

A DISCOURSE OF THE INDIGENOUS WORLDVIEW IN THE DOCTRINAL CONSTRUCT OF MFM¹

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INTRODUCTION

The Homogenous Unit Theory as propounded by Donald McGavran² stipulates that people 'like to become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic or class barriers'. In other words, it is believed that the barriers to the acceptance of the gospel relate more often to sociological than theological issues. The rejection of the gospel by people is not because they think of it as false but because they consider it alien. They nurse the fear that they would renounce their culture, lose their identity and betray their people in order to become Christians hence their resentment. Conversely, the evangelist that identifies with the people, contextualizes the gospel in a way that fosters effective communication with them and adapts the church to the people's culture will likely win many men and women to Jesus Christ, and thus have the church grow.

In a study conducted in 2008, the doctrinal construct and liturgical emphasis of the Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries (MFM) were examined on this premise because it was established that the MFM was burgeoning in Yorubaland. Cognizance of converts' primal religious beliefs and experiences stands out as one of, if not the most, striking practices of MFM to attract multitudes. Sermons and messages preached by either the General Overseer or any of his ministers are deeply rooted and couched in the cultural heritage and world views of the people living in the various communities within which the MFM is located. In response³ to the question 'why did you join the MFM?' a whooping 97% of the subjects mentioned the relevance of the teachings to their cultural and social background as the main reason. There were claims such as 'the messages opened my eyes to my problems', or 'the sermons reminded me of my past and exposed the root cause of my problems' among others. The pastors do not assume that the traditional beliefs of the worshippers belong to the past or that it should be treated as fossils with little or no influence on their present or future life. Rather the preachers emphasized in their messages that the foundation wields enormous influence on a person's life. In MFM, sermons and exhortations are embellished with illustrations drawn from the cultural background through emphasis by the ministers on the beliefs and teachings on topics such as roots, names, dreams, times and seasons as entrenched in their traditional beliefs to mention a few hence the indigenous worldview of the Yoruba is discussed through these subjects.

By the worldview is meant the general picture of the world and the place of humankind in it - providing frameworks for perceiving, feeling and transforming reality.⁴

The Yoruba share a communal worldview as embodied in myths that are handed down from one generation to another. It is validated by heavy reliance on tradition and the authority of the elders.⁵ The kernel of Yoruba worldview is that the world is spiritual with all events centering on *Olodumare*⁶, and other spiritual entities some of which are benevolent and others, malevolent.⁷ Consequent upon this, the Yoruba essentially sees the world as an imperfect one. Oladipo⁸ explains Yoruba worldview thus:

This is a world characterized by polarities such as those between being and non-being, knowledge and ignorance, success and failure, good and evil, beauty and ugliness, It is a world bedeviled by various obstacles – natural and social; human and non human. A world over which a person or group of persons cannot claim to have total control ... A world in which neither knowledge, nor wisdom, nor power or wealth is sufficient for the individual to cope with the demands of daily existence, even though each of them, in varying degrees, is a basic requirement of human survival. Thus, in spite of individual efforts to seek fulfillment, attempts are still made to achieve this goal through prayers to *Olodumare*, sacrifice to the divinities and gratification to the evil forces called *ajogun*.⁹

There is, therefore, a strong belief among the Yoruba that the individual is a vulnerable person. The appeal to the people's culture is made compelling through teachings and illustrations of the MFM on the followings:

ROOTS

By the root is meant deeds of a person's biological background and family antecedents. Olukoya¹⁰ claimed to have discovered through counseling and the help of the Holy Spirit that ninety-five percent of very difficult problems that people used to have are rooted in their foundations.¹¹ Foundation is defined as the platform on which one's life rests. It is viewed as the platform prepared for one by his ancestors. It is further described as origin, hereditary root and the bedrock upon which the structure of life rests. Olukoya avers that the problems associated with the roots are enormous and they have messed up so many lives. An evil root according to him derives from participation in tribal rituals, collection of names from oracles, use of charms and amulets, protection sought by parents from demons, curse pronounced against our forefathers and their descendents plus all kinds of wicked and ungodly practices that have led to murder or the shedding of blood.

Few of the numerous experiences that Olukoya cited as stories narrated by the people to buttress the effect of evil foundations are noteworthy. In one of the stories, a grown up woman who never menstruated approached a man of God for help. She was asked to fast, read the Bible, make scriptural confessions and pray on mountain tops but all was to no avail. The minister then asked her to pray that 'God should send fire into the root of her life'. Thirty minutes into the prayer, she claimed to have seen human beings appearing to her. First was the face of her grandfather in the midst of a thick

forest with blood in his hands. Next she claimed to have seen herself in her childhood days, being carried on the back of her mother who was in turn fighting another woman. Her mother then said ‘this child at my back would not prosper if I do not wound you today’. Unfortunately at the end of that tussle, her mother could not wound the other woman, in spite of the curse she had issued on her daughter. As the praying progressed, the sister claimed to have heard a voice saying that ‘the connection between you and them has been severed and you are free’. The menstruation that had been locked up was opened and before she stopped praying, her skirt was already dripping with blood.¹²

The interpretation given by Olukoya to the vision was that two events connected with the sister’s progenitors were responsible for her woes. First, he explained that the grandfather must have been guilty of human sacrifice in the forest for the purpose of protecting himself; hence his hands had blood in the vision. Secondly, the mother’s curse that the baby on her back would not prosper’ took its toll on her in later years. Consequent upon this interpretation Olukoya developed the doctrine that the foundation has untold effects on one’s life. Numerous Bible passages are quoted in order to justify this belief. Passages in which God promised retribution to people in consequence of the actions of their forefathers are quoted. Examples include:

Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites because you build the tombs of the prophets ... ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell.¹³

Other similar references often quoted from the Old Testament are:

And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies’ lands; and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them.¹⁴

Behold, it is written before me: I will not keep silence, but will recompense, even recompense, into their bosom, your iniquities, and the iniquities, of your fathers together, saith the Lord.¹⁵

These texts are some of the scriptures that formed the basis of the MFM teachings that it would be foolish for anyone to deceive himself by thinking that his background has no effect on him. There are grounds to agree that we are all products of our backgrounds. Studies have shown that hereditary factors substantially influence the traits of a person. It is also established that the soil more often than not influences the health and growth of the plants that are cultivated upon it. However, in terms of spiritual influence, there is need to have a broader look on the claims of the Bible before concluding that one is inevitably bound to bear the consequences of his parents’ ungodly practices. Our contention is that God has made sufficient provision for the protection of an individual from bearing the punishments of other persons’ vices. The rod of the wicked will not fall on the lot of the righteous.¹⁶ The soul that sinneth shall die.¹⁷ Never the less everyone shall bear his own burdens.¹⁸

Just as salvation is personal, even so retribution is going to be individualistic. In the cases quoted to support the transference of punishment from father to child the people themselves were unrighteous and so their judgments were similar to their fathers'. The verdict of Abraham that the judge of the whole earth will not punish the righteous with the wicked should not be easily overlooked.¹⁹

The MFM also believes and teaches that one can be delivered from the possible effect of his background. They hold that through serious warfare prayers deliverance is a possibility. However, the picture that is painted is that the deliverance would not come easy. Olukoya illustrates the difficulty, thus:

Foundations are usually in darkness, underneath the ground. It is not something one can look at or inspect. Only God sees them and knows where things have to be repaired.²⁰

It is emphasized that the prayer that breaks foundational problems is not something to be done in few minutes but should rather involve long agonizing and persevering prayers. Deeply rooted in the philosophy of Yoruba people is the idea of the overbearing effect of a person's background. It is uncommon for the Yoruba to take events as being ordinary. The adage *bi a ko ba se ese, ese ki i se lasan* (meaning there is no fire without a smoke) sums their position and belief. A message that lays stress on people's roots is therefore easily understood and quite appreciated by some of the people hence their admiration of MFM even though it also creates morbid fears in the life of many MFM members as they ponder on their family backgrounds and the possible consequences.

NAMES

A name is a word or a set of words by which a person, an animal, a place or a thing is known, addressed and spoken about.²¹ As noted earlier, names tell stories and convey special ideas about the circumstances surrounding the existence of a being in Yorubaland.²² The Yoruba maxim *oruko n ro ni, oriki n ro eniyan* (meaning: the normal and praise names of a person impacts on his life) suggests that the import of names is more than a reminder of history. Names are not regarded as mere historical artifacts. It is believed that a person's name has something to do with his *ayanmo*²³. The name impacts upon and controls the destiny of its bearer throughout life. Commenting on the attitude of the peoples of the Western parts of Nigeria to names Ayandele says:

It is a society that attaches a great deal of importance to names. ... Names are not mere emblems for distinguishing one person from the other. They are often a memorial of family incidents, showing the circumstances of the family when the child was born or showing whether the child hailed from a reigning family; names may also indicate the incidence of the birth of the bearer, showing whether a child was born with a cord around his neck (Ojo), or

with a face turned downwards (Ajayi), whether twins or whether the family had experienced repeated infantile mortality. Names may also tell the story of the occupation of the family (Ayandiran) or tell the family gods being worshipped (Ogunrinu).²⁴

Ayandele's submission implies that if one meets a Yoruba person for the first time, he can almost immediately conceive some ideas about the person by the name he bears.²⁵ The MFM pays serious attention to names not just because of the stories they tell about the past but because of the effects they have on the life of the bearer. Worshippers are taught that a Christian should dispense of his names if they have idolatrous implications. Every kind of name that tells of the family gods being worshipped is believed to be capable of tying a man to such gods or oracles. Thus former Pastor Fakehinde has become Olukehinde and Pastor Ogunrinde now bears Jesurinde.²⁶ The meaning of a name is another ground for changing it in MFM. Whether a name is indigenous or not, the ministry insists that a person should know the meaning of his name and change it if need be.

Some MFM members change English names such as Mary or Endurance²⁷ on the ground of their meanings. Members tell stories of woeful experiences they have had before changing their names. A sister, formerly called Elizabeth Odunewu²⁸ changed her name to Elizabeth Odunayo²⁹. She explained that Odunewu was the name of her husband and that since she began to bear the name after marriage, there was no year she did not fall into one mischief or another. Within her first year of marriage she escaped death narrowly during the delivery of her first baby. The following year her father was involved in a motor accident while traveling to come to see her. Other years were characterized by one misfortune after another. In all, two of her four children died, her husband died, her eldest daughter turned a harlot and got involved in a terrible mess. Her life was invaded by terrible confusion. One fateful day she heard a message on the implications of bad names. She changed her name from Odunewu to Odunayo and that brought about a cessation to her numerous and constant woes.³⁰ The opinions held by people and the interpretations they give to names show a measure of naivety. One wonders why in the case of Elizabeth Odunewu (Odunayo) it was only one of the names that affected her life, and not the two. According to her testimony, she gave birth within a year after marriage quite unlike the experience of Elizabeth the wife of Zechariah in the Bible.³¹ Similarly, one wonders whether the glory and honour of being the blessed mother of Jesus, the Saviour of the world depicts sorrow and constitutes a strong reason for rejecting the name, Mary. Evidently, the belief of MFM on the effect of names on our lives is not constructed on biblical basis but rather on the Yoruba traditional worldview. It is intriguing that although the MFM is highly critical of traditional religions and culture, it still shares some ideas with the former and thus both have some traits in common.

The art of changing names is not new in Yorubaland. What is new is the reason given for the change in MFM. We will recall that at the tail end of the twentieth and the better parts of the twenty-first century, many Christians changed their names in Yorubaland. Initially Christian converts changed their indigenous names to European

ones, based on the belief that Indigenous names were 'heathenish', difficult to pronounce by the missionaries and that European names were outward signs of the inward transformation from 'paganism' to Christianity. Other reasons advanced by European Missionaries were based on claims that such names served as protection for the bearers against being enslaved or sacrificed in the interior and that foreign names would enhance unity among converts of diverse tribes. People like Mann contented that those who rejected European names were guilty of 'Anglophobia' and 'anti-English monomania'.³² These happened when under the guise of religion many Christian converts had resentment for African customs and institutions.

At the wake of nationalism the reverse was the case. The veneration of indigenous customs and the concomitant repudiation of European culture had effects on names cherished by African converts. Consequently, foreign names were discarded for indigenous ones.³³ Ordinarily, one would think that the insistence that names, especially family or clan ones should be changed would cause disaffection between MFM and the people but rather than that it drew them closer. In other words, even though one would expect that any religious movement that attempts to deal a fatal blow against the age long belief in the preservation of names especially among the Yoruba would inevitably encounter vehement opposition and become unpopular among the people, what was found out was to the contrary. Many worshippers saw it as a teaching that opened their eyes to the causes of their afflictions and that it also opened doors of solutions as they complied with the teachings.

DREAMS

The MFM places a very high premium on the acts and interpretations of dreams.³⁴ Dream is a sequence of scenes and feelings occurring in the mind during sleep.³⁵ It is a very common experience to many human beings. It is something that one (seems) to see or experience during sleep. The MFM defines dream as a series of pictures or events in the mind of a sleeping person.³⁶ It is also seen as a means by which God communicates with His children. The MFM teaches that it is harmful not to dream at all because one would not be able to hear from God.³⁷ One is also encouraged to engage in warfare prayers against inability to remember dreams. Failure to recall dreams is attributed to the activities of the forces called 'dream erasers'. Conversely, there is a strong belief that dreams are often manipulated by the evil spirits to break out into peoples' lives.

Dream is identified as one of the natural ways by which the spirits infect lives. Dream is the dark speech of the spirit, a means of revelation and a way of unlocking the door of the spirit world.³⁸ The MFM holds that most of the problems in the lives of people start with instances of satanic dreams. There are spiritual attacks through the dream and the devil can use it to deceive and confuse a person. The association of dream with satanic activities is not peculiar to the MFM. Other deliverance ministries share the same view.³⁹ Nonetheless, associating dreams with satanic operation raises a number of questions. What types of dreams are demonic? What are the sources of demonic dreams? And how can demonic dreams be distinguished from normal or

ordinary dreams? The MFM has numerous examples of dreams that are branded as 'Satanic' or unspiritual as listed in one of her publications.

Dreams in which doors close just before one enters; being driven by unknown persons to unknown places, getting engaged with an unknown man or woman, eating in the dream, having sexual intercourse in the dream, being naked in the dream, stealing of wedding clothes, seeing padlock in the dream, seeing cobwebs, seeing corpses, retreating to childhood days, being caged, being imprisoned, being hindered, serving others, not completing tasks, dying, seeing tortoise, seeing snail, being pursued by animals, being pursued by masquerades dreaming of water, being abandoned, being lonely, playing card or games, contacting ancestors, engaging in physical combat with armed men, fighting with bats, losing blood and being handcuffed.⁴⁰

Students of the Institute of Spiritual Warfare (INSWAR)⁴¹ are taught the interpretative techniques and implications of dreams. For instance, if a person dreams of loosing blood in a dream, it implies that there is a plan to abort his life and to drain - virtue off him.⁴² Bad dreams can be prevented from recurring. The believer is therefore taught to pray hard in order to puncture the fulfillment of satanic dreams. The steps that are recommended to puncture evil dreams include self-examination, fortification with the word of God, aggressive (acidic) prayers, periodic anointing of the bedroom and deliverance.

Thirty of the thirty-four accounts of dreams given in the Bible are presented as messages from God.⁴³ The Bible also acknowledges that some dreams emanate from man as products of his desire.⁴⁴ Thus, dreams can be thoughts visualized in sleep or a wish fulfillment. Another source of dream according to the Bible is the devil. Job talks of a dream sent to him so that his soul chose strangling and death rather than life.⁴⁵ Scary dreams are associated with demons or evil spirits by deliverance ministers.

Dream experts hold a different opinion. Studies of dream foundation insist that unpleasant experiences in the dream are due to lack of progress by the dreamer to recognize and solve related conflicts in life.⁴⁶ It is widely acknowledged that dreams offer warning and premonitions. Researchers admit that dreams warn of current behaviour trend that may become detrimental in the future if they are not changed. The Stanford University pioneer sleep researcher Dr. William Dement⁴⁷ shares an experience to substantiate this. He recalled that he ceased to be a heavy cigarette smoker sequel to a vivid dream in which he suffered from an inoperable cancer of the lung. Through the dream, he experienced the incredible anguish of knowing that his life would soon end. He was relieved when he woke up and immediately decided to quit smoking. He understood the dream as offering serious warnings concerning his future health.

There are stories that show that on several occasions dreams are valid psychic phenomena and are manipulated by wicked spirits to execute evil. Olukoya narrated a

story to buttress this point. In a dream, according to him, someone found himself eating *gari*⁴⁸ in a bucket of water. The meal was so unusually large that he had a very hard time taking it. By the time he managed to consume the large quantity of *gari*, he felt nauseated and constipated. Somebody gave him another bucket of *gari* in the same dream and forcefully told him to consume it. By the time he woke up around 5.30 a.m., the taste of the local *gari* was still in his mouth. He rushed to his Pastor to seek an explanation but the Pastor concluded that his dream is a reflection of his state of mind because he did not have any meal before sleeping. Unfortunately the Pastor conducted the burial of the brother exactly one week later.⁴⁹

The *gari*⁵⁰ was understood as satanic meal that refused to obey the law of digestion. The stomach of the man remained swollen until he died. The narration of such dream experiences and interpretations put many people on edge. For people who read meanings to dreams, the MFM is a very good place to worship. The emphasis laid on dreams in MFM is another veritable example of her reliance on Yoruba traditional world views for engendering captivating teachings. The Yoruba do not handle scenes seen in dreams with levity. In his attempt to justify the importance of the teachings of MFM on dreams as a spiritual index, Olumide Akanni narrated one of his experiences thus:

One fateful night, I had a dream in which one old woman offered me a pepper soup cooked with smoked fish. I tried to reject the offer but she insisted that it must be eaten. She tried to force the meal through my mouth while I struggled to shut it by clenching my teeth. In the course of the struggle, I woke up to find a big insect in-between my teeth. When I shared my experience with the elders, I was told that it was an attempt to plant sickness into my body⁵¹.

The attempt to formulate dream theories and develop interpretative methods is like the efforts of the proverbial blind men trying to describe an elephant. Their experiences put together were far away from a complete picture of what an elephant is. Dream theories are insightful but do not cover the incredibly vast, diverse and enigmatic nature of dreams adequately. Dwelling on the interpretations and implications of dreams was not a dominant feature of the gospel in the Apostolic era. Owing to its enigmatic nature, Christians should rather show more concern for the essentials of the word of God than paying heed to stories of dreams and genealogies. Certainly, believers of the New Testament periods had dream experiences but did not build Christian doctrines out of them.

The worries expressed over dreams portend danger to normal spiritual development; it is capable of breeding suspicion, false accusation and can damage interpersonal relationship in cases where persons seen in the dream resemble known persons in real life. Strained relationships among brethren based on issues of dreams may jeopardize the future of the MFM hence the need for serious caution on the teaching.

SEASONS AND TIMES

MFM trains members to observe times and seasons. They are also fond of taking cognizance of numbers. They claim to identify and interpret numbers and times in order to curtail the activities of the devil and secure the life of their members. The stance they take on numbers and seasons informs some of the prayer programmes and outlines mounted from time to time. The sixth day of June, 2006 was one of such periods that could be used as a vivid illustration. A bulletin tagged 'Prayer Warfare against 666' on the 6th day of the 6th month of 2006' was produced and distributed few days before June 6 to all members. The document claimed that the number '6' is the number of man in opposition to God.⁵² Owing to the moral weakness of man that enabled Satan to gain access to the soul, the ministry associated the number of the day of man's creation with his frailty and his subjection to Satan. So to the MFM '6' as a number represents the weakness of man, the wickedness of Satan and the manifestation of sin.

Taking a cue from the book of Revelation, the MFM teaches the worshippers that just as the Anti-Christ will be designated by 666, it is important to accept the number as a concentrated expression of everything that stands against the knowledge of God. The same document identified the sixth character to be introduced in the Bible as the serpent and the sixth work of the flesh listed in the New Testament as witchcraft.⁵³ It is believed that all the forces of darkness know the importance of the 6th day of the 6th month of the year 2006 (6 – 6- 06) and had a well drawn agenda to kill, steal, destroy, waste and increase satanic influence and strategy. The MFM therefore called on the faithful to unfold their hands in readiness for a severe battle against satanic agents so as to frustrate their evil plans.

In order to counter and cancel the plans of the evil one, it was recommended in the bulletin that aggressive prayers should be said in the midnights of the 5th and 6th June, 2006. Three Psalms were recommended for chanting on each of the nights before the seventeen prayer points were marshaled one after the other.⁵⁴ Some of the prayer points outlined in the bulletin included the following:

1. I bind and cast down every spirit of darkness operating in the air against 6-6-06 in the name of Jesus.
2. O God, arise and shake the heavens, the earth, the sea and the dry land and destroy satanic thrones and satanic kingdoms assigned against 6-6-06, in the name of Jesus.
3. O God, arise and intimidate and frustrate the diviners and occultists that are programming evil against the 6th of June 2006 in the name of Jesus.
4. Every power projected by satanic agents into the heavens to control 6-6-06, be dismantled in Jesus name.

5. Eaters of flesh and drinkers of blood assigned against 6-6-06, eat your own flesh and drink you own blood in the name of Jesus.
6. We de-programme and cancel all spells, sorceries, enchantments laws, and divinations that have been programmed by the occultists into the heavens against 6-6-06, in the name of Jesus.
7. We declare that on this day 6-6-06, witches, wizards, occultists, enchanters, will have their understanding wiped out, their books shall vanish mysteriously from their library, they shall be dismayed and confounded, their seers will be completely blinded, their sun will go down and their moon will not shine, their pronouncements shall became impotent, and they shall be rendered insane (Isaiah. 44:24-25) in Jesus name.

In other publications, Olukoya sheds more light on the understanding and significance of times and seasons. Those who live in riverine areas are told to notice the rising of the water level at the sighting of the full moon. This signals the flagging off of witchcraft activities. Believers should therefore not take the emergence of a new moon for granted. Similarly, the early hours of the morning is considered to be spiritually significant, hence, the queries: Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; and caused the dayspring to know his place?⁵⁵

The value of rising early in the morning to worship God is emphasized in the Bible and constitutes a general practice among Christians of all ages. The insistence of the MFM on the observation of times and seasons is however worrisome. There are express commandments in the Bible that we should not follow the heathenish practices of reading signs and times. The Bible states:

When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch ... for all that do these things are an abomination into the Lord; and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee...?⁵⁶

These teachings have aided the growth of MFM, because they have brought Christianity as practiced and taught by the MFM in close affinity with many traditional religious' practices. The danger inherent in the observation of times and seasons is that those who are well grounded in primal religions may come to understand Christianity merely as a variant of their indigenous belief. The fear is that if professing Christian converts cannot clearly distinguish between Christianity and their former religious belief; there would be a gradual pollution of Christianity qua Christianity. The blow that

secularization dealt on Christianity in Europe may consequently be felt in the Southern continents.

Conclusion

The presentation of the gospel as illustrated holds attraction for many worshippers in MFM. The narrative style of teachings is easily understood, found understandable and relevant to the converts' area of need and worldview of the people, hence the notable interest in the ministry. The success of MFM in adapting Christianity to the life of the Yoruba is a welcome development. The kind of theology necessary for the extension of Christianity in any land is "situation theology" and not a prefabricated type. We should recognize that the demonological thrust of MFM is to be understood in the light of the precariousness of life in Africa. Only a theology that identifies with the sufferings, hope and aspirations of the people can be considered valuable. The assertion of Ayegboyin that the 'MFM is speaking the language that the people understand and is offering prayers that scratch where it is itching most'⁵⁷ sums it up.

Endnotes

- ¹ MFM connotes Mountain of Fire and Miracle Ministry, a vibrant Neo- Pentecostal church in Nigeria
- ² D. McGavran was a one time Missionary to India and the founder of the Institute of Church Growth at Northwest Christian College in Eugene, Oregon and also the School of Missions at the Institute of Church Growth at interdenominational Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California. The HU theory was developed and popularized through his *Understanding Church Growth*, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Eerdmans, 1970.
- ³ Source is from field research data gathered in 2008
- ⁴ See A. Spirkin. 1989.*Dialectical Materialism*. Moscow: Progress Publishers. 23
- ⁵ O. Oladipo. N.d.Rethinking Yoruba World View and Ideals of Life. Unpublished seminar paper at the Department of Philosophy. University of Ibadan. 4
- ⁶ Olodumare is one of the Yoruba divine names for the Supreme Being or God
- ⁷ B. Idowu. 1962.*Olodumare*. 62
- ⁸ Oladipo. Rethinking Yoruba World |View. 4-5.
- ⁹ *Ajogun* mean malevolent spirit that renders impotent the efficacy of charm and medicine
- ¹⁰ D. K. Olukoya is the General Overseer of MFM
- ¹¹ Olukoya. 1999. *Dealing with Unprofitable Roots*. Lagos: TBCCM. 7
- ¹² Olukoya. 1999. *Unprofitable Roots*. 11
- ¹³ Mathew 23: 29 - 35
- ¹⁴ Leviticus 26: 39
- ¹⁵ Isaiah 65: 6 - 7
- ¹⁶ Psalm 125: 3
- ¹⁷ Ezekiel 18: 4
- ¹⁸ Galatians 6: 5
- ¹⁹ Genesis 18: 25
- ²⁰ Olukoya. 1999. *Unprofitable roots*. 12
- ²¹ J. Crowther. 1996. Ed. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. Oxford: OUP. 771.
- ²² E. B. Idowu. 1996. *Olodumare: God in Yoruba belief*. Ibadan. Longman. 30
- ²³ Ayanmo is called *ipin ori* which means head's portion or lot. The Yoruba believe that man's doings on earth are predestined. Man brings destiny into the world and carries it about throughout life. J. O. Awolalu and P. A. Dopamu. 1979. *West African traditional religion*. Ibadan: Onibonjoje. 161
- ²⁴ E. A. Ayandele. 1960. *The missionary impact on modern Nigeria 1842 – 1914*. London: Longman. 259

- ²⁵ A name like Ikudayisi (Death has spared this one) tells volumes about the background of the bearer.
- ²⁶ Pastor Olukehinde is the MFM Pastor in charge of Olomore branch in Abeokuta while Pastor Jesurinde is one of the Personal Assistants to Olukoya in Lagos.
- ²⁷ In one of the lecture periods at the Institute of Spiritual Warfare in Lagos, the subject of names was discussed. Mary was said to mean 'sorrow' and Endurance implies that the bearer may have to face afflictions and disappointments in life so that God could test his ability to endure according to the name he bears.
- ²⁸ Odunewu means year of danger
- ²⁹ Odunayo means year of joy
- ³⁰ This is self-testimony, during an interview on Saturday 7th October 2006 in Abeokuta.
- ³¹ Luke 1: 5ff.
- ³² C. M. S. G3/A2/02. Mann to Lang. 28 September 1883. Quoted by Ayandele. 1966. *Missionary impact on modern Nigeria*. 244
- ³³ Some of the examples cited by Ayandele include David Brown Vincent who became Mojola Agbebi, Rev. J. H. Samuel who changed to Adegbeoyega Edun, and George William Johnson who became Oshokale Tejumade Johnson to mention a few see Ayandele. 1966. *Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria*. 258
- ³⁴ Details about the belief and attitude of the MFM o dreams are set forth in three of Olukoya's publications namely *Power against dream criminals, victory over Satanic dreams and your dream and your destiny* – all published by the Battle Cry Christian Ministries.
- ³⁵ J. Crowther. 1996. Ed. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. Oxford: OUP. 353.
- ³⁶ Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries. 1st International convention programme of events. 9.
- ³⁷ Pastor Omotosho. 2006. Lecture given on Wednesday 27th September. Institute of Spiritual Warfare, Lagos, between 11.00 and 1.00 p.m.
- ³⁸ Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries International Convention Programme.
- ³⁹ G. F Oyor. 1995. *Who Needs Deliverance*. Ibadan: God-will- do- it.
- ⁴⁰ Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries International Convention Programme p. 9
- ⁴¹ INSWAR is the acronym for a deliverance school of MFM
- ⁴² In one of the lectures attended on Wednesday 27th September 2006 at the headquarters, the subject of dream interpretations and how to puncture satanic dreams was taught by Pastor Omotosho between 10 a.m. and 12 noon.
- ⁴³ F. J. Dakes. 1981 *Complete concordance-cyclopedic index. Dakes annotated reference*. Georgia: Dakes.
- ⁴⁴ Allusion to this is made in Isaiah 29: 8 'It shall even be as when an hungry man dreamt and behold he eateth.'
- ⁴⁵ Job 7: 13 - 15
- ⁴⁶ Dreams Foundations, Montreal, Canada's Retrieved May 20, 2005, from <http://www.dreams.cal>
- ⁴⁷ Dreams Foundations, Montreal, Canada's Retrieved May 20, 2005, from <http://www.dreams.cal>
- ⁴⁸ Gari is a common diet in Yorubaland. It is a granulated cassava product that is either taken raw or turned into morsel food.
- ⁴⁹ Olukoya. 2000. *Deliverance from Spirit Husband and Wife*. 86 - 87
- ⁵⁰ Gari is a popular cassava meal in Nigeria
- ⁵¹ Stories narrated by Mr Olumide Akanni on Wednesday 26th of May, 2005 at MFM International Headquarters, Lagos.
- ⁵² This declaration was hinged on the Genesis account that says that God created man on the 6th day. Genesis 1: 26 - 31
- ⁵³ The works of the flesh are listed in Galatians 5: 19 - 21
- ⁵⁴ The Psalms are 2, 19 and 149
- ⁵⁵ For details, see Olukoya. 2000. *Command the morning*. 7 - 36
- ⁵⁶ Deuteronomy 18 : 9 - 12
- ⁵⁷ D. Ayegboyin. 2005. But Deliver us from Evil... The Riposte of the MFM and its implication for the Reverse in Mission. *ORITA XXXVII June/Dec*. 59.

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