table 3.5: Clergy to influence members on voting for particular political candidate/party

Categories of Respondents	Yes		No	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Clergy	11	27.5	29	72.5
General Public	29	72.5	11	27.5
Laity	2	5	38	95
Media	3	7.5	37	92.5
Politicians	6	15	34	85

Source: Field Survey, 2014

3.3 PROPHETIC VOICE / ROLE

Table 3.6: Clergy to teach members on issues of the state

Categories of Respondents	Yes		No	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Clergy	28	70	12	30
General Public	24	60	16	40
Laity	32	80	8	20
Media	33	82.5	7	17.5
Politicians	36	90	4	10

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table 3.7: Clergy to educate members on political party's public policies to help them make informed decisions during elections

Categories of Respondents	Yes		No	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Clergy	36	70	4	30
General Public	25	62.5	15	37.5
Laity	28	70	12	30
Media	29	72.5	11	27.5
Politicians	32	80	8	20

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table 3.8: Clergy to involve in politics (speak on specific national issues) when they mount the pulpit

Categories of Respondents	Yes		No	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Clergy	28	70	12	30
General Public	29	72.5	11	27.5
Laity	36	90	4	10
Media	32	80	8	20
Politicians	24	60	16	40

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table 3.9: Clergy to be involved in partisan politics

Categories of Respondents	Yes		No	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Clergy	11	27.5	29	72.5
General Public	4	10	36	90
Laity	5	12.5	35	87.5
Media	7	17.5	33	82.5
Politicians	15	37.5	25	62.5

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table 3.10: Should the Clergy criticize the government if the need be?

Categories of Respondents	Responses			
	Yes		No	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Clergy	28	70	12	30
General Public	35	87.5	5	12.5
Laity	36	90	21	10
Media	40	100	-	-
Politicians	20	50	20	50

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Figure 3.11: The effectiveness of the Prophetic voice of the Clergy in Ghana

Categories of Respondents	Responses			
	Inactive /ineffective		Active / effective	
	Frequency	Per cent	Frequency	Per cent
Clergy	23	57.5	17	42.5
General Public	22	55	18	45
Laity	22	55	18	45
Media	20	50	20	50
Politicians	29	72.5	11	27.5

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table 3.12 The anticipated stands of the Clergy having performed their prophetic role and received severe bashings and vilifications

	Responses					
	Silent		Inactive		More active	
	Frequency	Per cent	Frequency	Per cent	Frequency	Per cent
Clergy	20	50	6	15	14	35
General Public	6	15	4	10	30	75
Laity	11	27.5	6	15	23	57.5
Media	13	32.5	17	42.5	10	25
Politicians	18	45	14	35	8	20

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table 3.13: What Clergy should do when they feel repugnant about an issue going on in the state

What they are to do	Categories of respondents					
	Public		Media		Politicians	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Should be silent and pray about it	5	12.5	-	-	27	67.5
Should pray and speak to the authorities quietly	9	22.5	9	22.5	8	20
Should pray, speak quietly to the authorities and if necessary, publicly confront the authorities	26	65	31	77.5	5	12.5

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Interviews

EMMANUEL KWAKU ASANTE

The whole idea of the prophetic voice of the Clergy is taken from the Classical Prophets who articulated the will of God in the context of the governance of the people. For example Jeremiah and others were of the view that the well-being of the nation was depended upon the nation's commitment to the covenant stipulations. That is, once they kept the covenant stipulations, things would be well with them. On the basis of that when the people deviated, they drew their attention, rebuked and called them back to the will of God. Similar things can be said about Amos, Micah (Prophet of Justice) and all the others. They were God's covenant prosecutors. So the prophetic voice speaks on the question of justice and righteousness as the basis for nation-building. The prophetic voice was in some occasions critical on such national policies which were not in keeping with the will of God. But they also at some point encouraged policies that were considered to be in keeping with the will of God. The basis of the prophetic voice of the Clergy would first be scripture, to check whether what is done is in keeping with the spirit of the word of God. It would be very much concerned about the issues of justice and peace in our nation.

A member of a political party is a person who is a card-holding, a dues-paying and an activist of a particular political party. As a Clergy, I am not a member of any political party. I vote. I may be a sympathizer to a particular ideology for which I may vote.

As Clergy, we have to educate our members to take up their civic responsibilities, pray to God and vote based on their conviction but not on monetary enticement. We also create platforms for authorized bodies such as the National Commission on Civic Education to educate our members on electoral processes. However, we do not give our pulpit for people to use to canvass for votes.

Apart from that the Church offers her premises on request to be used by the EC for electoral exercises. We have also been involved in the training and sending of observers to facilitate the credibility of our elections so as to ensure peace in our nation.

The Clergy has a biblical mandate to be involved in all aspects of the state. The philosophy that says that the Clergy ought to concentrate on ecclesiastical and spiritual matters is a Gnostic perception of Christianity, where everything is reduced to the Spirit. The Clergy has been called to minister holistically. Holistic ministry would be much concerned about the total well-being of people. That is their spiritual, psychological, physical emotional and material well-being. It is for that reason that we cannot sit back and say ours is simply to pray and preach the raw word to the people but we would also be very much concerned about the whole issues pertaining to the governance of the nation. However, we do not encourage that the Clergy should go to the extent of discussing the policies of the political parties in order not to be tempted to align with one party or another. If a Clergy attacks the policies of a party, he has aligned himself with a particular party, and in the context that we operate, one should know that all things are lawful but not all things are beneficial. Therefore the Clergy should use wisdom. We may attack only policies that are explicitly against the teachings of the Bible.

It is very difficult to get the collective voice of the Clergy in Ghana because we do not have a collective association of the Clergy. We can only speak in the context of the groupings; CCG, NCC, CBC and all that. When we speak, we speak as individual Ghanaians. We are not going to get all the Clergy come together with one voice on a national issue to say “this is the voice of the Clergy in Ghana” The issue is, every Clergy has their political persuasions as well as doctrinal differences. So our reactions to certain public issues would not be the same. However, on a number of occasions the CCG and CBC have come together to speak on issues. The truth is that even the groupings are there on doctrinal basis other than that we

would have “All Bishops’ Conference” but not Catholic Bishops’ Conference. Even the Christian Council, Ghana is not a body for all churches. It is responsible for only those churches who are registered members of that body.

The future of the Church-State relations will not change. We have always related with the state well. If we feel that we have to issue statements, we will do that. Even the National Health Insurance Scheme, we have been having meetings with the President concerning it. If you live in a nation where 71% claims to be Christians, and you realize that something is going on wrongly, you cannot sit unconcerned just because you are a Clergy.

Many at times people bash me not because I am a member of the Clergy but rather because I happened to be the chairman of the National Peace Council whose mandate people are oblivious about. For example when Kwadwo Owusu Afriyie of the NPP declared the ‘2012 Election at the time when the EC had not come out, I came out to condemn the act in order to ensure peace because everybody knew that he had broken the law. I do not regret for doing that. I will do it again if I get the opportunity. If people bash us because we stand for the right thing, we are not bothered because even Jesus was vilified. When you read about Jeremiah, he was thrown into a cistern because the national leaders were not happy with his comments. One would not stand for righteousness in a nation and go scot-free. We must understand that to speak the prophetic voice, we are likely to suffer what the prophets also suffered. We advise that we do not get ourselves into situations where we are bashed because of our own personal interests and indiscretion in the political arena. The Clergy does not need to come out on every issue. Sometimes one needs to reason with his colleagues and find the best approach to deal with an issue.

It is instructive for both the Clergy and the nation to note that if the people, who are supposed to be the voice of the voiceless and the voice of God, keep silent and refuse to speak on issues

of the state, the devil will speak and evil will carry the day. If the righteous people consider politics as a dirty game and therefore stay out the unrighteous will get in there and all of us will get the unrighteous results. This is not to say that the Clergy should run for Parliamentary and Presidential positions but we can encourage individual good Christians to get into politics in order to use their values to transform the political system. As for the Clergy his role is like a chief; he is to unite all the people for the development of the nation.

If the Clergy feel repugnant of an issue in the state, he should not get up and say just anything anyhow, that is why we have leadership and centres. For example in the Methodist Church, the Presiding Bishop is the spokesperson. What happened at Obuasi with Bosomtwe Ayensu was unfortunate. A Clergy should find it difficult to say “President Mahama is asleep; and if he does not wake up to fix the economy, we would organize people for demonstration”, forgetting that in this country people could organize a bloody riot and implicate you to be the one behind it, and that would be very difficult to defend. As a result I called my brother and told him to be circumspect. The Clergy should be wise and balance as they exercise their prophetic role. They should not allow themselves to be thrown into partisan politics –they should give credit where credit is due. It is not good for a Clergyman to identify himself with a particular political party. Some people have done that. For example Asante Antwi is well-known as one of the leaders of the NPP. He tells me that if he had not been there things would have been abysmal for the party and the nation at large. I wish he had not but he thinks otherwise. As for me I do not want the Methodist Church to split so I would not do that.

JOSEPH OSEI BONSU

The prophetic voice of the Clergy could be explained as the priests disseminating God’s thoughts, desires and will about the events in the nation.

Nation-building is the consolidation of the various experiences and skills of all citizens of a nation toward the attainment of love, peace, justice, security, prosperity and moral and social values. It means the individual skills and specialties are to be harnessed for the common good

On the Clergy being involved in the politics of the nation, he says that the Church must be an agent of reconciliation between God and humanity, not only on religious or spiritual matters but also in political, economic and social issues. Many of the Clergy in Ghana have diverse intellectual, corporate and social backgrounds spanning from education, law, banking, business, economics, engineering, security, medicine and others which makes them well qualified to contribute meaningfully to national discourses.

He thinks that the prophetic voice has been effective and proactive. The Church through its leadership has been engaging the government on almost every sphere of the nation, but in many occasions, on the quiet. The confusion that characterized the creation of constituencies before the '2012 Elections, it took the intervention of the CBC, CCG and the National Peace Council to resolve the controversies that surrounded the creation of the 45 new constituencies by the EC ahead of the '2012 General Elections. Asante, the Chairman of the Peace Council and I co-chaired that meeting with all the political parties' representatives we managed to make the feuding parties understand the issues in order to ensure peace before, during and after the elections.

OSEI SARFO- KANTANKA

The Clergy speaking the mind of or the will of God to the nation or the Clergy allowing the gospel to affect the people in the nation holistically, (that is both sacred and secular life of the people or state) is what we term as the prophetic voice.

On the reactions from the Politicians when the Clergy speak on national issues, he said the politicians know that the Clergy is powerful. The Clergy has influence because they lead a greater number of the populace who are largely the middle class, the poor and the down-trodden. As a result, the politicians monitor and follow with keen interest the statements of the Clergy on weekly basis. They know that the Clergy has what it takes to educate and enlighten the people who sit under their feet every week about the bad policies or mismanagement of the resources of the nation. Hence, they vilify and insult the Clergy who execute their prophetic role in order to screw them up.

The people who appear before the Clergy every week have many problems spanning from education, economic, health, employment, housing, and so on. How can the Clergy ignore these problems of the people and do anything meaningful in their spiritual lives.

Any clergy who attempts to exercise his prophetic role in a state such as ours should have the guts to withstand the vilification and the persecutions from the leaders of the state.

The best way or approach is for the Clergy to execute their collective prophetic role in the state. We can make use of the various recognized religious bodies such as CCG, NCS, CBC, etc. to make statements and issue communiqué and pastoral letters. These statements and communiqués would be discussed in our various churches led by the Clergy so that the members could be educated on the state of the state.

The prophetic voice is silent in Ghana because many of the Clergy do not want to be tagged with one party or the other in order to avoid persecution and vilification.

YINKAH SARFO

To him, nation-building encompasses the proper use of the human resources, natural resources; ensuring stability, security, right leadership and allowing our educational institutions to run programmes that will be beneficial to the nation.

He suggests that the Clergy must speak on national issues to set the nation on the right path. Another side is advocacy as in Micah 6:8, God wants justice and mercy. Romans 13:1-2, also teaches that the state should protect the Church and the Church to guide the state in all aspects—prayer, counseling and teachings so that the leaders can rule the nation with justice and the will of God.

He sees the prophetic voice not very active. According to him, the insults and vilifications should even cause the clergy to speak the more.

Inactive prophetic voice would cause the nation into a plague. The country does not belong to the politicians. Jesus himself was the greatest politician the world has ever had. Kenya had a blood bath as well as Rwanda because the Clergy failed to speak. In Ghana, we have been doing well over the years. But we have to do more.

KING SOLOMON BADDOE

On nation-building he said, it involves all of us (not the responsibility of only the government) contributing our quota economically, socially, morally and spiritually for the well-being of all citizens.

On the Clergy speaking on politics, he said that Christians cannot live in isolation. We have been called first and foremost to preach the gospel. In preaching the gospel, we have the

responsibility to call the leaders of the nation to order (it is one of our responsibilities). If the nation is on a wrong footing, we have to call them back to order, using the word of God but not a political tool. If it happened in the Old Testament, it can happen now. We should get involved when it becomes necessary but we should not politicize issues but rather spiritualize them.

On the Clergy using the pulpit to address a specific national issue, he said that the only place they have a voice is behind their pulpit so the pulpit can be used to educate the members on what they need to know about the nation.

On educating the church members on public policies, he sees nothing wrong with that. If a clergy understands the policy, it is his responsibility to educate the members so that they are not misled by ignorance.

On assessment of the prophetic voice of the Clergy, he said the Clergy has decided to stay back. The voice is largely silent. I don't know why. It's just a few Clergy or individual Clergy who comes out to make contributions to national discourse but the Church as a whole is not giving in her input by way of the prophetic message-using the Bible to tell our people what they should and should not do. Maybe we are afraid that we may incur the wrath of the politicians. We are not involved that much. Even the few who get involved may be affiliated with one party or the other. They come normally to perform a function their parties have given them to play. Some of them are appointed as board members and presidential advisors, such Clergy when they come out, their voices could not be loud, clear and effective. So that is the problem of the Church.

KWAKU KWARTENG

As the ‘2012 Ashanti Regional Moderator for the Civic Forum Initiative (CFI), his core duty was to look at flash-points and organize independent observers for the General Elections.

To him, nation-building is about good governance – having the right caliber of leaders, provision of basic needs, security, justice and peace and avoidance of factionalism, nepotism and tribalism.

On the Clergy being members of political parties, he disagreed. The Clergy could be sympathizers of party ‘A’ or ‘B’. The role of the Clergy is such that once they align with particular political parties, it would create a whole lot of confusion for the Church and the state. In Ghanaian political arena, people normally do not speak into issues but on political lines.

He is of the view that if the prophetic voice is not contested then it ceases to be the voice of God. He added that the Clergy who speak the truth are not perturbed by what people say about them.

SAMUEL PYNE

On nation-building, he said, it is a process of harnessing the resources of the nation to build the society for the prosperity of the citizenry. It encompasses physical development, spiritual development, economic development and human development so that the people would be useful for the nation. It also includes managing tribal and religious differences to ensure harmonious living in the nation. I believe that every personality should be concerned about all the things that constitute nation-building. Aristotle said, “When good men refuse to be involved in the governance of the nation, stupid men will set the rules for them to obey”.

On Clergy speaking on politics, he said, biblically, the men of God, Old Samuel, Jeremiah, Elijah and the likes got involved in the governance process of their nation. Religious leaders should not leave politics to the politicians. If the Clergy decline from speaking against the wrongs of the society, then those very wrongs will confront them in church. If the economic policy of the nation creates poverty for the citizenry, the greater part of the responsibility would be on the Church. The history of Ghana shows that many of our educational and health institutions were established by religious groups. The Clergy should be involved especially in disallowing mismanagement of such facilities. However, they shouldn't take partisan positions on matters.

On the Clergy educating the members on the public policies of government, he said, it is important for the Clergy to teach them because they lead a large group of people. If they have the ideas and they know about how governance process should be executed, then they have a huge responsibility and core responsibility not to deny the people.

On bashing on the Clergy he said, notwithstanding the bashing, they still have the responsibility to criticize constructively. If they do not speak because they are afraid, they are shelving their responsibility. They are expected to rescue the perishing (not only those they see in church).

On assessment of the prophetic voice of the Clergy he said, it is a mixture (50-50)-some of them are really doing well; others (charlatans) are not. The minority is spoiling the soup for them. They do not necessarily have to be politicians but should be involved in the governance process of the nation.

KWAKU BOAHEN

On Nation-Building, The Ashanti Regional Youth Organizer says that it is a collective decision of all citizens playing their role to develop the nation for all of us.

On Clergy involving in the politics of the nation, he said, they have the right but they should not come publicly. And even if they do, they should not be partisan in their comments. In Ghana some Clergy bring their political colours to bare on their comments. As ministers of God, they are expected to bring everybody together in order to build the nation. Partisan position from such a group as clergy would not auger well for nation-building.

On assessment of the prophetic voice, he said, most of the Clergy are influenced by money; hence, we do not see them do what is expected of them.

On bashing and vilification, he said, If the Clergy have the right to criticize the government chosen by God through Ghanaians, then we too have the right to criticize them. The Bible indicates that no one is perfect, and for that matter most of these Clergy are not perfect so we have the right to criticize them when they make any comment on what government does.

On the Clergy using the pulpit to make political statements, he said, People like Asante Antwi and Mensah Otabil should be criticized if they speak on government policies because they are well-known NPP members. The fact is we know all those Clergy-politicians. We will not give them chance at all.

THOMAS KUSI BOAFO

Thomas Kusi-Boafo describes nation-building as a collective responsibility from all citizenry. It constitutes several activities and a combination of culture, religion and other economic factors. We build a nation with people. So the culture, social and religious backgrounds of the people have to be harnessed for development. We need to achieve a consensus of all these factors in order to shape the psychology of the people toward nation-building. It is an intermarriage of all the various connections and sub-groups into one unit so that the unity would propel the system toward a common objective or mission that the nation determines to achieve. So if you set all the fantastic national goals while the various factors of nation-building are disjointed, it will be difficult for the leadership of the nation to achieve the set goals. Indeed, nation-building occurs when each and every one becomes aware of the role they should play for the common good. That is, where the mental shake-up of the individuals could be geared toward national consensus. To achieve this, there is the need for intensive education of the civic rights and responsibilities of the citizenry using our patriotic songs, poems, schools, churches mosques and durbars.

On whether or not the Clergy should speak on political or national issues, he says that generally, the Clergy speaking on ecclesiastical and spiritual matters is their fundamental function. He asserts that the Clergy can only have the luxury of time to concentrate solely on church matters as some people would want them to do if all things were going on well, socially and economically for the people. He thinks that it would be better if the Clergy performed their ecclesiastical functions very well as well as make their prophetic voice heard effectively on the governance process of the nation. He opines that whatever is in the Bible has an implication on the economy of the nation. For instance in addressing the issue of

stealing and covetousness in Genesis 12: 20ff, the Church should extend its preaching against corruption in the national economy because corruption is what is derailing the nation at the moment. The church is even more fortunate to have several of the people in leadership of the nation-The President, Vice President, Finance Minister, many of the cabinet ministers, more than half of the Members of Parliament and the judiciary claiming to be Christians. What is more is that Christians constitute about 71 percent of the population in Ghana. This clearly gives the Clergy the opportunity to hammer on corruption and other injustices that go on in the nation. The silence of the Church at the time like this may constitute a gross neglect of their prophetic role in the nation. He posits that the Clergy is expected to lead the 71 percent of the population to demand and ensure accountability from the national leaders many of whom claim to be Christians. He added that the Church itself as a sacred institution is so concerned about accountability that as a result quarterly and annual accounts of offerings and tithes are prepared and presented for its members to scrutinize. If this happens even in the Church, then the people expect to see it replicated in the state.

He believes that once the society deliberately creates poor people, the burden would be on the Church. In fact, the church is the last resort when the national leaders fail the people. As a result the Church should be active and proactive. The Clergy should periodically come out with their position on national issues as well as educate their members to be abreast with issues on education, health, energy, employment and so on and also offer business advice to them. He advocates that the Clergy should be proactive to interpret almost every policy the government attempts to roll out so that the laity would be better informed. If the Church can spend time to fast and pray for the nation, why should the Clergy not spend time to study the public policies of the government and interpret them to their members? If they spend hours fasting and praying for the nation and yet poverty looms around the nation, then they ought to interrogate the policies of the government in all stages (agenda setting stage, policy/content

formation stage, decision-making stage, implementation stage and policy analysis and evaluation stage). He calls for a redefinition of the role of the Clergy as far as nation-building is concerned.

On bashing and condemnation of some Clergy who criticize the government, he confirms that indeed, politicians can be very intimidating. He urged the Clergy not to be afraid of the vilifications because it is normal for evil perpetrators to defend and attack people who confront them about their dealings. He intimated that so many prophets of old were tagged, “prophets of doom” because they confronted the various bad monarchical and political regimes. In his assessment, the bashing the Clergy receives in this country is incomparable to that of the prophets of old. To him, the Ghanaian politicians threaten the Clergy who boldly criticize the government with kid-gloves. Therefore, the insults and vilification should not stop them from criticizing the state at all if they have any idea about the benefits of being a well-known politician in an African country. Anyone that stands for the truth incurs the wrath of sinners. If corrupt politicians and national leaders begin to clap for the Clergy, then they ought to be very careful. He admonished the Clergy not to sit aloof for political players to mismanage God’s resources in the nation if they claim to be God’s children.

In his assessment of the prophetic voice of the Clergy, he commended them in general terms on the fact that they have held the fort in terms of keeping the nation together. However, he decries that many of the Clergy nowadays concentrate solely on materialism. He advised the Clergy to understand that governance process has a serious implication on the people who troop to church every week. It is their responsibility therefore as leaders of the Church to seek for economic and social well-being of the people. They should collaborate with all well-meaning Ghanaians to spearhead developmental issues. The Clergy should note that it will take only Ghanaians to build Ghana. The fact that they are Ghanaians, they cannot be indifferent about what goes on in the nation.

NANA YAW SARFOH

Nana Yaw Sarfoh a –two time best morning (political) show host in Ashanti Region commenting on the mandate of the Clergy to participate in national discourse, his response was affirmative. He explains that the Clergy has the mandate because they are first and foremost Ghanaians who are required by the 1992 Constitution of the nation to do so and more importantly the fact that they gather and lead more than half of the population of Ghana.

On the vilifications and insults that some Clergy receive from some politicians, he encouraged the Clergy to rise above such pettiness and insults. According to him, in fact, the vilifications are in confirmation that their calling and mission are divine. However, he advised that the Clergy should be neutral, not partisan. Under no circumstances should they be seen dinning and winning with some political parties so that their members and the general public may not easily tag them for being in bed with one political party or another. He cited Pastor Mensah Otabil and Archbishop Duncan Williams whose comments on national issues always attract controversies from the NPP and National NDC simply because these two famous Clergy are reported to be either staunch members or strong sympathizers of these political divide.

In his assessment of the prophetic voice as a journalist, he sees it as inactive and ineffective because many of them are indifferent and the few who speak, speak on political lines. In giving an example, he again used the Mensah Otabil and Duncan Williams saga. He confirmed the school of thought that believes that these two famous Clergy are NPP and NDC sympathizers respectively. In a situation like this, anytime any of them speaks, his comments on the state of the nation always make sense to the faithful of the party he has been

tagged to sympathize with. But to the other party faithful, his comments are always petty and partisan. He admonished the Clergy to be consistent with the truth concerning the nation regardless of which party is in power. Otherwise the nation would not take them seriously. He stated that what has been happening to the two Clergy mentioned above is a form of demotivation for other Clergy. This may be a factor for the silence of the prophetic voice. He believes that another cause of the ineffectiveness of the prophetic voice is that some of the top Clergy have compromised their stand through the request for and the provision of support and aid for church projects and programmes from political parties. These Clergy have obviously sold their conscience to the politicians. As a result, they have lost the moral courage to criticize them when they go wrong. He added that they ought to speak on only issues they are familiar with so that their comments would not be reduced to a mere propaganda but rather instructive and insightful. This therefore calls for thorough research on the part of the Clergy on national issues before they come out to make comments. They are supposed to unite the people. They are seen as pillars of the nation. Even if the politicians fail us, the Clergy should not fail us. They should know that even the 1992 Constitution drew inspiration from the Bible. So if the politicians who are voted by the people to use the Constitution to build the nation miss the mark, the Bible is one of the effective tools to be used to call them to order.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA INTERPRETATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

The preceding chapter was a presentation of the raw data gathered from the survey and the interviews conducted. The presentation of the data was done using tables, charts and graphs. The views from the in-depth interviews conducted on the other hand have been presented in the form of prose. This chapter seeks to interpret, analyze and discuss the field report.

The Clergy were selected because we thought it wise to follow the advice of Gordon Allport quoted by Yirenkyi to have said that “If you want to know why people do what they do, why not ask them first”. The Laity on the other hand interact with the Clergy on daily bases. In fact, they have been the immediate recipients of the sermons and messages of the Clergy and therefore stand a greater chance of giving a candid assessment of the prophetic voice of the Clergy. The Clergy and Laity respondents were sampled from Catholic and Protestant²¹⁶ churches. Some of the questionnaires were distributed at the Religious and Theological departments of universities and colleges²¹⁷ in Kumasi. Others were distributed after church services on Sunday mornings.

This study’s modus operandi includes an external assessment of the Clergy by the Media, Politicians and the General Public. The Media Practitioners were chosen because more often than not they report on the programmes and messages of the Clergy across the length and breadth of the country. They report extracts of sentiments and views expressed by the Clergy especially those on national issues. Some even empanel politicians, social commentators and

²¹⁶ Protestant churches whose Clergy and Laity responded to the questionnaire were Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Charismatic and African Independent Churches.

²¹⁷ Respondents were drawn mainly from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Christian Service University College and Mid-Ghana Assemblies of God Theological Seminary/College.

political analysts to do content analysis of the messages and sermons of the Clergy on their political shows. The 40 respondents from the Media were sampled from five media²¹⁸ houses in Kumasi. Those media houses were chosen based on convenience and proximity since almost all the radio stations in Ghana host political shows at least once every week. The distribution and collection of the questionnaires were done with the help of the receptionists in the various media houses chosen.

The perspectives of the Politicians on the other hand, were sought in this study chiefly because in SSA and Ghana in particular, politicians arrogate to themselves unwarranted promises to solve all the problems of the electorate if voted into power. Since such claims are too superfluous and are just meant to cajole voters for votes, the electorates which include the Clergy soon after the elections become disappointed and begin to express their frustrations the least opportunity they get. The Clergy who claim to be ‘the voice of the voiceless’ ‘the conscience of society’ become the unofficial mouthpiece of those who feel hurt by the insensitivities and ineptitudes of the leaders of the state. Sometimes too, they come into the political arena as a result of the incessant call on them by the opposition parties and the General Public to execute their prophetic role. This inevitably brings them into a face-to-face confrontation with the Politicians who feel threatened by the prophetic role of the elite and influential Ghanaian Clergy. The Politicians as it were would be extremely defensive and offensive. Some even go to the extent of prescribing a separation of the Church from the state as well as reminding the Clergy to concentrate on ecclesiastical matters rather than speaking into issues of national discourses; a medium (the church pulpit) some had used to canvass for votes prior to the national elections.

Lastly, the General Public population in this study consists of people from diverse religious and social backgrounds. Some were selected from the Muslim communities at Old Tafo and

²¹⁸ The Media houses that responded to the survey questionnaire were the Fox FM 97.9, Angel FM 96.1, Metro FM 94.1, Zuria FM88.7 and Mynd FM 105.1.

Asawase. Some others were teachers from Peniel Academy, Maakro D/A and Akom D/A Junior High Schools in the Afigya Kwabre District. Still others were selected from known literate market women at the Kumasi Central Market specifically, *Kente Line*²¹⁹. This was done in order to get a neutral and a fair assessment on the prophetic voice of the Clergy in Ghana.

4.1 FINDINGS

4.2 Political participation of the Clergy

Internal Assessment of the Political participation of the Clergy

The study indicates that majority of the Clergy in Ghana are unwilling to be known publicly as members of particular political parties. This assertion can clearly be seen in the results displayed in Tables 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5. Table 3.3 reports on whether or not the respondents (Clergy) belong to any political party. 85 percent, responded No, while 15 percent, said, Yes. When the Clergy were asked whether or not they in anyway influence the Laity to vote for particular political parties or candidates during elections, they unanimously (100 percent) denied as exhibited by the results in Table 3.4. Table 3.5 is the results from the question that was meant to find out if the Clergy think that they ought to influence their members in voting during national elections or not. Once again, the results (72.5 percent, No; and 27.5 percent, Yes) indicate reluctance on the part of the Clergy to be partisan in their political participation. In their hand-written remarks on the questionnaire, the Clergy explained that their reluctance is chiefly based on the fact that their immediate audiences (Laity) are from diverse political persuasions, so being partisan in such a setting would stir up a lot of troubles in the Church. Kwaku Asante, the Presiding bishop of the Methodist

²¹⁹*Kente* is a traditional cloth woven and used in Ghana. *Kente Line* is simply a place in the Kumasi Central Market where Kente cloths are sold. That is where one of the research assistants to this study works.

Church – Ghana, intimated that if the Clergy become partisan, the Church will split²²⁰. He said that so long as one is a clergy, his role is like a chief –he is to unite the people. He is not supposed to be a card-holding and a dues-paying member of any political party²²¹. He however added that a Clergy may be a sympathizer of a particular ideology but should not be an activist of any political party²²². This obviously means that according to him, it may not be prudent for a clergy to stand on the ticket of a political party to contest for presidential or parliamentary seat. All of this is to say that from the viewpoint of the Clergy in Ghana, their reluctance to be partisan in their political participation is just for convenience.

Exactly half (50 percent) of the Laity respondents conversely perceive the Clergy as members of political parties in the country while the other half (50 percent) differ from that opinion as can be seen in Table 3.3. This clearly shows that the Laity has inconsistent perceptions about the Clergy when it comes to their political participation. In their handwritten remarks on the questionnaire the respondents who think that the Clergy are members of the various political parties in the country explained that some of the Clergy display their clear political stands when they mount the pulpit. That is, their comments and criticisms are consistently in favour and or against a particular political party.

If Kwaku Asante's definition of who a member of a political party is, is to be considered (i.e. a card-bearing and a dues-paying person), then one would say that the assertion of the Laity who suspect the Clergy to be members of particular political parties just by inferring from what they say in their sermons is quite speculative and cannot be scientifically substantiated. This is not to suggest that the speculations about the Clergy from a section of the Laity

²²⁰ Emmanuel Kwaku Asante, interviewed by the researcher, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Department of Religious Studies, March, 7, 2014.

²²¹ Emmanuel Kwaku Asante.

²²² Emmanuel Kwaku Asante.

should be entirely ignored. At least few clergy such as Emmanuel Asante Antwi²²³ of the Methodist Church –Ghana and Daniel Nkansah²²⁴ of New Vision Pentecostal Church-Accra are well-known political party members in this country. This perception about some clergy playing partisan politics in Ghana is not only held by a section of the Laity but also a section of the Clergy. King Baddoe for instance has noted that some clergy normally come out on national issues to perform a function their political parties have given them to play²²⁵. He therefore admonished the Clergy to stop using the Church for the politicization of national issues.²²⁶ Those outspoken Clergy would obviously argue that they come out on national issues as concerned citizens of Ghana who are directly or indirectly affected by whatever goes on in the state. Absolutely, this is an uncontestable stand from the Clergy.

Table 3.4 shows the results from the Laity's assessment on whether or not the Clergy do influence them on voting during national elections. The Laity were surprisingly undivided (100 percent) that the Clergy do not influence them on voting. Their response is consistent with the Clergy who denied completely that they do not in any way influence the Laity on voting. We also solicited their opinion on whether or not they expect the Clergy to influence them on voting during national elections. We were expecting a unanimous rejection from the

²²³ Bishop Emmanuel Asante Antwi is a past Presiding bishop of the Methodist Church –Ghana. He used to be heavily criticized by some political parties especially the National Democratic Congress to be in bed with the New Patriotic Party based on his comments and criticisms. He has now been appointed as a member of the Disciplinary Committee in the New Patriotic Party. In an interview with the Most Rev. Prof. Emmanuel Kwaku Asante, the current Presiding bishop of the Methodist Church –Ghana, he confirmed it and said it was unfortunate for his colleague to be too deeply rooted in a particular political party but added that he thanked God that bishop Asante Antwi is doing the public party politics at the time of his retirement. According to him, Bishop Asante Antwi also has his reasons for doing what he does, for anytime he had confronted him on that issue he had explained that it is good he is in there; if he had not been there things would have been bad for the party (NPP) and the nation at large.

²²⁴ Prophet Daniel Nkansah of New Vision Pentecostal Church is the founder of the New Vision Party (NVP). He was the flag-bearer of the party in the '2008 and '2012 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections. However, on those two occasions he was not able to get his name on the ballot sheet of the Electoral Commission (EC). In '2012 he was reported to have fingered one of the officials of the EC to have indulged in corruption as candidates filled their nomination forms. Of course he made this allegation to be the bases for the rejection of his forms by the EC.

²²⁵ Solomon King Baddoe, the Principal of the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary –Kumasi, interviewed by the researcher, Assemblies of God Theological Seminary –Kumasi, March, 10, 2014.

²²⁶ Solomon King Baddoe.

Laity on this issue but surprisingly, 5 percent of the Laity expects the Clergy to influence them in voting during national elections whereas 95 percent of them remained consistent that the Clergy ought not to influence the Laity in any way during national elections.

From the internal (the Clergy and Laity) assessment of the political participation of the Clergy in Ghana, the study postulates that the Clergy should not in any way participate in politics in a partisan manner. That is, their sermons, comments and contributions toward national discourses should be devoid of partisan politics. However, it is instructive to note that a significant number (27.5 percent) of the Clergy have indicated (Table 3.5) that they have the desire to influence the Laity during national elections. In addition to that, is the fact that 15 percent of them wish to be affiliated publicly to one political party or the other. This implies that the perception of a section of the Clergy and Laity that some Clergy participate in politics in partisan manner may be true. It could also mean that a section of the Clergy indeed indulge in partisan politics in camera as can be seen from the results in Tables 3.3 and 3.5 where 15 percent suspect some Clergy to be members of the various political divide in the country and 27.5 percent expect the Clergy to influence the Laity during national elections respectively.

External Assessment of the Political participation of the Clergy

The results in Table 3.3 indicate that 42.5 percent of the Media think that the Clergy belong to particular political parties while 57.5 percent differ. Only 15 percent of the Clergy however agree with their assertion. The Media is one institution in Ghana whose assertions and findings cannot be easily ignored. They attend almost every high powered political party meetings as well as church services led by outspoken clergymen across the country. They sometimes interview or host some of the Clergy on and or off air about national or political

issues. As a result, one would consider the 42.5 percent who believe that some of the Clergy belong to political parties in Ghana to be very significant. In an interview with Nana Yaw Sarfoh, he asserted that some clergy are publicly known to dine and wine with particular political leaders so there is a strong notion that those clergy could not be anything less than members of those political parties²²⁷. However, 85 percent of the Clergy denied this assertion from the Media. Kwaku Asante claims that the Clergy are mere sympathizers of the various political parties²²⁸. On the contrary, 50 percent of the Laity who deal with the Clergy more than any other group among the respondents perceives a section of the Clergy as members of some political parties in Ghana as has been indicated in Table 3.3.

Assuming without admitting that indeed section of the Clergy in Ghana are members of the various political parties, one would ask which biblical doctrine such actions of those clergy contravene. Indeed, Jeremiah the prophet like many prophets worked closely with political leaders²²⁹. In addition, as citizens of Ghana, the constitution allows the Clergy to enjoy the right of association including the right to join or form any political party²³⁰.

The response from the Politicians as can be seen in Table 3.3 is more revealing. 80 percent of them believe that some of the Clergy are members of the various political parties in Ghana. With this results, one may argue that the Clergy's denial of some of them being political party members is only hypocritical and pretentious because as the old adage goes 'if the

²²⁷ Nana Yaw Sarfo, Morning Show host, Fox FM, interviewed by the researcher, Fox FM 97.9, March, 19, 2014.

²²⁸ Emmanuel Kwaku Asante.

²²⁹ We have indicated in Chapter Two of this study that Jeremiah started prophesying in Judah half-way through the reign of King Josiah and continued through the reigns of Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah. Shortly prior to his call, the centre of power was shifting from Assyria to Babylonia. That was obviously going to cause shattering events occurring for the land of Judah. Consequently, Jeremiah became a participant in those events in and around Judah. The prophet was seen as the friend and confidant of King Josiah of Judah. In fact the content of the prophet's preaching confirms his full support of Josiah's reforms.

²³⁰ Under the Fundamental Human Rights and Freedoms in the 1992 Constitution of Ghana 21 (3), it states "All citizens shall have the right and freedom to form or join political parties and to participate in political activities subject to such qualifications and laws as are consistent with this constitution"

alligator announces the demise of the crocodile, its report cannot be taken with a pinch of salt'. Majority of the politicians themselves have revealed that some of the Clergy are members of the various political parties.

Interestingly, in their handwritten comments on the questionnaire and the interviews conducted, none of the Politicians could boldly claim that these numbers of Clergy are members of their (those politicians') political parties. Rather, each of the respondents pointed out that those Clergy who are politically tagged are members of their opponents' parties. For example, Samuel Pyne, indicated his full support for the Clergy to be actively involved in politics.²³¹ He was however quick to add that the Clergy should not participate in politics in a partisan manner as people like bishop Duncan Williams and others do for the NDC party.²³² Kwaku Boahen, on the other hand said, his office was aware and keeping track of all the Clergy who are members of the opposition NPP and were constantly criticizing the ruling NDC in their sermons.²³³ He described Asante Antwi (Former Presiding bishop of the Methodist Church, Ghana), Bosomtwe Ayensu (Diocesan bishop of the Methodist Church, Obuasi), Mensah Otabil (the General Overseer of the International Gospel Church) and some others as opposition NPP members in cassock.²³⁴ This confirms Kusi-Boafo's assertion that politicians are sometimes intimidating, they have machinery whose main responsibility is to fish out those who are anti-government or anti-politicians.²³⁵ At least Kwaku Boahen of the

²³¹ Samuel Pyne, the Ashanti Regional Secretary of the NPP, interviewed by the researcher, Abrepo Junction near the Angel FM, March, 24, 2014.

²³² Samuel Pyne.

²³³ Kwaku Boahen, NDC Ashanti Regional Youth Organizer, interviewed by the researcher, NDC Party Office at Ahodwo, March, 26, 2014.

²³⁴ Kwaku Boahen.

²³⁵ Thomas Kusi-Boafo, a social commentator, in an interview, asserted that most of the political parties in Ghana have established machinery called *Party Vigilantes* who are quick to bash on critics. It is a small wing of the party who get their bread and butter from bashing and vilifying critics. They make sure that their political parties and candidates are protected. In fact they treat their party like a religion.

NDC has confirmed the existence of such a system under his office as the Ashanti Regional Youth Organizer of the party during an interview.²³⁶

Is it not surprising in this study to see that while the politicians in Ghana admit that some of the Clergymen are members of the various political parties, the Clergy maintain that they are only sympathizers? One would have thought that the Clergy being well-meaning citizens of the country and being well-aware of the Constitutional provisions that permit them freedom of association and the fact that there is no biblical doctrine that forbids them from being members of one group or the other, they would be bold to admit their political party affiliations. However, it is instructive for the Clergy to note that they are not expected in anyway to be biased and dishonest in their political participation in the country. The Clergy is to exhibit a high sense of integrity and hold unto the strong moral principles the Bible enjoins them to in their political participation. That is, they could attend party rallies, help sell the policies of their political parties but they should not do it like the *serial callers*.²³⁷

Taking a cue from Jeremiah, the Clergy are to go to all that the Lord shall send them and whatsoever He commands them, they shall speak (Jer. 1:7). Jeremiah was commissioned by God to go to whosoever he would be sent and say whatever he would be told to without delay, compromise, fear nor favour. Our exegesis has shown that the Lord promised His active presence to ensure deliverance for the prophet and also to mark his words and deeds.

²³⁶Kwaku Boahen.

²³⁷In Ghana, serial callers are party faithful who contribute by way of phone-ins to political shows on several radio stations. They are fanatic party members who would go all out to defend their party and condemn their opponents on air. Their telephone numbers and voices are well known by radio presenters of political shows. In fact, it has now become a sort of employment for some party fanatics. It is an open secret that many of such people are on the pay-role of their various political parties. These people do not approach national issues objectively. They sometimes become irrational and emotional on national discourses. A school of thought has it that the saucier a party faithful becomes toward the opposition, the more likely he/she gets government contracts and appointments.

The Clergy in Ghana is expected to perform his role as a prophet²³⁸ to all in the nation without fear or favour. In that case they could either be members or sympathizers of one political party or the other but could still be respected and taken seriously when they participate in any political discourse.

The politicians on the other hand should know that inasmuch as some Clergymen may be members or sympathizers of their parties, their role may be completely different from the *serial callers*. The preoccupation of the Clergy is to look for the holistic well-being of God's nation. Osei Sarfo-Kantanka agrees with us at saying that the people who appear before the Clergy every week have many problems spanning from education, economic, health, employment, housing and so on; therefore the Clergy cannot ignore these problems and do any meaningful thing in the spiritual life of the people.²³⁹

The response from the General Public as can be seen from Table 3.3 indicates that 45 percent of them believe that some Clergymen belong to some political parties whereas 55 percent of the respondents differ. The number of affirmative respondents (45 percent) is quite significant since the General Public do not comparatively interact frequently with the Clergy. Probably, their assessment is hinged on that of the Media with whom 42.5 percent agree with the General Public. The General Public normally gets to know about the political views of the Clergy through the Media. This probably makes them form their opinion about the Clergy based on that of the Media. Hence, a nearly equal percentage of them (General Public 45 and Media 42.5) having the same opinion about the political participation of the Clergy in Ghana.

²³⁸ The word occurs about 309 times in biblical Hebrew. A prophet is a spokesperson or mouthpiece of God.

²³⁹ Osei Sarfo-Kantanka, the Kumasi diocesan bishop of the Methodist Church- Ghana, interviewed by the researcher, Kumasi Diocesan Office of the Methodist Church Ghana (Nana Kwaku Duah House), March, 7, 2014.

On the assertion that the Clergy influence their church members during Presidential and Parliamentary Elections, the results displayed in Table 3.4 indicate that 42.5 percent of the Media are of the view that some Clergy influence their church members during national elections while 57.5 of them think otherwise. This is absolutely consistent with the results in Table 3.3.

Conversely, we argue that the assertion of the Media that the Clergy who are members of political parties do influence their church members in a partisan way could just be hypothetical but not scientific. The Media may find it daunting to produce any substantive evidence that could lend support to such a claim since the Clergy has as it were vehemently denied as Table 3.4 displays (Clergy 100 percent, No).

The Laity, whose opinion and evidence about the Clergy is expected to be more credible also completely (Laity 100 percent, No) dismisses the assertion that the Clergy influence them during national elections.

Assuming without admitting that the assertion of the Media about the political participation of the Clergy is hypothetical, definitely their assumption was based on a deduction from the political comments and statements made by the Clergy.

On hindsight, one may appeal to the Clergy to exercise a lot of circumspection when making political statements in the pulpit. God's instructions to Jeremiah are instructive for the Clergy in Ghana as well. He told Jeremiah to perform his prophetic role in Judah and the nations around without fear or favour. This is not to say that for the fear of being tagged and vilified, the Clergy should coil into their shells and remain indifferent as many of them appear to be today in Ghana but rather they should use the word of God to confront the political systems in the country as did the prophets of old for the well-being of God's people living on God's

land. Even Jesus Christ as Yinkah Sarfo asserted that He is the greatest politician the world has ever had²⁴⁰ confronted the leadership of Pontius Pilate, King Herode, the Pharisees, the Sadducees and all the political and religious systems of His time. Indeed He was not spared. He was vilified, harangued, persecuted and killed for treason. The Clergy in Ghana ought to take inspiration from Charles Wesley who admonished all Christians to labour on, spend and be spent... this is the way thy master went, should not the servant tread it still.²⁴¹

King Baddoe admonishes his fellow Clergy to refrain from the politicization of issues of the nation in church.²⁴² Kwaku Asante says that the Clergy ought to be wise and tactful in their political participation.²⁴³ He added that the Clergy should not allow themselves to be thrown into partisan politics because once they identify themselves with party 'A', whatever they would say, members of party 'B' would not listen even in their own churches.²⁴⁴ Nana Yaw Sarfoh believes that some Clergy have compromised their stands through the influence of politicians.²⁴⁵ He added that the Clergy is expected to speak the truth always whether it would affect their favourite party or not.²⁴⁶

Another twist to the question on whether or not the Clergy in Ghana influence their church members during national elections is the results from the Politicians as seen from Table 3.4. 30 percent of them responded affirmative while 37.5 percent differ. The nearly equal response goes to confirm their counter accusations against the Clergy for belonging not to their party but rather to the parties of their opponents as expressed earlier on in this study.

²⁴⁰Daniel Yinkah, the Metropolitan Archbishop of the Anglican Church of Ghana, Kumasi, St. Cyprian's Cathedral, March, 9, 2014.

²⁴¹The Methodist Hymn Book Number 589.

²⁴²Solomon King Baddoe.

²⁴³ Emmanuel Kwaku Asante.

²⁴⁴Emmanuel Kwaku Asante.

²⁴⁵ Nana Yaw Sarfoh.

²⁴⁶Nana Yaw Sarfoh.

To take the results on the face value, it may be argued that the reason why some Politicians as usual asserted that some Clergy influence their members is just to woo the rest of the Clergy who are either anti-politics or politically inactive into political activism. Another may see this results from the Politicians as a mere perception generally held against the Clergy who are politically active.

Also, from Table 3.4, 32.5 percent of the Politicians were not sure whether or not the Clergy influence the Laity during national elections. This result may have arisen because of the fact that some of the Politicians who responded to the questionnaire might not be Christians who interact with the Clergy frequently in the temples. However, it could be argued that the 32.5 percent of the Politicians who were not sure is an indication that majority of even the Politicians somehow disagree with those who assert that the Clergy influence their members in national elections. The reason for this argument stems out of the fact that the 32.5 percent who claim not to be sure would be more for a 'No' than a 'Yes' should they be asked to make a choice from the two. This would make 70 percent of them disagreeing.

The results from Table 3.5 where 15 percent of the Politicians suggest that the Clergy should influence their church members during Presidential and Parliamentary Elections presents a contrast with that of Tables 3.3 and 3.4 where 80 percent of the Politicians believe that some members of the Clergy belong to the political rivals in Ghana and 30 percent of them are of the view that the Clergy do influence their church members during national elections respectively. This clearly shows that in Ghana, majority of the Politicians see with contempt those members of the Clergy perceived to be partisan in their political participation.

Considering a large number of the Politicians (80 percent) suspecting the Clergy as being members of party 'A' or 'B' and 30 percent of them having a notion that those Clergy

influence their members during national elections, one would have thought that a substantive number of them would encourage the Clergy to influence the Laity during national elections but only 15 percent of the Politician respondents agreed to that suggestion. This implies that Politicians largely would harangue and vilify a Clergy who appear to influence his members during national elections.

We wonder that if 80 percent of the Politicians perceive the Clergy as members of some Political parties in Ghana, how are they expected to relate with the Laity on a daily basis without influencing them with their political ideologies? That could be too fantastic and simplistic. Especially where the Clergy in Ghana have since time immemorial claimed to have a biblical mandate to perform their prophetic role in the nation. Osei Sarfo-Kantanka contends that the Politicians know that the Clergy has influence in the nation because they lead a greater number, about 71 percent of the populace who are largely middle-class, the poor and the down-trodden²⁴⁷. He added that the Politicians know that the Clergy has what it takes to educate and enlighten the people who sit under their feet every week about the bad policies and mismanagement of the resources of the nation.²⁴⁸ Agreeing with Osei Sarfo-Kantanka, Yinkah Sarfo states that the Clergy is the conscience of society and the voice of the voiceless, so they are not expected to fail the people.²⁴⁹ He added that the Clergy should not put up an attitude that suggests that the nation belongs to the Politicians.²⁵⁰

All of this is to say that majority (85 percent) of the Politicians in Ghana would wish that the Clergy do not get involved in political activism because they know that their political participation is a threat to the political survival of the politicians. The Clergy on the other

²⁴⁷Osei Sarfo-Kantanka.

²⁴⁸Osei Sarfo-Kantanka.

²⁴⁹Daniel Yinkah Sarfo.

²⁵⁰Daniel Yinkah Sarfo.

hand are not oblivious of their influence over a greater number of the populace and their prophetic role in the nation. However, they arguably seem to be more disciplined or too careful in their political participation in the nation. The results in Table 3.4 show that even the Politicians (with only 30 percent exception) acknowledge that largely the Clergy in Ghana are circumspect in their political participation.

4.3 The prophetic voice (role) of the Clergy

Osei Sarfo-Kantanka describes the prophetic voice of the Clergy as the Clergy speaking the mind or the will of God to the nation.²⁵¹ That is allowing the gospel of Christ to affect the nation holistically –both sacred and secular life of the people of the state.²⁵² Daniel Yinkah Sarfo on the other hand, explains the prophetic voice in the light of the Church. To him, the Church is the conscience of the society and the voice of the voiceless.²⁵³ He sees the Clergy leading the Church to acting as the agents of transformation in the state as the prophetic voice.²⁵⁴ To King Baddoe, the role of the Clergy could be described as prophetic if they used the word of God to call the leaders and the people of the nation to order.²⁵⁵ Kwaku Asante traces the idea of the prophetic voice to the classical prophets who articulated the will of God in the context of the governance of the people.²⁵⁶ He cited Jeremiah, Micah, Amos (prophet of righteousness and justice) and their contemporaries who were of the view that the well-being of the people depended on the covenant stipulations; and that once they kept the covenant of Yahweh and depended upon Him, things would be alright for them.²⁵⁷ On the bases of that when the people deviated the prophets drew their attention and called them back

²⁵¹Osei Sarfo-Kantanka.

²⁵²Osei Sarfo-Kantanka.

²⁵³Daniel Yinkah Sarfo.

²⁵⁴Daniel Yinkah Sarfo.

²⁵⁵Solomon King Baddoe.

²⁵⁶Emmanuel Kwaku Asante.

²⁵⁷Emmanuel, Kwaku Asante.

to order²⁵⁸, he added. He concluded that the prophetic voice of the Clergy would be the one which speaks on the question of justice and righteous living as the bases for nation-building.²⁵⁹

All of this is to say that the prophetic voice of the Clergy is using scripture as the bases for speaking the mind or the will of God to address issues of righteous living, peace and justice for the holistic well-being of the entire nation. That is, the Clergy acting as a social critic with scripture as a tool in the political environment. The Clergy in Ghana like the prophets Jeremiah, Amos, Micah and others have the responsibility to speak to the nation about what God thinks about every issue of the state. The Clergy should make the people know that our God is not a *Deus Otiosus*.²⁶⁰ But rather, He is actively involved and equally concerned about the political affairs of the nation just as He is concerned about the spiritual life of the nation. This confirms Martin Luther's two Kingdoms theory, both of which the Christian lives and is expected to play his prophetic role for the common good.

In the 1980s the Clergy through the CCG and CBC criticized the brutalities and the injustices inherent in the Rawlings' regime. The Clergy in that generation were very prophetic. This study assesses how prophetic today's Clergy is.

Internal Assessment of the prophetic voice of the Clergy

The results in Table 3.6 indicate that majority of the Clergy (70 percent, Yes; 30 percent, No) and the Laity (80 percent, Yes; 20 percent, No) agree that the Clergy ought to teach the members on national issues. Indeed the Clergy have a two-dimension educational focus. They are first of all supposed to teach their members to take up their civic rights and

²⁵⁸Emmanuel, Kwaku Asante.

²⁵⁹Emmanuel, Kwaku Asante.

²⁶⁰*Deus Otiosus* is a god who is far-removed from his people and is not concerned about their daily activities.

responsibilities and secondly they serve as the conscience of society, and the voice of the voiceless (play advocacy role).

In the survey conducted, many of the Laity respondents indicated that prior to the '2012 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections, the Clergy encouraged them to exercise their franchise as good citizens of the country. Sometimes too, they created platforms for officials of National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE) during church meetings to educate the members about the new electoral rules and reforms especially the Biometric Verification System used in the '2012 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections.

In addition to that the Clergy is to educate the faithful about the public policies in the country.

This is one of the gray areas to which the Clergy in Ghana have turned a blind eye for the fear of being vilified by party vigilantes should they attack or endorse a political party's public policy. In the words of Kwaku Asante, "No political party comes out with a policy that would not be beneficial to the people, so for a Clergy to attack a political party's policy would mean that that Clergyman has aligned himself to one political party or the other and that would not augur well for the Church and the nation as a whole."²⁶¹ He however added that he would attack a political party's public policy only if it was explicitly against the teachings of the Bible and is not in keeping with the will of God.²⁶² Meanwhile, Kwaku Asante has hinted that the classical prophets were sometimes critical on national policies which were not in keeping with the will of God but they also at some point encouraged national policies which they considered to be in keeping with the will of God for the people.²⁶³

This is the reason why King Baddoe disagrees with Kwaku Asante on his reluctance to criticize a political party's public policy. He opines that if the Clergy understand the nitty-

²⁶¹Emmanuel Kwaku Asante.

²⁶²Emmanuel Kwaku Asante.

²⁶³Emmanuel Kwaku Asante.

gritties of a particular public policy, they have a responsibility to educate their members so that they are not misled by ignorance.²⁶⁴ Kwaku Asante however explains his position that considering how polarized party politics is played out in Ghana, he thinks that the Clergy ought to be wise when examining political parties' public policies because all things are lawful, but not all things are beneficial.²⁶⁵ Opuni-Frimpong, shares a similar view with King Baddoe when he says that the Clergy can only be said to be relevant when they take active participation in whatever concerns the people they serve.²⁶⁶

The data in Table 3.7 lends support to the view that the Clergy have a responsibility to educate their members about political party's public policies. 70 percent of the Clergy themselves are ready to take that responsibility while 62.5 percent of the Laity has that expectation from the Clergy.

However, the number (30 percent) of the Clergy who oppose their own involvement in educating their members on any national issue cannot be ignored. Likewise the 20 percent of the Laity who would feel uncomfortable in church should their pastors begin to include in their teaching sessions national issues such as the economy, injustices, corruption, education, health, politics, unemployment and so on is significant. These are the Christians who prescribe a total separation of Church from the State. In their handwritten remarks on the questionnaire, some of them indicated that they would prefer the Clergy to keep to prayers and spiritual concerns only even if the economy was bad, since Christians are in the world but are not of the world. As pastors they are not supposed to meddle in politics and stuff like

²⁶⁴ Solomon King Baddoe.

²⁶⁵ Emmanuel Kwaku Asante.

²⁶⁶ Opuni-Frimpong, the General Secretary of the CCG in an interview on Hello FM 101.5, King Edward, April, 2, 2014, 8: 00am hinted that the CCG in conjunction with the Trades Union Congress (TUC) had had a crunch meeting with President Mahama concerning the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) before the President left for the ECOWAS meeting in Yamoussoukro. In that meeting, it was reported that the CCG advised the President not sign the EPA because it was going to destroy local industries.

that; they are to concentrate on ecclesiastical matters and the spiritual well-being of the people.

Kwaku Asante completely disagrees with such a view. He describes it as a Gnostic perception of Christianity where everything is reduced to the spirit.²⁶⁷ He added that the Clergy have been asked to minister holistically; therefore they have to be very much concerned about the physical, emotional, psychological, economic, social and the spiritual well-being of the people in the state.²⁶⁸

Kwaku Asante's view is in keeping with our understanding about the prophetic role of Jeremiah. Prophet Jeremiah carried his prophetic ministry in a chaotic era politically, morally, and spiritually. He became the greatest personality in Jerusalem because he took a stand openly against the ungodly reign and social wrongs of King Manasseh persisting in his time. If the prophetic role of Jeremiah is to be used as the epitome of the prophetic voice of the Clergy in Ghana, then one needs not to be labour on the fact that the Clergy in Ghana have a biblical mandate to be involved in the governance processes of the people in the nation.

The society sometimes calls on the Clergy to advocate on their behalf when there seem to be acts of brutalities, injustices and corruption. Literature and newspaper reports abound on how the religious bodies especially the CCG, CBC and the NCS played their advocacy role during the severe repressions in the 1980s. They stood for freedom, justice, integrity and equity in the political arena in Ghana. This study examines how the Clergy play their advocacy role in the governance of the people. Osei Bonsu pointed out that it took the intervention of the

²⁶⁷ Emmanuel Kwaku Asante.

²⁶⁸ Emmanuel Kwaku Asante.

CBC, CCG and the National Peace Council (NPC) to resolve the controversies that surrounded the creation of the 45 new constituencies by the EC ahead of the ‘2012 General Elections.’²⁶⁹ He explained further that himself, the chairman of that meeting with all the political parties’ representatives they managed to make the feuding parties understand the issues in order to ensure peace before, during and after the elections.²⁷⁰ In the words of the Chairman of the NPC, Emmanuel Kwaku Asante, “When the EC delayed in declaring the ‘2012 Presidential results, people started calling on us...we in collaboration with the religious bodies such as the CCG, CBC, NCS and other civil societies held a crunch meeting for the political parties and the EC in the EC office to ensure that justice and fair play was delivered to the people of Ghana...”²⁷¹ A typical example of the incessant calls on the religious bodies can be cited when on *Adom* FM, on Sunday, 9th December, 2012 when the EC had still not declared the results, Clement Apak was heard on air saying, “I am calling on all the top bishops - Duncan Williams, Mensah Otobil, Emmanuel Asante and even *Otumfour*²⁷², yes, leadership must speak before things get out of hand...”

This and many of such incessant calls made the religious bodies and the civil society groups take the move they took to ensure the stability of the nation. This goes to say that the Clergy through the bodies (CCG, CBC, NCS, Ghana Baptist Convention, Ghana Pentecostal Council

²⁶⁹Joseph Osei Bonsu, the President of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference, interviewed by the researcher, Konongo Catholic Parish, March, 20, 2014.

²⁷⁰Joseph Osei Bonsu.

²⁷¹Emmanuel Kwaku Asante, the Presiding bishop of the Methodist Church -Ghana, 7th March, 2014. In an in-depth interview with the chairman of the NPC, the Most Rev. Prof. Emmanuel Kwaku Asante, he revealed that after they had convinced the EC to give room for the aggrieved party to provide evidence of the purported rigging, the EC conceded for 24 hours within which the purported evidence could be brought. After the given period, the EC hinted that the evidence of the purported rigging was not substantive enough to affect the results at hand. Even though the opposition NPP was still unimpressed, they (NPC, CCG, CBC, NCS and the civil society groups) impressed on them to proceed to court for justice rather than restrain the EC from declaring the results and to delay it beyond the 72 hours stipulated by the laws of Ghana. He believed that the action they took saved this nation from plunging into turmoil. He added that he never regret for playing that role as a Clergy and a citizen of this country.

²⁷²*Otumfour* is the title for the paramount chief of the Asante Kingdom in Ghana. Otumfour Osei Tutu II the paramount chief of the Asante Kingdom is an eminent king well-known in Ghana and abroad for his wise counsel and mediatory skills.

and others) have engaged and continue to engage the State for the well-being of Ghanaians. Our concern in this study is not to examine the prophetic role of the various Christian/Church bodies but to examine the prophetic voice of the Clergy as individuals and as collectivities. Even where the various church bodies are referred to, the attention is geared toward their collective voice but not their denominational or sectional voices.

The data in Table 3.8 show that while 70 percent of the Clergy respondents prefer to speak on specific national issues when they mount the pulpit, only 47.5 of the Laity support that position. Our sample indicates that 30 percent of the Clergy and 52.5 percent of the Laity oppose it. Based on this result, one would say that the Ghanaian Clergy is gradually becoming more sensitized and daring toward the well-being of the populace. In the words of Osei Bonsu, “The Clergy must be an agent of reconciliation between God and humanity not only in religious or spiritual matters but also in political, economic and social issues”²⁷³. Another may argue that the result reveals just an inherent desire among the Clergy but its actual demonstration is far-fetched in the Church. For example, Sarfo-Kantanka says, “I believe the Politicians fear the Media than the Clergy because we are not speaking...Who is really speaking for the voiceless?”²⁷⁴ King Baddoe shares a similar opinion. He says:

The Clergy has decided to stay back. I don't know why. It's just a few individual Clergy who come out to make contributions to national discourses...May be we are afraid that we may incur the wrath of the Politicians. We are not involved that much. Even the few who get involved may be affiliated to one party or the other.²⁷⁵

Clearly King Baddoe and many like-minded Ghanaians think that effectively the Clergy has not demonstrated the willingness to be involved in the national debates on nation-building. In their handwritten remarks some of them explain that our democracy is too young and volatile.

²⁷³ Joseph Osei Bonsu.

²⁷⁴ Osei Sarfo-Kantanka. the Kumasi diocesan bishop of the Methodist Church made this observation on a programme dubbed “Kukurantumi” on Nhyira FM 104.5 on the Easter Saturday, the 30th of March, 2013. The bishop in an interview was asked to share his thoughts on “The significance of the Death and Resurrection of Christ to the Nation”

²⁷⁵ Solomon King Baddoe.

Many Ghanaians are too passionate and fanatic about their political affiliations many of whom are also members of the Church. Therefore as pastors they have to learn to walk on a fine line when making political comments on the pulpit. Others explained that the Laity has inconsistent expectations from them. Even though a section of the Laity expects the Clergy to share their views on issues that come to the state, suffice to say that for many of these people the kind of involvement they are prescribing for the Clergy may not include criticizing the economic mismanagement and the bad policies of the government they support. That is a 'No go area'. If a Clergy happens to have a congregation where majority are sympathizers of the strongest opposition party, then he is sure to be encouraged to criticize the ruling party, but if it happens to be the other way round, then he is not expected to be prophetic in his ministry lest he would be accused of dabbling in politics. Honestly, these inconsistent expectations screw up some of the Clergy and leave others in a state of indecision.

The Clergy in Ghana could learn a great deal from the prophetic role of Jeremiah. Our study of the text in Jeremiah 1:5-10 has revealed that the prophet Jeremiah was called by God to have his eyes upon the nations, and to predict their destruction, or restoration, according as their conduct was bad or good. He was not to timidly or servilely flatter men, or to show indulgence to their lusts and passions. Consequently, he was encouraged by God to be magnanimous in spirit.

We have noted in this study that the prophetic voice implies being a social critic with the word of God as a tool. Also, it means becoming critical on national policies that are not in keeping with the will of God and encouraging those policies that are in keeping with the will of God. In this case we see no difference between the prophetic voice of the prophet Jeremiah and that of the Clergy in Ghana with the exception of the setting. The Clergy is required by

God and the society to speak against the rot and encourage the good in the governance process of the people toward the total well-being of all.

We share the same sentiment with the Director of Communications of the Convention People's Party (CPP), Nii Armah Akomfrah, that the Clergy of late have preferred platitudes even though they have the power to rebuke, discipline and correct.²⁷⁶

The data in Table 3.10 indicate that 90 percent of the Laity expects the Clergy to criticize the government when the need be. While only 70 percent of the Clergy themselves are willing to do so. Again the Clergy is more cautious than the Laity in the political arena. Osei Bonsu opines that many of the Clergy in Ghana have diverse intellectual, corporate and social backgrounds spanning from education, law, banking, business, economics, engineering, security, medicine and others which makes them well qualified to contribute meaningfully to national discourses.²⁷⁷ Table 3.2 reveals that 60 percent of the Clergy respondents have other academic and professional qualifications aside the Theological/Biblical certificates they got from the seminary. This fact cannot be denied. We agree with those who posit that the Clergy is indeed the voice of the voiceless and the conscience of society. They must bring their rich experiences and expertise to bear on the governance process of the nation.

The 30 percent of the Clergy who may hesitate in criticizing the government explained in their handwritten remarks that they have taken a cue from the ordeal, bashings, vilifications and castigations their fellow outspoken Clergy face when they criticize the government. Perhaps this is the reason why Kwaku Asante would unlike Bosomtwe Ayensu not criticize

²⁷⁶On the official Website of the CPP <http://www.conventionpeoplesparty.org> September, 14, 2012, [Accessed on 11th January, 2013]. Nii Armah Akomfrah commented that Ghana as a country, we appear to be living under the erroneous impression that Christian faith is exclusively a faith of soft-talking, humble-looking and tongues speaking. He further stated that if this is all that our faith offers then our faith is ineffective and incomplete.

²⁷⁷Joseph Osei Bonsu.

the government unless what they are doing is explicitly against the spirit of the word of God.²⁷⁸

However, neither the Clergy nor the Laity prefers a partisan position to be encouraged in the Church. Kwaku Asante compares the position of the Clergy to that of a chief who is supposed to unite all his subjects for development.²⁷⁹ The survey confirms that partisan politics would not be countenanced in the Church in Ghana. As can be seen from Table 3.9, 72.5 percent of the Clergy themselves are not ready to go partisan way in the discharge of their prophetic role. Similarly the Laity would normally not encourage partisanship in the Church. With 87.5 percent of the Laity ready to oppose the Clergy should they become partisan when they mount the pulpit, is a clear sign of the fact that majority of the Laity are party fanatics.

The data in Table 3.11 show that only 42.5 percent of the Clergy considers their prophetic voice to be effective while 57.5 percent of them differ. The Clergy respondents who think that the prophetic voice of the Clergy in Ghana is ineffective, is very significant since they are not oblivious of the huge responsibility they have toward the nation and God. King Baddoe minces no words by saying that the prophetic voice is largely silent.²⁸⁰ Yinkah Sarfo agrees with Baddoe, he says, “The prophetic voice is not very active, Kenya had a blood bath as well as Rwanda because the Clergy failed to speak.”²⁸¹ According to Osei Sarfo-

²⁷⁸ Emmanuel Kwaku Asante, the Presiding bishop of the Methodist Church -Ghana, March, 7, 2014. We asked the Presiding bishop to share his thought on a comment Rt. Rev. Bosomtwe Ayensu, the Methodist bishop of Obuasi diocese was reported to have made concerning how the government was managing the economic challenges of the nation. Kwaku Asante responded that it would be very difficult for him to say that “President Mahama is asleep”, because the President is not his cup of tea. He added that it was important for one to develop a tough skin before going that way at the government else the party fanatics would wear him out. He would rather look at what everybody could do to help overcome the crisis. “That would involve educating and encouraging my members to take up their civic responsibilities, and a word to a wise would be enough”. He indicated.

²⁷⁹ Emmanuel Kwaku Asante.

²⁸⁰ Solomon King Baddoe.

²⁸¹ Daniel Yinkah Sarfo.

Kantanka, the prophetic voice is undeniably silent because many of the Clergy do not want to be tagged with one party or the other in order to avoid persecution and vilification.²⁸²

In their handwritten remarks, some of the Clergy explain that the prophetic voice looks largely silent because just a few of them has access to the Media. We are of the view that quality attracts quantity. That is, it does not matter where a Clergy may find himself, if he gives a quality message especially the one that is about the well-being of the nation, the Media will be attracted. The few who have access to the Media now perhaps got it because of the role they have been playing in the nation –either they encourage the prophetic voice or discourage it publicly.

Osei Bonsu on the other hand, thinks that the prophetic voice has been effective and proactive.²⁸³ Citing the role the Christian bodies such as the CBC, CCG, Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council (GPCC), NCS and the others have been playing, he hinted that the Church through its leadership has been engaging the government on almost every sphere of the nation, but in many occasions, on the quiet.²⁸⁴

Inasmuch as we agree with those who think that the prophetic voice of the Clergy in Ghana is essentially silent, one cannot ignore the immense role the various Christian bodies have played in the democratic processes of the country since Independence especially during the 1980s repressions. However, we anticipate the feat they would have attained if the execution of their prophetic role had been done collectively, not denominationally.

²⁸²Osei Sarfo-Kantanka.

²⁸³ Joseph Osei Bonsu.

²⁸⁴ Joseph Osei Bonsu.

In Table 3.11 only 45 percent of the Laity respondents see the prophetic voice of the Clergy to be effective while 55 percent of them think otherwise. This means that both the Laity and the Clergy themselves concede that the prophetic voice of the Clergy in Ghana is silent. The Clergy is expected to do more as far as their prophetic role is concerned. The Laity expects the Clergy to be sensitive and proactive to issues that come to the state. They should know that their silence condemns the society if they claim to be the voice of the voiceless and the conscience of society.

The results in Table 3.12 is a hypothetical picture on what the respondents think may be the stands of the Clergy should they face vilifications and persecution after they have executed their prophetic role in the country. While only 27.5 percent of the Laity assumes that the Clergy may be silent, 50 percent of the Clergy themselves anticipate that they would be silent completely if they are persecuted for exercising their prophetic role in the nation. An equal 15 percent of the Clergy and Laity think that the Clergy would not be entirely silent but they would be inactive under the circumstances. However, while 57.5 percent of the Laity believes that the vilifications may cause the Clergy to become more active, only 35 percent of the Clergy themselves hope that their prophetic voice would be more active in the face of the imminent castigations and vilifications.

In their handwritten remarks on the questionnaire and during interviews, some of the Clergy explained that they would be silent or inactive because the democratic dispensation in Ghana just like elsewhere in the SSA is still young and fragile. Hence, some African politicians could be too drunk with power that they see people who do not agree with them as enemies, and are ready to wipe them out from the surface of the earth. Thus the Clergy under the circumstances ought to be wise in their political involvement. Others were categorical that

due to the inconsistent expectations from the Laity coupled with the fact that they are handicapped and ill-equipped as to how to deal with political issues in a politically sentimental and polarized nation such as ours, they have no option rather than to keep quiet.

The picture painted by the data in Table 3.12 seems gloomy for the nation. Yinkah Sarfo feared that an inactive prophetic voice would plunge the nation into a plague.²⁸⁵ Kwaku Asante also thinks that if the prophetic voice becomes silent, it would not augur well for the nation.²⁸⁶ He explained further that if the people who are supposed to be the voice of the voiceless and the voice of God decline to speak, the devil will speak and evil will carry the day.²⁸⁷

Consequently, the Laity (57.5 percent) expects the prophetic voice of the Clergy to be more active after being harangued by the politicians. In their handwritten remarks on the questionnaire, the Laity explained that their anticipation for the prophetic voice of the Clergy to be more active is based on the fact that the Clergy come across as a formidable class in the society who cannot be easily scared by any politician through vilifications and propaganda. They believe that the Clergy are powerful and influential people in the society leading a large mass (71 percent) of the people. As a result, one would say that the Laity's point of view that the Clergy ought to be more active in their prophetic role in the face of vilifications is very legitimate.

Some other Clergy have declared their intention to damn the consequences and make the prophetic voice more active in the face of any persecution from the politicians. With those sampled, 35 percent of the Clergy in Ghana is poised to make their voices louder on national issues in order to ensure the total well-being of the larger society. Kwaku Kwarteng is of the

²⁸⁵ Daniel Yinkah Sarfo.

²⁸⁶ Emmanuel Kwaku Asante.

²⁸⁷ Emmanuel Kwaku Asante.

view that if the prophetic voice is not contested then it ceases to be the voice of God.²⁸⁸ He added that the Clergy who speak the truth are not perturbed by what people say about them.²⁸⁹ According to Osei Sarfo-Kantanka, the Clergy would continue to confront the state to ensure that the populace especially the middle-class and the down-trodden are fairly treated.²⁹⁰ He added that any Clergy who attempts to exercise his prophetic role in a state such as ours should have the guts to withstand the vilifications and the persecutions from the leaders of the state.²⁹¹ King Baddoe too said “The insults and the vilifications should cause the clergy to speak the more as Jeremiah did.”²⁹² This accordingly implies that to a segment of the Clergy, they consider their continued activeness in the political arena from a moral and social justice point of view.

External Assessment of the prophetic voice of the Clergy

The educational role of the Clergy seems to be largely uncontested by all the respondents. As can be seen from Table 3.6, 60 percent, 82.5 percent and 90 percent of the General Public, Media and the Politicians respectively agree that the Clergy ought to educate their members on national issues. However, on the Clergy educating the members on political parties’ public policies, the results in Table 3.7 indicate slight departure on the part of the Media and Politicians. Of those sampled, 72.5 percent of the Media and 80 percent of the Politicians were in favour of that proposition indicating a 10 percent decline in the respondents’ view on the educational role of the Clergy. The Media, as it were is supposed to be neutral in many aspects of the national life. This is an attitude they may wish the Clergy to have in the political arena. The politicians on the other hand, explained that the Clergy are known to be

²⁸⁸ Kwaku Kwarteng, ‘2012 Ashanti Regional Moderator for Civic Forum Initiative, interviewed by the researcher, Emmanuel Methodist Church- Suame, March, 24, 2014.

²⁸⁹ Kwaku Kwarteng.

²⁹⁰ Osei Sarfo-Kantanka.

²⁹¹ Osei Sarfo-Kantanka.

²⁹² Solomon King Baddoe,

men of integrity in the sight of their church members. Therefore majority of the masses (at 71percent) is likely to listen to their assessment of the party policies. According to Samuel Pyne, the Clergy leads a large group of people, so they should not deny the people of their knowledge in the governance process and their understanding of the political parties' policies.²⁹³ Kwaku Boahen on the other hand opposes the Clergy that some of them cannot be trusted to share their genuine views on government policies since some are well-known sympathizers of the opposition party.²⁹⁴

This is not unusual about politicians in SSA where the ruling party usually sees their critics in a bad light whereas the opposition party commends critics who are not politicians for every criticism they give about the government. Ghana is no exception to this predictable situation. This therefore implies that the majority of the politician respondents who favour the position of the Clergy are opposition members while the remaining 20 percent who oppose that kind of education may be members of the ruling party. It is obvious that when the political table turns the outcome of the politician respondents would change. Thus, the present opposition may oppose what they are mooting today and vice versa.

The General Public respondents appreciated (62.5 percent) on the Clergy educating the Laity on the public policies of the political parties. They believe that the Clergy have a huge responsibility to educate their members who constitute about 71 percent of the population. All the respondents essentially believe that it is important for the Clergy to educate the Laity on national issues as well as the public policies of the political parties. It is instructive however to state that for many of these people the educational role of the Clergy does not include criticism of the political parties' public policies.

²⁹³ Samuel Pyne.

²⁹⁴ Kwaku Boahen.

Table 3.8 displays the responses on whether or not the Clergy is expected to use the pulpit to speak about specific national issues such as education, health, employment, corruption, justice, the economy and so on. 60 percent of the Politicians are in favour while 40 percent opposes. 72.5 percent of the General Public agrees while 27.5 percent disagrees. The Media has 80 percent in favour and 20 percent in opposition.

Some people may be surprised to realize that many of the Politicians (80-90 percent) had indicated earlier that they would favour the Clergy educational role in the country. But when it comes to the Clergy addressing specific national issues when they mount their pulpit, only 60 percent of them would agree with the Clergy. Meanwhile, the Clergy have put forward cogently that if they have to be involved in the politics of the nation they would have to use the pulpit. King Baddoe for instance says that the only place the Clergy have a voice is behind their pulpit; so the pulpit should be used to educate the Laity on what they need to know about the nation.²⁹⁵

The 40 percent of the Politicians who oppose the Clergy is significant. In their handwritten remarks some of the Politicians are of the view that the Clergy lead people with diverse political dispositions, therefore they are supposed to use the pulpit to unite the factionalized people who listen to them daily than to deepen the political cracks among the people.

However, an increasing number of the General Public (72.5 percent) supports the use of the pulpit by the Clergy to involve in the politics of the nation. The General Public is consistent with their position on the Clergy's prophetic role which includes educating the people and advocating against the wrongs and for the rights in the nation. Kusi Boafo asserts:

The Clergy can only have the luxury of time to concentrate solely on church matters as some people would want them to do if all things are going on well- socially and economically for the people. It would be better if the Clergy performed their ecclesiastical functions very well as well as made their

²⁹⁵ Solomon King Baddoe.

prophetic voice heard effectively on the governance process of the nation. Whatever is in the Bible has an implication on the economy. For instance the Clergy should extend their preaching against corruption going on in the nation because that is what is derailing the nation at the moment. The Clergy is even fortunate to have several of the people in national leadership- the President, Vice President, Finance Minister and many of the cabinet ministers, and more than half of the legislature and judiciary claiming to be Christians. What is more is that Christians constitute 71% of the population in Ghana. This clearly gives the Clergy the opportunity to hammer on corruption and other injustices going on in the nation.²⁹⁶

The General Public as well as the Media has huge expectations from the Clergy. They believe that the Clergy has what it takes to help correct the ills as well as promote what is right in the society. That is if the Politicians remain petty and dishonest in their dealings with the populace, the Clergy is expected by the masses to serve as the moral conscience and social advocates of the nation.

Inasmuch as majority of all the categories of the respondents agree that the Clergy has the mandate to be involved in the politics of the nation, a large number of them would not prefer partisan positions from the Clergy. The results in Table 3.9 show that while 90 percent of the General Public says No, only 10 percent says, Yes. The Media records 82.5 percent No, and 17.5 percent Yes. The Politicians on the other hand, has 62.5 percent against and only 37.5 percent in favour.

The result from the Politicians is consistent with that of Table 3.8 where majority (60 percent) of them would wish that the Clergy stay out of politics entirely. One would therefore not expect a contradictory response from them on whether or not the Clergy should speak on specific national issues in a partisan way. However, it is surprising to note that as many as 37.5 percent of them endorses a partisan position from the Clergy. What do they stand to achieve?

²⁹⁶ Thomas Kusi Bofo, A chartered Accountant, A Lecturer and A Social Commentator, interviewed by the researcher, Residence at Afrancho, March, 24, 2014.

In their handwritten remarks some of the politicians wrote that many of the church members whose source of information and sense of judgement depends on their pastors due to their low educational level could be saved from being enticed with money by unscrupulous politicians. This argument appears to be too superfluous and simplistic since we cannot guarantee that all Clergy in Ghana will be sacrosanct in their active partisan politics.

On hindsight, one may say that a segment of the politicians who suggest that the Clergy should be involved in active partisan politics are as it were just being smart. They have a philosophy that politics is about numbers –winning a group of Clergy to one’s side politically, would essentially mean winning majority of their church members. In this way, one would conclude that the suggestion of these politicians that the Clergy should be partisan in their involvement in politics is not purely pragmatic but for political expediency.

The issue becomes more complex when one considers the fact that majority (62.5 percent) of the Politicians are not in favour of such proposition and the reality on the ground that there are counter accusations of some outspoken Clergymen being affiliated to one party or the other in this country. According to Samuel Pyne the Clergy should be involved in speaking about the mismanagement of national facilities but they should not take partisan positions like Duncan Williams²⁹⁷ has always been doing for the NDC²⁹⁸. Kwaku Boahen on the other hand says the Clergy has the right to be involved in educating people to take up their civic roles in order to help build the nation but they should not be partisan in their comments²⁹⁹. He

²⁹⁷ Duncan Williams, the founder of the Action Chapel International has been tagged as a member of the ruling NDC since somewhere 1992. Recently, when the nation’s currency (Cedi) value began to fall, it was reported by the Media that he held a Cedi and prayed to restore its potency. A segment of the people especially the opposition was unimpressed. They vilified him the least chance they had on radio, TV and in newspapers, telling him to call his people in national positions who are mismanaging the economy to order rather than praying for the Cedi and blaming the crises on spiritual forces.

²⁹⁸ Samuel Pyne.

²⁹⁹ Kwaku Boahen.

quickly hinted that some Clergy such as Mensah Otabil³⁰⁰, Asante Antwi and Bosomtwe Ayensu³⁰¹ display their NPP colours in their comments.³⁰²

Indeed the political arena in Ghana is quite hostile to the Clergy. Therefore it would be difficult for one to accept that these politicians who indicate that the Clergy should go to the length of being partisan in their political involvement say this with all sincerity.

We agree with the 72.5 percent of the Clergy themselves who think that they should not be involved in the partisan politics of the nation. However, 27.5 percent of them have indicated their readiness to get involved in the partisan politics of the nation. Perhaps, they should take the advice of Nana Yaw Sarfoh. He says, if the Clergy flirts with the political parties, it will weaken their prophetic voice and the politicians would take the whole country for a ride³⁰³.

The Clergy should play a mediatory role. They should be the watchmen over the nation. Their political involvement should be likened to a thermometer, telling exactly the condition of the nation as and when necessary.

³⁰⁰ Pastor Mensah Otabil, the General Overseer of the International Christian Gospel Centre has been tagged as a member of the opposition NPP way back in President Rawlings' regime. On several occasions he has shared his views on the economic situation in the country some of which the ruling NDC faithful have been repugnant. Recently, when Archbishop Duncan Williams was reported to have prayed for the Ghana Cedi to rise, it was reported by the Media that Pastor Mensah Otabil, in a sermon had said that no amount of prayer could cause the Cedi to rise if the economic managers of the nation did not ensure physical discipline and best financial practices. Obviously, his comment was interpreted by the ruling party communicators as a direct response to the prayer of Duncan Williams and consequently received bashings from the NDC as being part of the opposition NPP in cassock.

³⁰¹ Bosomtwe Ayensu, the Obuasi Diocesan bishop of the Methodist Church- Ghana in the wake of the economic difficulties coupled with the increments in the utility bills, commented among other things that he assumed that President Mahama was sleeping, and if he and his economic team did not wake up to work hard to fix the economy, he, the bishop and others would organize a mammoth demonstration against the government because the ordinary Ghanaian was suffering unduly. The bishop's comment did not go down well with the NDC vigilantes, so they descended on him heavily with insults because they felt he could not have said that if he had not been an anti-government or opposition member. In an interview with the Presiding bishop of the Methodist Church- Ghana, The Most Rev. Prof. Emmanuel Kwaku Asante, he expressed dissatisfaction in bishop Ayensu's comment. He described the statement as unfortunate. He said it would be difficult for him to get up one day and say President Mahama was sleeping...and because of that he had called and advised bishop Ayensu to be circumspect about his comments because some people could organize a bloody riot and implicate the bishop to be the one to have masterminded it because of what he said.

³⁰² Kwaku Boahen.

³⁰³ Nana Yaw Sarfoh.

The data in Table 3.10 show that 87.5 percent of the General Public respondents want the Clergy to criticize the government if the need be while 12.5 percent of them differ. While 100 percent of the Media encourage the Clergy in Ghana to criticize the government, only 50 percent of the Politicians agree.

The General Public has been largely consistent in their position on the prophetic voice of the Clergy. They have massively supported the Clergy role in educating their members on national issues as well as the public policies of the political parties. Many of them have also mooted for the Clergy to use the pulpit to address specific national issues as well as criticize the leaders of the nation. However, they have advised against the Clergy involving in active partisan politics in the nation. The General Public respondents are well aware of the fact that majority of the populace are of the illiterate folk and to a large extent, middle class whose voices are hardly loud when they are suffering. They consider the Clergy to have a powerful voice per their status in the society and the access they have to the Media. Therefore to encourage them to speak for the voiceless masses in the nation is crucial. Kusi Boafo is very straight forward at saying, “The Church is the last resort when the leaders of the nation fail us.”³⁰⁴ This means that when the government disappoints the people, the Church led by the Clergy will be the only formidable body to advocate for the good of all in the nation.

Considering the relatively inconsistent nature of the Media respondents, one could say that the undissenting view (100 percent) on the Clergy criticizing the government might be for convenience. That is, they are suggesting this so that they would always have sensational news³⁰⁵ to carry. Other than that, one would wonder why 20 percent of them in Table 3.8

³⁰⁴ Thomas Kusi Boafo.

³⁰⁵ In Ghana it seems items of news on insults, mouth-slitting, castigations, unpolished political exchanges and stuff like that sell better than informative news. Many Media practitioners over-stress on sensationalism in the society more than education, information and advocacy.

suggested that the Clergy should not be involved in the politics of the nation and on another breath expect them to criticize the government.

Be it as it may, majority (70 percent) of the Clergy is poised to make the prophetic voice effective and efficient. The 30 percent of the Clergy themselves who have declined not to criticize the government has been consistent. That is, the same percentage (30) indicated that they were not going to teach the Laity on national issues, public policies of parties; and also not use the pulpit to address specific national issues. They simply think that the Clergy ought to concentrate only on ecclesiastical and spiritual matters; they are not to meddle in the issues of the state. This is a position Kwaku Asante has described as a Gnostic perception of religion where everything is reduced to spirit.³⁰⁶

Some of these Clergy stated on the questionnaire that they do not find the involvement of the Clergy clearly stated in the Bible. Others too indicated that few scriptural verses that allude to the political participation of the Clergy are essentially vague. That is, some scripture verses endorse political involvement, others frown at it.

Assuming without admitting that scripture is uncertain on whether or not the Clergy has the right to engage in a national discourse, one would say that the 70 percent Clergy respondents who have expressed the willingness to be involved in what goes on in the state should be encouraged without condemning the 30 percent for their position. In the light of this, we anticipate that the segment of the Clergy who have differing position on their role in the state would assess the relevance of the Bible if it was not meant to holistically affect the society within which it operates.

³⁰⁶Emmanuel Kwaku Asante.

Our findings seem to confirm our assertion that the Clergy has been called to undertake a holistic ministry –using the whole scripture to transform the whole being of the individual and the society as a whole. The Prophet Jeremiah did not have any political position in the nation but as the spokesperson of God (prophet) he had divine authority to help the right and fight the wrong. He was set over the nations not to demand kickbacks from them in order to compromise the prophetic voice, but “to root out and pull down, destroy and overthrow, and to build and plant.”³⁰⁷ The Clergy in Ghana like Jeremiah was in Judah is mandated by God to reform the nation with the word of God which is for cleansing. They are supposed to use constructive criticisms to expose and attempt to stamp out vicious habits as well as all forms of corruption that have plagued the nation. Also, the Clergy is expected to establish and or encourage virtue in the nation.

However, there is a sharp conflicting view (50 percent, Yes; 50 percent, No) from the Politicians on whether or not the Clergy should criticize the government. Samuel Pyne for instance agrees with the proposition that the Clergy should criticize the government. He says:

Biblically, the men of God –Old Samuel, Nathan, Elijah, Jeremiah and the likes got actively involved in the governance process of their nation. Religious leaders should not leave politics to the Politicians. If the Clergy decline from speaking against the wrongs of the society, those very wrongs will confront them in church. If the economic policy and mismanagement in the nation create poverty for the citizenry, greater part of the shock will be on the Church.³⁰⁸

Pyne is obviously one of the Politicians who think that the Clergy has a biblical mandate to play their role as social critics. He simply thinks that the Clergy keeps silent on issues of the nation at their own peril since it is not likely for them to have a different economy from the rest of the people in the nation. To Kwaku Boahen, leadership comes from God so those Clergy called by God would naturally not speak against genuine leaders chosen by God. He says:

³⁰⁷ Jeremiah 1:10
³⁰⁸ Samuel Pyne.

Some Clergy are not called by God. Some are called by Satan. Others too called themselves because of money; for that matter if they criticize the government chosen by God and Ghanaians, we too will criticize them. Bible indicates that no one is perfect. Many of these Clergy are not perfect so when they make comments on what government does, we have the right to criticize them.³⁰⁹

Kwaku Boahen is also one of the Politicians who prefer the Clergy to stay out of politics especially on being critical on the government. He indicates that those Clergy who desire to criticize the government should bear in mind that they too are going to be criticized by the Politicians about their criticism.

We assume that these two variant (50 -50) positions by the Politicians may just be for political expediency. It is likely for the opposition politicians in Ghana at the time of the study to indicate their support for the Clergy who lead about 71 percent of the population to criticize the ruling government so that the larger number of the voters would lose hope in the government thereby giving one of the opposition parties a chance. Ghana is going through serious economic hardships. There have already been several labour unrests in the country. Cases of corruption involving some government functionaries are all over the place. It is only natural to expect the ruling party members to assume a defensive position especially, to do all that they could to screw up powerful people such as the Clergy. The position of the Politicians would obviously change on whether or not the Clergy should criticize the government when the tides turn. That is, the present opposition members may descend on the Clergy with insults if they come to power and are criticized by the Clergy while the current ruling party members in opposition may back and call on the Clergy to criticize the government in power.

The results in Table 3.11 indicate that the respondents think that the prophetic voice of the Clergy is largely ineffective in Ghana. Among the Clergy respondents themselves, only 42.5

³⁰⁹Kwaku Boahen.

percent think that the prophetic voice is active. 55 percent of the General Public believes that the prophetic voice is ineffective whereas only 45 percent of them think otherwise.

The General Public monitors the Media landscape to find out and assess the inputs the Clergy make in the governance process of the nation. In their assessment, 55 percent of them have marked the Clergy down.

The Media respondents split at 50 percent each in favour or against the activeness of the prophetic voice of the Clergy in Ghana. The Media is obviously sharply divided in their perception about the prophetic voice of the Clergy. This sharp division and indecisive view of the Media was clear when Nana Yaw Sarfoh was asked to give his personal assessment on the effectiveness of the prophetic voice of the Clergy in Ghana. He simply says, “There is more room for improvement for the prophetic voice of the Clergy in Ghana.”³¹⁰ This means that to a segment of the Media, the prophetic voice is not completely silent but it is not effective. To scrutinize the handwritten remarks of some of the Clergy who think that the prophetic voice is active, one would see that almost all of them said that the prophetic voice is effective based on the activeness of the same few Clergy the politicians have tagged to be members of NPP and NDC. Many of them cited Mensah Otabil, Duncan Williams, Bosomtwe Ayensu, Emmanuel Martey (the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana) to point out that the prophetic voice is active. Some few others mentioned Emmanuel Asante, Opuni-Frimpong and Osei Sarfo-Kantanka.

One may argue that these Clergy cited by the Media are known to be active just because they have access to the Media. We argue that if some Clergy are known to be active prophetically just because they have access to the Media, then the prophetic voice of the Clergy ought to

³¹⁰ Nana Yaw Sarfoh.

have been more effective because there are more Clergymen whose church services are aired live on TV and radio across the country every week than we hear the sermons and comments of the Clergy the Media have mentioned.

The Clergy all over the country are expected by majority of Ghanaians to be prophetic to ensure the general well-being of all. One does not need to be in the capital towns before he could make his prophetic ministry affect the nation. The Clergy ministering in cities, towns, villages, and hamlets in the nation, are expected not to fail the people within which they minister. They should use the word of God in a holistic manner to impart on the holistic life of the people. According to Kusi Boafo the Clergy is expected to lead at least the 71 percent who constitute Christian population in the country to demand accountability from the national leaders, many of whom profess to be Christians and patronize the church services the Clergy lead.³¹¹ This is in keeping with the view of Osei Sarfo-Kantanka who posits that periodically the Clergy should come together to review the state of the State and come out to exercise their prophetic voice.³¹² Kwaku Asante on the other hand, sees this view as impossible since each of the Clergy has their individual undeclared political sympathies coupled with doctrinal differences.³¹³

Well, be it as it may, we look forward to seeing the Clergy for once come together for the common good of the people. If the Clergy who claim to be the conscience of society and the voice of the voiceless cannot come together to seek the well-being of the people due to their doctrinal and political differences, then what example could they leave for some of these self-

³¹¹ Thomas Kusi Boafo.

³¹² Osei Sarfo-Kantanka, the Kumasi diocesan bishop of the Methodist Church made this observation on a programme dubbed “Kukurantumi” on Nhyira FM 104.5 on the Easter Saturday, the 30th of March, 2013. The bishop in an interview was asked to share his thoughts on “The significance of the Death and Resurrection of Christ to the Nation”

³¹³ Emmanuel Kwaku Asante.

centered and self-seeking politicians in SSA at large and Ghana in particular? However, Kwaku Asante explains that in some cases some of the Clergy have and could come together on specific national issues especially with the bodies such as the CBC, NCS and CCG but to have the individual Clergy coming together on an issue to say, “This is the collective voice of the Clergy” will be impossible in a political dispensation such as we have in Ghana.³¹⁴

The Politicians’ view on the effectiveness of the prophetic voice is not surprising. Only 27.5 percent of them think the prophetic voice is effective while 72.5 percent believes that the prophetic voice is inactive. In a situation as we find ourselves in Ghana where the Politicians have conflicting expectations from the Clergy, one would conclude that the opposition may expect the Clergy to be unduly critical on the ruling government, so anything short of that expectation would make the opposition give a low mark for the prophetic voice of the Clergy. Nii Armah Akomfrah for instance lamented that the Religious Leaders in Ghana have been dormant for far too long³¹⁵. Smart Frempah, a member of the NPP Communication Team also indicated that African religious leaders have failed Africa by keeping quiet on the political developments in our nations and as a result we could be ruled by fools.³¹⁶

Another reason that might have accounted for the 72.5 percent politician respondents to say that the prophetic voice of the Clergy is ineffective is that half of the Politicians have already indicated that the Clergy has no mandate to criticize the government. One may conclude that for such politicians, if the Clergy happen to be too critical on the government, their action could be regarded as a failure on the part of the Clergy. A case in point is the comment made

³¹⁴Emmanuel Kwaku Asante.

³¹⁵ The General Secretary of the Convention People’s Party made this statement on the party’s official Website, <http://www.Conventionpeople’sparty.org>. According to him the Religious Leaders have preferred platitudes when they have the power to rebuke, discipline and forcefully correct.[Accessed on 11th January, 2013].

³¹⁶Smart Frempah made this comment on [http:// www.myjoyonline.com](http://www.myjoyonline.com) on 2nd August, 2012 at 12:46pm.

by Richard Quashigah, the National Propaganda Secretary of the ruling NDC that the Church is a symbol of morality in the society and must not be seen to be meddling in politics.³¹⁷

Indeed, the Politicians have a conflicting and dishonest expectation from the Clergy when it comes to exercising their prophetic voice. The ruling party would not want the Clergy to criticize the government. The opposition on the other hand would wish that the Clergy criticizes the government unduly in order to help their cause of wresting power from them. However, this study defines the prophetic voice of the Clergy in the light of their role as social critics. The prophetic voice of the Clergy is not a political tool. It is the conscience of society, voice of the voiceless, and an instrument of positive change through protest and advocacy with scripture as its foundation.

Since as many as 70 percent of the Clergy has indicated their willingness to be prophetic (criticize the government) coupled with 50 percent of the Politicians who are going to be uncomfortable with such a move by the Clergy (as can be seen from Table 3.10), one would expect a show down in the political arena in Ghana in the years ahead.

This assumption makes our hypothetical assessment on the attitude the Clergy may put up in the face of the imminent vilifications, bashings and castigations from the Politicians valid.

The data in Table 3.12 show that while 45 percent of the Politicians assume that if they bash the Clergy for being prophetic they will be silent, 50 percent of the Clergy themselves think likewise. Also, when 35 percent of the Politicians felt that the prophetic voice will be at best inactive, 15 percent of the Clergy themselves concurred.

³¹⁷ Richard Quashigah made this remark on *Asempa FM's Ekosii sen?* Programme, published on <http://www.myjoyonline.com> on 14th September, 2012. He made this comment after Asiedu Nketiah, the General Secretary of the NDC had publicly told the Clergy who happened to share their views on the creation of the 45 new Constituencies ahead of the 2012 General Elections in Ghana to take their Bible and leave the Constitution for the Politicians to handle.

Now, to consider the two unfortunate situations (silent or inactive) the prophetic voice is likely to fall into, one would deduce that while 80 percent of the Politicians anticipate that their bashings and vilifications could cause the prophetic voice to become silent or inactive, 65 percent of the Clergy themselves have conceded that possibility.

Indeed, this is enough motivation for political party *vigilantes* and *serial callers* to engage the more, in the politics of insults and vindictiveness. Thomas Kusi-Boafo asserts:

Most of the political parties in Ghana have established machinery called *Party Vigilantes* who are quick to bash on critics. It is a small wing of the party who get their bread and butter from bashing and vilifying critics. They make sure that their political parties and candidates are protected. In fact they treat their party like a religion.³¹⁸

This means that so long as the Politicians remain confident that if they severely bash on the Clergy who become critical on the leaders of the nation, they are likely to succeed in screwing up many of them, then they have no option than to organize to make that a strong political tool against their critics. Nana Yaw Sarfoh also alleges, “Some of the Clergy have compromised their prophetic voice –they have been influenced by the Politicians. In a situation like that, how could they criticize, admonish and correct a system legally handled by the Politicians?...the Politicians are well aware of the shortcomings of the Clergy that is why they do not listen to them but rather bash them when they speak.”³¹⁹

Even though 65 percent of the Clergy themselves think that the prophetic voice will be either silent or inactive in the face of persecution, the General Public maintains their huge confidence in the Clergy in Ghana to be more active in the governance process of the people. While 75 percent of them trust that the Clergy will be more effective in the discharge of their prophetic role, only 25 percent of them anticipate that the prophetic voice of the Clergy may

³¹⁸ Thomas Kusi Boafo.

³¹⁹ Nana Yaw Sarfoh.

be silent or inactive if the vilifications of the Politicians become severe. In their handwritten remarks on the questionnaire, the General Public sees the Clergy as a formidable group of people who cannot be easily terrified by the Politicians.

The Clergy in Ghana indeed has a track record in their firmness when they have to ensure that justice is delivered to the people. One would recall that during the severe repressions inherent in the Rawlings' 1980s regime, the Clergy in Ghana was one of the few classes of people who persistently condemned the brutalities until Ghana was freed from the military rule to a democratic rule.

The General Public simply thinks that the Clergy has the capacity to do the same today and in future as they did in the past.

The percentage of the Media respondents who look forward to seeing the prophetic voice rendered silent or inactive in the face of vilifications is quite close to that of the Politicians. While 80 percent of the Politicians have that anticipation, 75 percent of the Media too have the same view of the prophetic voice. One would assert that the Media is one body that knows to some extent the dealings of both the Clergy and the Politicians. This result could imply that the Media is aware of the weaknesses of the Clergy. In fact, 65 percent of the Clergy themselves have admitted their weaknesses. This goes to say that some Media persons out of mischief would as it were always want to create tension between the Politicians and the Clergy. Many at times it is the Media that goes to the Clergy to sample their views on the problems going on in the country. Afterwards they give the party serial callers and vigilantes a platform to assess the views of the Clergy sampled. This is how the bashing and the vilifications begin in the Ghanaian political arena.

If this is how hostile and capricious the political environment is to the Clergy, how could they make their prophetic voice still active and effective in order to help build the nation?

The data in Table 3.13 show that none of the Media respondents would prefer that the Clergy just remain silent and pray when they feel repugnant about an issue in the state. 22.5 percent of the Media wants the Clergy to pray and speak to the authorities in the nation quietly. Whereas 77.5 percent of them encourage the Clergy to pray, speak quietly to the authorities and if necessary confront them publicly for the right things to be done.

The position of the Media respondents on this issue is consistent with the one they took in Table 3.10 where 100 percent of them agreed that the Clergy should criticize the leaders of the state for the total well-being of the people. Nana Yaw Sarfoh agrees with the respondents but advises that the Clergy should plan, research and organize themselves well before they come out to speak their mind on national issues and debates.³²⁰ He added that they ought to speak the truth of the matter in question whether or not it affects their political favourites.³²¹

The General Public is not different from the Media in terms of consistency on what the Clergy should do when they feel repugnant about an issue in the state. While only the 12.5 percent of them who were of the view that the Clergy should concentrate on spiritual matters; they should not get critical on the government as shown in Table 3.10, has as it were in Table 3.13 indicated that the Clergy should only pray and be silent on issues of the nation. 22.5 percent and 65 percent of the respondents say the Clergy should not just pray and remain silent but rather they should go ahead to speak to the leaders quietly and if it becomes necessary, they should publicly confront those leaders of the nation in order to help deliver

³²⁰ Nana Yaw Sarfoh.

³²¹ Nana Yaw Sarfoh.

justice, accountability and total well-being for the people. Kusi Boafo opines that just as the Clergy devote time to fast and pray for the leaders of the nation, they should also find time to study the policies the various political parties put forward in order to educate their members about them.³²² He added that the Clergy is expected to periodically come out with their position on national issues³²³.He further stated that if even in the Church, the leadership is expected to render accounts on how they manage people's offerings and tithes quarterly and annually, how much more should the Clergy not lead the 71 percent of the populace to demand accountability on the management of the nation's resources?

According to Osei Sarfo-Kantanka, the best approach is for the Clergy to execute their collective prophetic voice in the state.³²⁴ He explains:

We can make use of the various recognized Christian bodies such as the Christian Council Ghana (CCG), National Catholic Secretariat (NCS), Catholic Bishops' Conference (CBC), Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council (GPCC) and so on to make statements and issue communiqués and pastoral letters. These communiqués and pastoral letters would be discussed in our various local churches led by the Clergy in order to educate the members on the state of the nation at a given time.³²⁵

This is in keeping with the view of Kwaku Asante who perceives that the current state of the Church-State relations in Ghana will not change in the near future³²⁶. The Clergy will continue to rely on the various bodies to partner the state for nation-building. That is, any time the CCG, CBC, NCS and GPCC realizes that there is something going on wrongly in the state, and feel that they have to issue statements they will do so. He however has no hope that these various Christian bodies could regardless of their individual doctrinal and political inclinations come together in one voice to state their collective view on every political issue in Ghana.³²⁷

³²² Thomas Kusi Boafo.

³²³ Thomas Kusi Boafo.

³²⁴ Osei Sarfo-Kantanka.

³²⁵ Osei Sarfo-Kantanka.

³²⁶ Emmanuel Kwaku Asante.

³²⁷ Emmanuel Kwaku Asante.

This obviously has serious implications for the state. Witty politicians could always have their way out by employing divide and rule tactics in the governance process of the people especially, now that the Church has become a stronger force to reckon with in the political arena in terms of numbers since it constitutes 71 percent of the total population of Ghana.

We agree with the aspect of Osei Sarfo-Kantanka's view that posits that the issuance of communiqués and statements by the Christian bodies should trickle down to local churches all over the country to advance and intensify debates and discussions at the grassroots. This would reduce the speculations that surround the role these Christian bodies (CCG, CBC, NCS and others) play in the governance process in Ghana. In addition, the idea of local council of churches should be encouraged so that in the communities and villages, they can come together periodically to exercise their prophetic voice for the well-being of the people within which they operate. Opuni-Frimpong is right at saying, "The Clergy can only be said to be relevant when they take active participation in whatever concerns the people they serve."³²⁸

King Baddoe on the other hand advises the Clergy to stop the politicization of national issues in church so that the Politicians may not have the justification for bashing them.³²⁹

If by politicization of national issues, King Baddoe is talking about raising the awareness of the people in church on the state of say, the economy, rate of corruption, injustices, energy sector, transportation sector, education sector and health sector, then we differ. The Clergy has been called into a holistic ministry.

We assume that perhaps, King Baddoe's admonition to the Clergy is for them to be wary of taking partisan position when they see the need to discuss national issues in church. We say this because throughout the study, he comes across as one of the Clergy who advocates for active involvement of the Clergy in the governance process of the people. He however, does not encourage partisan politics from the Clergy

³²⁸Opuni-Frimpong.

³²⁹ Solomon King Baddoe.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Summary of Findings

The study was intended to examine the interplay between the Church and politics.

In order to understand the biblical mandate alluded to by the Clergy, an exegesis of the text in Jeremiah 1:5-10 was employed. In addition to that a survey and in-depth interviews were conducted to present a fair assessment on the Prophetic Voice of the Clergy in Ghana.

In the course of the study it was discovered from the Internal Assessment that majority of the Christian respondents (Clergy and Laity) denied that the Clergy belong to the various political parties and therefore influence the Laity during national elections. However, 15 percent of the Clergy desire to be affiliated to political parties. The External Assessment is also on the side of the Clergy except the Politician respondents (80 percent) who accuse the Clergy as members of the opponents' political party. Yet, the number of the respondents (Media, 42.5percent; General Public, 45 percent) who see the Clergy to be partisan based on their comments is quite significant.

The Clergy has a two-dimension educational role. That is teaching and advocacy. The Internal Assessment shows that the Laity (80 percent) expects the Clergy to educate them on political parties' public policies to enable them to be better informed. The Clergy (70 percent) is also poised to educate the members on government policies. However, while only 20 percent of the Laity opposes it, 30 percent of the Clergy oppose their own prophetic role.

The view of the Clergy and Laity on educational role of the Clergy is uncontested by the Media, Politicians and General Public even though when it comes to education on public

policies of political parties, we observed a slight departure (10 percent) on the part of the politicians and Media.

On the Clergy being critical on government policies, majority of the Laity expects much from the Clergy in terms of advocacy; meanwhile, 30 percent of the Clergy themselves were reluctant. Even though all the Media, Politician and General Public respondents agree to the Clergy educating the Laity and speaking on national issues, the Politicians hold a conflicting (50 percent Yes, 50 percent No) view about the Clergy criticizing the government of the day. In addition to that the study shows that generally, majority of all the categories of respondents agree that the Clergy could use the pulpit to address national issues, in like manner, majority advises against partisanship on the part of the Clergy when they mount the pulpit. However, it is worth noting that 37.5 percent of the Politicians would prefer the Clergy to be partisan.

Assessing the prophetic voice of the Clergy currently, the Clergy and the Laity themselves acknowledge that it is essentially silent. However, the Christian bodies (CCG, NCS, CBC etc.) have been doing well. This observation is confirmed by the Media, Politicians and General Public.

Consequently, the Politicians anticipate strongly that if *party vigilantes* continue to bash the Clergy the prophetic voice will remain silent. Majority of the Media share the same view. Surprisingly, the Clergy themselves concede this view of the Politicians. The General Public and the Laity on the other hand, have huge confidence in the Clergy that regardless of the vilifications they would stand for the nation.

5.1 Conclusion

SSA is arguably the most religious region in the world, as well as the region facing the most profound difficulties...³³⁰ If the mission of Christians is to become for the world the light and the salt, one would wonder how relevant Christians may be if they have no desire and programme to step into the world and diffuse it with their strong moral principles. It is therefore not out of place for the Church in SSA to strive to be at the centre of the organization and decision-making process that ensures the total well-being of people.

This study has examined the prophetic voice of the Clergy in Ghana on nation-building. We explained nation-building as a process whereby diverse views of the citizenry are harnessed and incorporated into the collective decision-making process for the total well-being of the people in a nation.

Prophetic voice on the other hand could be explained as a religious attempt or response to use the word of God as a measuring rod to evaluate, educate (criticize) and transform the total well-being of the individual and the nation as a whole. In the light of this, we have discovered through the exegesis on Jeremiah 1:5-10 that Christians as a whole and the Clergy in particular have a biblical mandate to engage in rhetoric that is geared toward building of consensus to harness the collective thoughts for nation-building.

In this study, we have argued against separation of church and state and have advocated for massive positive political participation (PPP) of all citizens especially the Clergy. This is so because Christians claim to be the heirs of God. If Christians being ‘sons’ of God inherit all that God has, then it is only proper for them to ensure that God’s resources are not mismanaged.

³³⁰ Manglos and Weinreb, “Religion and Interest in Politics,” 214.

It is clear from the study that the Prophet Jeremiah was commissioned by God to take dominion or rule over the nations in and around Judah. We rule people with words. The prophet was to evaluate the state of the state in the light of the word of God. He was expected to criticize policies and actions and inactions that were not in keeping with the will of God as well as encourage policies and deeds that were in keeping with the will of God. As a result the Clergy in Ghana are chosen by God among the people to serve Him and their neighbours.

The survey and the in-depth interview conducted indicate that the Clergy in Ghana who are leading the various Christian bodies are gradually becoming more assertive in the political arena. However, the individual Clergy's prophetic voice seems essentially silent or inactive due to the vilifications and bashings that sometimes come with it. All the respondents encourage the Clergy to be more active in their prophetic role. However, the Clergy, engaging in partisan politics would not be countenanced in Ghana. Conversely, 27.5 percent of the Clergy have indicated their desire to influence the Laity to make decisions during national elections. Also, 15 percent of them have expressed their wish to be affiliated to political parties in the country. This undoubtedly, implies that the perception from a section of Ghanaians that some clergymen in Ghana indeed indulge in partisan politics in camera is quite material. But it is a fact that in Ghana, politicians treat with contempt clergymen perceived to be partisan in their political participation. This makes partisanship a 'No go area' for the Clergy. The 37.5 percent of the Politicians who advocate for the Clergy to become partisan may only be for political expediency but not pragmatic.

Another finding in this study is that politicians in opposition normally encourage strong groups such as the Clergy to appear critical to the government while those in government will

always defensively vilify the Clergy when they perform their prophetic role. But if the mantle of power falls on the opposition party, their attitude toward the prophetic voice changes –they become hostile just as the previous government functionaries were. This is one of the reasons why some clergymen become accused of being in bed with some parties. In fact, this behaviour of the Politicians makes them unreliable and inconsistent. The study shows that the Politicians have conflicting view about the Clergy criticizing the government. It could be interpreted as the fact that the Politicians have inconsistent expectations from the Clergy.

Now, we foresee a show down in the ensuing years since 70 percent of the Clergy in Ghana have declared that they are poised to become critical on the governance process of the nation while 50 percent of the Politicians are bent on persecuting them.

We have also discovered that the Clergy are likely to use the pulpit to address national issues. However some politicians appear to be afraid of that. In that case the Politicians are as it were likely to adopt defensive mechanisms especially, bashing and vilification to screw the Clergy up since majority of the Clergy themselves have disclosed that they would keep quiet if they are vilified.

This has serious implications for the nation. If the prophetic voice becomes silent, witty politicians would always have their way to subject the people into serious hardships. It will also give room for corruption to wear its ugly head in the state. The Church will eventually lose its relevance in SSA.

Throughout this study we have had a conviction that Ghana as a nation belongs to God, therefore its well-being should be paramount to God's children who are potential heirs. This goes to say that we are of the view that politics is a good thing. But its participation should be

done positively from the angle of a good citizen. Christians stand a better chance of handling God's nation and its resources. This does not mean that we advocate for only Christian national leaders but we mean that if a nation gets majority of the people managing government business to profess to be Christians as it is the case in Ghana now, then good governance, transparency and accountability should not elude the people.

We look forward to seeing prospective researchers examine the prophetic voice of the Clergy in making a National Development Agenda a reality in Ghana. They could also look at the prophetic voice of the Clergy on Tribal Sentiments in the Political Arena and also, the Effect of the Islamic *Dawa* (public preaching) on Nation-building.

5.2 Recommendations

- We recommend that Theological/Religious Institutions should consider introducing Public Theology to help train the Clergy to function effectively in the nation.
- That there should be a Ghana Bishops' Conference to speak for the Church.
- That the Clergy should not use only the pulpit but also the newspapers, TV and radio in sharing their views concerning the nation.
- That formation of local council of churches should be encouraged and their role redefined in order to bring them to the centre of the very problems facing them in their localities. That is they should become the voice of the voiceless for their communities.
- That the Clergy should be fair and consistent in their criticisms. There should not be partisanship in their approach.
- That the Clergy should research, consult, and discuss issues with one another before coming out on controversial national issues.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adebanwi, Wale. "The Clergy, Culture, and Political Conflicts in Nigeria." *African Studies Review* 53 (2010): 121 -142.
- Akoto, B.E.A, Dorothy. "Church and State: A Contemporary Understanding of The Book of Joel." in *Christianity, Mission and Ecumenism in Ghana*, edited by J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, Accra: Asempa Publishers Christian Council of Ghana, 2009.
- Asante, Emmanuel. *Culture, Politics and Development: Ethical and Theological Reflections on the Ghanaian Experience*. Ghana: Challenge Enterprise, 2007.
- Assimeng, M. *Religion and Social Change in West Africa*. Accra: Ghana University Press, 1989.
- Bewer, A. Julius. *The Prophets in the King James Version with Critical Notes*. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1949.
- Blackwood, W. Andrew, Jr. *Commentary on Jeremiah*. Texas: World Books Publishers, 1977.
- Bosomprah, Ben. "P.C.G as God's Voice for the Nation. " *Christian Messenger*, March/April, 2012.
- Campbell, E. David. "Acts of Faith: Churches and Political Engagement", *Political Behavior* 26 (2004): 155 -180.
- Craigie, Peter C., Kelly Page H. and Drinkard Joel F. Jr. *Word Biblical Commentary Volume 26: Jeremiah 1 -25*, Dallas: Texas, Word Books Publishers, (n.d)
- Deifelt, Wanda. "Advocacy, Political Participation, and Citizenship: Lutheran Contributions to Public Theology", *Dialog: A Journal of Theology* 49 (2010): 108 -114.
- Feinberg, Charles Lee. *Jeremiah: A Commentary*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1982.
- Greenberg, Moshe. *Introduction to Hebrew*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1965.
- Harrelson, Walter. *Jeremiah: Prophet to the Nations*, Chicago: The Judson Press, 1959.
- Heaton, E. W. *The Old Testament Prophets*. Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd, 1958.
- Jamieson, Robert, Fausset Andrew Robert and Brown David. *A Commentary on the Old Testament*, Michigan: Grand Rapids, 1993.
- Kamaara, Eunice. "The Role of the Christian Church in Socio-economic and Political Development in Kenya." *Journal of Third World Studies* 17 (2000): 165 -176.
- Keil, C. F. and Delitzsch F. *Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes*, Grand Rapids: Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996.
- *Commentary on the Old Testament: New Updated Edition*, Hendrickson Publishers Inc., 1996.

- Kelly, Page. *Biblical Hebrew*, WBE Publishing Company, 1965.
- Kempkey, Kristina. "The Political Relevance of Religion in Africa", *SAIS*, 17 (2011).
- Kudadjie, J. N., and Aboagye-Mensah, R. *Christian Social Ethics*. Accra: Asempa Publishers Christian Council of Ghana, 1991.
- Manglos, D. Nicolette, and Weinreb, A. Alexander. "Religion and Interest in Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa", *Social Forces* 92 (2013): 195 -219.
- M^cGuire, Meredith. *Religion: The Social Context*, Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1981.
- NIV Study Bible (Fully Revised)*, Michigan: Zondervan, 2002.
- Okyerefo, K. P. Michael, et al., "Religion as a tool in strengthening the democratic process in Ghana". *Journal of African Studies and development* 3 (2011): 124 -142.
- Opuni-Frimpong, K. *Indigenous Knowledge & Christian Missions: Perspectives of Akan Leadership Development*, Accra: SonLife Press, 2012.
- Phiri, Isaac. "Why African Churches Preach Politics: The Case of Zambia", *Journal of Church and State* 41 (1999): 323 -347.
- "Proclaiming Peace and Love: A New Role for Churches in African Politics", *Journal of Church and State* 42 (2000): 781 -802.
- Pobee, S. John. *Religion and Politics in Ghana*. Accra: Asempa Publishers Christian Council of Ghana, 1991.
- Kwame Nkrumah and the Church 1949 -1966*, Accra: Asempa Publishers Christian Council of Ghana, 1988.
- Rad, Von, Gerhard. *The Message of the Prophets*, London: SMC Press Ltd, 1968.
- Radoli, A. *How Local is the Local Church?* Kenya: Gaba Publications, 1993.
- Rowley, H. H. *Prophecy and Religion in Ancient China and Israel*, London: The AthlonePress University of London, 1956.
- Simms, Rupe. "I am a Non-Denominational Christian and a Marxist Socialist": A Gramscian Analysis of the Convention People's Party and Kwame Nkrumah's use of Religion." *Sociology of Religion* 64 (2003): 463 -477.
- Smart, D. James. *Servants of the word: The Prophets of Israel*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1952.
- Strong, James. *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of The Bible*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1890.

Thompson, J. A. *The Book of Jeremiah*. Michigan: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1913.

Walter, Harrelson. *Jeremiah Prophet to the Nations*. Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1959.

Wiersbe, W. Warren. *Be Decisive*. Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books/SP Publications, Inc. 1995.

Yirenkyi, Kwasi. "The Role of Christian Churches in National Politics: Reflections from Laity and Clergy in Ghana." *Sociology of Religion* 61 (2000): 325 -338.

Electronic Sources

Calvin, John. *Calvin's Commentaries*, PC Study Bible formatted electronic database, Biblesoft Inc., 2005.

Clark, Adams. *Adams Clarke's Commentary*, Electronic Database: Biblesoft Inc., 2005.

Henry, Matthew. *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, PC Study Bible Formatted Electronic Database, Biblesoft Inc., 2006.

Vine, William E. *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament Words*, Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1985.

Westminster, *Westminster Parsing Definitions*, Electronic Database, Biblesoft, 2001.

Wheeler, Dale M. *Wheeler's Hebrew Syntax Notes*, Electronic Database, Biblesoft, 1988 - 2006.

Radio/T.V. Programme and Internet Online Sources

Adofo, Rockson. *A Comment on Otabil tape on Free S.H.S Policy*, <http://www.myjoyonline>, October, 30, 2012. Accessed 22nd February, 2013 at 2:15pm.

Marfo, Kwadwo. *Political Show*, Kapital Radio 97.1, Kumasi: November, 13, 2012, at 1:00pm.

Opuni-Frimpong, K. *Morning News*, Hello FM 101.5, Kumasi: April, 2nd, 2014, at 8: am.

The Concerned Clergy Association of Ghana, Press Release, <http://www.peacefonline.com/Gh>, November, 26, 2012. Accessed on February, 22, 2013.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW LIST

PERSONALITY	POSITION/STATUS	DATE
MOST REV. PROF. EMMANUEL KWAKU ASANTE	The Presiding bishop of the Methodist Church-Ghana, The Chairman of the National Peace Council	7 TH MARCH, 2014
VERY REV. KWAKU KWARTENG	The Coordinator of the Civic Forum Initiative 2012- Ashanti Region	10 TH MARCH, 2014
REV. SOLOMON KING BADDOE	The Principal of the Mid- Ghana Assemblies God Theological Seminary	10 TH MARCH, 2014
RT. REV. PROF. OSEI SARFO-KANTANKA	The Kumasi Diocesan Bishop of the Methodist Church	17 TH MARCH, 2014
HIS HONOUR ARCHBISHOP DR. DANIEL YINKAH SARFO	The Kumasi Metropolitan Archbishop of the Anglican Church of Ghana	19 TH MARCH, 2014
NANA YAW SARFOH	The Morning Show Host, Fox FM 97.9	19 TH MARCH, 2014
MOST REV. JOSEPH OSEI BONSU	The President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference	20 TH MARCH, 2014
THOMAS KUSI BOAFO	A Social Commentator, Lecturer, Kumasi Polytechnic, A Chartered Accountant	24 TH MARCH, 2014
SAMUEL PYNE	The Ashanti Regional Secretary of the New Patriotic Party	24 TH MARCH, 2014
KWAKU BOAHEN	The Ashanti Regional Youth Organizer of the National Democratic Congress	26 TH MARCH, 2014

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

COLLEGE OF ART AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

M. PHIL. RELIGIOUS STUDIES

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE CLERGY

This survey intends to collect data to help us examine the prophetic voice of the clergy in Ghana on nation-building. The exercise is for academic purpose only so whatever information you would give would be treated with the confidentiality it deserves.

Please, kindly tick where appropriate and give a brief explanation where necessary.

A. BACKGROUND OF THE RESPONDENT

1. Gender: Male [] Female []

2. Age: 20 -30 [] 31 -40 [] 41-50 [] 51-60 [] 61-70 Above 70 []

3. Marital Status: Married [] Single [] Widow/Widower []

4. Academic/Professional Qualification: Middle School Level Certificate (MSLC) []

WASSCE [] Diploma/HND [] First Degree [] Master's Degree [] PhD [] Others.....

5. Apart from the certificate from the Seminary, do you hold any other certificate?

Yes [] No []

If you ticked Yes, specify the certificate and the area of study.....

6. Leadership Status: Superintendent/District Minister/Area Head []

Minister in-charge/Head Pastor [] Associate Minister/Pastor [] Presiding Elder []

7. Does your family live in Ghana? Yes [] No []

B. POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

8. The level of knowledge in the Constitution of Ghana.

No knowledge [] Slight knowledge [] In-depth knowledge []

- 9. Do you have a copy of the Constitution of Ghana? Yes [] No []
- 10. Have you been voting during Presidential/Parliamentary Elections? Yes [] No []
- 11. Do you belong to any particular political party in Ghana? Yes [] No []
- 12. Do you educate your members on electoral processes during elections? Yes [] No []
- 13. Does your church either at the local or national level offer any assistance (i.e. election observers, church premises, tables and chairs etc.) to the Electoral Commission for electoral activities? Yes [] No []

If you ticked Yes, please indicate appropriately the kind of assistance your church offers. Is it Church Premises [], Tables and Chairs [], Election Observers [], Cash []?

- 14. Does your church allow political parties or aspirants to interact with church members during church meetings if they request? Yes [] No []
- 15. a. Do you in anyway influence your members to vote for a particular party or candidate? Yes [] No [] b. will you like to influence the members during elections? Yes [] No []

C. PROPHETIC VOICE/ROLE

- 16. Should the Clergy be involved in the politics of the nation (i.e. talk about specific national issues when they mount the pulpit)? Yes [] No []
- 17. Should the Clergy be involved in the partisan politics of the nation? Yes [] No []
- 18. Should the Clergy teach their members to involve themselves in debates on issues of the state? Yes [] No []
- 19. Should the Clergy educate their members about political parties' public policies in order to help the members make informed decisions during elections? Yes [] No []
- 20. Are you well-informed about the current public policies on:
 - i. Education? Yes [] No [], ii. Health? Yes [] No [], iii. Housing? Yes [] No [],
 - iv. Employment? Yes [] No [], v. the Economy? Yes [] No []
- 21. How should the Clergy play their prophetic role in the state? Reactive [] Proactive []
- 22. The prophetic Voice of the Clergy in Ghana should be heard only on spiritual/church matters but not on national/state issues. Agreed [] Disagreed [].

Briefly explain your reason in 22 above.

.....

.....

.....

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

23. Have you publicly criticized a government of Ghana before? Yes [] No [] If Yes,

24. What was the reaction from the:

a) government officials/ruling party? Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised [] me.

b) opposition parties? Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised [] me.

c) media? Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised [] me.

d. general public? Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised [] me.

e. fellow clergy? Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised [] me.

f. laity/church members? Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised []

25. What was your stand toward debates on issues of the state afterwards? Resolved to be -

Silent [] inactive [] more active []

26. Would you publicly criticize a government of Ghana if the need be? Yes [] No []

27. What is your anticipation of the reaction of the:

a) government officials/ruling party? Bashing/Condemnation [] Commendation/Praise []

b) opposition parties? Bashing/Condemnation [] Commendation/Praise []

c) media? Bashing/Condemnation [] Commendation/Praise []

d. general public? Bashing/Condemnation [] Commendation/Praise []

e. fellow clergy? Bashing/Condemnation [] Commendation/Praise []

f. laity/church members? Bashing/Condemnation [] Commendation/Praise []

28. What would be your decision in terms of speaking on issues of the state? I would become

– Silent [] Inactive [] More active []

29. How would you assess the Prophetic Voice/Role of the current clergy in Ghana?

Inactive/Ineffective [] Active/Effective []

30. Does the current state of the Prophetic Voice of the clergy in Ghana as you have indicated in 29 have any effect on the current state of the nation? Yes [] No []

Please state below some of these effects either negative or positive

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

31. Any other comment?.....

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Thank you for contributing to the success of this research. God bless you immensely!

For further clarification/information, contact the researcher on 0266-166124

KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

COLLEGE OF ART AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

M. PHIL. RELIGIOUS STUDIES

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE LAITY

This survey intends to collect data to help us examine the prophetic voice of the clergy in Ghana on nation-building. The exercise is for academic purpose only so whatever information you would give would be treated with the confidentiality it deserves.

Please, kindly tick where appropriate and give a brief explanation where necessary.

A. BACKGROUND OF THE RESPONDENT

1. Gender: Male [] Female []
2. Age: 18 [] 19 [] 20 -30 [] 31 -40 [] 41-50 [] 51-60 [] 61-70 Above 70 []
3. Marital Status: Married [] Single [] Widow/Widower []
4. Academic/Professional Qualification: Middle School Level Certificate (MSLC) []
WASSCE [] Diploma/HND [] First Degree [] Master's Degree [] PhD [] Others.....
5. Denomination/Church:

B. POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

6. The level of knowledge in the Constitution of Ghana.
No knowledge [] Slight knowledge [] In-depth knowledge []
7. Do you have a copy of the Constitution of Ghana? Yes [] No []
8. Have you been voting during Presidential/Parliamentary Elections? Yes [] No []
9. Should clergy/pastors vote during Presidential/Parliamentary Elections? Yes [] No []
10. Do you belong to any particular political party in Ghana? Yes [] No []
11. Should the clergy belong to any particular political party in Ghana? Yes [] No []
12. Should the clergy educate their members on electoral processes during elections?
Yes [] No []

13. Does your church either at the local or national level offer any assistance (i.e. election observers, church premises, tables and chairs etc.) to the Electoral Commission for electoral activities? Yes [] No [] No idea []

If you ticked Yes, please indicate appropriately the kind of assistance your church offers. Is it Church Premises [], Tables and Chairs [], Election Observers [], Cash []?

14. Does your church allow political parties or aspirants to interact with church members during church meetings if they request? Yes [] No []

15. Do your pastors in anyway influence the members to vote for a particular party or candidate? Yes [] No []

16. Would you prefer that your clergy influence the members to vote for a particular party or candidate? Yes [] No []

C. PROPHETIC VOICE/ROLE

17. Should the Clergy be involved in the politics of the nation (i.e. talk about specific national issues) when they mount the pulpit? Yes [] No []

18. Should the Clergy be involved in the partisan politics of the nation? Yes [] No []

19. Should the Clergy teach their members to involve themselves in debates on issues of the state? Yes [] No []

20. Should the Clergy educate their members about political parties' public policies in order to help the members make informed decisions during elections? Yes [] No []

21. Are you well-informed about the current public policies on:

i. Education? Yes [] No [], ii. Health? Yes [] No [], iii. Housing? Yes [] No [],

iv. Employment? Yes [] No [], v. the Economy? Yes [] No []

22. How should the Clergy play their prophetic role in the state? Reactive [] Proactive []

23. The prophetic Voice of the Clergy in Ghana should be heard only on spiritual/church matters but not on national/state issues.

Agreed [] Disagreed [].

Briefly explain your reason in 22 above.

.....
.....
.....

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

24. Should the clergy publicly criticize a government of Ghana? Yes [] No [] If Yes,
Some clergy do.

25. What has been the reaction from the:

- a) Ruling party? They are - Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised []
- b) opposition parties? They are - Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised []
- c) media? They are - Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised []
- d. general public? They are - Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised []
- e. fellow clergy? They are - Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised []
- f. laity/church members? They are - Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised []

26. What do you suggest to be the stand of such clergy toward debates on issues of the state afterwards? They should resolve to be -

Silent [] inactive [] more active []

27. Would you publicly criticize a government of Ghana if the need be? Yes [] No []

28. What is your anticipation of the reaction of the:

- a) Ruling party? Bashing/Condemnation [] Commendation/Praise []
- b) opposition parties? Bashing/Condemnation [] Commendation/Praise []
- c) media? Bashing/Condemnation [] Commendation/Praise []
- d. general public? Bashing/Condemnation [] Commendation/Praise []
- e. clergy? Bashing/Condemnation [] Commendation/Praise []
- f. fellow laity/church members? Bashing/Condemnation [] Commendation/Praise []

29. What would be your decision in terms of speaking on issues of the state? I would become – Silent [] Inactive [] More active []

30. How would you assess the Prophetic Voice/Role of the current clergy in Ghana?

Inactive/Ineffective [] Active/Effective []

31. Does the current state of the Prophetic Voice of the clergy in Ghana as you have indicated in 30 have any effect on the current state of the nation? Yes [] No []

Please state below some of these effects either negative or positive

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

32. Any other comment?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Thank you for contributing to the success of this research. God bless you immensely!

For further clarification/information, contact the researcher on 0266-166124.

KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

COLLEGE OF ART AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

M. PHIL. RELIGIOUS STUDIES

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE MEDIA PRACTITIONERS

This survey intends to collect data to help us examine the prophetic voice of the clergy in Ghana on nation-building. The exercise is for academic purpose only so whatever information you would give would be treated with the confidentiality it deserves.

Please, kindly tick where appropriate and give a brief explanation where necessary.

A. BACKGROUND OF THE RESPONDENT

1. Gender: Male [] Female []

2. Age: 18 [] 19 [] 20 -30 [] 31 -40 [] 41-50 [] 51-60 [] 61-70 Above 70 []

3. Marital Status: Married [] Single [] Widow/Widower []

4. Academic/Professional Qualification: Middle School Level Certificate (MSLC) []

WASSCE [] Diploma/HND [] First Degree [] Master's Degree [] PhD [] Others.....

B. POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

5. The level of knowledge in the Constitution of Ghana.

No knowledge [] Slight knowledge [] In-depth knowledge []

6. Do you have a copy of the Constitution of Ghana? Yes [] No []

7. Have you been voting during Presidential/Parliamentary Elections? Yes [] No []

8. Should clergy/pastors vote during Presidential/Parliamentary Elections? Yes [] No []

9. Do you belong to any particular political party in Ghana? Yes [] No []

10. Should the clergy belong to any particular political party in Ghana? Yes [] No []

11. Should the clergy educate their members on electoral processes during elections?

Yes [] No []

12. Are you aware that some churches either at the local or national level offer assistance (i.e. election observers, church premises, tables and chairs etc.) to the Electoral Commission for electoral activities? Yes [] No []

If you ticked Yes, please indicate appropriately the kind of assistance you know churches offer. Is it Church Premises [], Tables and Chairs [], Election Observers [], Cash []?

13. Should churches allow political parties or aspirants to interact with church members during church meetings if they request? Yes [] No []

14. Do the clergy/pastors in anyway influence the members to vote for a particular party or candidate? Yes [] No []

15. Would you encourage the clergy to influence the members to vote for a particular party or candidate? Yes [] No []

C. PROPHETIC VOICE/ROLE

16. Should the Clergy be involved in the politics of the nation (i.e. talk about specific national issues) when they mount the pulpit? Yes [] No []

17. Should the Clergy be involved in the partisan politics of the nation? Yes [] No []

18. Should the Clergy teach their members to involve themselves in debates on issues of the state? Yes [] No []

19. Should the Clergy educate their members about political parties' public policies in order to help the members make informed decisions during elections? Yes [] No []

20. Which of the following describes the approach of the clergy when they participate in national discourses? Individualistic [] Denominational [] Partisan [] Collective []

21. How have the Clergy played their prophetic role in the state? Reactive [] Proactive []

22. The prophetic Voice of the Clergy in Ghana should be heard only on spiritual/church matters but not on national/state issues. Agreed [] Disagreed [].

Briefly explain your reason in 22 above.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

23. Should the clergy publicly criticize a government of Ghana? Yes [] No []

Some clergy do.

24. What has been the reaction from the:

a) ruling party? They are - Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised []

b) opposition parties? They are - Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised []

c) media? They are - Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised []

d. general public? They are - Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised []

e. fellow clergy? They are - Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised []

f. laity/church members? They are - Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised []

25. What do you suggest to be the stand of such clergy toward debates on issues of the state afterwards? They should resolve to be -

Silent [] inactive [] more active []

26. Would you publicly criticize a government of Ghana if the need be? Yes [] No []

27. What is your anticipation of the reaction from the:

a) ruling party? Bashing/Condemnation [] Commendation/Praise []

b) opposition parties? Bashing/Condemnation [] Commendation/Praise []

c) fellow media? Bashing/Condemnation [] Commendation/Praise []

d. general public? Bashing/Condemnation [] Commendation/Praise []

28. What would be your decision in terms of speaking on issues of the state? I would become – Silent [] Inactive [] More active []

29. How would you assess the Prophetic Voice/Role of the current clergy in Ghana?

Inactive/Ineffective [] Active/Effective []

30. Does the current state of the Prophetic Voice of the clergy in Ghana as you have indicated in 29 have any effect on the current state of the nation? Yes [] No []

Please state below some of these effects either negative or positive

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

31. If the clergy/pastors feel repugnant about an issue in the state, what should they do?

It is none of their business [] They should be silent and pray about it [] They should pray and speak to the authorities quietly [] They should pray, speak quietly to the authorities and if necessary, publicly confront the authorities []

32. If the clergy have to participate in political discourse, they should do it -----

Partisan [] Individually [] Denominationally [] Collectively []

33. Any other comment?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Thank you for contributing to the success of this research. God bless you immensely!

For further clarification/information, contact the researcher on 0266-166124.

KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

COLLEGE OF ART AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

M. PHIL. RELIGIOUS STUDIES

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE POLITICIANS

This survey intends to collect data to help us examine the prophetic voice of the clergy in Ghana on nation-building. The exercise is for academic purpose only so whatever information you would give would be treated with the confidentiality it deserves.

Please, kindly tick where appropriate and give a brief explanation where necessary.

A. BACKGROUND OF THE RESPONDENT

1. Gender: Male Female
2. Age: 18 19 20 -30 31 -40 41-50 51-60 61-70 Above 70
3. Marital Status: Married Single Widow/Widower
4. Academic/Professional Qualification: Middle School Level Certificate (MSLC)
WASSCE Diploma/HND First Degree Master's Degree PhD Others.....
5. Religion: Christianity Islam Traditional Others.....
6. Political party: NDC NPP CPP PPP PNC GCPP

B. POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

7. The level of knowledge in the Constitution of Ghana.
No knowledge Slight knowledge In-depth knowledge
8. Do you have a copy of the Constitution of Ghana? Yes No
9. Should clergy/pastors vote during Presidential/Parliamentary Elections? Yes No
10. Should the clergy belong to any particular political party in Ghana? Yes No
11. Should the clergy educate their members on electoral processes during elections?
Yes No

12. Are you aware that some churches either at the local or national level offer assistance (i.e. election observers, church premises, tables and chairs etc.) to the Electoral Commission for electoral activities? Yes [] No []

If you ticked Yes, please indicate appropriately the kind of assistance you know churches offer. Is it Church Premises [], Tables and Chairs [], Election Observers [], Cash []?

13. Should churches allow political parties or aspirants to interact with church members during church meetings if they request? Yes [] No []

14. Do the clergy/pastors in anyway influence the members to vote for a particular party or candidate? Yes [] No [] Not sure []

15. Would you encourage the clergy to influence the members to vote for a particular party or candidate? Yes [] No []

C. PROPHETIC VOICE/ROLE

16. Should the Clergy be involved in the politics of the nation (i.e. talk about specific national issues) when they mount the pulpit? Yes [] No []

17. Should the Clergy be involved in the partisan politics of the nation? Yes [] No []

18. Should the Clergy teach their members to involve themselves in debates on issues of the state? Yes [] No []

19. Should the Clergy educate their members about political parties' public policies in order to help the members make informed decisions during elections? Yes [] No []

20. Which of the following describes the approach of the clergy when they participate in national discourses? Individualistic [] Denominational [] Partisan [] Collective []

21. How have the Clergy played their prophetic role in the state? Reactive [] Proactive []

22. The prophetic Voice of the Clergy in Ghana should be heard only on spiritual/church matters but not on national/state issues. Agreed [] Disagreed [].

Briefly explain your reason in 22 above.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

23. Should the clergy publicly criticize a government of Ghana? Yes [] No []

Some clergy do.

24. What has been the reaction from the:

a) ruling party? They are - Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised []

b) opposition parties? They are - Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised []

c) media? They are - Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised []

d. general public? They are - Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised []

e. fellow clergy? They are - Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised []

f. laity/church members? They are - Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised []

25. What do you suggest to be the stand of such clergy toward debates on issues of the state afterwards? They should resolve to be -

Silent [] inactive [] more active []

26. Would you publicly criticize a government of Ghana if the need be? Yes [] No []

27. What is your anticipation of the reaction from the:

a) ruling party? Bashing/Condemnation [] Commendation/Praise []

b) opposition parties? Bashing/Condemnation [] Commendation/Praise []

c) media? Bashing/Condemnation [] Commendation/Praise []

d. general public? Bashing/Condemnation [] Commendation/Praise []

28. What would be your decision in terms of speaking on issues of the state? I would become – Silent [] Inactive [] More active []

29. How would you assess the Prophetic Voice/Role of the current clergy in Ghana?

Inactive/Ineffective [] Active/Effective []

30. Does the current state of the Prophetic Voice of the clergy in Ghana as you have indicated in 29 have any effect on the current state of the nation? Yes [] No []

Please state below some of these effects either negative or positive

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

COLLEGE OF ART AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

M. PHIL. RELIGIOUS STUDIES

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC

This survey intends to collect data to help us examine the prophetic voice of the clergy in Ghana on nation-building. The exercise is for academic purpose only so whatever information you would give would be treated with the confidentiality it deserves.

Please, kindly tick where appropriate and give a brief explanation where necessary.

A. BACKGROUND OF THE RESPONDENT

1. Gender: Male Female

2. Age: 18 19 20 -30 31 -40 41-50 51-60 61-70 Above 70

3. Marital Status: Married Single Widow/Widower

4. Academic/Professional Qualification: Middle School Level Certificate (MSLC)

WASSCE Diploma/HND First Degree Master's Degree PhD Others.....

B. POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

5. The level of knowledge in the Constitution of Ghana.

No knowledge Slight knowledge In-depth knowledge

6. Do you have a copy of the Constitution of Ghana? Yes No

7. Have you been voting during Presidential/Parliamentary Elections? Yes No

8. Should clergy/pastors vote during Presidential/Parliamentary Elections? Yes No

9. Do you belong to any particular political party in Ghana? Yes No

10. Should the clergy belong to any particular political party in Ghana? Yes No

11. Should the clergy educate their members on electoral processes during elections?

Yes No

12. Are you aware that some churches either at the local or national level offer assistance (i.e. election observers, church premises, tables and chairs etc.) to the Electoral Commission for electoral activities? Yes [] No []

If you ticked Yes, please indicate appropriately the kind of assistance you know churches offer. Is it Church Premises [], Tables and Chairs [], Election Observers [], Cash []?

13. Should churches allow political parties or aspirants to interact with church members during church meetings if they request? Yes [] No []

14. Would you encourage the clergy to influence the members to vote for a particular party or candidate? Yes [] No []

C. PROPHETIC VOICE/ROLE

16. Should the Clergy be involved in the politics of the nation (i.e. talk about specific national issues) when they mount the pulpit? Yes [] No []

17. Should the Clergy be involved in the partisan politics of the nation? Yes [] No []

18. Should the Clergy teach their members to involve themselves in debates on issues of the state? Yes [] No []

19. Should the Clergy educate their members about political parties' public policies in order to help the members make informed decisions during elections? Yes [] No []

20. Which of the following describes the approach of the clergy when they participate in national discourses? Individualistic [] Denominational [] Partisan [] Collective []

21. How have the Clergy played their prophetic role in the state? Reactive [] Proactive []

22. The prophetic Voice of the Clergy in Ghana should be heard only on spiritual/church matters but not on national/state issues. Agreed [] Disagreed [].

Briefly explain your reason in 22 above.

.....
.....
.....

23. Should the clergy publicly criticize a government of Ghana? Yes [] No []

Some clergy do.

24. What has been the reaction from the:

a) Ruling party? They are - Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised []

b) opposition parties? They are - Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised []

c) media? They are - Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised []

d. general public? They are - Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised []

e. fellow clergy? They are - Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised []

f. laity/church members? They are - Bashed/Condemned [] Commended/Praised []

25. What do you suggest to be the stand of such clergy toward debates on issues of the state afterwards? They should resolve to be -

Silent [] inactive [] more active []

26. Would you publicly criticize a government of Ghana if the need be? Yes [] No []

27. What is your anticipation of the reaction from the:

a) Ruling party? Bashing/Condemnation [] Commendation/Praise []

b) opposition parties? Bashing/Condemnation [] Commendation/Praise []

c) general public? Bashing/Condemnation [] Commendation/Praise []

d) media? Bashing/Condemnation [] Commendation/Praise []

28. What would be your decision in terms of speaking on issues of the state? I would become – Silent [] Inactive [] More active []

29. How would you assess the Prophetic Voice/Role of the current clergy in Ghana?

Inactive/Ineffective [] Active/Effective []

30. Does the current state of the Prophetic Voice of the clergy in Ghana as you have indicated in 29 have any effect on the current state of the nation? Yes [] No []

Please state below some of these effects either negative or positive

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

31. If the clergy/pastors feel repugnant about an issue in the state, what should they do?

It is none of their business [] They should be silent and pray about it [] They should pray and speak to the authorities quietly [] They should pray, speak quietly to the authorities and if necessary, publicly confront the authorities []

32. If the clergy have to participate in political discourse, they should do it -----

Partisan [] Individually [] Denominationally [] Collectively []

33. Any other comment?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Thank you for contributing to the success of this research. God bless you immensely!

For further clarification/information, contact the researcher on 0266-166124.

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE

- How long have you been a clergy, journalist, politician?
- What is your understanding of the prophetic voice of the clergy?
- What is your understanding of nation-building? What constitutes nation-building?
- Do you belong to any particular political party in Ghana?
- Do you educate the laity on electoral processes during elections? Should the Clergy educate the Laity on national issues?
- Does your church either at the local or national level offer any form of assistance i.e. election observers, church premises, tables and chairs etc. to the EC?
- If yes, could you indicate the specific assistance your church do offer?
- Do you in anyway influence your members to vote for a particular party or candidate? Should the Clergy influence the members? Why?
- Do the clergy have a biblical mandate to get involved in the debate on issues of the state? Some people are of the view that the clergy ought to concentrate on spiritual and ecclesiastical matters; they should not meddle in the political affairs of the state.
- Should the clergy educate the laity about political parties' public policies in order to help them make informed decisions during elections?
- In your estimation, would you say that the clergy has been proactive in the execution of their prophetic role in the state? Why?
- Have you publicly criticized a government of Ghana before? What was the reaction of the government officials/communicators? The media? Opposition parties? Fellow clergy? The laity? General public? What was your attitude toward debates on national issues afterwards? Would you criticize a government of Ghana if need be?
- Would you say that the prophetic voice of the clergy in Ghana is active? Why?
- What is the future for clergy/church-state relations in Ghana?
- Are Ghanaian Christians responding to the call to be social and political activists?
- Should the clergy use the pulpit to address specific political/national issues? Why?
- Would you encourage a member of the clergy to become a member of a political party?
- Is it right for a clergy to context for presidential/ parliamentary elections?
- Have we been unduly bashing on the clergy or the clergy have opened up the can of worms, so they deserve it?
- Is the insult and vilification of the clergy a way of screwing them up so that many of them will be afraid to speak on national issues?
- Is the clergy arrogating to itself an unwarranted superiority?
- Some people are of the view that the prophetic voice of the clergy in Ghana has become silence. What is your assessment?
- A few clergy publicly exercise that mandate in the state at the moment. Even the few who do, do it individually or denominationally. Hence it is ineffective. What do you say?

- What are some of the implications for the state in terms of nation-building when the prophetic voice of the clergy becomes inactive/silence?
- If the clergy feel repugnant of an issue in the state what should they do?
- What is the way forward for an active/ formidable prophetic voice of the clergy in Ghana?