

Pentecostalisation of the African Church

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Abstract

Over the years, theologians have made several attempts to link William Seymour's 1906 Azusa street revival to various roots. It has been linked to (a) the socio-economic-political context of the 1900s in the United States of America; (b) African slaves' spirituality, and (c) the Methodist revival. This paper continues the quest to link William Seymour's 1906 Azusa street revival to another root, namely, Enoch Sontonga's song, *Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika*. The intended purpose is to point out that the pentecostalisation of the African church on the African continent, which changed the religious landscape of the African church and redefined mainstream Christianity, is a divinely orchestrated process. This divine process stems from southern Africa and western Africa respectively. Desktop research is used to focus mainly on the spread of the first wave of pentecostalism called classical pentecostalism (the Holiness Movement).

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¹ The views expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the beliefs of the South African Theological Seminary.

1. A Desire Related to the Pentecostalisation of the African Church

The title *Pentecostalisation of the African Church* forms the basis of this paper to explore a possible link and relationship between the 1906 Azusa street revival and Enoch Sontonga's song, *Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika* and beyond. Enoch Sontonga (1873-1905) was a teacher, choirmaster, and poet associated with the Methodist mission school in Nancefield, Johannesburg, South Africa (Sontonga [n.a.]). He was also a member of Mzimba's African Presbyterian Church (Kalu 2005:274). His preaching role in the church was expressed in his deep desire for the Holy Spirit to descend on the African continent. The chorus of his famous *isiXhosa* song, *Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika*, composed for his school choir in 1897, conveyed this (Sontonga [n.a.]). This song resonates with the spirit of Ethiopianism that had gripped the country then. The song was placed within its relevant religious platform when it was first performed at an ordination service of Reverend Mboweni, the first Tsonga Methodist Priest to be ordained, in 1899 (Sontonga [n.a.]). Later, Sontonga's choir and others sang *Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika* in Natal and Johannesburg. More than a century later, the pentecostalisation of the African church would be an inevitable reality on the religious landscape of Africa. The focus of my paper is on the chorus and how it resonates with the process of pentecostalisation of the African church, through its request for the Holy Spirit to descend on Africa. Below is the original version of *Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika* (Sontonga [n.a.]):

Nkosi, sikelel' iAfrika;	<i>Lord, bless Afrika;</i>
Malupakam'upondo lwayo;	<i>May her horn rise high up;</i>
Yiva imitandazo yetu	<i>Hear Thou our prayers, And</i>
Usisikelele	<i>Bless us.</i>
Chorus	Chorus
Yihla Moya, Yihla Moya,	<i>Descend O Spirit,</i>
Yihla Moya Oyingwele	<i>Descend, O Holy Spirit.</i>

Let's turn to early and late socio-economic-political-religious contexts of the African church in South Africa (1800s–1900s).

Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika is related to four important developments in (colonial) South Africa and the African continent. First, the song was penned twenty-six years after the ordination of Tiyo Soga, the first African Presbyterian minister, who obtained his theological training from Glasgow University, Scotland (Soga [n.a.]; Odendaal 2012:24–25). It was penned during the era of Ethiopianism (Hanciles 2005:210), based on Psalm 68:31, 'Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands to God' (Kalu

2005:264). This period stirred many African mission church leaders to secede from their mission churches to establish their own independent churches which reflected their socio-economic-religious contexts in the Cape, Transvaal and Natal colonies of South Africa, and in other countries on the African continent. This song is a prayer for God to bless Africa and raise her horn. The last stanza of the song is a plea for the Holy Spirit to descend on the African continent and for God to bless the African family. Later, SEK Mqayi, one of the influential Xhosa-speaking poets added seven stanzas to the original song (Sontonga [n.a.]). Second, the song was also penned ten years prior to mobilisation of Africans in the Cape Colony to fight *Tung' umlomo* (Voters Registration Act passed in September 1897) intended to disenfranchise them from voting (Odendaal 2012:114). Third, the song later became the anthem of the African National Congress (ANC) in 1912 (Sontonga [n.a.]). Later, the Pan African Congress of Azania (PAC), the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania (BCMA), and the Azanian People Organisation (AZAPO) embraced it as a national anthem. It also spread beyond the borders of South Africa, and has been translated and adapted into a number of other languages. It is still the national anthem of Tanzania and Zambia and has also been sung in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa for many years (Sontonga [n.a.]; cf Kalu 2005:275).

It is the author's view that the African National Congress (ANC), the oldest liberation movement on the African continent, and the heavy influence of priests and religious leaders who were part of its founding fathers and members, contributed immensely to enabling other liberation movements and subsequent national political leaders, in Southern Africa, after gaining political independence to embrace the song and its intrinsic desire for the Spirit to descend on the African continent.

In exile, the African National Congress (ANC), the Pan African Congress of Azania (PAC) and the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania (BCMA), through their interaction with various nations on the continent also did the same. The song and the cry for the Holy Spirit to descend on Africa was made throughout the African continent and the globe where members of all these liberation movements gathered. It is interesting to note that at a certain time Christians, non-Christians, communists and those who were sympathetic to the struggle for political liberation, sang *Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika* to conclude the gatherings of these liberation movements. Undoubtedly, these three developments indirectly set the stage for forthcoming phenomenon of pentecostalising the African church evident from 1906 to the present.

Fourth, the song was officially fused with the *Die Stem* (the Afrikaans national anthem of the South African apartheid government) written and composed by poet CJ Langenhoven in 1918, to form the current new South African national anthem. It is not strange that, for political and secular reasons, those assigned to compose a new anthem that would represent a new and democratic South Africa, opted to exclude Sontonga's chorus, which called for the Holy Spirit to descend on Africa, from the new South African national anthem. This is a huge and sad development in the history of Christianity in South Africa. However, the old version, together with SEK Mqayi's seven additional stanzas, is still available in some Christian hymnbooks (e.g. the Presbyterian Xhosa hymn-book, *Ingwade Yama-culo Ase-rabe, Icilongo levangeli*), and allows them to continue Enoch Sontonga's cry and desire for the Holy Spirit to descend on the African continent.

2. The African Church Prior to the 1906 Azusa Street Revival

Enoch Sontonga, the preacher, teacher, poet and choirmaster, penned his song nine years prior to the 1906 Azusa street phenomenon. Prior to the Azusa street revival, various Christians in South Africa as well as many other Christians and non-Christians heard and sang *Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika*. This was thanks to Reverend JL Dube who popularised the song through his choir, the Ohlange Zulu Choirs in 1901 (Sontonga [n.a.]).

At that time various Christians in the four colonies of South Africa attended the following mission churches: The Roman Catholic Church, the Lutheran Church, the Anglican Church, the Methodist Church, the African Methodist Church, the Dutch Reformed Church, the Presbyterian Church, the Swiss Mission among others. In addition to these, some African Christians attended the following Independent African Churches, the Thembu National Church (founded by Nehemiah Tile in 1884), the Ethiopian Church (founded by Mangena Mokone in 1892), the Presbyterian Church of Africa (founded by Pambani Jeremiah Mzimba in 1898) among others. Many African leaders who seceded from missionary churches joined Mokone's church. At that time, in the four colonies of South Africa, these churches formed the basis of what constituted mainstream Christianity and church prior to 1906. Christians in the former group were taught to denounce any practice related to *Ubuntu* whilst those in the latter group of churches were encouraged to fuse *Ubuntu* with Christianity

(Mzondi 2015). The former viewed the latter with great suspicion and did not recognise them as Christian.

Most, if not all, of the above-mentioned mission churches existed throughout sub-Saharan Africa prior to the 1906 Azusa revival. In addition, the following Ethiopian churches existed in Nigeria and Ghana, the Native Baptist Church established in 1888 by David Brown Vincent, who later reverted to using his African names, Majola Agbebi, the Gold Coast African Methodist church established in 1896 by Attoh Ahuma, and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church established by JEG Aggrey (Kalu 2005:270–271). Similar to the South African context prior to 1906, these churches constituted what was mainstream Christianity in western, eastern and central Africa.

3. The Pentecostalisation of the African Church: Post the 1906 Azusa Street Revival

The pentecostalisation process of the African church shows a Johannesburg-Topeka-Los Angeles link [pattern] of yearning for the Holy Spirit. Key players in this pattern were Enoch Sontonga, Charles Parham and William Seymour. Enoch Sontonga composed a song that yearned for the Holy Spirit to descend on Africa, Charles Parham taught that speaking in tongues is a sign of being baptised with the Holy Spirit while William Seymour yearned for the experience he learned from Charles Parham. The latter is usually associated with the move which led his followers and those who travelled from other parts of the world to experience Pentecost to go in different directions to spread the experience. This process took place nine years (1897–1906) after Sontonga's desire for the Holy Spirit to descend on Africa, expressed in *Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika*. Regrettably, Enoch Sontonga died in 1905, a year before the 1906 Azusa street revival in the United States of America. At the time of his death, Charles Parham had established a Bethel Bible School promoting the doctrine of speaking in tongues, an experience linked to the 1901 Topeka, Kansas revival in the United States of America. Meanwhile, as discussed above, *Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika* was sung in meetings of the South African Native Council (a forerunner of the African National Congress) in Johannesburg and Natal in South Africa.

Three interesting arguments flow from these developments: these are, firstly, Charles Parham's move (teaching the doctrine of speaking in tongues as the evidence of baptism in the Holy Spirit), and later William Seymour's move (yearning for this experience and later spreading it after he was baptised in the Holy Spirit)

were not coincidental, but a divine move to link these experiences to Enoch Sontonga's yearning and prayer for the Holy Spirit to descend on Africa. Enoch Sontonga and William Seymour were two remarkable distant African Christians (one in the Transvaal colony of South Africa the other in Los Angeles in the United States of America) indirectly connected by two aspects, namely, a yearning of the Holy Spirit and their Methodist background: the former was a teacher of a Methodist school in South Africa, the latter a preacher influenced by Methodist teaching in the United States of America. The Methodist background is also identifiable in John G Lake, who left for colonial South Africa in 1908. Secondly, William Seymour's experience was God's answer to Enoch Sontonga's prayer. This answer later stirred many of Seymour's followers to take the experience to various parts of the world. Thirdly, William Seymour's followers were God's divine instruments used to respond to Enoch Sontonga's prayer. Records show that these followers, who came to Africa, felt that they were responding to a divine call (Miller 2005: 32–34); although, there was the ever-present and ambivalent state-Christian missionary perception, namely, Africa is a Dark Continent (Ewisa [n.a]:23). The Apostolic Faith recorded that '[w]orkers are constantly going out trusting God for their support. A band of six missionaries left for Africa ... going for two points in Africa' (Apostolic Faith 1906, cf Miller 2005:32). The two points refers to southern and western regions Africa. These regions served as spring-boards for the continual pentecostalisation of the sub-Saharan African church from 1906 to the present. Kalu (2005:346–348) splits those followers into Charles Parham's followers and William Seymour's followers, and categorises them as individuals who felt called, and sponsored efforts to unite Pentecostal groups, and denominational brands of pentecostalism.

The above-mentioned arguments set the stage to acknowledge that the pentecostalisation of the African church on the African continent was a divinely orchestrated process, and to discuss the unfolding process below, which began simultaneously in southern and western Africa, and also reached central and eastern Africa.

3.1. The South(ern) African influence

In southern Africa, John G Lake and Thomas Hezmalhalch, who came to South Africa in 1908, reached some African Christians who probably knew the *Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika* song. These Christians were members of Christian Catholic Church in Zion (CCCZ), and consisted of some Africans and some Afrikaans-speaking people associated with an American preacher, Alexander Dowie, who taught that healing and miracles still occurred. Many

of these church members embraced this form of pentecostalism. Consequently, the Johannesburg and Wakkerstroom Christian Catholic Church in Zion (CCCZ) members were the first South Africans to be pentecostalised. The church was later called the Apostolic Faith Mission, and became the largest Pentecostal church in South Africa. The church subsequently managed to spread the Pentecostal experience to Swaziland and Moçambique (Chetty 2002:30) and Zimbabwe (Maxwell 2005). Later, a Canadian Pentecostal missionary, Charles William Chawner, arrived in South Africa around 1910, and introduced the Pentecost experience to Africans in Natal. He was later joined by other missionaries (Hofmeyer 1994:192). In 1917, Chawner and his co-missionaries opted to associate themselves with the Assemblies of God of the United States of America (Watt 1992:21). The Assemblies of God, with Africans being the majority, became the second largest Pentecostal church in South Africa, after the Apostolic Faith Mission. It also reached Zimbabwe (Asamoah-Gyadu 2005:393). Meanwhile, Samuel and Ardella Meads, and Robert Shidelars targeted Angola to introduce the experience (Miller 2005:32). The above process belongs to the first wave, called classical Pentecostalism, directly linked to William Seymour. Later, four prominent African classical Pentecostals contributed to the Pentecostalisation process of the Africa church. These are Elias Letwaba, Job Ciliza, Nicholas Bhengu of South Africa, and Ezekiel Ghutti of Zimbabwe. Examples of classical Pentecostal churches in South Africa are the Apostolic Faith Mission, Back to God-Assemblies of God, Full Gospel, and African Gospel Church.

Another important and related development in southern Africa is that, after the 21 March 1960 Sharpeville massacre which resulted in the banning of the PAC, ANC, SACP and other organisations, Christians and non-Christians also continued to sing that the Holy Spirit descend on Africa through the chorus of *Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika* in public and under-ground meetings of structures of the liberation movements. This development brings us to the continued influence of southern Africa in the pentecostalisation of the African church on the continent, in the past decades through the ministry of Rheinhard Bonnke, a German-born missionary linked to the Apostolic Faith Mission in South Africa.

Rheinhard Bonnke was initially based in Lesotho and later moved to South Africa, before relocating to his home country, Germany. He has contributed and continues to contribute to the massive spread of classical Pentecostalism in sub-Saharan Africa. His efforts, which began in South Africa, have made him reach

massive crowds with the message of Pentecostalism. Rheinhard Bonnke worked in the era when *Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika* was sung in meetings of South African liberation movements in exile on the African continent (Lesotho in the south to Ghana in the west); as well as during public meetings of the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO), Pan-African Movement (PAM), and the United Democratic Movement (UDM) in South Africa. At the end of these meetings, Christians and communists continued to sing that the Holy Spirit should descend on Africa, as they sang *Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika*.

During his stay in South Africa in the 1980s, Rheinhard Bonnke interacted with Richard Ngidi, one of the main contributors in the process of spreading classical Pentecostalism among Africans in the late 1900s while he was working in the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa. Richard Ngidi, who might have known *Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika*, as other Christians during the height of apartheid, influenced Rheinhard Bonnke (Khathide 2010:79–82). On the back cover of Richard Ngidi's biography, Rheinhard Bonnke describes this influence as follows:

Pastor Ngidi preached under the a powerful unction of the Holy Spirit, I saw signs and wonders happen in a place where I had never imagined God moving on such a scale. In an instant I threw off my timidity like an old garment and vowed never to be guided by my own reservations and fears, but solely by the word of God (Kathide 2010).

It is also highly probable that Rheinhard Bonnke, who conducted tent crusades in various South African townships during the mid-1980s might have heard of *Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika* from two sources. First, from the most influential African Pentecostal leader in South Africa, Frank Chikane, who was part of his team when he was in South Africa. Second, from other African Pentecostals, because during the 1980s some African Christians wanted to stop foreign preachers from preaching, as they perceived them to support apartheid, to discourage Africans from resisting apartheid and its related systems (Ewisa [n.a]:33–34). Ewisa ([n.a]:32) emphasises that '[i]t is for this reason that young evangelicals in Soweto have protested against some evangelistic missions in Soweto (like that of Ray MacCaully and Rhema) not because they are against the mission, per se, but because of the outrageous[sic] motives which hurt blacks in this country'. These youths were part of those African Christians who participated in public political meetings, and the underground meetings of the liberation movements where *Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika* was sung at the end of these meetings.

This concern should have influenced Rheinhard Bonnke to opt to leave South Africa and relocate his offices to Europe. Based on these events, the southern Africa influence, flowing from Enoch Sontonga's *Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika*, is noticed in Rheinhard Bonnke re-strategising evangelistic efforts to reach Africa. It should be remembered that before relocating to Europe, Rheinhard Bonnke had worked in the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa (a classical Pentecostal church) and was influenced by an African classical Pentecostal from the same church, Richard Ngidi. *Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika* was sung in this context both within South Africa and in exile during the era of apartheid. This influence contributed to the process of spreading classical Pentecostalism in Africa, as Rheinhard Bonnke (in)directly, carried the prayer asking for the Holy Spirit to descend on Africa, mentioned in *Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika*, in his massive crusades throughout sub-Saharan Africa. The author does not see this phenomenon as a coincidence, but an amazing divinely orchestrated process where God used missionaries, local African classical Pentecostal pastors and the liberation movements.

3.2. The western African influence

Enoch Sontonga's song asking for the Holy Spirit to descend on Africa resonates with a parallel pentecostalising process in western Africa as Pentecostal missionaries reached western Africa. Women like Julia H Hutchins and Leila McKinney were part of a group of missionaries who went to Africa after experiencing Pentecost at Azusa; Lucy Farrow, GW Batman and Julia Hutchins went to Liberia whilst Leila's destination was not documented (Miller 2005: 31–34).

It is incomplete to discuss the pentecostalisation of the African church without mentioning that, in the early 1900s, some west African Pentecostal leaders also contributed to the process of pentecostalising the African church. The focus is on the pentecostalisation of the church in west Africa in two countries, namely, Ghana and Nigeria and beyond. Twenty years after the composition of *Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika*, a unique experience occurred in Ghana. Peter Anim experienced Pentecost in 1917 without any direct contact with missionaries linked with the 1906 Azusa street revival (Asamoah-Gyadu 2005:394–395). This initiative marked the beginning of the process of pentecostalising the Ghanaian church. Anim narrates his experience as follows: 'I was faced with necessity of contending for a deeper faith and greater spiritual power than what primary religious experience was able to afford, and I began to seek with such trepidation to know more about the Holy Ghost' (Aamoah-Gyadu 2005:395).

Another development related to the process of pentecostalisation in Ghana was the arrival of a UK-based missionary, James McKeown, who worked with Peter Anim, but later separated due to differences concerning faith-healing doctrines (Asamoah-Gyadu 2005:395). These developments led to the existence of two categories of classical pentecostalism in Ghana, namely, African initiated pentecostalism and mission initiated pentecostalism. Known classical African Pentecostal churches in Ghana are: the Church of Pentecost, the Christ Apostolic Church, and the Apostolic Church of Ghana. Consequently, classical pentecostalism spread from Ghana to neighbouring countries through these churches.

Similar to the situation in Ghana and South Africa, two categories of classical pentecostalism exist in Nigeria, namely, mission initiated (example the Assemblies of God) and African initiated (example Christ Apostolic Church). Later pentecostalisation in Nigeria is not attributed to any link with American-influenced pentecostalism, but with British influence (Achunike 2009:16), and largely due to the initiatives of some African Pentecostal leaders like William Kimuyi (Asamoah-Gyadu 2005: 391). The latter belongs to a group of leaders who were influenced by a revival which swept the education sector in Nigeria. In 1970, university students claimed to be baptised in the Holy Spirit and spread that experience to mission churches (Achunike 2009:16). It is intriguing to note that at that time (1970s), Enoch Sontoga's *Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika* was sung, as part of procedure in meetings, in some parts of Nigeria at the end meetings of the South African liberation movements mentioned above. The following classical Pentecostal churches are found in Nigeria: Christ Apostolic Church, Redeemed Christian Church of God, Deeper Life Bible church, and Living Faith church. These churches played a vital role in the spread of classical pentecostalism on the African continent.

4. Drawing the Line of Distinction

The pentecostalisation of the African church, as discussed in this paper, acknowledges that Enoch Sontonga's *Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika* is the fountainhead of the process which started in the United States and reached two influential areas of sub-Saharan Africa, namely, southern and western Africa. In his other work, the author (Mzondi 2018), argues that (a) the proper term to use when referring to the 1906 Azusa street revival, and subsequent indigenised African experiences in South Africa should not be 'African pentecostalism', but '*Ubuntu* pentecostalism'; (b) that *Ubuntu* pentecostalism manifested itself in various forms as

various communities conceptualised it to suit their different contexts. These views point us to the developments related to the pentecostalisation of the African church.

Flowing from the south and west of Africa, classical pentecostalism (mission and African initiated) reached the entire sub-Saharan. The process created an (in)direct proliferation of pentecostalism which manifested itself in various ways as different leaders conceptualised different forms of pentecostalism to suit their different contexts. From the south, Rheinhard Bonnke's conference (a classical Pentecostal conference) held in Zimbabwe 1986 ignited the proliferation of new Pentecostal churches (both small and mega) initiated by those who attended the conference. These attendees conceptualised a different form of pentecostalism which suited their socio-economic-political contexts. They fused the teachings of classical pentecostalism with that of the prosperity gospel. The fused teachings became an appealing blend of pentecostalism, which drew many (young and old) to these churches since their socio-economic-political contexts were addressed in these churches. In western Africa (Ghana and Nigeria), some classical Pentecostal leaders also fused their teaching with that of the prosperity gospel. Benson Idahosa set the pace and standard which many Pentecostal leaders want to emulate. Their new blend of pentecostalism also drew many (young and old) to their churches. Their perception is noted in Kalu's (2003:20) view:

The ordinary Pentecostal in Africa is less concerned with modernization and globalization and more about a renewed relationship with God, intimacy with the transcendental, empowerment by the Holy Spirit, and protection by the power in the blood of Jesus as the person struggles to eke out a viable life in a hostile environment.

This tendency to fuse classical pentecostalism with the teaching of the prosperity gospel created space for others to fuse classical pentecostalism with African Traditional Religions (ATRs). Consequently, another form of classical pentecostalism emerged, namely, one which publicly used tangible elements in the ministry of healing and deliverance, so that their language addressed real matters which affected people, specifically, witchcraft. TB Joshua set the standard which many Pentecostal leaders desire at all costs to emulate.

The author posits that there is a need to point a clear line of distinction between these three forms of pentecostalism. Asamoah-Gyadu (2005) and Mwaura (2005) refer to two forms of pentecostalism on the continent as classical pentecostalism and

New/Neo-Pentecostal Churches. As noted, the author counts three. Only the first two resonate with Enoch Sontonga's song asking for the Holy Spirit to descend on Africa (*Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika*). They confirm that God does work in miraculous ways and will continue to surprise many. The Holy Spirit has descended on Africa. This phenomenon has changed the religious landscape of sub-Saharan Africa.

5. Figures Confirm that the Holy Spirit Has Descended on Africa

At the end of the nineteenth century, mainstream Christianity in sub-Saharan Africa was viewed through the existence of mission churches and Ethiopian churches. During the middle of the twentieth century mainstream Christianity was viewed through the existence of mission churches, Ethiopian churches and African Initiated/Independent Churches (AICs). The pendulum has shifted in the twenty-first century. Mainstream Christianity is beginning to be viewed through the existence of all Pentecostal churches found in sub-Saharan Africa (www.pewforum.org/2016/10/05/overview-pentecostalism-in-africa).

Figures of 'the century of Pentecostalism' demonstrate that the Holy Spirit has descended on the African church. These figures reflect the influence of southern and western Africa in the process of pentecostalising the African church on the continent.

The 2011 statistics show that of the 43.7% Pentecostals in the world, 14.8% are in sub-Saharan Africa (Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion and Public Life, Global Christianity 2011). The largest classical Pentecostal churches on the continent are the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa (1.2 million members) (The AFM in South Africa n.d.); the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God-Forward in Faith (539 683 members) (Mabe, Dimingu and Siyamangwa 2018:7). In Nigeria two large classical Pentecostal churches are the Redeemed Christian Church of God, (3 million members) (Biggest churches in Nigeria: Top 10) and the Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria (3 million members) (Christ apostolic Church n.d.). In Ghana the largest classical Pentecostal church is the Church of Pentecost in Ghana (global membership of 3 million) (Church of Pentecost n.d.).

6. Conclusion

This paper has pointed out that the developments related to the 1906 Azusa street revival, have a link with Enoch Sontonga's song: *Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika* composed nine years before the 1906 Azusa street revival, and four years before the Charles Parham revival in 1901 in Topeka. It was observed that the two events were an answer to Enoch Sontonga's prayer for the Holy Spirit to descend on the African continent. This experience later spread to the various parts of the globe. On the African continent, southern Africa and western Africa became the springboards of the process called the pentecostalisation of the African church. These developments have changed the religious landscape on the African continent. Unlike previously, where mainstream Christianity was viewed through mission churches and Ethiopian churches, current research shows that mainstream Christianity in sub-Saharan Africa is now viewed through pentecostalism.

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