

PROJECT ABSTRACT

Master of Arts in Leadership Project

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Title: FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE RESISTANCE TO ADVENTISM AMONG
THE ILA OF NAMWALA, ZAMBIA

Name of researcher: Matson M. Kazoka

Name and degree of faculty advisor: Zacchaeus Mathema, DMin

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The main focus of this thesis is evangelism among the Ila of Namwala in Zambia. It discusses the difficulties with which Pastors and evangelists encounter among the Ila people due to their hold on culture. Some of the cultural practices that the Ila hold on to are practices such as polygamy, sexual cleansing, ancestor worship (Shimunenga ceremony), etc. The practices here mentioned have for a long time hindered church growth among the Ila people. It was after observing the tenacity with which the Ila hold to their culture, that the researcher sought a deeper understanding of the Ila people and the cultural dynamics which shape them. To begin the search for understanding the culture of these people sixty-three questionnaires were distributed to forty elderly people both men and women and also to twenty three youths both boys and girls. The feedback from the distribution of these questionnaires, contributed to

the outcome of this research. This earlier activity was followed by the biblical theological foundations of humans which were contrasted with the realities of the Ila people of Namwala. In this vein both the old and new testaments were consulted. In addition to the above assertions, personal interviews were also conducted. It was after identifying the cultural factors that influence resistance to accepting Adventism among the Ila that the researcher organized a seminar in which he discussed with the members the dangers of culture in relation to God's word. This seminar attracted 23 members both men and women. In this seminar, the participants discussed the importance of community services to the needy people, and the mechanics of implementing the program. The texts that were used were Matthew 25: 31-46 and Acts 9; 36-43. The program was implemented on a few selected families and the result was a dramatic change of attitude towards Adventism among them. Community service projects when implemented in the spirit of Christ can yield positive results on the community upon which they are implemented.

ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY OF AFRICA

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE RESISTANCE TO ADVENTISM
AMONG THE ILA TRIBE OF NAMWALA, ZAMBIA

A project
presented in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree
Masters of Arts in Leadership

by
Matson M. Kazoka

2014

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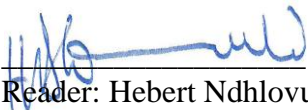
by
Matson M. Kazoka

APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE:



Advisor: Zacchaeus Mathema

Dean, School of Postgraduate Studies
Willard Munger, PhD



Reader: Hebert Ndhlovu, DMin

Centre: Helderberg College, South Africa

Date of Approval: January 2015

I dedicate this research project to all those who intend expand the borders of God's kingdom to the furthest parts of the world, whose passion is to penetrate different cultural set ups with the intention of introducing Jesus to those groping about in darkness. The researcher also dedicates this project to Missiologists whose desire is to further this research on the Ila and other people groups who have been enslaved by culture and who may want to find more solutions to this perceived enslavement. The prayer of the researcher therefore, is that God empowers those willing to carry the yoke of Christ so that they can carry the work of preaching to its logical conclusion.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The 2010 Zambia National Demographic Census indicates that the total population of the Ila tribe in Namwala is 101,589. When the 2002 survey is compared with the findings of 2010, there is a difference of 1879. Of all the population of the Ila people, only 17, 557 (17.28%) are members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This translates into a ratio of one Adventist for every six non-Adventists.

This ratio may be considered good in some parts of the world field, however, a problem exists. The major problem is that most of the members lack sincerity and seriousness in matters of worship. This observation is seen in the way they respond to the challenges of life. The Ila people have traditional norms which are very hard to break even when they become Christians. When illness or death occurs in a family, the likely-hood in most of the Christian families is that they will revert to traditional means to find a solution to the problem. For the Ila Christian, traditional religion is synchronized in the worship of God; hence they see no problem in consulting medicine men as is illustrated in chapters two and three. In addition to the above most of the Ila are not willing to abandon their cultural practices which negate the Gospel. This, therefore, becomes a big challenge to Christian growth among the Ila of Namwala. However, despite the work of evangelism by Adventist missionaries, contemporary public evangelistic campaigns, door to door ministry and person to person Bible studies, there has been no signs of true conversion in the lives of even those who are already claiming to be Adventists. The numbers may be overwhelming,

but they are numbers without quality. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to investigate factors that influence resistance to Adventism among the Ila tribe of Namwala in Southern province of Zambia. When these factors are investigated and established, the church will be required to come up with strategic ways of establishing strong Adventist presence in the area by sublimating and transcending cultural tendencies which are not compatible with Adventism. Questionnaires, Personal interviews and Theological approach were the instruments of data collection in this research document.

Statement of the Problem

Considering the number of public campaigns conducted, door to door evangelism ministry and person to person Bible studies by the Seventh day Adventist church among the Ila tribe of Kabulamwaanda in Namwala Zambia, there is not much growth in membership among the Ila people when compared with growth among the Tonga's. This picture contrasts that which is found among the Tonga people as well as other tribes in Zambia where the church is experiencing rapid growth. It is one thing to experience lack of numerical growth of the Church in Namwala, but there is another aspect of growth of the Church which is lacking in Namwala: there is lack of spiritual growth in discipleship as there is ample evidence that even baptized Seventh-day Adventist members vacillate between Christianity and aberrant traditional practices. For instance, in matters of tithe returning, Monze Central Church (a single church) which is one of the many churches in Monze Mission district, a stronghold of the Tonga people with a membership of 2050 scores an average of K22434 monthly. In contrast, Kabulamwaanda one of the districts in Namwala with a membership of 3052 contributes an average of k8594, this record is indicative of the vast differences

being experienced in spiritual matters between two groups of people the Tonga and the Ila of Kabulamwaanda in Namwala.

Purpose of Study

As has already been hinted above, the purpose of this research is to identify the factors influencing resistance to change and become authentic Adventists among the Ila of Kabulamwaanda district in Namwala. Generally, the philosophy of life among the Ila people is that of pleasure seeking, contradicting God's design for living for humankind. This pleasurable life style is alluded to by Edwin Smith and Andrew Dale in their book, *The Ila speaking people of Northern Rhodesia*.¹ This understanding will enable the researcher to come up with a program that would help them change their attitude towards the Gospel of Christ and internalize Adventist values and beliefs.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant in that it will be an avenue through which the Adventist church will design programs that are intended to bring solutions to many social - cultural problems that impede Christian growth among the Ila society. It will help the Pastors and Evangelists to carefully structure programs that will counteract the factors that influence resistance to Adventism among the Ila of Namwala.

Delimitation of the Study

Although the problem being discussed in this research could be found in other areas of South Zambia conference, this research is mainly focusing on Namwala district the home of the Ila people who are sometimes referred to as the Baila and whose strong

¹Edwin Smith and Andrew Murray. *The Ila-speaking People of Northern Rhodesia* (New Hyde Park, NY: University Books, 1968) 41.

cultural life has slowed down church growth conceptually, numerically, and spiritually.

Limitation of the Study

There are two limitations in this research; the first one is that, there are very few books which have been written concerning the socio-cultural dynamics of the Ila tribe in relation to Adventism available and even the few books that are available have been written mainly by those who are not Ila. The indigenous Ila people have not been keen to write books pertaining to their own society which makes most of them to lack the ingredients that gives a true picture of who the *Ila* are and what they stand for.

Methodology

This research paper will rely on three methods of data collection which are questionnaire distribution, personal interviews as well as using a theological approach in which both the Old and New testaments will be used.

Study Summary

In pursuing this study the researcher proceeded by crafting an introductory chapter which included introduction, statement of the problem, statement of purpose, statement of significance, delimitation, limitations, and definition of terms. This project will include the introduction, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitation, and definition of terms.

The second chapter dealt with the philosophy of life as designed by God and how the Ila people have violated basic principles of the good life, and how this has reduced them to the degradation which will be described in the third chapter of this project.

The third chapter was mainly the description of the local setting and was focused on the social, cultural as well as religious life of the Ila tribe in Namwala.

The fourth chapter was a program design intended to offer a solution to the problem of resistance to Adventism and its values by the Ila people.

The fifth chapter constituted of summary, conclusion as well as recommendations concerning the whole project.

Definition of Terms

Sambwe: This term implies some traditional charms which boost animal production.

Lomba: A magical creature whose head resembles the owner while the body is snake like. This animal can be used in different ways such as creating wealth, killing people

Shimmunenga: The Ila prophet who predicts future events such as impending drought, coming animal pestilences or good rainfall pattern.

Zuma: be strong.

Mankomona: a small coconut like fruit.

N'gombe: cattle

Kazanda: roots or charms.

Bantu: humans or people.

Botatwe: three

Mizhimu: Ancestral spirits.

Mun'ganga: witch finder or witchdoctor.

Malende: Shrine

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter focuses on what the Bible and other Christian writers say about the ideal life as God designed it. This is done with the purpose of establishing the blueprint for living, relating, and serving as it is revealed in God's His sacred writings.

The Foundational Statement about Human Creation

The purpose of the existence of human beings is implicit in the declaration that humans were created in the image of God (Gen 1:26-27). This declaration by God indicates that human beings are special to God their creator. Human beings have dignity and value. Their creation as Ellen White stated was “the crowning work of his creation.”² The creation of human beings in the image of God carries far-reaching implications in the way they live, relate, and serve God and their fellow human beings. Chapter two of the Book of Genesis elaborates on the specifics of creation of human beings and how God gave then the institution of marriage which was to become the basic building block for human society.

Chapter 3 of the Book of Genesis the Bible describes the fall of human beings and the devastating consequences of the fall into sin. As asserted by other authors, Genesis 1 – 3 are foundational chapters concerning the origin, purpose and destiny of

²Ellen White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1958), 52.

human beings and the rest of creation. Many authorities would say that whatever falls after Genesis 3 is just commentary.

The dignity and value of human beings place them on a higher status.

Unfortunately the Ila people like some people of other cultures in this sinful world, have indulged in destructive patterns of life that reduce their dignity, status and value as will be shown later in the third chapter of this Project. The activities of the Ila people have reduced their status of being human beings who were created in the image of God. Iilas in general have little regard for the word of God and Christianity as a whole. To the Iilas, life is all about sexual pleasure and many other activities which are very destructive to human life. It is, therefore, in order to examine what God's design for life is before examining how devastatingly the Ila people have continually indulged into self-destructive patterns of life and self-defeating behaviours.

God had a plan of an ideal life for every human being when He created Adam and Eve. According to their culture, the Ila people have failed to follow God's requirements. They seem to have violated every dimension of life that could result into a holistic pattern of living. What they ignore is that which relates to the redemption of mankind. The requirements of God are able to bring up a people who are able to glorify God and bless their fellow human beings. Among some of the dimensions of life which are abused by the Ila people are as follows: the physical body of the Ila person, their cognitive dimension, their affective and evaluative dimensions. The question which may need to be answered is: what is God's design for all the specific dimensions outlined above?

Dimensions of Life As Designed by God

As has already been stated above, the physical, the cognitive, the affective and the evaluative dimensions of life were designed by the Creator to operate to the fullest.

A brief examination of each of those specific dimensions suffices to show that human beings have, indeed, fallen and come short of the glory of God. What then is God's ideal for each of the dimensions of life?

The Biology of the Human Body

The biblical creation account states that human beings were created in the image of God (Gen 1:26, 27). It is clearly stated here that God created both the body and the spirit. The human body is just as important as the spirit. According to the record in Genesis 2:7 the equation of a complete human soul (living being) is BODY + BREATH OF LIFE (SPIRIT) equals HUMAN SOUL. So, a human being does not have a soul as was distorted by Greek philosophers.

A human being is a soul. The BODY plus the spirit make the soul. The human soul is a unit which cannot exist without the body. In the New Testament, Paul underlines the importance of the body as the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19-20). Thus the human body is God's creation and is not intrinsically evil.

Commenting on the creation of human beings, Ellen G. White states that "Man was to bear God's image, both in outward resemblance and in character. Christ alone is 'the express image' (Heb 1:3) of the Father; but man was formed in the likeness of God."³ Moreover, Ellen White underlines the importance of the body by stating that "All need to become acquainted with that most wonderful of all organisms, the human body. They should understand the functions of the various organs and the dependence of one upon another for the healthy action of all. They should study the influence of the mind upon the body, and the body upon the mind, and the laws by which they are

³Ibid., 45.

governed.”⁴ This indicates that man is as a result of God’s creating power and did not come by chance or evolution as many other theories asserts.

Moreover, God Himself reveals that the body needs to be taken care of. The commandments of God forbid sin. Some of the health rules are put in place to help man care for the body and keep it in a good condition so that man is able to serve his God without disease. The lifestyle of an Ila however, negates what God designed to be the way of taking care of the body as the *Zambian Post News Paper* of Friday March 26, 2009 shows. In this tabloid, senior chief Bright Nalubamba of the Ila people condemned some of the social vices that are commonly practiced among the Ila such as polygamous unions, the act of sexual cleansing, wife inheritance as well as property grabbing. These and many other vices, clearly show how the majority of the Ila people have deviated from God’s plan for humanity and violet the laws of health with impunity. To a large extent, these practices influence their resistance to Adventist teachings as discarding them would compromise their cultural identity.

It is therefore important to understand that strict adherence to rules and regulations of health will preserve the body in good health and prolong life. The sixth commandment that condemns murder is obviously directed at preventing bodily injuries and mutilations or destruction of human life itself as this would be displeasing to God. The seventh commandment also is given to humankind to make sure that the body functions to the fullest without diseases and other ailments which make human life miserable.

Some elements of the tenth commandment extend prohibitions which are intended for healthier living. The human body is of great value before God who

⁴E.G. White. *The Ministry of healing* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press,1942), 128.

created it, and human beings are not allowed to temper with the body. When the psalmist sang that he was “fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psa 139:14) he was stating a fundamental truth about the complexities of the body which declare the wonder of God’s creative power.

Humans such as the Ila people of Namwala have violated almost every natural and moral law which God gave to regulate the human body and its functions as is shown in the book by Tobias W. C. Sumaili entitled, ‘*SHIMUNENGA*’ and the traditional culture of the Baila.”⁵ Here Sumaili discusses some of the violations such as unregulated sexual immorality, beer drinking, and ancestor worship etc. The above therefore are among some of the serious factors that the church faces in evangelising them. Humans are therefore mandated by God to jealously look after their bodies and avoid violations of health rules as not doing so negatively affects the state of the human mind too.

The Cognitive Dimension

The cognitive dimension by definition is man’s reasoning power which enables him to appreciate the world around him, to discern the complexities of life, to analyse issues before getting involved in them. It includes the mental act or process by which knowledge is acquired. According to Ellen White, the cognitive dimension is also the one that carries the image of God. Thus she writes: “Every human created in the image of God is endowed with power that is akin to his Creator—power to think and to do.”⁶ Those who have developed this power are the ones who become leaders and make qualitative difference in the world. Obeying and disobeying lies within its

⁵Tobias W. C. Sumaili, *Shimunenga and the Traditional Culture of the Baila*. (Lusaka, ZM: Zambia Educational Publishing House, 1994), 13.

⁶Ellen G. White, *Education*. (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1952), 17.

domain and it is the frequency that connects humanity to God. It is on this dimension that character is built.

It is, however, important to note that this is not the case with the majority of the Ila people especially when they are celebrating their traditional events such as the Shimunenga ceremony. Sumaili gives details of their behaviour in his book, ‘Shimunenga and the traditional culture of the Ila.’⁷ A close examination of the Ila lifestyle, tend to show how abusive they can be to their cognitive power through the practice of ancestor worship, the numbing of their sensibilities by taking in alcoholic beverages etc. The abusiveness to their cognitive power can be seen in the lewd songs they sing without exhibiting a sense of shame. This assertion can be seen in the offence that Edwin Smith felt through their singing of “lewd songs and a general licence.”⁸ The phrase, “a general licence”, describes their unregulated freedom to enjoyment and the absence of any restraint in behavioural practices. The freedom alluded to in this phrase includes uncontrolled immoral sexual life, beer drinking, and intemperance in eating.

In addition to their celebrations, the Ila also exhibited their religiosity when they prayed to their ancestor Shimunenga for their cattle to be multiplied “Provide us with calves of many colours of Shimunenga, you who gather in both the living and the dead... you who give fertility to bulls and calves of brown and white and red.”⁹

It is of vital importance to remember that judgments that all human beings make and conclusions they arrive at in life as indicated above find their source in the

⁷Sumaili, 9.

⁸ Edwin Smith and Andrew Dale, *The Ila-speaking Peoples of Northern Rhodesia*. (New Hyde, NY: University Books, Inc.1968), 191.

⁹ Sumaili, 13.

cognitive dimension. The mind is the engine that is responsible for all the activities of humanity. It is what, to a large degree shapes, human character. Ellen G. White discusses this thought in *Testimonies to the Church* vol. 3 where she asserts,

Between the mind and the body there is a mysterious and wonderful relationships. They react upon each other. To keep the body in a health condition, to develop its strength, that every part of the living machinery may act harmoniously should be the first duty of our life. To neglect the body is to neglect the mind. It cannot be to the glory of God for his children to have sickly bodies or dwarf minds.¹⁰

In another statement she comments on the harmony that exists between the body and the mind when she asserts,

The improvement of the mind is the duty we owe to ourselves, to society and to God. But we must not devise means for cultivation of the intellect at the expense of the moral and the spiritual. And it is only by the harmonious development of both mental and moral faculties that the highest perfection of either can be attained.¹¹

This important observation by Ellen White shows how important proper body management is both to God and humanity. It, therefore, places upon human beings a very heavy responsibility of taking care of their bodies in order that they function according to God's design knowing very well that each person is accountable for their actions.

John Mbiti observes that beliefs and customs (practices) are inseparable, "Beliefs and customs often go together. They cover all areas of life. Beliefs generally deal with Religious ideas; customs deal with what people normally approve of and do."¹²The cognitive dimension therefore becomes a thread that translates human

¹⁰ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3 (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), 485-486.

¹¹ White, *Review and Herald*, January 4 1881.

¹² John S. Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion* (Portsmouth, England: Biddles, 1991), 42.

beliefs into activities of life. The quotation from Mbiti is actually confirmed by the Ila belief in ancestral spirits as shown by Edwin Smith and Andrew Dale in their book entitled 'The Ila-speaking peoples of Northern Rhodesia.' In the chapter entitled, 'THE DOCTRINE OF SOULS.' They are quoted as saying, "The Baila are firm believers in the doctrine of metempsychosis: this means that at death a person passes into another living creature, man, animal, or plant."¹³ This belief system was confirmed by Smith and Dale in the same book as they indicate that, the grave of chief Sezongo became a shrine to which the Ila went to pray as the following quotation confirms, "It was like this with the old chief Sezongo at Nanzela. Sometime after his death, we visited his grave and found some men sweeping the hut in which he was buried. There was a tortoise in the hut and we were informed that it was Sezongo."¹⁴ This Ila belief system militates against that which the Adventist church advocates thereby influencing resistance. It is the religion and culture of the Ila people combined that influences resistance to Adventist teachings and stands as a big hindrance to Adventist growth among this society. The task of the church is therefore to show that in Christ Jesus, life is complete and therefore deserving worship.

Jesus also confirms this intricate relationship between the mind and body's physical output in Mark 2: 11-12. In this text, Jesus commands the sick man to arise and take up his bed and the believing man's body responds and he is healed. Solomon too confirms the relationship between the mind and the body when he says, "As a man thinketh so is he." Proverbs 23: 7 the cognitive dimension is a very important area of human existence in God's design as it is the engine for all human output. Practically speaking, activities such as brutal murders, belief in spirits, beer

¹³Smith and Dale, 124.

¹⁴Ibid., 126.

drinking, sexual immorality, witchcraft, etc. all have their origin in the human mind. It is important therefore, that, the spirit of God wholesomely controls the mind of man to save it from the stated illicit human activities.

Cognitive skills therefore translated into viable economic programs could enhance economic prosperity among the majority of Ila and all humanity thereby making them honourable societies. It is however important to realize that the cognitive does interact with other dimensions as well such as the affective as well as the evaluative and this is confirmed in the following section.

The Affective Dimension

The affective dimension is part of the human being (constitution) and it is the emotional side of life and may be revealed in the way people relate to God, to others and the environment around them.

The happiness or sadness individual human beings exhibit in different circumstances, to a large degree, has their roots on affections. Affections have a strong bearing on issues of worship, ceremonies and funerals. A good example is seen during funerals of the Ila people. During such occasions, emotions are seen expressed in the warlike dance known in their local language as kuzemba. In this war-like dance, the Ila men emotionally wield their spears as they run to and fro as if to try and spear death itself. This behaviour is due to strong affections they attach to their dead relatives. These misplaced emotions constitute part of the Ila culture and religion and make it difficult for the Adventist church to successfully change their mind set on traditional issues. Emotions constitute part of their happiness and sadness especially on things in which they attach great value. The Pastors and Evangelists, therefore, ought to assure the Ila of a better world where all their fears and worries will come to an end through the gift of eternal life. This knowledge is essential because it enhances

emotional stability in human beings by controlling ill effects which cause complications such as high blood pressure, depressions, strokes etc. It will also help them to see their cultural-religious practices as enemies of life and impediments to progressive living.

Solomon agrees with this thinking in the book of Proverbs 17: 22 where he comments, “A merry heart doeth good like medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones.” He uses two important words; a merry heart and broken spirit. These two phrases show the effects of affection and disaffection on human lifestyle. In the book *Ministry of Healing*, Ellen White indirectly alludes to this when she describes Jesus as a highly social person during his ministry on earth when she asserts, “The Saviour’s entire life was characterized by disinterested benevolence and the beauty of holiness. He is our goodness from the beginning of his ministry, men began to comprehend more clearly the character of God...he was highly social yet he posed a reserve that discouraged any familiarity.”¹⁵

In the publication of 2007 on communication by Floyd Korry, comes the following words, “Highly affectionate people tend to have better mental health and less stress¹⁶...” Diane Boudreau January 10 2007 publication which was posted on the internet on stress says “A simple expression of affection through word or deed, can have a wide repercussion on emotional effects that range from joy to

¹⁵Ellen White, *Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948), 26.

¹⁶ Floyd Korry. “Interpersonal Communication,” http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2006.00339_3.x/abstracts

discomfort to outright fear. In fact affection also has distinct physical effect both to the receiver and to the giver.”¹⁷

The affective dimension, therefore, is an essential branch of human life which enables one to interact with the environment around him, to love, to hate or even worship God. Usually affections are much stronger on the things that have value to an individual such as loving a wife, a husband, a child, wealth, entertainment. If the criticism is coming from someone you highly value, the impact is devastating as opposed to someone you do not love.

It is the affections for those that we value that bind us together in unity as societies in our daily activities. In like manner, those that want to win souls to Christ ought to understand that the biggest hurdle is to detach people’s emotions from the things of value to them especially things that have to do with culture and traditional religion. In matters of evangelism therefore, it would be prudent for the church to take into account peoples affections and cultural values if success is to be achieved. It is also worth noting that feelings are value driven and this assertion can be seen in the lifestyle of the communities in which we live.

According to Dennis C. Fowler, like many, the Ila people place a lot of value in the following programs “female initiation rites and feasts, beer brewing, smoking marijuana, marrying girls as soon as they reach puberty, funeral feasts, witchcraft, divination, praying to ancestors etc.”¹⁸The Ila people may be affirmed in their pursuit of happiness, but they need to be guided and led to see that the way they live and what they do defeats the very purpose of their pursuit.

¹⁷ Diane Boudreau “The Effects of Affection,” <http://researchmatters.asu.edu/stories/affects-affection-960>

¹⁸ Dennis G. Fowler, *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 27 no. 2 (April 2003):64-71.

To set the Ila free from these traditional programs which are devoid of life and militates against church growth among them, there should be a strong and practical approach of sharing the gospel with them. It is therefore important that the church must come up with life changing programs whose values will enhance their life patterns and in this respect, much will be discussed in chapter four of this thesis. As has already been observed, various dimensions of living according to God's design have been devastatingly affected. Another dimension that has been affected is the sense of the real value.

The Evaluative Dimension

As observed in the previous section, behaviour is to a large extent determined by perceived values in a given culture or context. Each society has a certain set of values that influence behaviour. A practical example is on the pre literal societies whose values on their common culture, common territory, and common language hold them together as a society. Sir Norman Anderson makes the following observation on pre literary societies,

“The pre literal societies are a group of people who feel they belong together through sharing a common culture and a set of values, a common territory, and social organization and probably a common language.”¹⁹ It should be understood that in like manner, the Ila too have certain values that hold them together. Until the aspect of values is clearly taken into account by those who want to introduce Jesus to them, evangelism efforts will not yield the desired results as values constitute part of the Ila

¹⁹ Norman, Anderson. *The World's Religions* (Grand Rapids, MI., Eerdmans Publishing Association, 1994), 13.

religion and culture. The Ila culture gives them identity and it is this that unites the society.

According to Smith and Dale, traditional practices play a major role in holding the Ila together as a unity as is observed in the following quotation, ‘We strictly teach our children to respect and observe our traditional practices because they are a mark of our identity.’²⁰ Peter Snelson too discusses cattle ranching as one of the cultural and economic values inherent in Ila society as it adds to the growth of the village economy.

This assertion is seen from the response that came from one of the parents who were urged to allow their children to go to school by the Primitive Methodist missionaries at Kasenga in Namwala. To this request one parent responded by saying, “cattle are our school.”²¹

Children were very instrumental in building the village economy as they spent much of their time herding cattle and helping in the cultivation of family fields. Therefore, it must be understood that behaviour is always value driven and for the introduction of Jesus to any society to be meaningful, values of those being evangelised must never be ignored. To the Ila man, wealth acquisition is more valuable than conventional education. Therefore due to the high value attached to the acquisition of cattle, the Ila go to the extent of using the African charms known in their local language as Sambwe which when translated means, that which is bathed. This concept will be discussed in detail in chapter three of this thesis.

²⁰Smith and Dale, 252.

²¹Peter Snelson, *The Educational Development of Northern Rhodesia* (Lusaka, Zambia: National Education Company of Zambia, 1974), 54.

This aspect of wealth acquisition comes in other dimensions too such as having polygamous marriages with the intention of increasing the number of children in the family to work in maize fields and this is the more reason some Ila place much value in polygamy. In relation to this assertion, Smith and Dale declare, “the multiplicity of wives means so many more children”²² These and many other values among the Ila people of Namwala make it difficult for Adventist missionaries to assert their influence and win them over to Christ. It would therefore be prudent for the Adventist church to prove to the Ila people that the Christian religion comprises better values of wealth acquisition through the use of conventional scientific methods and that people who accept Jesus and his view of life, experience happier lives than those who live without Him.

Value systems therefore, determine human conduct in any given society. God intends that we recognize the importance and essentiality of all three dimensions of the human construct. It is important also to understand that the challenges that Missiologists encounter among societies, are mainly due to value differences in various issues. An intelligent approach to life needs to account for the relativity of values. There is no group of people in the world whose culture has no good things in it and this is true also of the Ila people. The church therefore should seriously strive to discover areas of cultural values in the Ila society especially those that antagonise Christianity. This understanding will enable the church to counteract those evils that influence resistance to Adventist teachings and there after introduce them to Jesus Christ.

²²Smith and Dale, 65.

Stewardship and the Body Temple

Human beings were created and placed on planet earth to be stewards of what God has created for them and for himself. In his wisdom God also designed the human body to be the dwelling place of his spirit and asserted that whoever will defile the human temple, God would destroy him.(1 Cor. 3:15-16; 1Cor. 6:19-20) The concept of stewardship however, does not seem to make much sense to many of the people in the world such as the Ila people of Namwala. This observation comes about due to the carefree kind of life and their disregard for healthful living by the majority of these people.

Among the practices which they love doing, according to *Zambian Post* Newspaper, a private tabloid of Monday, November 23, 2009, include sexual immorality, polygamous marriages, property grabbing etc. this observation was made by the senior chief of the Ila people Bright Nalubamba. Tobias W. C. Sumaili in his book *SHIMUNENGA AND THE TRADITIONAL CULTURE OF THE BAILA*, mentions beer drinking as one of the social evils of the *Ila* people and discussing the activities of Shimunenga ceremony he declares “The first day of the ceremony (Shimunenga) is known as the women’s day. It is the women’s day because on this day the women go around the villages singing and dancing and drinking. On this day men do not do anything at all they just sit around the villages drinking beer.”²³ Cornelius Matandiko in his book ‘Seventh-day Adventism in Zambia’ discussing burial practices among the Ila says, “Many gifts are presented and put in the grave. These include items such as food, utensils, tobacco, beer and

²³Sumaili, 13.

clothing.”²⁴Matandiko also says, as they give they say some words like, “ngoyu tombwe wakufweba.”²⁵ Which means here is tobacco for you to smoke. The practice here stated defeats the concept of the body temple as declared by God. (1Cor 3; 16-17)

After considering the items that are put inside the grave of the deceased and the main motive for putting them, one thing that comes out clearly is that, the majority of the Ila society are living a carefree, pleasurable kind of lifestyle. The observation above, defeats God’s purpose for creating humanity and places upon the Ila, the responsibility of becoming good stewards of not only their bodies but also their environment. Very few among the Ila understand the philosophy of stewardship as designed by God.

In managing what God has entrusted to them, humans ought to exercise maximum care so that their actions may receive God’s approval. Man’s affections on things that surround him, his value systems and the power to choose, must all resonate with that of God. In all aspects of life, humans must endeavour to relate well to God and to live within his will.

The concept dealing with the relationship between God and the human body is replicated in the book *Seventh day Adventists Believe...* and it asserts: “It is frequently suggested that human moral and spiritual dimensions reveal something about God’s moral and spiritual nature. But since the bible says that man comprises an

²⁴Cornelius Matandiko, *Seventh-day Adventism in Zambia* (Lusaka, ZM: Zambia Adventist Press, 2003) 26.

²⁵Ibid., 27.

indivisible unity of mind and soul, man's physical features must also in some way, reflect God's image."²⁶

This quotation suggests that humanity is mandated to live in accordance with God's original design. God's design for living therefore entails fulfilling the original purposes of God such as becoming like him by reflecting his image in both outward appearances, spiritually, attitudes, and in living a life of service to humanity. The book, 'Handbook of Seventh day Adventist Theology' comes up with the following observation:

Resemblance though not the focal idea, cannot be excluded. The representational functions of human beings cannot subsist without communication with their maker. The physical, intellectual, social and spiritual endowments as well as the ability to communicate with God are equally very important. Since God's image in human beings is brought about in order to place them in dominion over lower nature, it must involve everything that enables human kind to rule in their sphere as God rules in his.²⁷

In the purpose of God, the modelling of man carries with it certain qualities such as knowledge, holiness and righteousness which are again emphasized in Colossians 3:10 and Ephesians 4:24. The book 'Christian Beliefs' shares a similar understanding concerning the image of God in man and his role to both God and fellow man and the inanimate world.

Both outwardly and inwardly Adam resembled the creator. He was endowed with personality; he was not a thing or abstraction. He was given characteristics, faculties, and powers that clearly distinguished him from the lower creatures- reason, the power of choice, mental capacities and aptitudes. These and other characteristics that make him man, in contrast with animals, reveal that he was made in the image of God.²⁸

²⁶General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1988), 85.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 26.

²⁸T. H. Jemison, *Christian Beliefs* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1957), 125.

This concept outlining the image of God in humanity should also evoke the desire to understand what constitutes life. The Church leaders and the people at large ought to investigate what practical roles they should play in building society as God would if he were here on earth. Some of the practical areas that constitute a holistic human life are areas such as, the philosophy of manual labour, the spiritual dimension as an extension of the image of God, body management and also the aspect of social involvement in which man participates in evangelism and community service acts. When human beings embrace these attributes, they become relevant to society and to God. It is important therefore that the Adventist church help the people group under focus in this study to appreciate themselves and understand the importance of taking care of their bodies. This knowledge of stewardship will help them understand the importance of caring for their bodies and work hard to sustain their families.

Wealth Acquisition among the Ila

In the eyes of God, wealth acquisition is closely connected with the concept of manual labour, which was constituted at creation with the injunction to “tend and keep the earth.” And Moses in Genesis 2: 15 asserts: “Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it.” And in Genesis 4: 2 the author repeats the same thought when he declares “But Cain was the tiller of the ground.”

Jacob is said to have laboured for Rachel for seven years, as the Bible states, “I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter” (Genesis 29: 18).

His assigning humanity this useful occupation in a perfect world reveals the dignity of manual labour.

The fourth commandment (Exodus 20:8-11) reminds human beings to keep the seventh day holy. It is also clear from the commandment that this one day of rest out of seven days is linked to six days of labour. Human beings are created in order to

work to achieve God's purpose for creating them in His own image. The assignment by implication condemns indolence. The Apostle Paul in his letter to the church of Thessalonica gives the following injunction:

For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat. For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busybodies. Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread. But as for you, brethren, do not grow weary in doing well. (2Thessalonians 3: 10-13)

The creation account in chapter one of the book of Genesis also gives us an elaborate story of how God created the world in six days, thereby appending his signature on the importance of labour to humanity. God desires that all humanity be actively involved in productive labour in order that they earn a decent living to God's glory. It is however important to realise that the majority of the Ila people, are found in the bracket of peasant farmers. On the average, people in this bracket struggle to make ends meet as they are generally poor people with small fields of maize, sorghum, sweet potatoes, beans and a few herds of cattle etc. Vincent Marko Tembo asserts, "The Ila belonged to a large group of Bantu-speaking peoples. They therefore took part in the general practice of agriculture. They grew indigenous crops such as cassava, millet, sweet potatoes, beans and also cultivated maize for its mealie meal."²⁹

Tembo cites cattle ranching too as a part of the main economic base of the Ila people thus he declares, "It is worth noting that the Ila speaking people owned and valued a lot of cattle in the past..."³⁰. While Tembo points to the past, It must be remembered that rearing cattle is still part of the Ila culture. It is important however to

²⁹ Vincent Marko Tembo, *Basic Education Social Studies, History*, (Lusaka; ZM: Zambia Publishing Company Ltd, 1986), 33.

³⁰Ibid., 33.

understand that like all other indigenous Africans, traditional religion influences much of what the Ila do in their society especially the way they multiply their wealth. While a few of the Ila acquire their wealth in a clean and decent manner, the majority of those who own cattle use charms to increase production due to the value tag they place on them. Smith and Dale commenting on this idea declare, “Many are the tales told of the way people have gained happiness and prosperity in life through the action of misamu (charms).”³¹

It is this use of charms to increase the multiplication of animals and crop production that causes Ila resistance to Adventism. The Ila place a very high price tag or value on wealth acquisition and their traditional religion among other things, incorporates the use of charms (magic) in the accruing of wealth. This tradition however, stands in contrast to biblical teachings which require that God becomes the source of all our wealth through hard work.

To wean the Ila from unchristian ways of obtaining wealth as indicated in the previous section, the Adventist church needs to prove that it is possible to earn wealth by using modern scientific methods of agriculture, cattle production and through other credible means. The Bible gives examples of men whom God blessed with great riches such as Abraham, Lot, and Job etc. (Genesis 13:1-10; Job 1-2), because they not only trusted in God but they worked hard also. It is the duty of the Adventist church to help the *Ila* understand that wealth can be obtained by working hard other than the use of magic. Unless and until Pastors and Evangelists can inculcate into the minds of the *Ila* the understanding that conventional methods of labour can bring decent wealth to a family, resistance to their teachings will continue.

³¹Smith and Dale, 84.

Psychological Benefits of Manual Labor

On the psychological benefits, it is very important to understand the intricacy that exists between the body and the mind. Whatever affects the body whether positively or negatively, affects the mind as well. David understood this intricacy when he declared, “I will praise you; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made, marvellous are your works; and that my soul knows right well.”(Psalm 139:14) In the book ‘Life Sketches of Ellen G. White,’ Ellen G. White shares the following thought in relation to the above, “The mental faculties will strengthen and develop if you will go to work in the fear of the LORD.”³²

For the human mind to be alert and active, it is essential that human beings must be involved in manual labour. It is only when the mind is alert, that the word of God can be appreciated by the human family. The church must therefore encourage those that they evangelise to be actively involved in manual labour as this will prevent them from getting involved in illicit activities. When the human mind is inactive, Satan finds it easy to fill it with ideas that are inconsistent with bible teachings. The situation among the *Ila* speaking people, like other African people groups is not very different, as they spend much of their time thinking about pleasurable acts and how to obtain wealth. Pleasure seeking and wealth acquisition which fill the minds of many *Ila* people as has been stated in the discussion of Shimunenga therefore, are among the factors that influence resistance to the acceptance of Adventism among them. It is therefore prudent that those who work to help the *Ila* families, should consider nurturing their children as this will help them grow into responsible adults. To bring

³² Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches of Ellen White* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1915), 275.

positive psychological change to the Ila mind-set, Pastors ought help groom children in the Ila families.

Family as a Social Institution

A family is a social institution in which its members fully express their feelings of happiness and sadness and where they are also recognised as important. In the case of humanity, God verbalised his wish for the family to live as a social entity when he said; “It is not good that man should be alone, I will make him a helper suitable for him.” Gen. 2: 18. The text discusses companionship of the people who live together. Mary Kay De Genova totally agrees with the idea as she observes that, “Traditional views emphasized the role of the family as an institution whose function was to meet the role of society or physical needs of family members... more modern views of the family tend to emphasize the role of fulfilling emotional and social needs of family members this is the expressive role.”³³

Magesa amplifies this ideology when he quotes a Zulu officiating Minister who said, “Mapule, you should bear in mind ...that you are married not to your husband Paul, but to his family. That means you have to identify completely with his relatives look after them, care for them go out of your way to make them happy³⁴

In God’s mind the family is both an institution organised to nurture its own members in the right ways as well as providing security to them. It is also a companionship centre where members can share both their happiness and their grief. Borrowing from the above observation, it is important that the Adventist church in

³³ Mary Kay De Genova, *Intimate Relationships in Marriages and Families* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008), 6.

³⁴ Laurenti Magesa, *African Religions: The Moral Traditions of Abundant Life* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1997), 116.

Namwala help the Ila people to grow in the Lord and help nurture their children in a way that God approves as this will make them grow as responsible children. It is in the family setting where godly values can be shared with all family members and this orientation will also deter them from participating in evil deeds which stand in the way of their salvation. As a social institution, the Ila family must also be introduced to Christ as this trend will make them grow as responsible adults in the Lord, who must also be of use to their society.

In the gospel of John, Jesus declares, “By this all men will know that ye are my disciples, if you have love one to another “John 13: 35. Ellen G. White in her book *Medical Ministry* declares, “The pleasure of doing well animates the mind and the body as direct beneficiaries of social acts.³⁵” In the book of Genesis 18:1-14 Abraham welcomes strangers.

The above observations on family life, ought to remind the Adventist church concerning the importance of nurturing the family in the way that God accepts. Family education ought to inculcate Christian values that will shape the family destiny. In relation to the above discussion, the church ought to have the Ila family in mind as this family is the main focus of our study. The biggest huddle to Christian living among the Ila is their traditional life practices which among other things include ancestor worship, and the free use of charms to increase their cattle population. Charms are also used for protection of a family. The church ought to concern itself with the salvation of the Ila family and help to introduce good values that will shape their destiny and to make them to distaste their evil practices. The introduction of Christian values to this society, will help them to discard evil tendencies that are incompatible with Christian values.

³⁵Ellen G, White, *Medical Ministry*, (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1963), 106.

The Family as an Evangelism Centre

According to God's purpose, the family as social unit has been entrusted with the task of reaching out to the world (the neighbourhood) with the message of love. There are many examples in scripture where God's people were instrumental in sharing his word wherever they went, the Apostle Paul preached among the Greeks in Athens; Acts 17: 14-26; Acquilla and Priscilla were also evangelists using their house as a worship centre. Romans 16: 1-3. Jonah was an evangelist to Nineveh etc Jonah chapters 1-4. While Genesis 7: 1 shows God's recognition of Noah's family who evangelised the antediluvian world for a hundred and twenty years, Christian families should therefore take it upon themselves to share the good news of salvation to those in danger of being lost.

In summary therefore, it should be understood that chapter two described the divine purposes of God for creating humanity, that humans were created in the image of God as special beings with important dimensions that make them function holistically. These dimensions are the physical body itself, the cognitive, the affective and the evaluative. At creation, important duties were also assigned humanity, duties such as stewardship in which humanity is expected to look after their bodies, their families their societies and the environment around them.

Chapter 2 had clearly shown how God intended man to live his life on earth, how he was to relate to the environment around him and to his creator. It also described in not so deep manner issues that influence the Ila people from accepting Adventist teachings. Chapter 3, however, goes further in the description of the lifestyle of the Ila. It describes the local setting of the Ila people specifically on the issues that negatively affect Adventism among them. It discusses the socio-cultural

dynamics of the Ila life as will be shown in the following chapter and how this affects evangelism.

CHAPTER 3

DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL SETTING

This chapter attempts to provide the socio-cultural and religious milieu of the Ila people as determined by their beliefs, values and customs. In discussing this terrain, the chapter underscored elements in the Ila culture and society that have hindered the Adventist evangelization of this people group and the failure, in general, of the Ila people to internalize Adventist values. Consequently, this discussion led to the formulation of the appropriate mission strategy to effectively reach the Ila people with the Adventist message. This chapter did not only discuss factors that influence resistance to Adventism among the Ila tribe of Namwala and their failure to internalize Christian values as espoused by Adventists. It also defined the word Ila in three versions as shown in the section that follows.

The Ila People

The word Ila could have several meanings such as “Intestine,” or “a maize seed,” or “a person who goes and never returns” (Waililila). This people group is geographically located in a rural district South of Lusaka, the capital of Zambia. It is one hundred and sixty five kilometres (165km) west of Monze and one hundred and seventy six kilometres (176km) North West of Choma, the current provincial headquarters of Southern province of Zambia. The Ila are found in four chiefdoms in Southern province, namely Mbeza, Ndema, Maala and Namwala itself. The Ila culture has no central government as other African groups or tribes do, but are ruled by several chiefs, namely: Nalubamba, Mungaila, Mukobela, Muchila. They belong

to a group of people known as, “The Bantu Botatwe,” a phrase which means, “Three groups of people.” Their livelihood is mainly based on cattle ranching; however in the chiefdoms of Muchila and Nalubamba, people also grow crops such as maize, cotton, sweet potatoes and groundnuts. This agro- practice is found mainly among the migrants who have migrated to the Chiefdom.

The thread that ties the Ila together is their culture which has little room for change especially when change is suggested by an outsider (one who is not Ila). This attitude towards outsiders probably points to the reason why missionaries have found it difficult to effectively penetrate their social cultural formation with a view to evangelise them. To successfully evangelise, and win them over to Christ, the church must seriously consider the importance of understanding their social-cultural dynamics.

The Ila Social-Cultural Context

The Ila social-cultural context is complex to exhaustively discuss it in this document. Therefore, the researcher will attempt to look at generic family structures including polygamy and other related social issues centred on sexual life, the acquisition of wealth, and generalized social recreational activities which fundamentally define their world view. The Ila family structures are crucial to the understanding of this study as they are tied together by their cultural dynamics. The next section examines this Ila family concept which militates against impartation of Christian moral values that are drawn from Scripture.

Family Structures

Unlike Western cultures, the Ila family structures are based on extended family system patterned after other traditional African clans. However, the major family

structures among the Ila people to be discussed below are based on the lineage that includes the immediate, extended family and polygamous marriages.

Lineage is a family structure based on genetic connections and what this means is that, the family members have biological connections and that includes father, mother, children, uncles, aunts and also even 'the living dead' are counted as part of the family. This section will discuss issues pertaining to patrilinealism and matrilinealism, as well as Polygamy as it fittingly relates to the Ila lifestyle.

Patrilinealism

The Ila family structure is based on the concept of patrilinealism in which the father is the head of the household with authority over other family members invested in him. In this formation, the married couple is expected to live with the husband's family. In the Ila family context, the husband has absolute control of his household because of the bride wealth that he pays to the parents of the wife. According to their culture, for the man to marry, they are required to pay not less than seven herds of cattle to the parents of the wife.

It is this bride wealth that he gives to the parents of the wife that gives him absolute authority over his family affairs. In this formation, the husband is entitled to the custodianship of the children in the event that he divorces his wife or if she dies. Eventually, he assumes the role of the Patriarch depending on how many sons, daughters and grandchildren he has according to the lineage. This kind of a setting to a large degree encourages the man to marry as many wives as he can afford as it is acceptable in the Ila society and connects his family to other family units.

Matrilinealism

Matrilinealism is the concept which empowers women in their families. In this formation a woman is given authority in the home to determine the direction in which house management ought to be run. In this governance system, if the husband passes away, all the children and much of the household property will remain with the wife of the home. This type of management however, is not part of the Ila cultural setting. The Ila however practice Patrilinealism in which authority is wholly in the hands of the man.

Extended Families

The term ‘extended family’ is often used to refer to an inclusive family that is composed of father, mother, children and other members with whom one has some biological connections. In most cases, this type of family setting is common in the rural set up. In the Ila culture, no one lives for himself or herself. The ‘extended family concept’ implies that the nuclear family isolated as it maybe, has an obligation to support other members of the bigger family such as parents, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces and many more. This practice is important in that it is a social obligation to every Mwila (singular) to house and support other members of the extended family apart from one’s own immediate family members, the concept that is made more visible through the existence of polygamous marriages.

Polygamy

Polygamy is another form of marriage practiced among the *Ila* in which a man, can marry several wives. This practice characterises several Ila families. Confirming the earlier statement one Ila man was quoted as saying, “Uswe tubantu basiya tucikwete makatazyo makando ngutucilwisya. Azanga kutwala maali asiyanza simwi

syakale-kale silibolya.” When interpreted, this statement means, we black people still have great cultural problems to fight against. There is polygamy and other customs like that.³⁶ It is a deviation from the Biblical teaching on marriage and acts as one of the major hindrances to missions in the territory. The Bible authorizes only a monogamous union between a man and a woman (Gen 2; 7, 21-22; Matt 19: 5, 6), this was the original design of the family structure. The question to be answered has to do with why polygamy is still widespread among the Ila people in spite of the gospel proclamation among the Ila people. Specific reasons which seem to account for the prevalence of the practice in spite of missionary endeavours to eliminate it are clustered in the area of economics.

Economic Reasons for Polygamy

The laws of nature dictate that for every effect there is a cause. This section examines the reasons why polygamy is common among the Ila of Namwala.

The First reason is economic and it is based on the premise that the more women one has, the more children one will have thereby having enough labour for farm work. Also Children are entrusted with looking after cattle especially that cattle ranching are the main stay of the Ila economy. Peter Snelson alludes to this concept when he asserts that “cattle are their school”³⁷ and supported by. Edwin W. Smith who also cites economy as one of the reasons for Polygamous behaviour among the Ila when he

³⁶ S. Nzwanga, Headman, interview by author, Nyimba fishing camp, Monze Zambia, 20th October 2012.

³⁷ Snelson, 54.

declares, “.in economic considerations, for more wives the more likelihood of the husband having plenty to eat and the better his status among his fellows.”³⁸

The second reason is that many of the Ila women have no conventional education thereby rendering themselves impotent economically; the trend makes them to be totally dependent upon their men folk for their economic survival hence. This scenario makes scripture irrelevant to them as they would rather remain outside the church and retain their marriages other than divorce and become destitute.

Third reason: Another economic reason pertaining to polygamy is that in a Polygamous union among the Ila, the younger wives are encouraged by the husband to set traps for the unsuspecting sexually weak men, to entice them into adultery. When a man is caught in the act, he is made to pay several herds of cattle. This kind of behaviour though immoral makes such families get animals which they acquire in this manner. This is one of the reasons the Ila resist the teachings of those who advocate for the dissolution of these unions. This revelation was given to the researcher by headman Nzwanga during an evangelistic campaign conducted at Nyimba fishing camp in the year 2009. Laurenti Magesa shares the following thought:

Abundant life is the reason behind all forms of marriage and unions, and this is why African marriages sanction many variations of union.

Even when these forms are situated within certain social contexts-that is social prestige or the assurance of hands to work the fields...they all serve to preserve and prolong life, to provide for ritual fecundity and physical procreation.³⁹

Among the many reasons that Magesa advances for polygamy are, kinship, alliance formation, solidarity, and the bonding of the visible and the invisible worlds.

³⁸Smith and Murray, 65.

³⁹Magesa, 135-136.

Phillips observes that polygamy is an important institution as it is ‘a mark of importance and success in life.’⁴⁰ He also observes that, “This structure of marriage also provides more protection for widows, because it makes sure that women remain within the lineage after the death of their husbands and that materially they are more provided for.”⁴¹ Polygamous unions are among many social issues that impede the spreading of God’s kingdom among many Africans and the Ila are among the victims of this aberration.

Additional Aberrant Practices and Faulty Belief Systems among Ila People

There are numerous beliefs and practices among Ila people which hinder progress of the redemptive mission of Christ. Only a select few may be briefly explored under this section. In this paper a few have been selected to include: sexual cleansing, wealth acquisition, social recreational activities, belief in human consciousness in death, burial rites, and belief in herbal medicine, witchcraft and religious socialization.

Sexual Cleansing as a Social Practice

The concept of sexual cleansing is an act in which the surviving spouse of a dead husband or wife is compelled or willingly asks to have sexual intercourse with the relative of the deceased. This act of sexual cleansing is generally born out of the fear that come about due to lack of a clear understanding on the condition of humanity in death, it is believed that if the spouse is not sexually cleansed the spirit of the deceased may haunt him or her for the rest of his or her life and that they may either die, run

⁴¹Ibid., 14.

mad, or even pave way for some catastrophic event in their own society. Cornelius Matandiko observes:

Crucial is the cleansing of the surviving spouse [Kusalazya]. Cleansing is done after burial. The elders meet in a council. To determine the eligible person to cleanse the surviving spouse. A clan cousin or a nephew is usually the most likely to participate in the sex ritual supposed to cleanse the widow or widower. The chosen and the bereaved are taken to a house. After sex they go outside where mourners are told that the cleansing was done. This is done in fear of lunyoka 'death spirit' that is on the bereaved. This spirit kills anyone who gets involved sexually with the bereaved.⁴²

The above quotation clearly brings out the aspect of the fear of death to the surviving spouse and social isolation as the reasons behind the sexual cleansing act among the Ila. If the surviving spouse is not sexually cleansed, it is believed that some omen will befall her and those associating with him or her hence the need to isolate them. This fear factor is responsible for the Ila people's sexual cleansing behaviour. Just like wealth acquisition, sexual cleansing is both a social and religious fact which makes it difficult for missionaries to win souls to Christ in the region.

Wealth Acquisition

On the economic front, research reveals that a cattle ranching is the main source of the livelihood of the Ila even though in some areas also grows crops as stated in the introduction. The Ila make a lot of money through the selling of beef, milk and the charging of bride wealth (chiko in the Ila language) as well as selling of some agricultural produce.

The main problem to Missiologists and evangelists however, is the questionable methods used by the majority of the Ila people in the acquisition of wealth. They mainly use a practice known as 'sambwe.' It is a common practice among most of the well-meaning Ila to use Black magic or charms to increase cattle population which in

⁴² Matandiko, 31-32.

most cases results in the death of a family member. Incest is also used to acquire wealth. This is when sexual intercourse takes place among family members such as between father and daughter; mother and Son; brother and sister etc.

At other times, the medicine man may encourage the one seeking these fortunes to sleep in the same room and on the same bed with a beautiful naked young woman for the whole night and if he overcomes his passions by not having sex with her, then the medicine will take root and work in the affirmative. If however he fails the test, then, the opposite may also be true or consequently, he could become a womanizer. Edwin W. Smith and Andrew Murray Dale observe that, “Sambwe is a Talisman active in bringing to the possessor *cholwe*, i.e. luck, prosperity, good fortune, presumably by transferring to him particular energies or qualities inherent in it. The word is related to kusamba, to wash, bathe and appears to mean etymologically that which is bathed.”⁴³

Most of the methods of wealth acquisition among the Ila militate against the set standards of God in which He forbids idol worshipping (exodus 20:3, 4). This social-cultural and religious dimension of the Ila is very much cherished among them to the extent that any new idea alien to what they already know is unacceptable, especially when matters of wealth acquisition are affected. In his book entitled, ‘The story of Rusangu Mission Vivian Kanondo talking of Tonga love for their cattle asserts, “ You can run away with a Tonga man’s wife and he will just laugh it off and say well, I will marry another one, but if you steal his cattle, he will fight you to death.”⁴⁴

⁴³ Smith and Murray, 252.

⁴⁴ Vivian Kanondo, *The Story of Rusangu Mission* (Monze, Zambia: Monze secondary School, 2005), 30.

The Tonga and the Ila have similar social –cultural conditions. This tells why missionaries still find it almost impossible to break through their cultural structures, for more than a hundred years now in both personal and public evangelism. And to this day, the Ila society does not easily accept any new ideas or approaches to life especially that which calls for radical change.

One Mwiila (singular) shared the following thought with the researcher, “We *Ila* people strictly teach our children to respect and observe our traditional and cultural practices because they are a mark of our identity.” And commenting along the same thought Mathema says: “The difficulty lies in attempting to break ties that bind the individual to these hierarchies and entities of power. To break away from this system means that one gets cut off from the connections that make life complete, meaningful and safe.”⁴⁵

Mathema further observes that this kind of worldview should be taken seriously when the traditional Africans are being evangelized and disciplined. Other writers also believe that this religio-cultural aspect should be addressed lest the church settle for a false understanding thinking that people who join the church (Adventism in particular) have been truly converted into Christianity and accepted Jesus as their saviour, when in the actual sense they are not.

Other challenges to evangelize the Ila society, just like it was in the Biblical times, hinge on idolatry and evil customs common among this people group. The Bible condemned this practice in Israel of old in this manner: “You shall have no other gods before me,” Exodus 20:3. In 1 Samuel 15:23, the Bible says, “For rebellion is like the sin of divination and arrogance like the evil of idolatry.” Paul also admonishes

⁴⁵Zacchaeus Mathema, “*The African Worldview: A Serious Challenge to Christian Discipleship*,” Ministry, October 2007, 6.

the Corinthian believers: “My dear friends flee from idolatry and witchcraft” (1 Corinthians 10:14).

Edwin Smith, a primitive Methodist missionary, made it his business to understand the Ila religious belief system so as to build a platform upon which he would evangelise to them. He (Smith) handled them as friends whom he wanted to learn more from and hence never condemned them because of their evil practices such as “beer drinking, witchcraft, polygamy”⁴⁶ etc In the same manner, the church must not stand on the holier than thou platform to condemn them, but rather study their social-cultural values as well as their emotional well-being. It is needful to understand their thought patterns and to begin helping them move from where they are to where they ought to be. In order to evangelize the Ila, there is need for missiologists to come up with a strategy that will take into account some of the positive elements found in the *Ila* culture such as hospitality, sociability and commitment to that which they believe in, etc. and use them as stepping stones to introducing Jesus to them.

Social and Recreational Activities

One of the social and recreational areas in which the Ila find joy and pleasure is in activities involving, “beer drinking, singing and dancing at such ceremonies as Shimunenga”⁴⁷ ceremonies. Like the Epicureans, the Ila spend many hours in pleasurable resorts. The Epicureans were a group of people whose philosophy thrived in pleasurable acts such as eating and drinking and they taught that the supreme good is happiness. For the Ila many hours are spent in beer places because there they have

⁴⁶Edwin Smith and Andrew Dale, 252.

⁴⁷ Sumaili, 13.

an opportunity to prey on morally weak women, discuss social issues pertaining to sexual life, wealth acquisition, cattle rustling and witchcraft, to mention but a few.

To many of them, the precious hours which are spent on socializing, have a negative bearing on their livelihood. Also In this culture there is no age restriction as far as drinking of beer is concerned, for children and they can comfortably drink beer with their own parents. Many evils such as sexual immorality, quarrelling and fighting are common occurrences among them. All the beliefs and practices have a strong impact on Ila people in ways that hinder the advance of the mission of the church. The Ila religious context comprises many facets of practices and beliefs. The main social-religious activity of the Ila is the shimunenga ceremony at which their prophet predicts future events that may include an impending drought, cattle diseases, crop failures and calamities. Besides receiving instructions for the future events, it is here that people express their devotion to their divine ancestral spirit by singing and dancing and the singing of lewd songs.

The ancestor worship which is exhibited in this ceremony has a very strong impact on missionary activities in the area among the Ila of Namwala. In Maala, there is a bush in which no unauthorized person is allowed to enter except the guardian of the Shimunenga who also enters at specific times for the purpose of giving offerings to Shimunenga their prophet. If by mistake or by design one unauthorized person enters this sacred forest, they will be charged several herds of cattle.

During the procession of this ceremony, several activities take place such as beer drinking, uncontrolled sexual activities, dancing and many more. To colour it all, several herds of cattle are slaughtered for people to eat. The Shimunenga rituals hinge on the aspect of ancestor veneration which contradicts Biblical teaching concerning the state of the dead.

Burial rituals are another area of the Ila religious context and they are a source of concern for the Adventist church. Usually during funerals, some of the personal belongings of the deceased are buried together with him with the understanding that he will need them in the spirit world. The items under discussion include such things as spears for those who loved hunting, tobacco, beer pots, etc.

Gibson Madyenkuku,⁴⁸ a literature evangelist, who lived in *Namwala* and was close to the late chief Mungaila of the Ila of Maala, revealed that, there was a struggle in choosing the chief's successor in Maala to the extent that some close relatives bitterly struggled to ascend to the throne and be installed as chief Mungaila. In the process of this struggle, the spirit of Shimunenga took possession of a small boy who unexpectedly went into the house of the late chief in full view of all mourners and took the stuff of the late Chief. And when he came out of the house, he handed it over to the man who was not even suspecting anything and was not even among those who contending for the throne.

This act was an indication of his installation as chief Mungaila. The above act settled the bitter struggle for power that had ensued in the family. The man was officially recognized as the successor to the throne as chief Mungaila and the struggle to the chieftdom came to an abrupt end. This revelation goes to show how much faith the Ila have in their prophet and how much they love their culture. Shimunenga yearly predicts future events such as the weather patterns, animal diseases likely to occur; crop harvests and many other events which in many cases tend to come true See Appendix figures 1-3

The social, cultural and religious items cited above hinder evangelization in two

⁴⁸ Gibson Madyenkuku, A literature evangelist, interview by author, Gwembe Zambia, 16, March 2012.

ways: the first reason being that the indigenous Ila, regard the church going community as a poor and a lazy community as such they would not want to be associated with such a community. Secondly, the indigenous Ila person is so strongly tied to his culture and finds it difficult to give up on it. The Ila and culture cannot be separated as pride of identity is in their way of life.

Belief in Consciousness in Death

“When the Ila people talk about death, they generally conceive it as the extinction of the body and not the person.”⁴⁹ They believe that it is only the physical part of the body that dies but the spirit of the deceased lives on as is the case with Shimunenga who died long time ago but his spirit is perceived to live on. The Ila believe that those spirits commonly known as the Basangushi (Ghosts) continue to hover above the place they once lived for as long as earth exists.

The word Basangushi means something that changes form (Metamorphosis); the belief which makes the Ila to bury their relatives within the vicinity of their villages. For more than a hundred years now, Adventists have been baffled by the devotion of the Ila to this concept which is unscriptural. The missionaries therefore have a mammoth task of changing the world view of the Ila concerning the so called living dead and accept the biblical assertion or position concerning those who die. The scriptures state categorically that the dead know not anything, “For the living know that they will die; But the dead know nothing” Ecclesiastes 9:5. It should be made plain to the Ila that these purported ancestors, are actually evil angels whose main intention is to deceive humanity.

⁴⁹ Sumaili, ix.

The Ila divinities are in three categories, personal, family and communal. The personal divinity is a personal god to which a person submits, while a family god is one of whom the family depends for their security and the communal god is the god of the community. Zacchaeus Mathema makes a statement to that effect when discussing ‘African Worldview,’ that “The difficult lies in attempting to break ties that bind the individuals to these Hierarchies and entities of power.⁵⁰” The Ila religion ties them to their families, friends and even their geographical context. The main task of missionaries is to show the Ila that Adventist religion is a system that offers better values and therefore a viable alternative to theirs.

Razafiarivony, discussing Ancestor worship in Madagascar in 1998, observes that, “If a member goes against tradition, such a person would be neglected and lose all their prerogatives of the members of the circle. It is this fear of rejection that brings syncretisation of the gospel.”⁵¹ Laurenti Magesa commenting on the concept of community solidarity asserts that, “We cannot understand persons, indeed we cannot have personal identity without reference to other persons” “Bondedness,” Magesa adds, “is the key to understanding that what falls on one, falls on all.”⁵²

One Ila man speaking to the researcher on their seriousness in observing tradition asserts, “we strictly teach our children to respect and observe our traditional practices because they are a mark of our identity.” This therefore shows the source of resistance to new changes among the Ila tribe because of the perceived values in their culture. The Ila has to choose between his culture and the new religion, his family

⁵⁰Mathema, 6.

⁵¹Davidson Razafiarivony, “*Ancestor Worship in Madagascar: An Adventist Perspective*” (Paper presented at Faith and Learning Seminar at the University of Eastern Africa, Baraton, Kenya, November 22-December 2, 1998).

⁵²Laurenti Magesa, 64.

values and Christianity. To offset this impact on missions, the Missionary should endeavour to prove to the Ila that the new religion not only offers family values but also meets peoples felt needs as well. Beyond this fact, the aspect of Eternal life should be brought to their attention as well. The other aspect which the missionary should take into account is to prove to the targeted community that the God of the bible, wields enough power to deal with issues of life and death, diseases, security and many other issues. With this revelation, the impact of the Ila culture on Adventism will be reduced drastically.

Burial Rites

The Ila religion covers what happens during the burial of chiefs, family members and others. During these burial ceremonies, several events take place such as putting some gifts in the grave which are buried together with the deceased with the belief that he will need them in the new environment he has gone to. Some such gifts are gifts like clothes, tobacco, plates, cups and many others. In the book 'Seventh-day Adventism in Zambia' Cornelius Matandiko declares, "Many gifts are presented and put in the grave. These include items such as food, utensils, tobacco, beer and clothing... as they give they say some words like ngoyu tombwe ukafwebe 'Here is tobacco for you to smoke.'"⁵³ In this thought pattern the concept of immortality of the Soul is amplified which can be traced to the devil's false teaching in the Garden of Eden in which he told the Edenic pair that, they would not die the Bible in Gen 3:4 says, "you shall not surely die."

To the Ila death is like a transfer to a spirit world where from time to time they come back to protect their relatives especially the immediate family members and that they take part in supervising the activities of the living.

⁵³Matandiko, 26.

Belief in Herbal Medicine

Another area of concern for missionaries pertains to traditional medicines known as Musamu (a singular generic noun for medicine and its plural form is Misamu). The Ila people strongly believe in the herbs which are used in various spheres such as for healing, hunting, retaining the husbands affections, protection etc. The use of Musamu (Medicine) comprises a part of the Ila religion in many respects and may sometimes be understood in the context of magic or witchcraft.

The Ilas have an extra ordinary faith in Misamu and seem to have medicine for almost everything essential for one's livelihood. They have medicine for hunting, good luck, for agriculture, for protecting their families from witchcraft and the line that clearly connects all this kind of behaviour is Spiritism. The Bible talks about spirits that protect humanity according to Psalm 34: 7. The Ilas also have a belief that ancestral spirits provides security to their families, the task of the church is therefore to prove to them that there are no ancestral spirits, but spirits of devils whose intent is to harm humanity.

Medicines are also very common domestically. Many women use some concoctions in their husband's food to secure love and keep them from having extramarital affairs, sometimes both men and women use medicine to boost their sexual power; they also apply some to their toddlers to protect them from witches.

A good example that confirms the use of herbal medicine for protection can be seen in the way they shield themselves from snake bites. The researcher's relative who for the sake of this research we will call X had shielded himself to the extent that his presence paralysed snakes of all kinds so that they were incapacitated in his presence. And this action had built his faith in black magic to the extent that he feared no snake no matter how dangerous it would be. Thus, the use of these medicines constituted a

system of insurance against the ills and calamities of life. These medicines have become part of the Ila insurance system and it requires the power of God's spirit to assure them of God's love, care and protection for them.

As has been alluded to in this research the Ila do not easily accept ideas which are different from what they are used to especially if the suggestions are coming from an alien referred to as Mulumbu (Foreigner) in their derogatory language. The Ila believe in the possession of power and it is the task of the Missionaries to instil confidence in the society concerning the God of power, the God who is able to provide security to his Children (Psalm 34:7).

Unless the security system provided by the God of the Bible is clearly explained to the Ila, showing them his love and power, mission work will be negatively affected as the fear of witchcraft occupies their minds to the extent that most of the families use herbal medicines to shield themselves from witchcraft power. Witchcraft is one of the many social factors or evils that are perceived to be hindrances to the growth of Adventism among the Ila people of Namwala. The survey that was carried out among both seminar participants and some non-Adventists attests to this fact.

In Table 1, several other social issues are cited as having a negative effect to church growth. Some of the issues are polygamy, wife inheritance, beer brewing and drinking etc. The statistics shown in table 1 below, show percentages of people's responses to the socio – cultural factors which negatively affect the reception of Adventism among the Ila people. These statistics understand why church growth has taken this long before flourishing among the Ila. In this survey the members who attended the seminar that was conducted by the researcher, were given the questionnaire forms to indicate what issues they felt negatively influenced church growth among the Ila. The results of the research are what the chart below shows. The

reader of this research is therefore advised not to read the chart in isolation of chapter three, as it is an integral part of the entire chapter. Below is the chart or table that contains answers from the questionnaire that was distributed to seminar participants. It contains all the major factors that are perceived to be hindrances to church growth among the Ila people.

Table 1 shows the social-cultural factors that are perceived to negatively affect church growth among the Ila in Kabulamwaanda mission district. It has three sections, the spiritual problem, effects on church growth and non-effect on church growth. The people who were given these questionnaires were therefore expected to indicate as to which issues were considered hindrances to church growth. Below are the results of the survey that was done.

Table 1. Social-Cultural Factors Affecting Church Growth Among the Ila of Namwala

Spiritual Problem	Hindrance to Church Growth	Non- Effect on Church Growth
Wife Inheritance	56%	44%
Polygamous Marriages	60%	40%
Witchcraft in its various forms and stages	65%	35%
Ancestral worship and practices	56%	44%
Forbidding beer brewing, drinking and selling	80%	20%
Sexual cleansing	70%	30%
Idolatrous practices	76%	34%

More than three quarters of the questionnaires were given to non-Adventists and this makes credible the findings the thesis carries. A close examination of the peoples responses to the questionnaires show that most of the factors that influence resistance to Adventism among the Ila people are social, cultural as well as religious.

This research has discovered that eighty (80%) percent of the findings indicate that beer brewing, drinking and selling is a big impediment to the acceptance of Adventism in Namwala among the Ila because it borders not only on social life, but also on economy as well. The other visible hindrances are sexual cleansing (70%), polygamous marriages (60%), and wife inheritance (56%); however witchcraft also plays a major role in this spiritual malady too. The aforementioned data is substantiated by a research article in the Post News Paper. In this article was discussed the socio cultural evils among the Ila society.

On the rampancy of beer drinking in Zambia the Post newspaper of Thursday 10th December, 2009 on the section entitled “⁵⁴Auto Post” carried the sub –heading,” Drinking culture threatening development”. The author Mr. Khankhara is quoted as having said, “The drinking culture in Zambia has gone out of the window, threatening all spheres of social and economic development of our country” This declaration informs the research of the correctness of 80% findings concerning beer drinking in among the Ila society that was extracted from the questionnaire. See Appendix 5 which is the questionnaire in question. Commenting on the last three, the Post News Paper (A Zambian Private Owned tabloid) of Monday, November 23, 2009 in the section of Home News on page 12 carried the following headline, “Traditional leaders ban sexual cleansing”. In this work shop, the traditional leaders condemned the acts of sexual cleansing, Wife Inheritance, Polygamous Marriages as well as Property Grabbing.

The Chairperson of the forum in which these resolutions were made was Senior Chief Bright Nalubamba of the Ila people in whose territory this research was being

⁵⁴The Zambia Post newspaper. 10th December, 2009.

carried out. He (Chief Nalubamba) is quoted as having said, “Sexual cleansing and spouse inheritance were customs that had perpetuated and continued to remain drivers of HIV and AIDS infections and should be stopped.”⁵⁵

The Post News Paper of Monday November 2009 on polygamous marriages, he is quoted as having condemned traditional leaders who still practice polygamy, he stated, “Some traditional leaders and their subjects had continued to practice polygamy while some people had continued to justify it giving little consideration to the consequences it had particularly in the advent of HIV and AIDS on women and children.

While this workshop touched several social and cultural issues which are contentious, only three issues give credence to this research, these are sexual cleansing, wife inheritance, and polygamy. These three issues are deeply rooted in the social and cultural world of the Ila and negatively affect their desire for spiritual life. Chief Nalubamba being a Senior Ila Chief speaks from the experiences he faces in his Chiefdom. His utterances therefore confirm the direction of this research document. While the workshop was putting remedial measures to curb the spread of HIV and AIDS, it brought to surface some immoral issues which the Church is contending with among them (the Ila).

After extensively discussing the social, cultural as well as religious issues in chapter three of this research, and how they negatively influence the growth of Adventism among the Ila people, the researcher came up with program in chapter four. The program in the next chapter is a strategy which is intended to be a bridge to reach out to the Ila. In this strategy the researcher relied mainly on the method of evangelism which Jesus used when he was on earth that of meeting peoples felt needs.

⁵⁵ Ibid.,2009

This whole strategy is unveiled fully in the next chapter which attempts to find a solution to the social issues the preceding chapter discusses.

CHAPTER 4

PROGRAM DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

Chapter 4 is a practical way or a strategy of trying to discover answers to the issues that are raised in chapter three and perceived to be impediments to the growth of Adventism among the Ila people. This strategy bases its strength on the five steps that Jesus used in soul winning ways. It is the firm belief of the researcher that this strategy will yield positive results and empower the church in bringing many Ila to Christ.

Program Design

Jesus' Evangelism Method

In the book 'Ministry of Healing,' Ellen G. White discusses the five ways which Jesus strategically used to reach out to those who were not of the house. Following are some of these steps which defined Jesus ministry:

The first step was that, Jesus used the philosophy of proximity as he mingled with the people as one who desired their good. Jesus cared enough for lost humanity that he stooped so low so as to identify himself with those that he came to save. His method enabled the people to come closer to him and receive the much needed help. The approach also enabled Jesus to get first-hand information concerning the people's felt social needs. The approach of Jesus achieved two things, the first being that people were enabled to experience the love of God through the person of Jesus which the Pharisees and other religious leaders could not offer.

Jesus social spirit is something that God's church ought to emulate and espouse as it creates an environment that is conducive for evangelism. It is this attitude that will draw the people closer to Christ Jesus as it shows the spirit of love and care. In the book, *Marketing Adventism*, Dan Day asserts,

“Yet in a very deep sense, that's why we all join. Some of us come in when our social needs require attention. Some come in when our safety and physiological needs demand a response...”⁵⁶ Dan Day emphasises the importance of meeting people's felt needs, social, physical, psychological etc. as this makes them stay in the church or leave it. The needs alluded to here are the physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, self-actualisation needs and esteem needs. These needs which have their source in Abraham Maslow constitute all that humanity requires to live a holistic life.

Ellen White under the title 'Kindness Key to Hearts' declares, “Many can be reached only through acts of disinterested acts of kindness. Their physical wants must first be relieved. As they see evidence of our unselfish love, it will be easier for them to believe in the love of Christ.”⁵⁷ Ellen White's argument is that people have felt needs and that unless they are met, the avenue to people's hearts may be difficult to achieve. It is therefore important to socialise and mingle with the people as it is the best way to get acquainted with their needs.

The second reason that Ellen White emphasizes is that of Jesus sympathetic ministry (getting into the shoes of those that he came to serve and save.). He did not by pass all those that needed his help. Several heart rending examples are recorded in both the Bible and the writings of Ellen White regarding Jesus sympathetic ministry.

⁵⁶Dan Day, *A guide to Marketing Adventism* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association 1990), 69.

⁵⁷ White, 81.

There are several examples in scripture where Jesus demonstrated the love of God through healing the sick as is shown in Mark 2: 1-12 where he healed the paralytic. In this text, the action of Jesus transformed the attitude and changed the mind-set of the patient. The healed man started rejoicing and praising God. Mark declares, “Immediately he arose took up his bed and went out in the presence of them all...and glorified God.” Mark 2:12.

The behaviour of the healed paralytic is indicative of not only the intricacy that exists between the physical and the mental, but the power of social work as well. It is a common belief that when people’s felt needs are satisfied or met, then the ground for evangelism will have been created. Jesus as the creator of the human body understood the fact that health has a positive outlook on life as is the case with the healed paralytic. A physically healthy body affects the spiritual life positively. Ministry must therefore take into account the importance of people’s physical well-being as it has a dual effect on those affected and on their family.

Sympathy therefore should be a dimension that every Christian ought to embrace as it enhances ministry. In the book of Mark 6: 30-42 Jesus performed community service acts that brought physical relief to the many thousands that he ministered unto. Etc. It is vital to realise that ministry un accompanied with a sympathetic spirit, yields no positive results. Jesus was aware of this dimension of ministry.

Sympathetic ministry to the needy should be exhibited by all professed Christians for success to be realised. The church membership ought to act as social workers (emulating Jesus example) who must come down to the level of the of their parishioners with the intention of lifting them up to the level where God expects them to be in faith.

The third reason shows Jesus as an action oriented evangelist whose success was based on his proximity to the people he ministered to. The strategy that Jesus employed in ministering to the needy should be central in the gospel ministry as it touches on people's needs.

Finally Jesus invited them to accept him as their personal saviour of which many of them did. The work of soul winning will yield untold successes if all the steps that Jesus used can be incorporated in our search for souls. The project that the researcher carried out on the strength of the principles under scrutiny, produced a certain measure of success as people's daily needs were the pivot upon which ministry was anchored.

The church in Kabulamwaanda mission district focussed on areas of community services such as distribution of clothes, food, helping in sponsoring school going children etc. However the dimension of health which is missing will need to be incorporated in the future evangelism efforts as it leverages ministry. Jesus ministry to the needy must be emulated by all well-meaning gospel workers.

Paul's Method of Evangelism

The apostle Paul was another evangelist whose method of evangelism was not only very effective, but also similar to Jesus way of reaching out to those that were in spiritual darkness. In the book of 1 Corinthians 9: 19-23, Paul introduced the adaptation method in which he identified himself with his target audience, those that had ear marked for evangelism.

In the text cited above Paul asserts, "For though I am free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews, I became a Jew that I might gain the Jews..." Paul's success, was partially due to his adaptation behaviour in which he lowered himself and identified with those that he ministered to in order to win their confidence.

In another scenario, in the book of Acts 17:22,23 the apostle Paul is seen adapting himself to the philosophical thinking of those that he was targeting to win for Christ so that he could be accepted by the Greek philosophers. And asserts, “Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are too suspicious for as I passed by and beheld your devotions I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD whom therefore you ignorantly worship, him I declare to you.” Paul understood the importance of coming down to the level of those that he ministered to in order to obtain their attention and to be relevant to their felt needs.

As missionaries, it is needful to come down to the level of the people we minister to as it is the only way we can assist them effectively. The biblical method of Jesus and Paul border on the concept of community services which in their time yielded results. It is on this premise that the writer of this project in partnership with the church decided to try this same concept on the Ila people. The research team decided to take advantage of the already existing sociable conditions on the ground among the Ila to implement this concept as the Ila are very hospitable people, they love receiving gifts among other things and it is this that we took advantage of .

The researcher therefore, decided to partner with the church that we will call X for the sake of anonymity to carry out a project on community services. It was decided to try this community services concept by selecting only three households due to the limited financial resources.

The first step that the researcher took was partner with the department of personal ministries of Church X, to design a programme in which a pilot project was designed which was intended to test the effectiveness of the community services concept in the area of soul winning (evangelism) among the Ila people of Namwala. The main objective of this strategy was to lure the people into the church in order to reach out to

them with the message of hope. To pilot this project the researcher entered into partnership with Church X in the month of October, 2009 in which three non-Adventist families were targeted for assistance in such areas as food, clothing, school fees and school uniforms for children who didn't have.

These families were among the most venerable in their community who could hardly support themselves enough. The programmes that were to be carried out on these two families are as follows: Firstly, helping them with daily necessities of life such as food relief. In this vein church members were asked to generously contribute either money or food stuffs of various kinds towards this project which would be used to help these families. The response was overwhelming.

Secondly, helping paying school fees for some of their children especially those that had been out of school due to lack of funding. The church in partnership with the researcher jointly contributed four thousand kwacha towards this project. This money was used according to the design of the project to help those children that needed financial help.

Thirdly, the project also looked at the aspect of supplying second hand clothes to both parents and children. Part of the money that was contributed was used to buy second hand clothes to help the members of these families some of whom were almost walking naked.

Fourthly, the word of God was shared through Bible studies with these family members who ended up being invited to accept Jesus as their personal saviour and Lord and to join Adventism.

The main reason for implementing the above program is not only to be socially relevant, but to find a path leading to the hearts of the members of the targeted families as well. The program was also intended to build sound relationships between

the church and the families with the intension of introducing Christ to them.

The researcher in partnership with the church successfully launched the program using Christ's five methods of evangelism found in the book '*Ministry of Healing*' by Ellen White, in which she asserts, "Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with the people as one who desired their good. He showed his sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then he bade them follow me."⁵⁸In relation to Christ's methods, the program was launched. Below is the implemented program with astounding results.

Program Implementation

The Church and the researcher raised K4000 which was used to buy both second hand clothes for both the old and the young in the three targeted families. The Personal ministries department which is responsible for community services through Dorcas and A.M.O –Adventist Men Organization was mandated to distribute these clothes according to each family's needs. The Church went further than that and bought school uniforms, books and pens for the school going children who had stopped going to school due to lack of uniforms. In addition to all this, the church also paid school fees for those vulnerable children whose families were unable to do so. The distribution was fairly done and enabled these families to live fairly good lives.

The Food Distribution Program

In the second phase of the project, the Church organised ten (10) fifty kg bags of maize which were shared among these vulnerable families according to the population of each family and their food security needs. The Church also helped the

⁵⁸ Ellen G. White, *Ministry of healing*. (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association. 1942), 143.

families with ways of enhancing their food security by teaching them to grow maize which is Zambia's staple food. In addition to maize growing, the families were also oriented in other ventures such as gardening where they would grow their own vegetables. The main purpose of this practice was to ensure food security and decency of life among the targeted families. In the processes of time, the attitudes of these members towards the Adventists began to change and they saw the Church in a different way and the stage for sharing the gospel of Christ was set.

Community Service Programs

The Church also decided to embark on a deliberate program of assisting these families during times of calamities such as illnesses and funerals if any of these should occur. Fortunately for these families during the six months that this project was allotted, there was no big calamity that occurred, however, this does not exclude small occurrences that affect healthful living. Programs such as that of collecting firewood, drawing of water, cooking and many other activities were earmarked if any funeral should occur. The purpose in all these activities was to show the spirit of care and concern to these venerable families that surround us particularly the families' that were ear marked in this research. The successful implementation of this concept was because of the seminar held earlier on (see Appendix A).

Evangelism Program

The project culminated in evangelism as this was its main purpose, to win Souls to the LORD. The church through person to person evangelism, using experienced, spiritually mature members introduced Christ to the members of the families in these selected households by opening the word of God to them. A total of 15 Bible studies were conducted per family, studies such as the state of the dead, the Sabbath truth, the

Second Coming and others and studies are still continuing with these families. The duration of these studies was six months however; the program is still ongoing. The church came closer to the members of these three families exhibiting love and care as Christ did during his ministry on earth with the intention of transforming them into his similitude and sharing the love of God to them.

Program Evaluation

The evaluation process which took place after six months of implementation and is still on-going has the following observations:

The first observation that was noticed was the change of attitude by the Ila society towards Adventism. Previously the Ila showed a very hostile attitude towards Adventists belief system. The Ila saw Adventists as very judgemental people and always criticizing those of opposing belief systems. The people did not only hate the advocates of Adventist belief system, but also the system itself.

Secondly, it was observed that families who were direct beneficiaries of this strategic plan, allowed their children to attend Adventist gatherings whenever it was convenient to them. However by the time this document was computed, no adult was seen attending these meetings.

Thirdly, the activities of the church on the families that were assisted helped to create a positive attitude towards Adventism by the society in which these families lived. It became relatively ready to obtain permission to conduct meetings within their territories.

Finally, the successful implementation of the strategic plan on evangelism has now become the platform upon which the SDA church can launch their evangelism programs without much resistance. The above outcome gives the understanding that among the Ila society projects based on community services, intended to meet their

social needs if implemented in the spirit of Christ can bring positive change to many families. The changes that the gospel has brought to the three families, in terms of their attitude towards life, has brought them ridicule among their neighbours and peers as a sign of weakness. Generally there is a belief among the Ila that the church is for the weak and poor as such the three families are now classified as such and are ridiculed on a daily basis.

Future Plans on Evangelism

After the church's successful evangelism program, it was resolved by the personal ministries department that they cast their eyes beyond the three targeted families to as many as they could reach. And also it was resolved that every member of the church should be taught in personal evangelism and not only AMO and Dorcas societies. The churches will be assigned territories in which they will operate from in reaching out to their target audience. In these territories they will be expected to continue to implement the concept of community services so as to supply the felt needs of the families.

The church will also be encouraged to use the branch of medical ministry to communicate the truth through healthful living. It is believed that this dimension which helped missionaries to penetrate Africa, with success can yield positive results in Kabulamwaanda district also.

Another dimension that will be tried in evangelism is that of education. The churches in the district will be encouraged to open pre-schools in which Christian education will be incorporated. This kind of approach will help to capture the young ones before culture and tradition takes root in them.

Finally all the churches will be encouraged to meet the felt needs of the people by stocking and distributing food. The church members are to be encouraged to do what

is called needs assessment program so as to determine how much they may assist the vulnerable families.

The detailed implementation of the strategic plan and its expected outcome becomes a tool upon which the future researcher would use to researcher further. The conclusion of chapter four therefore, leads us to the last chapter, chapter five which not only summarizes the whole document, but, also concludes it.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The task of this thesis project was to try and change the mind-set of the Ila people who advocate African traditional religions and help them to have a better world view concerning the Adventist belief system. This research has revealed that the people like the Ila of Zambia have sunk into wrong patterns of living, relating and working because their cognitive, affective and evaluative dimensions of their lives have been enmeshed by multiple cultural dynamics which have stunted their conceptual understanding and internalization of Christian values. There is so much that militates against making good choices and decisions the right living which would making them receptive to the gospel and appropriating provisions of the same gospel of Jesus Christ.

And besides, their faith identifies them with the societies they belong to and traditional practices such as ancestor worship, beer parties, Polygamy, etc. make them feel accepted in their family set ups. Witchcraft is a common feature among many of them, to the extent that it is incorporated in their investment in agriculture, animal husbandry, hunting, security for their families etc. their religion is this deep. Seeing the depth of their evil practices, a project based on community services was undertaken by the research team composed of the pastor and the elders.

The objective of this project was to build relationships with these societies that have sunk so low in traditional practices, in order to destroy their pre judicial

view concerning Adventism. The project selected some families which were vulnerable so that they could be assisted with items such as food, clothes, money and many others. The results revealed that such projects done in the spirit of Christ open up hearts and can be a bridge through which the gospel of Jesus can be preached to those held up in sin. One encouraging result of this project is that, the parents allowed their children to join the Adventist family though they themselves were still not decided on the issue of worship.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is important to understand that issues that pertain to the salvation of another person can be very delicate and must be treated as such. In many African societies, traditional religions which guide their growth are taught them from the early stages of their childhood and uprooting them from this orientation, can be a difficult challenge. Missiologists, the world over ought to go deeper in understanding people's culture and other traditional practices if success is to be realised. Identity through language learning is another dimension which can bring success. The researcher can now assuredly confirm to the other missionary oriented men and women that are using the strategy of community services in the spirit of heaven can yield positive results.

Recommendations

The researcher of this thesis would like to put forward the following recommendations in order to assist those that would like to do further research on the Ila society: the Government, Non-governmental organizations, educationists, Pastors and others, to come up with better ways of reaching out to the Ila people and improve their social standing.

Firstly, any researcher who may want to do a successful study on the Ila people, would do well to study and understand their socio- cultural dynamics. This is because their culture has a very strong bearing on their daily general way of living, the researcher strongly recommends a comprehensive study of their social-dynamic lifestyle in order to create fertile ground for evangelism among them.

Secondly, the Ila generally are resistant to change whether the change is sociological, ideological or physiological. Usually this occurs when the one advocating for change does not take into account their cultural dynamics. The researcher therefore recommends that the one intending to bring change, must strive to take into account their social-cultural dynamics and to operate within that context.

Thirdly, successful communication is a dynamic that is essential for any meaningful research. The researcher therefore recommended that, the one doing research on the Ila master their language. This language orientation creates some identity between the researcher and the Ila people obtaining a spirit of cooperation from the people being researched.

The fourth reason (recommendation?) is that, the majority of the Ila love to be praised and receiving of gifts. The researcher therefore recommends that in order to spread the gospel easily among the Ila, an evangelist would do well to use the community services strategy as a tool which can be effectively used to introduce Jesus to the Ila society.

APPENDIX A

SEMINAR MATERIAL

Training Seminar

The project required specialized personnel to carry out community service functions in order to test the effectiveness of the concept on the Ila tribe and to this effect a seminar was organized by the researcher in order to train the members who would be later Incorporated in the program of evangelism. The times of this seminar were as follows:

Table 2. SeminarTime Table

	Time	Event
1	6:00-7:00	Devotion
2	7:00-8:00	Break fast
3	8:00-10:00	Evangelism [Person to person]
4	10:00-12:00	community services
5	12:00-14:00	Lunch break
6	14:00-16:00	The importance of good character In Evangelism

The seminar ended with the researcher and the participants' drafting a program of action in which three households were selected to be helped according to their identified needs. The seminar took seven days. It was decided that a period of six months be allotted for the project in order that a fair conclusion maybe arrived at. The project will continue to be monitored for more than two years to consolidate the encouraging results that have already been witnessed. During the seminar, feeding and

other logistics for the invited were prepared by the participants. However, the church budget for the up-keep of the Pastor was funded from the local church fund.

APPENDIX B

2002 CENSUS REPORT FOR NAMWALA DISTRICT

Namwala district has one Parliamentary constituency which is divided into twelve wards. The district has four chiefs namely: His Royal Highness Chief Muchila; His Royal Highness Chief Mukobela; His Royal Highness Chief Mungaila and His Royal Highness Chief Nalubamba. Below is the 2002 population distribution table. This table shows a slight improvement of about in statistics when compared to the 2010 statistics.

Table 3. Census Statistics for Namwala district

Ward No.	Ward Name	Males	Females	Total	H/ hold
1	Baambwe	1411	1463	2874	525
2	Chitongo	2049	2127	4176	553
3	Kabulamwanda	2236	2348	4584	629
4	Kantengwa	2402	2216	4618	2616
5	Mbeza	1377	1381	2758	427
6	Kuluweza/Ngabo	2725	2774	5499	927
7	Nakamboma	9281	9843	19124	2569
8	Namakube	4518	4796	9314	1220
9	Moobola	6096	6518	12674	1797
10	Namwala Central	2736	2796	5532	977
11	Ndema	3039	3442	6281	821

Section I.

No	Item	SD	D	A	SA
1	In your own assessment do you think the church activities in the Adventist church are accommodative to a new culture				
2	Do you think your cultural practices are accommodated in the teachings of the Adventist church				
3	In your own perspective, do you think your culture accommodates the Christian activities in the society				
4	In your own view do you think the wife in heritage in your culture prohibits the community from joining the church				
5	Do you think the polygamous marriage in your community hinders people from joining the SDA church				
6	In your own understanding do you think the practice of witchcraft which is prohibited by the Adventist church prevents the community from joining the church				
7	In your view do you think the practice of visiting the ancestral spirits hinders the community from joining the church				
8	Do you think tradition music in your community which is not used in the Adventist church hinders people from joining the church.				
9	Do you think the Adventist rejection of brewing and taking of bear among her members hinders the community from joining the church				
10	Do you think the exchange of wife among men in Baila community which is rejected by the Adventist church discourages the community from joining the church				
11	Do you think the cleansing activity among the Baila community has prohibited the community from joining the church				
12	Do you think the indulgency in idolatry among the Baila community hinders them from joining the church				

Section II

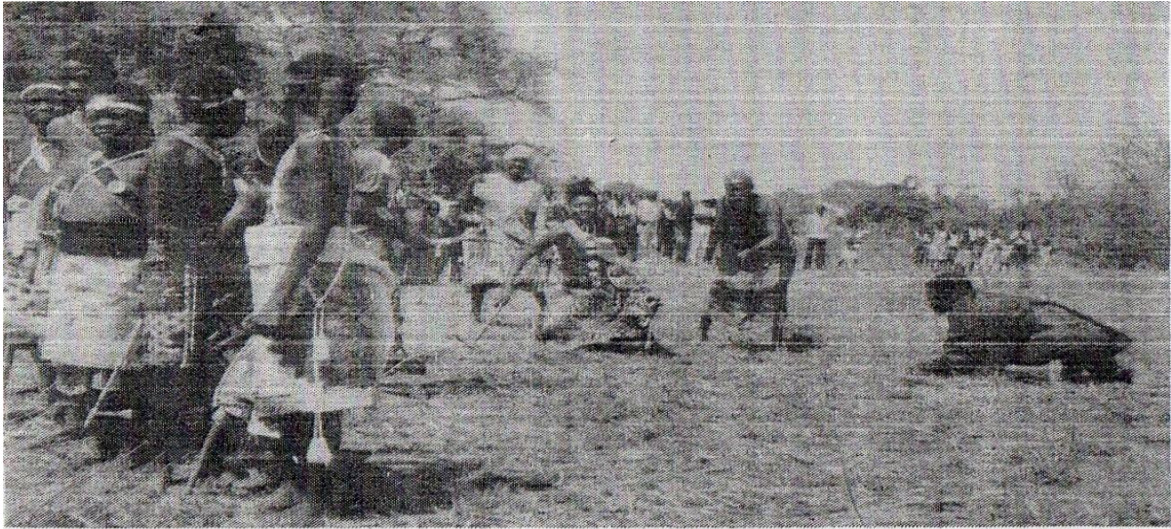
No	Item	SD	D	A	SD
13	Do you think the Adventist church has done enough in reaching the Baila community with the Gospel				
14	Do you think the Adventist church involvement in community activities encourage the community to join the church				
15	In your own opinion do you think the church is taking an active part in encouraging the community to be join the church				
16	Do you think the community leadership is in harmony with the Adventist leadership				
17	Do you think the Adventist church leaders understand your culture that can make them minister to the community effectively				
18	Do you think the Adventist church do take part in the community activities which encourages a relationship between the community and the church				
19	Do you thing the Adventist church is organized in a way that it encourages the community to join them				

Section III

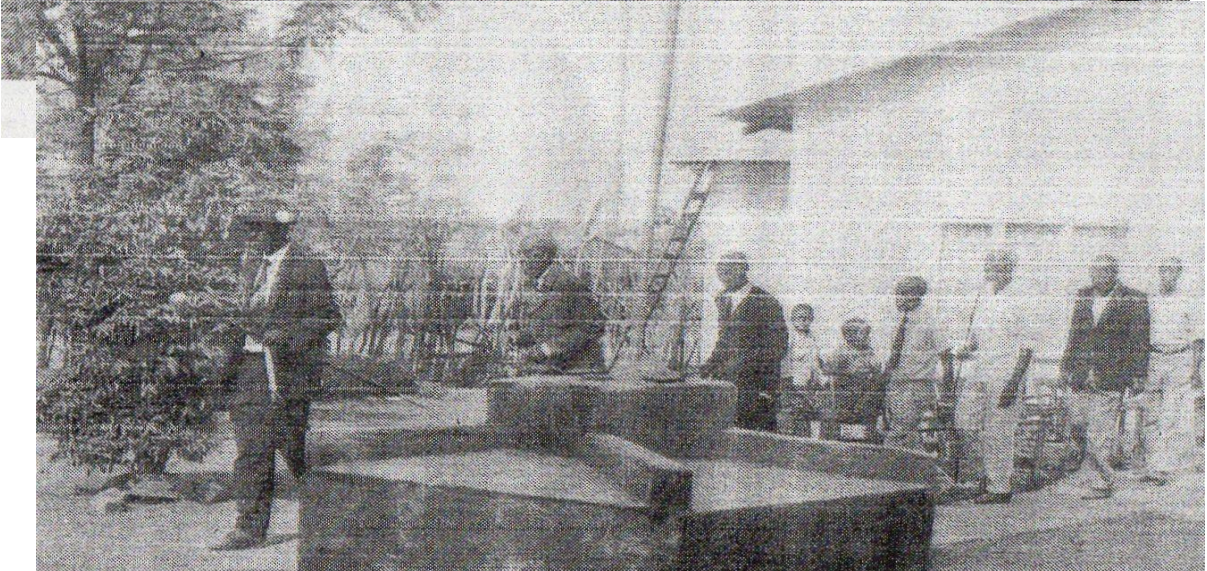
No	Item	SD	D	A	SD
20	Do you think the behavior of the Bahila members who have joined the Adventist church encouraging that one can join the church				
21	Do you think the involvement of Church members from Baila community in traditional rituals discourages others from joining the Church				
22	Do you think the un involvement of the converts from the Baila community rituals a hindrance to the community in joining the Adventist church				
23	Do you think the rejection of the community culture by her members who have joined the church an hindrance the community in joining the Adventist church				
24	Do you think the church is willing to accept new converts with the challenges they have in the Baila Community				

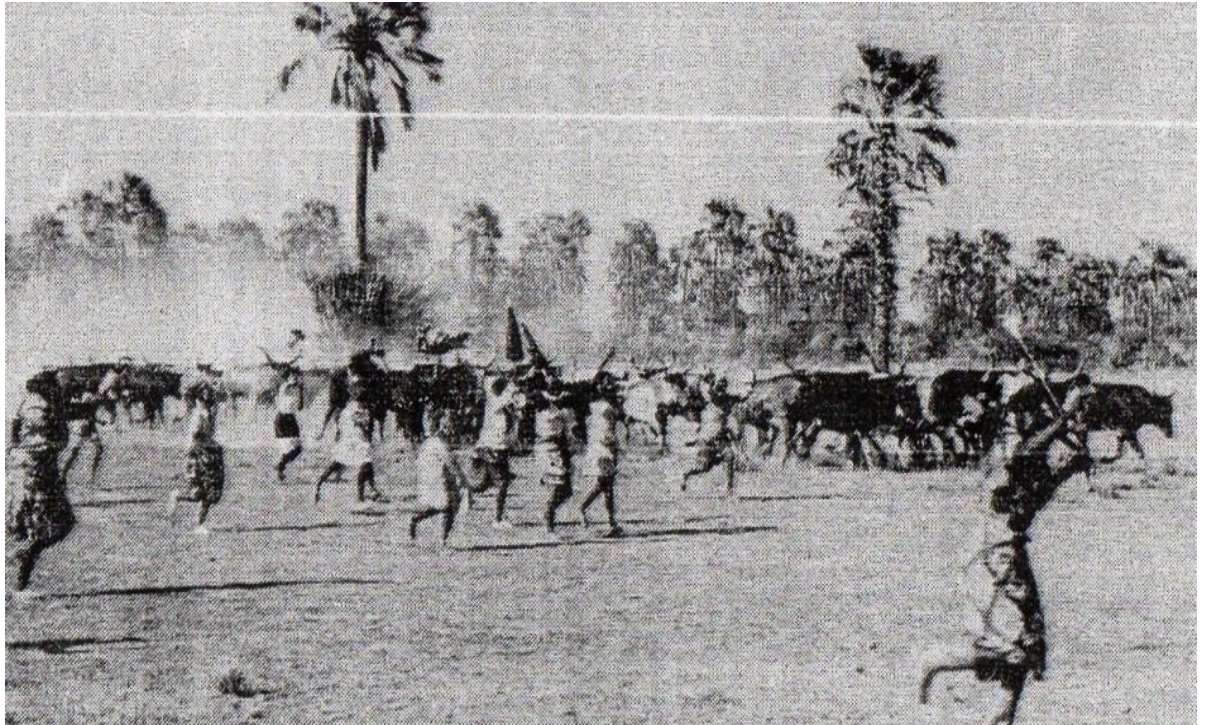
APPENDIX D

SHIMUNENGA CEREMONY PHOTOS



Dramatic performances – a young woman (wearing a leopard skin) and her father display 'the dance of adulthood' during Shimunenga Ceremony. (ZDM)





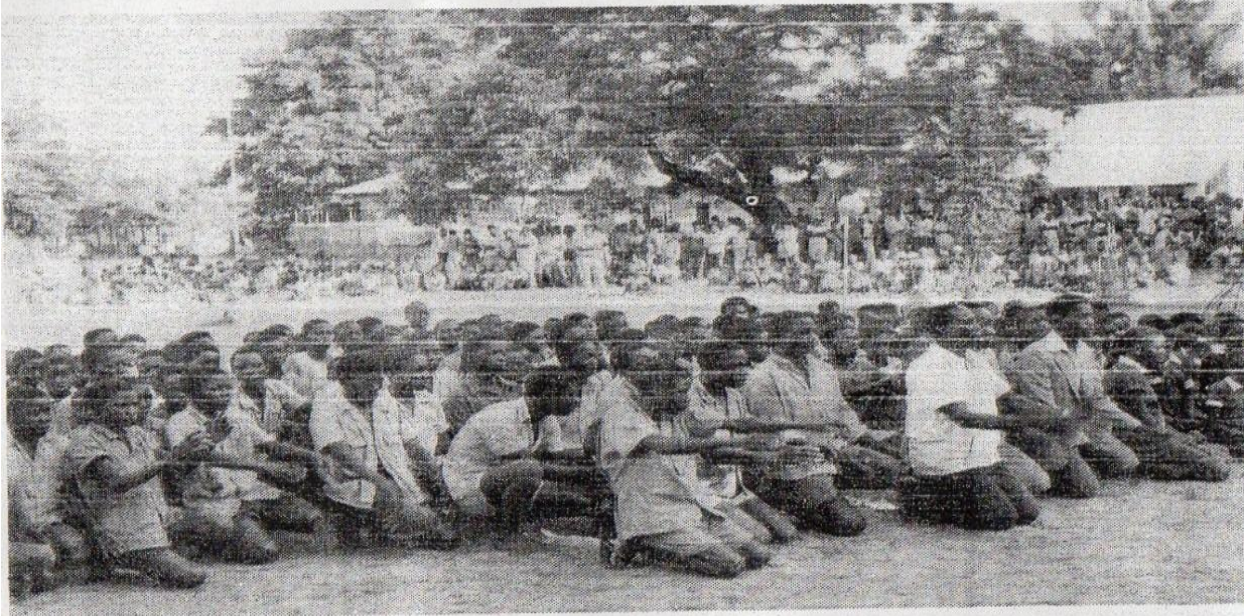


Shimunenga Ceremony attracts many people from different walks of life. In the picture, the late Mr Harry Nkumbula and Chief Mungaila join a group of dancers. (ZDM)



Headman Shamalomo (wearing a leopard skin) shows that despite his old age he can dance. (ZDM)

Fig 2



School children and their teachers also take an active part at the Shimunenga Ceremony. (ZIS)

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VITA

Personal Details

Surname: Kazoka

Other names: Matson Miller

Academic record

2007 - 2014 MA in Leadership, Adventist University of Africa, Kenya.

1997 - 2001 BA at Solusi University, Zimbabwe.

1988 - 1989 Diploma, Ministerial School in Zambia.

1974 – 1975 David Livingstone Teachers Training College, Livingstone Zambia.

1968 - 1972 Rusangu Secondary Schools, Monze in Zambia.

1959 - 1967 Keemba Primary School Monze in Zambia.

Professional Accomplishments

2013 - District Pastor: Nadezwe mission district.

2004 - 2012 District Pastor Rusangu mission district.

2001 - 2003 District Pastor in Livingstone mission district.

1993 - 1996 District Pastor in Maamba mission district.

1996 - 1996 (August) District Pastor in Dimbwe mission district.

1973 – 1973 (December) Stores clerk at Nakambala sugar estate in Mazabuka Zambia.