

A Church historical judicial assessment of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe engagement with demon possession and exorcism

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BY

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DECLARATION

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the authorship owner thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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SUMMARY

The Reformed Church in Zimbabwe (RCZ) was constituted in a context where the converts to Christianity believed that the diviners are the only people who have the authority to control the powers that destabilize the normal order. The focal point of this thesis is *A Church historical judicial assessment of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe's engagement with demon possession and exorcism.*

Chapter two attends to the biblical perspectives regarding demon possession and exorcism. Amongst others the origin of the devil, demon possession and exorcism in the Old Testament, Intertestamental period as well as the New Testament is being addressed in this chapter.

Chapter three highlights the African Traditional view on demon possession/spirit possession and exorcism. The chapter identifies causes for the sudden disappearances of the practice of exorcism rites amongst the Shona people belonging to the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe and, focuses therefor on an African view of demon possession, unexpected or involuntary possession, expected or voluntary possession, communal and Shamanism possession, as well as the practice of demon possession in Zimbabwe and the challenges it poses to the Christian believers in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe.

Chapter 4 deals with the historical background of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe. The Dutch Reformed missionaries in Zimbabwe encountered numerous challenges regarding the Shona people's view on the subject of demon possession/spirit possession and exorcism. The chapter analyses the perspective of the Dutch Reformed Missionaries who evangelized Masvingo province on demon possession/spirit possession and exorcism. The missionaries equated demon possession/spirit possession and exorcism with heathenism.

In Chapter 5 attention is given to a church judicial assessment of the church order regulations in place in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe concerning demon possession or exorcism. The influence of the missionaries of the Dutch Reformed Church on the current provisions in the church order of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe should not be underestimated. These church judicial provisions, build in by the missionaries in the church order of the

Shona Reformed Church and the later Reformed Church in Zimbabwe, curbs any influence of the Shona culture in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe.

In Chapter 6 the researcher proposes that the *Church Order of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe* as well as theological training and ministry of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe should make provision, taking the rich Shona cultural background in to account, for a ministry of exorcism; a liturgy on exorcism as well as theological dialogue in order to address the problem of exorcism in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe.

OPSOMMING

Die Gereformeerde Kerk in Zimbabwe (RCZ) is in 'n konteks waar die bekeerlinge tot die Christendom geglo het dat waarsêers die enigste persone is wat die op die mag het om die magte wat die normale orde destabiliseer te kan beheer, gekonstitueer. Die fokuspunt van hierdie navorsing is 'n kerkhistoriese geregtelike assessering van die betrokkenheid van die Gereformeerde Kerk in Zimbabwe met duiwelbesetenheid en duiweluitdrywing.

HOOFTUK TWEE hanteer die Bybelse perspektiewe met betrekking tot duiwelbesetenheid en duiweluitdrywing. In die Hoofstuk word onder andere aandag verleen aan die oorsprong van die duiwel, demoon besetting en duiweluitdrywing in die Ou Testament, tussen-testamentêre tydperk asook die Nuwe Testament.

HOOFTUK DRIE fokus op die Afrika Tradisionele siening op duiwelbesetenheid / besetting en duiweluitdrywing. Die hoofstuk poog om die oorsake vir die skielike verdwyning van die duiweluitdrywing rituele onder die Shona mense wat deel uitmaak van die Gereformeerde Kerk in Zimbabwe vas te stel. Hierdie hoofstuk fokus op die Afrika-beskouing van duiwelbesetenheid, onverwagte of gedwonge besetting, verwagte of vrywillige besetting, gemeenskaplike besetting en Shamanistiese besetting, asook die praktyk van duiwelbesetenheid in Zimbabwe en die uitdagings wat dit vir die Christen gelowiges in die Gereformeerde Kerk in Zimbabwe inhou.

HOOFTUK 4 handel oor die historiese agtergrond van die Gereformeerde Kerk in Zimbabwe. Die NG sendelinge in Zimbabwe het talle uitdagings met betrekking tot die beskouinge van die Shona mense rakende duiwelbesetenheid/besetting en duiweluitdrywing ondervind. Die navorsing ontleed die perspektief van die NG sendelinge wat Masvingo-provinsie geëvangeliseer het met betrekking tot op duiwelbesetenheid/besetting en duiweluitdrywing. Die sendelinge het duiwelbesetenheid/besetting en duiweluitdrywing aand die heidendorp gelyk gestel.

In **HOOFTUK 5** word aandag verleen aan 'n kerkregtelike assessering van die kerkordelike reëlings met betrekking tot duiwelbesetenheid/besetting of duiweluitdrywing wat in plek is in die Gereformeerde Kerk in Zimbabwe. Die invloed van die sendelinge van die NG Kerk op die huidige bepalings in die kerkorde van die Gereformeerde Kerk in Zimbabwe kan nie onderskat word nie. Die kerkregtelike bepalings, ingebou deur die sendelinge in die kerkorde

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Charles Juro Thy will be done: Kuda kwenyu ngakuitwe!

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Motivation for the research

The Reformed Church in Zimbabwe (RCZ) was constituted in a context where the converts to Christianity believed that the diviners are the only people who have the answers to control the powers that destabilize the normal order. The focal point of this research paper is *A Church historical judicial assessment of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe's engagement with demon possession and exorcism*. The researcher is a member of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe from childhood. During 1983 he was confirmed as a member of the RCZ and on 1 April 2000 he was ordained as a minister of the Word of the RCZ. As a member of the RCZ as well as minister of the Word in both rural and urban congregations, the researcher encountered numerous cases of demon possession. This phenomenon challenged the researcher in the executing of his task as minister of the Word of the RCZ. In the RCZ if one put too much emphasis on demon possession it may easily end up one to be labelled as a Pentecostal, an African Independent or that one is discrediting the doctrines of the RCZ. The choice of the research topic is therefore deeply existential.

Misconceptions regarding demon exorcism coupled with the influence of the missionaries contribute to the current aloofness of demon possession in the RCZ. The premise of the researcher is that the RCZ was guided from 9th September 1891, the date of the constitution of the RCZ, to the present time by rules and regulations foreign to the cultural practices in Zimbabwe. The premise of the researcher is that already in 1976 when the African Reformed Church became an autonomous reformed church in Zimbabwe it should have accessed all church judicial provisions, the policies, doctrines as well as theological presumptions handed down to them by the Dutch Reformed Church Cape Synod. The presumption of the researcher is that the historical setting of the early missionary church should be explored in relation to the social setting of the recipients of the gospel in Zimbabwe, namely the Shona people. The *Church Order of the RCZ* as well as the decision making structures of the RCZ do not attend to the issue of demon possession appropriately.

The researcher is of the opinion that the RCZ through its decision making structures should assess the historical factors that shaped the church law and practices of the RCZ regards to demon possession. This is however a sensitive issue to be addressed in the RCZ seeing that members of the RCZ are coming from cultural backgrounds that had definite ways of dealing with spiritual matters. In view of the above background the research will deals with a church historical judicial assessment of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe's engagement with demon possession and exorcism. The study will therefore focus on the historical background of RCZ, the Biblical perspectives on demon possession and exorcism, an African perspective on demon possession and exorcism as well as the current challenges in the RCZ. At the end of the thesis a few amendments to the church order of the RCZ will be proposed. The researcher presupposition is that this research may help the RCZ to address the issue of demon possession and exorcism appropriately and make informed decisions on the issue.

1.2. Research focus and problem statement

Misconceptions about demon possessions as well as the influence of the missionaries on the RCZ theological framework of thinking contributed to the current aloofness of the RCZ on demon exorcism. The Reformed Church in Zimbabwe appears to be lukewarm when it comes to issues dealing with demon possession and exorcism. The practice of demon exorcism remains controversial in the RCZ. The focus of the research is *A Church historical judicial assessment of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe engagement with demon possession and exorcism*. The current church judicial provisions of the RCZ are unwelcoming in matters of demon possession and exorcism.

1.3. Research Question

This thesis addresses the following research questions:

- (i) What historical and theological factors are influencing the current understanding in the RCZ regarding demon possession and exorcism?
- (ii) What provisions are being made in the RCZ Church Order regarding demon possession and exorcism?
- (iii) What church order amendments can be proposed to the RCZ in order to address demon possession and exorcism effectively?

1.4. Research Hypothesis

My hypothesis is as follows: If the RCZ attend to the historical and theological factors which influenced the current understanding in the RCZ regarding demon possession and exorcism it will enable the RCZ to change the church order of the RCZ accordingly.

The reserwe was motivated by the past and present theological and ecclesiastical responses to demon possession and exorcism in the RCZ. The main problem is the responses of missionaries and Africans to African cultural and religious beliefs and practices related to demon possession and demon exorcism. The research topic deals with the church historical judicial approaches and implementation of church polity articles regarding the position, discipline and excommunication of members of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe (RCZ) who attend or participate in the rituals and practices. Since the establishment of the Church, the missionaries and African Christians (re)formulated and grappled with the articles due to diverse responses of leaders and members. Members who were or are affected by decisions either remain silent or leave the RCZ and join other churches, particular the African Independent Churches and African Pentecostal Churches. From the beginning of postcolonial Zimbabwe, new challenges and opportunities emerged for the RCZ: re-recognition and reaffirmation of traditional diviners or healers, exorcism rituals, and the formation of a legal board of Zimbabwe Traditional Healer Association (ZINATHA). ZINATHA regulates and superintend over the moral and practices of all those members registered under the board (Nthoi 2006:32). In other words the office of the diviner has been authenticated in Zimbabwe. Thus when Christians face problems of spiritual in nature some may visit the offices of ZINATHA and seek help.

1.5. PRIOR STUDY

The Shona people even before the arrival of the white settlers had various means of responding to different calamities affecting their societies. Wall (1996:7) pointed out that it is impossible to separate any individual from his or her social relationship. Wall (1996:44) mentions that the Gospel is not a voice from heaven separated from the rest of reality, neither is it an alternative or supplementary programme to the drama of life which we are watching.

Ferguson (1989:184) describes demons as power that accompanies men and dispenses destiny. The term and meaning of the word underwent several changes from the Biblical times to the present time. A demon is considered as unclean spirit of a deceased human or spirit of unknown type which may cause demonic possession. According to Henry (1967:72) demons are triumphant dynamic forces, crusading unhindered through history. There are several theories about who demons are and where they come from. Among the various theories about who demons are and where they came from it seems likely that demons come among fallen angels who rebelled with Satan against God (Revelation 12:4). According to Burret (1988:166) demons are those spirits which the society regards as being harmful for both the individual and society as a whole. Demons are evil masters who desire to see their will be done in human beings and other material objects. Geham (1989:302) explained that there are several ways in which an individual may be induced of demon spirit. Demons may be conceived by individuals anthropomorphically, but may constitute and assume various dimensions whenever they wish to be seen (Idowu 1973:172). He further explained that spirits according to African beliefs are ubiquitous: there is no area of earth nor object or creature which has not been inhabited by a spirit. Cerfaux (1960:94) defines demons as natural enemies of God's kingdom they are leaders of the kingdom of this world and guides the wolf pack. Demonization is seen as both an involuntary or voluntary inducement.

Demon possession refers to the state when victims are under control or influence of the demons. Possession in medical fraternity may be described as the patient's health status that is the period when the object or the victim is in the sick bed in need of the medical practitioner. Davies (1995:23) describes spirit possession as any altered state of consciousness indigenously interpreted in terms of the influence of an alien spirit. In anthropological circles possession is a form of trance state. Certainly, most trance state are associated with removal from the normal cues and rules of sociability, the trencher is lost from his socially constructed self (Davies 1995:23). Demon possession is explained and understood by many from a cultural point of view. Demon possession is a powerful psychological experience that is wide spread in human cultures. It is a means by which an individual in a socially subordinate role can respond and cope with circumstances that cannot be effectively dealt with.

Africans recognize and accept the existence of evil spirits who may use material objects as temporary residence and manifests their presence and actions through the natural objects and phenomenon (Daneel 1988:378). Geham (1989:302) explained that demon possession in African context take place during rhythmic beating of drums and dancing. When someone is possessed he or she displays unusual powers, the personality changes and the person comes under total by the spirit or spirits.

Hunter (1990:387) describes exorcism as invoking the name of God to expel an evil spirit believed to inhibit or possess a person or by extension a place or object. Exorcism is therefore seen as a form of spiritual healing. Bromiley (1982:242) defines exorcism as the process of expelling an evil spirit or spirits from a possessed individual through the means of magical adjurations and rituals. Tenney (1975:450) also describes exorcism as an act of expelling an evil spirit thereby releasing the person possessed by that spirit. Ervin (2002:55) describes demon exorcism as an open challenge to spiritual hosts of wickedness to release their captive (Eph.6:12). The casting out of demons was a central feature in the public ministry of Jesus. Twelftree (1993:13) defines demon exorcism as a form of healing used when demons or evil spirits were thought to have entered a person and to be responsible for sickness and was the attempt to control and cast out or expel spiritual beings or demons from people. Demon possession is a condition in which one or more evil spirits or demons inhabit the body of a human being and take complete control of their victim at will. By temporary blotting out his consciousness they can speak and act through him as their complete slave and tool (Gehman 19989:175). Bloesch (1970:130) describes demon possession as a malady that cannot be touched by natural means. Such possession might be described as the total control of will by an external power. This supernatural power according to Christian tradition is called the Devil, Satan or the prince of this world. However, there are several names given to Satan who is believed to be the chief architect of all demon powers. According to Tweltree (1999:23) exorcism was thought to be successful as a result of the interplay of three factors namely (a) the exorcist, (b) a source of power-authority and (c) the ritual or application of that power-authority against the offending spiritual being. According to Montagomery (1976:41-45) in Mark numerous accounts are portrayed where Jesus exorcise demons (Mark 1:23-28; 5:1-20; 7:24-30; 9:14-29) the among Jesus' characteristics acts. Twelftree (2007:46) further discussed that exorcism conducted by

Jesus are being portrayed as power-encounters. Thus, in the story of the healing of the demoniac in the Capernaum synagogue the man screams out when he confronts Jesus (Mark1:24). O'Donovan (1997:245) explains that in times of crisis, many weak Christians still turn back to these practices in order to solve their problems. The researcher defines demon exorcism as act of obedience to the will of Christ to subdue the power of darkness and bring about liberation, spiritual and physical healing. However those who refrain from exercising demon exorcism is not disobedient to the will of Christ.

1.6. Research Methodology

The researcher takes cognizance that much historical information of the RCZ is written in Afrikaans. These books, however, do not address the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe's challenges regarding demon possession and exorcism and are not accessible to the members of the RCZ. In order to carry out this study researcher will do literature review of the sources available on the subject. This will include primary as well as secondary sources. The study is a historic-church judicial research on demon possession, exorcism in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe. An evaluation of the church judicial position of the RCZ regarding demon possession and exorcism will be highlighted in the research. The study is interdisciplinary by nature. In this research much attention will be given to primary sources, namely the Church Order, acts and agendas of synods of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe. The researcher will consult the archival material in the Faculty of Theology Library at Stellenbosch University in South Africa, in the archives at Stellenbosch as well as in the Murray Theological College Library in Zimbabwe. This church historical judicial research aims to assess how the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe has dealt with demon possession and demon exorcism in the church polity and the consequences thereof for groups and communities inside and outside the church. It is a conceptual and hermeneutical research, describing, explaining and briefly developing some of the main concepts and ideas. The research method, literary review, is appropriate for analysing interpreting primary and secondary text (a literary review). As far as the former texts are concerned, of special importance are the church polity documents and records from the archives. The research builds on various insights from literature in different disciplines inter alia Missiology, Church Polity, Biblical science and is therefore an interdisciplinary research.

The researcher will attend amongst others to the following concepts in the thesis *inter alia* demons, demon possession, exorcism, spirit possession, African Traditional Religion, intertestamental.

1.7 Research Limitation and contribution to knowledge

The research is being done by a clergy of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe and has to be understood in the context of the reformed church in the Zimbabwean, which is a Shona environment. The term Shona is a composite comprised of a vast array of ethnic groups who speak more or less the same language. Shona is commonly known to designate a spoken dialect. Despite of geographical differences the religious patterns of the various groups share much commonality. The MTh thesis has the potential to positively influence church polity in the RCZ and academy (solving a judicial problem and contextualising and re-reading the relevant articles in the academy) in an African context.

1.9 Chapters Outline

This study comprises of six chapters.

CHAPTER 1 deals or focuses on the information to the background study. It provides general introduction to the main thrust and objectives of the research. In this chapter a background to the study is dealt. The major outlines, research topic, research focus, problem statement and the research question which leads to this study will be highlighted. Furthermore, the hypothesis which gives provisional answers will be explained. Purpose and contribution, prior study, research outline and research methodology as well as the research plan will be given. The potential impact of this research will be given at the end of this chapter. The Reformed Church in Zimbabwe (RCZ) was constituted in a context where the converts to Christianity believed that the diviners are the only people who have the authority to control the powers that destabilize the normal order. The focal point of this thesis is *A Church historical judicial assessment of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe's engagement with demon possession and exorcism.*

CHAPTER TWO attends to the biblical perspectives regarding demon possession and exorcism. Amongst others the origin of the devil, demon possession and exorcism in the Old

Testament, Intertestamental period as well as the New Testament will be addressed in this chapter.

CHAPTER THREE This chapter highlights on African Traditional view on demon possession/spirit possession and exorcism. The chapter will try to identify causes for the sudden disappearances of the practice of exorcism rites amongst the Shona people belonging to the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe. This chapter focuses on an African view of demon possession, unexpected or involuntary possession, expected or voluntary possession, communal and Shamanism possession, as well as the practice of demon possession in Zimbabwe and the challenges it poses to the Christian believers in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER 4 deals with the historical background of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe. The missionaries in Zimbabwe encountered numerous challenges regarding the Shona people's view on the subject of demon possession/spirit possession and exorcism. The research analyses the perspective of the Dutch Reformed Missionaries who evangelized Masvingo province on demon possession/spirit possession and exorcism. The missionaries equated demon possession/spirit possession and exorcism with heathenism.

In **CHAPTER 5** attention will be given to a church judicial assessment of the church order regulations in place in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe concerning demon possession or exorcism. The influence of the missionaries of the Dutch Reformed Church on the current provisions in the church order of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe should not be underestimated. These church judicial provisions, build in by the missionaries in the church order of the Shona Reformed Church and the later Reformed Church in Zimbabwe, curbs any influence of the Shona culture in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe.

In CHAPTER 6 The researcher propose that the *Church Order of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe* as well as theological training and ministry of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe should make provision, taking the rich Shona cultural background in to account, for a ministry of exorcism; a liturgy on exorcism as well as theological dialogue in order to address the problem of exorcism in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe.

Chapter 2

Biblical perspectives on demon possession and exorcism

2.1 Introduction

Geham (1989:302) explains that there are several ways in which an individual may be possessed by a demon spirit. Demons may be conceived by individuals anthropomorphically but may constitute and assume various dimension when they wish to be seen (Idowu 1973:172). Such possession might be defined as the total control of the will by an external, supernatural evil power (Bloesch 1970:130). Bloesch (1970:132) describes demon possession as when people are moved by an over powering compulsion either to cause self-destruction or to the destruction of others. In biblical times demon possession is attributed to personal sin. According to Thomas (1998:301) there are several accounts in the New Testament where demon possession is being described as a malady. The victims of the evil spirit possession are being described as being dominated by the demon or unclean spirit to the extent that they lose the ability to control or perform normal body functions. In the New Testament demon possession is closely linked to infirmity, deafness, witness, blindness and epilepsy (Thomas 1994:302).

2.2. The origin of the devil

Both primal religion and Christian religion uphold to the belief of evil forces at work in people. Demons in this view carry out the mandates of their principal who is the Satan. According to Braaten (2000:96) many attempts theologically and philosophically have been undertaken to describe the originality of the devil. The devil may be described as dethroned archangel. In the New Testament the devil is being described as the prince of this world (John.12:31), evil one (Matt.13:19) et cetera (Braaten 2000:99).

Green (1981:33) mentioned that the idea of Satan is an etiological tale, that is to say it is mythical or poetic story to explain a perplexing phenomenon, the existence of evil, disease and death in God's world. There are several theories which have been put forward to explain the existence of the devil. According to Green (1981:34) one of the explanations about the devil is that he was one of God's creatures, a spirit of great ability who became obsessed with pride, rebelled and was expelled from his original eternal place. This belief as portrayed in Old Testament suggests that the devil was created with a good moral character but chose to disobey

the Creator. The Old Testament has two apocalyptic passages that are generally believed to shade light to account of the origin and character of the devil:

You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: ruby, topaz and emerald, onyx and jasper, sapphire. Your settings and mountains were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared. You were anointed as guardian cherub, for I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you. Through your widespread trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned. So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and I expelled you, from among the fiery stones. Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendour. So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings. (Ezekiel 28:11-17).

This quotation read together Isaiah (14:11-17) form a theological basis on the ground of the devil being created with a good moral character and performing good orders as directed by the Creator:

All your pomp has been brought down to the grave, along with the noise of your harps; maggots are spread out beneath you and worms cover you. How you have fallen from heaven, morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! You said in your heart, “I will ascend to the heavens; I will raise my throne above the stars of God I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of Mount Zion. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.” But you are brought down to the realm of the dead, to the depths of the pit. Those who see you stare at you, they ponder your fate: “Is this the man who shook the earth and made kingdoms tremble, the man who made the world a wilderness, who overthrew its cities and would not let his captives go home?”

The book of Genesis offers little information regarding the originality of the Satan. Ezekiel 28:11-18 has to do with a prophecy addressed to the cherub which is a type of an angel (O'Donovan 1992:188). One of the angels of God chose to rebel against Him. The angel was created beautiful and very wise, but became very corrupt as a result of pride (Ezekiel 28:17). In the Pastoral Epistles (1 Timothy 3:6) the Holy Spirit revealed that the fall of Satan was the consequence of his conceit. Through his pride and his careful planned decision to rebel against God, the Satan seemed to have introduced evil on the whole universe (O'Donovan 1992:189). The word Satan means accuser or slanderer (Green 1981:42). According to Leahy (1975:11-13) fallen angels form a formidable army of the Satan. In Scripture Satan is represented as the originator of evil (John.8:44). The devil has a position of authority and lordship over the angelic

hosts that shared in his revolt and expulsion from heaven. Demon possession therefore is the work of the devil through his angels. O'Donovan (1992:190) states that a third of other angels with Satan lost their original places (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6 and Revelation 12:4). According to Yoder (1972:142) the evil powers cannot fully escape the providential sovereignty of God.

2.3 Demon possession and exorcism

2.3.1 Old Testament

According to Gehman (1989:191) the nations surrounding Israel had an exaggerated and pervasive consciousness of evil spirits which the Hebrew faith was restrained and reserved in its acknowledgement of demonic spirits. As already been alluded to in the previous paragraphs Christian religions, non-Christian and many other traditional religions believe in the existence of evil. The Old Testament give testimony to the existence of demons (*diabolos*), goat-demons devils, evil spirits, lying spirits, gods, idols and/or to the practice of exorcism (Gen. 37:1; Deut. 32:17, Lev. 4:24; Lev. 4:28; Lev. 5:6; Lev. 17:7; 1 Sam. 16:14-23; 1 Sam. 18:10-11; 1 Sam. 19:9-10; 1 Sam. 28:13; 1 Kings 22:19-23; Psa. 106:37; Judges 9:23-24; Isa. 13:21; Isa. 34:14; 2 Chron. 11:15; 2 Chron. 18:18-22, Dan. 10:13). Demons can inhabit or possess anything living or non-living and certain aspects of nature. The Old Testament has no specific terms to demons but has allusion to it, particularly in the cultic worship. The word **שֶׁבֶת** (seed) is related to the gods of the Canaanites. For instance Deut. 32:16-17: They made him jealous with strange gods; with abhorrent things they provoked him. They sacrificed to demons, not God, to deities they had never known, to new ones recently arrived, whom your ancestors had not feared. (NRSV) Psalm 106 35-37 refers also to demons as foreign gods. "They served their idols and they became a hindrance to them; they sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons. They poured out innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan; and the land was polluted with blood." The worship of idols manifests a kind of demon possession. The Hebrew word **שֶׁבֶת** (seed) in verse 36 is parallel to the word **עֲזָבִים** ('atsabim), "idols" or "graven images, and in verse 38 to **עֲזָבֵי כְּנָעַן** ('atsabey kená'an), "idols of Canaan." (Bratcher 2013:1).

Montgomery (1976:35) identified three levels upon which the Old Testament portrays demonology:

- (i) The Old Testament takes seriously the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo*. This doctrine describes God as one who created the world out of nothing (Genesis chapters one and two).
- (ii) The Old Testament makes man responsible for his own choices.
- (iii) Man's inclination to evil and his tendency to dramatize it.

According to Tenny (1976:96) the allusions on demons in poetic sections of the Old Testament raise the question as whether they are actually anything more than mere figures of speech. The Old Testament has two main figures denoting to demons, namely Azazel (Lev. 16:19; 10, 26) and Lilith (Isa. 34:14). According to Caldwell (1913:30) Azazel seems to have been one of the spirits haunting the wilderness. Origen identifies Azazel with Satan, as he does also the serpent of Gen., chap. 3. Tenney (1975:97) refers to various names of demons. Leahy (1975:64) although demon activity in the Old Testament is less than in the New Testament, it is nevertheless a constant reality. According to Caldwell (1913:32) the word Satan is often used in the Old Testament as a verb, meaning to be or act as an adversary. Satan as a noun means a human adversary as in I Sam. 29:4, or a superhuman adversary as in Num. 22:22. Satan as a proper name occurs according to Caldwell (1913:32) in not more than three passages in the Old Testament, and they are all late and probably not independent of each other: Job. 1:6, 2:1; Zech. 3: I, 2; I Chron. 2i: i. In the Septuagint, under later influences, it is translated *diabolos*. Demons in the Old Testament are believed to have influenced various groups to indulge into divination (Leahy 1975:66). The Old Testament suggests that God used demons to execute His plans for the punishment of the ungodly and disobedient. For example King Ahab was punished by a lying spirit which Jehovah had put in the mouth of the prophet (1 Kings 22:23 and 21:20-25). Leahy (1975:69) recorded that the Israelites on entering Canaan soon forgot their deliverance from Egypt and mingled with heathen and served their idols and even sacrificed their sons and daughters to demons (c.f. Psalm 106:37). In the Old Testament demons possess human beings, animals and non-living creatures. No consistent demonology can be found in the Old Testament. King Saul (1 Sam. 16:14-23) was a victim of demon possession. In the same episode David is portrayed as one with the power to drive out the evil spirit in King Saul. An evil spirit tormented King Saul; his advisors counselled him to find someone who could play the harp, believing music would bring relief to him. The attendants of Saul discovered that the talents of a young man called David, who was summoned into the King's service. The Bible says whenever the evil spirit possessed King Saul, David would play the harp and the spirit would leave the King and eventually get relieved. According to the story of (1 Sam. 16:14-23), King Saul being under the

siege of an evil spirit is significant in understanding possession by an evil spirit. David in this passage functioned as an exorcist, for whenever the spirit from Yahweh troubles Saul, David would play his harps and the evil spirit would depart away from him. Davidic psalms provide indicators to the whole issue of demon exorcism.

According to Williams (2009:143) demonic development as a form of idolatry became prominent in Judaism during the second Temple period. A number of cultural influences may have contributed to this development. The belief in demonic possession was popular among the Jews in the Second Temple period (Williams 2009:145). In the Old Testament both good and evil spirits were thought to come from Yahweh. The Old Testament views idol worship and foreign gods as demons (Ryken 1998:203). “They sacrificed to demons who were not God, to gods whom they have not known” (Deut. 32:17). Evil spirits is being described in the Old Testament as subordinating them to God’s sovereign rule (Arnold 1992:60). Montgomery (1976:33) noted that the Old Testament acknowledges the spirit world but demythologize or marginalize it. In biblical religion demon possession is always related to personal sin, where as in the so called primitive circles it is attributed to misfortune (Bloesch 1970:132). The Bible portrays demons as fallen angels who belong to the sphere higher than that of man.

In the Old Testament demons are mentioned in fewer passages which include the following (Isa. 34:14; Lev. 17:7; Deut. 32:17; Psalms 95:5; I Sam. 16:14-23). According to Bromiley (1982:242) evil spirits or demons were also foamer figures in the ancient Israel. It is abundantly clear that the existence of demons is unquestionable and evil spirits were regarded as subject to the power of Yahweh. Furthermore, Bromiley (1982:242) explains that the existence of the malevolent evil spirits in the Old Testament is unquestionable. For instance the goat of Azazel in (Lev. 16:8-26) demonstrates the concept of exorcism in a ritual form. Other Old Testament scholars suggest that the OT contain identifiable references to demon possession. The Old Testament reflects God’s opposition to evil doers. It is often thought that there is virtually no demonology in the Old Testament, and it is visible in the New Testament and the substantial teaching on the theme if found. While the issue of demons is more to the fore front of the New Testament, demonology is not absent in the Old Testament (Arnold 1992:55). The Old

Testament writers assume the existence of a major figurehead of evil and a plethora of evil spirits.

According to Freedman (1992:11) discussion upon demon exorcism is a complex one. The cleansing ritual in the Old Testament provides indicators to the understanding of demon exorcism. The role of diviners and prophets of God all worked towards the elimination of evil and bring peace to the possessed. The Mosaic laws also provide a fertile ground towards the understanding of the nature of exorcism in the Old Testament times. The Old Testament reveals that God according to His divine will allows demons to possess certain individuals at times appointed by Him.

The power of Yahweh reigned over the power of darkness. Possession has to be understood in the light of idol worship in the context of the Old Testament. Hence, a right relationship with God of Israel would keep away demons. Demon exorcism in this sense is explained in terms of God's initiative to protect His own people. Another important facet is the engagement of God in holy wars with nations venerating pagan gods. This very Biblical concept of destruction of other nations on account of idolatry is a form of exorcism. In the Old Testament exorcism suggests a ritual of bringing purity to the individual or nation that has transgressed the set of rules given to Israel.

2.3.2 Intertestamental period

The intertestamental period is the gap of time between the period covered by the Hebrew Bible and the period covered by the Christian New Testament. It is considered to cover roughly four hundred years, spanning the ministry of Malachi (c. 420 BC) to the appearance of John the Baptist in the early 1st century AD, almost the same period as the Second Temple period (530 BC to 70 AD). It is also the time when many pseudopigraphal works were produced (*Encyclopedia Britannica*). For example the demonology of the *Book of Enoch* (200 BC- 64 AD) reappears for the most part in the New Testament (Caldwell 1913:100-101).

While demons are rare and obscure in the Old Testament, they came to the fore in the intertestamental period. D.S. Russell, quoted by Christenson (1998:77) says: “When we enter

the intertestamental period we find that the belief in angels has grown to proportions unknown in the Old Testament writings. Details of their numbers, their names, their functions, and their nature are given which, though in many cases having their beginning in the canonical Scripture for outstrip anything to be found theirs". Several intertestamental work reflect a fascination with the allusive story of sons of God intermarrying with the daughters of men and producing Nephilim, the heroes of epic stories (Gen. 6:1-4). The brief narrative becomes the basis for an expansive theology of fallen angels and demons.

The Jewish worldview underwent a significant transformation during the period between the Old Testament and New Testament (Boyd 1997:172). Since the time of Exodus the Jews closely associated the truthfulness of their belief in Yahweh's supremacy with political success. Captivity caused a crisis of faith upon the people of God:

After several hundred years of painful oppression under pagan authorities, however, the chastisement theology began to wear thin. When this oppression turned to overt bloody persecution under Antiochus IV, many Jews abandoned this theology. An increasing number of Jews in the third and second century B.C began to believe that what was happening to them could be all their fault, and thus it could not all be Yahweh's disciplining will. (Boyd 1997:173).

There was a strong belief that the cosmos was populated with good and evil spiritual beings and that the earth is caught in the cross fire of their conflict. The intensification of the Old Testament themes, the incredible expression of and centralization of the Old Testament about lesser gods and Yahweh's conflict with them, constitutes what has come to be known as the apocalyptic world view (Boyd 1997:173). Against this background the New Testament should be read and understood. During the intertestamental period the Jews believed that the world was full of supernatural agencies working for good or evil. Just as angels were able to accomplish beneficent deeds so the demons or the evil spirits were always available to affect calamity, sickness or misfortune. The evil spirits are believed to be the prime causes of sickness and other misfortune in the society. According to Tenney (1975:98) the church fathers battled with the problem of demon possession and exorcism. Several myths were told describing demons, demon possession and its effect upon the created order of God. In the post exilic era Jewish religious

groups focused especially on the problem and origin of evil (Bromiley 1979:920). Demons were linked to supernatural beings that rebelled against God). The meaning of term demon evolved over time (c.f. Keener 2011:770). Amongst others the concept refers to the spirits of the dead, evil spirits and unclean spirits (c.f. Keener 2011:772). Spirit forces figured largely in the Greco-Roman culture. The world was seen as being under the guardianship spirits (Green 1981:79). This notion ultimately led to believe in the existence of a dominant spirit world. According to Bloesch (1970:134) another form of demon possession is seen when the power of the devil possess crowds or nations. In such circumstances demons becomes virulent in social institutions. This could mean that such an institution will no longer be in control of the human beings but under the influence of an institutional demon.

The transmission of the belief in demon possession from the Old Testament into the period between the two testaments is evident. There are a wide spread of traditions in regards to “As the gods of other nations were demonized, so “demon” in a dualistic sense is found in the Septuagint (LXX) as a designation of pagan deities and spirits” (Bo Becking 1999:2310). In around AD 150 to 450 the belief in demon possession and exorcism grew. During the inter-test mental Judaism, demons appear to function in four primary ways, namely (a) Demons cause and transmit diseases amongst men; (b) they accuse men who dwell on earth; (c) they act as agents of divine punishments; and (d) they tempt men to sin (Bromiley 1979:921). According to Keener (2011:774) people associated demons with various afflictions from which deliverance was sought. Thus possession trance manifested itself to outsiders as madness when witnessed outside the cultic context.

Demons are being described as souls of the offspring angels who cohabited with human beings. According to the myth a group of angels descended from heaven, and mated with women producing as offspring a race of wicked giants who conquered the earth with violence and bloodshed. The giants were destroyed by God through the flood and their spirits were trapped in air and haunt as demons (Bo Becking 1999:238). What is cardinal in these mythological stories is the shadow of truth to the reality of demons and their effect to the created order of God. De Villiers (1987:1) explains that the search for Satan in the ancient near eastern literature is a vain effort. This is due to non-existence of a character (god or demon) similar to the one in the

Christian tradition which reigns over a particular dominion and is responsible for all evil in this world. The harmful and ferocious demons are regarded or seen as causative agents of physical sickness, anti-social behaviour, witch craft and many other forms of satanic behaviour. De Villiers (1987:3) further explains that the existence of evil and of evil powers was believed in and they were part of everyday living in Mesopotamia. Evil therefore stands to be a reality of the existence, an existential fact to be reckoned with. Man's actions were, however, never determined so absolutely by evil or its forms, but his own responsibility was suspended.

The harmful and ferocious demons are regarded as causative agents of physical sickness, anti-social behaviour, witchcraft and many other form of satanic behaviour. According to Keener (2011:778) rabbinic piety suggests that prayer would render demons impotent.

This link of sin with suffering is so important for the understanding of the history of Christianity derives from Judean ideas represented in Hebrew Scriptures, about how God communicates with Israel. The emphasis on repentance for sin that figure so prominently in the history of Christian healing also drives from Judean stories about the relationship between God and Israel . Thus Christian healing can be understood as an outgrowth of Judean religion, grounded in scriptural traditions linking sin with suffering and healing with repentance and forgiveness. (Porterfield 2005:34).

Against this historical background the gospels narrative were recorded. Jesus Christ is depicted in the gospels as one with sensitivity to the social context of his time responding to the social needs of his context.

2.3.3 New Testament

According to Caldwell (1913: 167) Satan is called "the prince of demons" (Mark 3:22); "the prince of this world" (John 12:31); "the prince of the powers of the air" (Eph. 2:2); "the god of this world" (II Cor. 4:4); "the tempter" (Matt. 4:3; I Thess. 3:5); " devil" (diabolos, the "accuser,"); "Satan"("adversary,"); "Beelzebub" (Luke 11: 18; cf. Matt. 12:26); "the enemy" (Matt. 13:39);

"the evil one" (Matt. 13: 19; Eph. 6: 16); "Belial" (II Cor. 6:15); "the serpent" (II Cor. II: 3); "the old serpent" (Rev. I2:9); "the dragon" (Rev. I2:9). Hunter (1990:387) mentions that exorcism was practiced in Judaism before the Christian era. The term most commonly used of the expulsion of demons in the New Testament is cast out (*ekballo [ejkbavllw]*). In classical and Old Testament usage it had the sense of forcibly driving out an enemy. In the New Testament, it is typically used of a physical removal (John. 9:34-35; Mark 1:12). Demons were cast out by the spirit of God (Matt. 12:28; Luke 11:20), and this was done by verbal command rather than the elaborate rituals of the exorcists. Jesus' authority to cast out demons was given to the Twelve (Matt. 10:1; 10:8) and others, who cast them out in Jesus' name (Mark 9:38-41; Acts 15:18). The disciples were successful in casting out demons, but needed a reminder to keep their priorities straight (Luke 10:17-20). With the young boy, however, they were unsuccessful because of lack of prayer (Mark 9:28-29). (*Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology* 2015).

Bradley (1995:56) states that the practice of demon exorcism is very ancient and wide spread. Demons were part of the belief system of Christianity since its beginning. Actual demonic possession is exclusively a New Testament phenomenon. In the New Testament demon possession is a stark, stern reality (Leahy 1975:81). The New Testament provides abundant evidence of the absolute authority of Christ over Satan. Christ regarded deliverance from possession as part of His ministry and the sign of His Kingdom. The power of Christ over demons must be viewed in relation to His total victory over Satan. The New Testament writers see the devil or demons as spiritual beings which were hostile to both God and men (Tenney 1975:13). Thus in the gospels the outburst of demonic opposition to the work of God in Christ are evident. The evangelists depict Jesus Christ in continual conflict with the evil forces. To cast out demon was not an easy matter as the disciples discovered (Matt.17:19; Mark 9:28). The New Testament does not give apparent distinction between demons, evil spirits and unclean spirits. Demons troubled or annoyed people (Luke 6:18); they robbed a young boy of his speech (Mark 9:17; Mark 9:25), rendered a man mute (Matt. 9:33; Luke 11:14), and froze the back of an elderly woman (Luke 13:11; Luke 13:16). They seized the Gerasene demoniac (Luke 8:29) and a young boy (Luke 9:39). Jesus warned in a parable of the possibility of multiple demons living in or indwelling a person (Matt. 12: 43-45; Luke 11:24). Evil spirits were in the demoniac in the

synagogue (Mark 1:23); the Gerasene demoniac was a person who was with a spirit (Mark 5:2); " [in the power] of an unclean spirit, " Amplified) that drove or impelled him (Luke 8:2). Many were described as having an evil or unclean spirit (Matt. 11:18; Mark 3:30; 7:25; 9:17; Luke 4:33; 7:33; 8:27; John. 7:20; John 8:48; John 8:52; 10:20) (*Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology 2015*). Such an unclean spirit entered a young boy) and then mauled and convulsed him (c.f. Mark 9:25; Luke 8:30

The writers of the New Testament refer to Satan, demons, fallen angels and various levels of evil principalities and powers as being quite active in the world (Eph.1:21;3:10; Col.1:16). All these terms are used in New Testament inter-changeably. Bromiley (1979:22) points out that the New Testament regards demons as evil or unclean spirits. Their primary function is the possession and control of human beings. In Acts 17:18 and Revelation 9:20 demons are being described as the veneration pagan deities through images. The gospels make a clear distinction between sickness and demon possession. The New Testament describes physical, social, and spiritual symptoms of demonic control, though no exhaustive list is given. The physical symptoms include muteness (Matt. 9:32-33; Mark 9:17; Luke 11:14), blindness (Matt. 12:22), self-inflicted wounds (Mark 5:5; 9:22), crying (Mark 5:4), or screaming (Mark 1:26; 5:7; 9:26), convulsions (Mark 1:26), seizures (Matt. 17:15), falling to the ground, rolling around, foaming at the mouth, grinding of the teeth, and rigidity (Mark 9:18; Mark 9:20), inhuman strength (Mark 5:3-4), and staying active day and night (Mark 5:5). The social symptoms include dwelling in unclean places (Mark 5:3; Luke 8:27) and going around naked (Luke 8:27). The spiritual symptoms include supernatural abilities such as recognition of the person of Christ and reaction against him (Mark 1:23-24; 5:7; Luke 4:40-41) and the ability to tell the future (divination Acts 16:16). None of these symptoms by itself should be seen as proof of demonization. Rather, they are examples of the types of manifestations that come with demonic infestation (*Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology 2015*). In the Qumran community, which produced the Dead Sea Scrolls, explained the prevailing political situation in those terms. The community published a document, now known as the War Scroll (IQM), which describes an impending battle between the "children of light" and the "children of darkness (Arnold 1992:65). The War Scroll is extremely of importance in order to understand demonology in the New Testament since it gives us a glimpse into the Judaism of Jesus' day and the time of Paul's ministry. It helps us to see the teaching of

Jesus and Paul on Satan's kingdom with a new freshness and vitality. Jewish demonology has a significant formative influence on the development of early Christianity

Because exorcism in this period was common in the East, the Greek milieu of most extant Gospels does not account for the Gospel narratives of exorcism, moreover, redaction critical analysis shows that neither Matthew nor Luke's writing in different parts of the empire made major changes in their sources about exorcism (Keener 2011:784).

The testimony of the Gospels regarding to the practice of demon exorcism remains authentic. The concept *daimonion* [*daimovnion*] translated as demon appears 60 times, in the New Testament whereas 50 of it appears in the Gospels. Gehman (1998:173) noted that references to demonic spirits and spirit possession are frequent in the Gospels. By way of comparison, Christian exorcism share aspects in common with Jewish practices of exorcism. Demon possession and illness was also linked to sin (John 9:1-10). The ministry of Jesus is portrayed in terms of casting out demons and performing cures. There is more recorded demonic activity during Jesus' life than any other time in biblical history (Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13); the blind man (Matt. 9:32-33); the blind and mute man (Matt. 12:22-23; Luke 11:14); the Canaanite woman's daughter (Matt. 15:22-28; Mark 7:24-30); the man in the synagogue (Mark 1:23-27; Luke 4:31-37); the Gerasene demoniac (Matt 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-20; Luke 8:26-37); the boy with seizures (Matt. 17:14-20; Mark 9:14-29; Luke 9:37-43); and the silencing of demons (Matt. 8:16; Mark 1:32-35; Luke 4:40-41); the seven demons expelled from Mary Magdalene (Luke 8:1-2); Jesus' rebuke of Satan's suggestion through Peter (Matt. 16:23; Mark 8:33), and his command to Judas after Satan had entered him (John 13:27). People who have demons are demonized (*daimonizomai*) Matt. 4:24; Matt. 8:16; Matt. 8:28; Matt. 8:33; 12:22; 15:22; Mark 1:32; Mark 5:15; Mark 5:16; Mark 5:18; Luke 8:36; John 10:21). This term *daimonizomai* is generally translated as demon-possessed (*Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology* 2015).

The word *exorkizein* is a Greek word which means to charge someone under oath. The Greek English Bible 'LXX' Translate the verb *exorkizein* to mean sear a curse (Bromiley 1982:2420). Furthermore, Exorkistes in the New Testament is translated exorcists (Acts 19:13). Therefore, exorcism may be defined as a process of expelling an evil spirit or spirits from a possessed individual(s) through the means of magical adjuration and rituals. Indeed, the practice of demon

exorcism was and is still viewed as the restoration of the person's totality and the sense of wholeness. Various methods were used to cast evil spirits and the use of charms and prescribed rituals procedures were some of the best known ways.

The word exorcism occurs fifty two times in the gospels and eight times in the remainder of the New Testament. An integral part of Jesus's ministry was the casting out demons. The same can be said of the ministry of the seventy evangelists (Matt.10) when they were given powers to cast out demons and on their return they gave a report that even the evil spirits were submissive to them in His name. One quite important message about Jesus' acts of exorcism in the Synoptic gospels is that Christ did not go out into the villages seeking to know who were possessed by evil spirits. However, Jesus' exorcism coincided with his normal mission outreaches. The reading of (Luke 4:14 ff) suggests Jesus read the passage and justified his mission into the world. According to Green (1981:131) the authority of Jesus is noteworthy in his ministry of driving away the evil spirits. The evil spirits did submit before him without resistance. In other words Jesus' exorcism portrayed in the Synoptic gospels is restricted to those whose personality have been invaded and overtaken by Satan.

Jesus regarded exorcism as an indication that the Kingdom of God was breaking through into human experiences. Ferguson (1989:185) said that the belief in demon possession of individuals was wide spread in Judea Christianity and led to the practice of exorcism to expel demons by pagans, Jews and Christians. The recognition of demons as powers of Satan is clearly demonstrated in the New Testament. According to Bo Becking (1999:239) demons in the New Testament are a mighty force that can possess human being in large numbers;

A theme that underlines Jesus's entire ministry is the apocalyptic assumption that creation has been seized by cosmic force and that God is now battling this force to rescue it. Jesus understood himself to be one in whom the battle was played out in a decisive way. (Boyd 2001:35).

Thus this assumption is evident in almost everything Jesus says and does. Jesus' earthly ministry was characterized by healing and exorcism. All sickness was regarded as forms of satanic

oppression. Jesus through his ministry of expelling demons and conferring healing and especially through his death and resurrection defeated the power of the devil (1 John 3:8; Heb.2:14) (Boyd 2001:38). Healing and exorcism significantly occupied a significant space in the early church. Jesus came to set Satan's captives free (Matt. 12: 22-29; Luke 4: 18-21; Mark 5:9-10; Mark 5:1ff; Luke 8:2), and in all of his dealing with the demonized he demonstrated compassion for the people and authority over the spirits. He commanded the spirit in the Gerasene demoniac to come out (Luke 8:29) and ordered the demon out of the man in the synagogue (Mark 1:27) and the young boy (Mark 9:25). He did not have to be physically present to effect release, seen in the healing of the Canaanite woman's cruelly demonized daughter from a distance (Matt. 15:22-28). The people were amazed that he simply commanded the demons and they obeyed (Luke 4:36), as they were used to seeing elaborate exorcism rituals that were not always successful. The demons in the Gerasene demoniac needed Jesus' permission to enter the pigs (Mark 5:13; Luke 8:32) and he denied permission for demons to speak (Mark 1:34; Luke 4:41). He rebuked the demon in the young boy (Matt. 17:18; Mark 9:25; Luke 9:42) and the man in the synagogue (Mark 1:25: Luke 4:35) (*Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology* 2015). The indwelling demons possess the host, speak through them and control their host from inside. According to the testimony of the Synoptic gospels the main effect to the host by demon possession is causing physical, mental suffering and anti –social behaviour.

The practice of demon exorcism is very ancient and part of many religious groups. The person(s) performing the exorcism is known as the exorcist and was often a clergy or any individual thought to be graced with the special powers or skills. In general possessed persons are not regarded as evil themselves nor wholly responsible for their actions. According to Ryken (1998:203) the understanding of the people as recorded in the Holy Scriptures is that most diseases are as the consequence of sin. Therefore, many diseases were dealt with through ritual practice, a form of exorcism.

Tenny (1975:450) describes exorcism as act of expelling an evil spirit thereby releasing the person possessed by that spirit. The researcher defines exorcism as act of compassion rendered to every one under the control of the evil spirit to bring about liberation, healing and wholeness. Both the Old and New Testaments testify that exorcism was done by priests, prophets and the

apostles. According to Porterfield (2005:21) the activities exorcism and healing are prominent in Jesus' ministry. For example Mark presents Jesus as a prophet known throughout Galilee for healing and exorcism, while the other two Synoptic writers build their stories upon this depiction. According to the testimony of and the world view of the writer of the fourth gospel, sin lies at the root of sickness; sin is the underlying cause of the malevolence and misfortune; illness and disability have spiritual implications, either as punishments from God or manifestations of malevolent powers lurking about in the cosmos (Porterfield 2005:22). There are a number of occurrences and references to the casting out of demons by of Jesus. The gospel of Mark presents a greater portrait of Jesus in conflict with these forces of darkness. "At the beginning of his ministry, Jesus entered the synagogue in Capernaum on the Sabbath. The authority with which he taught astonished those present and evoked an outcry from a demon possessed man there who cried saying; "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know you are the Holy One of God," (Ervin 2002:57). Mark recorded Jesus' first point of contact and conflict was with the demons. In Mark Jesus's ministry is portrayed as a direct engagement with demonic forces. It is clear that Matthew and Luke all had incidents of Jesus' confrontation with demons. As it was in the past the Kingdom of God was in conflict with the dominion of the principalities and powers of evil and the struggles continues. Ervin (2002:2) states that in the ministry of Jesus, the message of the Kingdom and healing are indivisible, for healing is the sign of the Kingdom has drawn near. The sign and the message complement each other. From the Biblical traditions exorcism was seen as a means of driving the forces of evil. It is a ritual of restoring normalcy and right relationship with divinities and the social order. Exorcism was an integral part of the Christian ministry. It brings about the state of humanness and spiritual integration to a person.

Leahy (1975:78) mentions that the New Testament is profoundly aware of the activity of the demons and the forces of darkness marshalled against the Son of God and His Church on earth. More than fifty times mentions are being made in the Gospels that Jesus is in conflict with evil. Demon worship was established phenomenon in the Greek and Roman world in the New Testament times. According to Arnold (1992:40) the god Asclepius was often praised as a saviour and was one of the most popular deities among the masses during the New Testament era. This god was honoured throughout the Mediterranean world for his power to heal the sick

and afflicted. He was identified with the feelings of the afflicted because he was believed to be a god man. The nations around Israel worshipped a multiplicity of gods and goddesses. In every century and in every geographical region, including Palestine, the Jews lived in a polytheistic environment. The Septuagint reflects the Jewish conviction that pagan religions had a close affiliation with the demonic real. This belief is also the conviction of Paul the apostle (1 Cor.10:19-21). The physical manifestation of demon possession in the New Testament takes various forms, among which include, hypochondria, insanity, deafness, frenzy and blindness (Leahy 1975:79). Moxness (2003:137) noted that the gospels provide culturally representative ideas about places where one could expect to find possessed persons and where exorcism would take place. Thus the public function of Jesus' exorcism is emphasized by the gospel writers. With his exorcism Jesus challenged the centres of authority in Galilee. Thus his exorcisms are a demonstration of his powers and a challenge to established authority. According to Moxnees Jesus' exorcisms could primarily be explained in terms of power (2003:140). The authors of the New Testament, like the people of their time, distinguish between ordinary causes of illness and illness which was caused by strange and sinister forces. Maddocks (1981:21) explained that Jesus' exorcism and healing proclaimed in terms of health and wholeness. God was putting his creation right by healing it. Today the Church as an institute established by God has the mandate follow the footsteps of the Head and obediently heal both humanity and the created order. Mattocks (1981:86) mentioned that the Church is supposed to be a healing fellowship. Jesus conducted exorcisms that transformed the lives of the people (Porterfield 2005:25)

The Gospels reveal upon Jesus' dealings with Satan and demons. There are several primary words employed in the Gospels to describe Jesus' healing ministry among the demonized. He released (*luo [luvw]*) the woman bound by demons for eighteen years (Luke 13:16). He saved (*sozo [swvzw]*) the Gerasene demoniac (Luke 8:36). He healed (*therapeuo [qerapeuvw]*) many (Matt. 4:24; 10:22; 17:16; Luke 6:18; 7:21; 8:2; 13:14): a word used of healing the sick (lame, blind, mute, maimed, deaf) as well as the demonized and even of satanic healing. Its use implied that the restoration of demoniacs was on the same level of ministry as other types of healing, all of which showed Christ's mastery over Satan and sin. Jesus also healed (*iaomai [ijavomai]*) many who had spirits under the power of Satan (Luke 6:19), including the Canaanite woman's daughter (Matt. 15:28) and the young boy (Luke 9:42) (*Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of*

Biblical Theology 2015). Demon exorcism in the New Testament is neither a form of superstition nor an incompetent therapeutic practice. Powell (1998:51) indicates that in the gospel of Mark, Jesus' healings and exorcism and miracles demonstrates the truth of His claim that God's will was accomplished in Him in a remarkable way. Furthermore, His actions authenticated the meaning of the message that God's Kingdom had drawn nearer. It reflected that demons and diseases and other catastrophic forces of nature had to their final end. According Davies (1995:90) knowledge of Jesus's exorcisms comes primarily from the synoptic gospels. All the three synoptic gospels agree to the casting out of demons as an important theme in the ministry of Jesus. Evidence from the synoptic gospels reveals that Jesus's power over demons and that of God's Kingdom is broken into the present order. According to Freedman (1992:141) Jesus authorized the disciples to continue with the casting out of demons after His departure (Matt. 10:8 & Luke 9:1-2). (Boyd 1997:204).

Consequently, Jesus's healing ministry and exorcism, which play a major role in His ministry, are not simply patches on the body destined for death regardless, they are manifestations of God's reign on earth now an in breaking of eternity into a time of revelation of all God's merciful nature, a promise of the restitution of all things in the heart of the Author of universe. (Wink 1933:134)

Bromiley (1979:22) points out that the New Testament regards demons as evil or unclean spirits. Their primary function is the possession and control of human beings. In Acts 17:18 and Rev. 9:20 demons are being described as venerated pagan deities through images. Spirits are mentioned in only five instances in Acts:

- (i) Those tormented by evil spirits were brought before the apostles in Jerusalem and healed (5:15-15).
- (ii) Philip, not an apostle, exercised Christ's authority over demons in Samaria (8:6-7).
- (iii) Paul released a slave girl who had a fortune-telling spirit by simply commanding the spirit to leave (16:15-18).
- (iv) God performed extraordinary miracles through Paul in Ephesus, including the expulsion of demons (19:11-12).
- (v) The Jewish exorcists and a demoniac in which the exorcists were soundly beaten (19:13-17). When the church heard what happened, those who had not fully come out

of their magical practices repented and publicly burned their expensive scrolls (19:17-20). (*Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology* 2015).

In Acts (16:16-18) Paul and Silas were haunted by a slave girl possessed by a demon spirit which enabled her to prophesy. Hawthorn (1993:134) states that the girl was possessed by a python spirit. In this case Paul recognized the source as demonic and expelled the spirit in the name of Jesus. Indeed demon exorcism in the Bible is not perceived as a rare and extreme act. Arnold (1992:35) notes that every city in Athens including Paul's city was full of idols (Acts 17:16). The city of Paul's childhood contained temples and alters dedicated to a wide assortment of deities. They believed in demons, the power of Satan inspired and perpetuated these pagan gods.

According to Davies (1995:93) casting out demons perhaps heralded the arrival of the authority of God over all earth or the beginning of the arrival. The New Testament reveals the tension between the Spirit of God and demons and the victory of God's Spirit over demons signifies the present activity of the Kingdom of God among individuals. The New Testament testifies that demons screamed as a signal of their submission to the authority of Jesus's power. In the New Testament Jesus is God and there is no way He succumbs to demons. All authority in heaven and was invested in Jesus. Jesus casting out of demons was seen as the most verifiable indicator of the arrival of God's Kingdom (Freedman 1992:141). In the synoptic gospels the disciples were endowed with the power over demons. Evil was experienced as something very real and tangible in the ancient world.

According to Green (1992:165) evil spirits can torment people (1 Sam. 16:14-23; Psalm 91). Exorcism is not a creation of the new millennium but stretches down the history of human existence. Twelftree (2007:25) noted that in the New Testament interest in exorcism increases. According to Twelftree (2007:28) there is a great reluctance to acknowledge demons in individuals or to practice exorcism in the later history of the Church. Exorcism plays an integral part in the early Church. The Synoptic Gospels writers emphasise the centrality of exorcism and healing in Jesus' ministry. For example Jesus commissioned his followers to practice exorcism in the Synoptic Gospels, whilst the Johannine tradition is completely silent on the matter. According to the gospel of Mark, Jesus designated his disciples to whom he sends to proclaim the message and have authority to cast out demons (Mark 3:14-15). Therefore Christian ministry

can be viewed as demonstrating the reality of the Kingdom and its interpretation to the people. Twelftree (2007:25) says: "Solving the problem of the place of exorcism among early Christians is potentially important for the following reasons:

- a) Being able to describe the place of exorcism among early Christians contributes to our understanding of the nature of early Christianity.
- b) A careful study of what was thought and practiced in relation to exorcism among early Christians draws attention to aspects of significant early theological diversity.
- c) Given the argued place of exorcism in the ministry of Jesus (Twelftree 2007:25).

According to Brown (1995:227) Jesus's ministry of healing was inextricably linked with the ministry of deliverance from demons. Sickness is frequently associated with satanic power in the Gospels. Luke summarizes Jesus' earthly ministry in terms of driving out demons and healing (Luke 13:32). So within the testimony of the Gospels specific conditions and illness are attributed to demons and satanic influence. Furthermore Brown (1995:228) describes that the Gospels in particular are very clear in stating that Jesus' mission was to bring healing and relief into the suffering disease ridden world. Rich (2011:21) explains that in Madagascar the health of the whole community is understood to be at risk when one in the community is ill. Healing process is understood to be communal because of the collective nature of life and understanding of it. According to Ella (1990:75) the relationship between health and Christian missions in Africa is inseparable from medical and health programs. Ella (1990:78) further explains that the healings performed by Jesus are the signs of the Kingdom and attest to the presence of the Messianic salvation. The healing and exorcism of Jesus had apologetic and salvific functions; they manifested Christ's power, love, messianic and divinity and destined to bring about in men and women the beginning of the future glory reserved for them at the Parousia. According to Cerfaux (1960:92) the miracles in the Gospels were the visible manifestations of the Kingdom of God upon his people.

Exorcism is exhibited as a religious right or act. Generally the bible testifies to the importance of exorcism through the ministry of Jesus which were not confined to a single method. Sometimes the demons were expelled from afar (Mark 7:25-29; Matt. 15:22-28) and at times expelled demons were allowed to express recognition of Jesus as the Lord and the Holy one of God.

Ferguson (1989:221) mentions that the admission that the gods of polytheism were demons played into the hands of Christian apologists. Demons could be transferred everything that philosophy regarded as unfitting in the gods. The apologists claim that pagan religion was inspired by demons. The amazing fact of exorcism from the Bible is that the death of Christ defeated the powers of evil (Gehman 1999:239). Christ's death did not only pay the debt sinners owed to God, it also defeated the devil and demons. By allowing Christ to see humiliation was a heavenly plan to put an end to the rule and unsanctioned power of Satan and demons. The Bible affirms that Christ's death makes Satan powerless in the lives of God's children who trust in him for protection and deliverance.

According to Twelftree (2007:28) the subsequent history of the Church shows a great reluctance to see demons in individuals or to practice exorcism. It is therefore suggested that part of the reason for the difference of opinion on the role of exorcism in the early Church could be inherent in the New Testament canon itself. Jesus's activity in casting out evil spirits was the one of the most remarkable thing about Him to the people of His day. Exorcism was an established practice among the Jews during the life and time of Jesus. In the Gospels (Matt. 12:27 and Luke 11:19) the texts suggest that the practice of demon exorcism was there among the communities before and during Jesus' time. The Jews claimed that exorcism had divine sanctions but when Christ expelled demons in a way different from and incomparably superior to their exorcism, they accused Christ of blasphemy (Leahy 1975:102).

In Acts 19: 14, the sons of Sceva attempted to exorcise a demon spirit without success as they were defeated by the demon. In Acts and the Epistles Satan and his demons pretend to be friendly spirits to deceive people (2 Cor 11:15) and blind the minds of believers (2 Cor 4:3-4). They lead people astray from truth (2 Tim. 3:13; 1 John 2:26; 3:7). They also lead people astray through the pursuit of pleasure or sensual gratification (Eph 5:6; Col 2:8; 2 Thess 2:3). Believers are not immune from demonic attack. Demons seek to influence Christians through false doctrines and teachings (1 Tim. 4:1; 1 John 4:1-4) as well as false miracles and wonders (2 Thess. 2:7-11; Rev. 16:14). Christians however have the identity (being in Christ), the authority (being seated with Christ), and the mandate to resist Satan and his demons (Eph. 1:15-2:6) in the

name of Jesus (Phips 2:10). Demons remain under the sovereignty of God (*Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology* 2015).

The ministry of the seventy evangelists whom Christ send (Luke 10:1ff) in which demons were expelled, was essentially and primarily a ministry of the Gospel in the presence of the Holy Spirit. Exorcism is part of the call of the Christian community to extend the good news of the liberation and restoration to God's Kingdom to all those who are under the oppression.

The Gospel writers devoted substantial portions of their narrative recounting Jesus' engagement with these evil spirits (Arnold 1992:77). The Father sent the Son Jesus to proclaim a message of liberation for those enslaved to sin and trapped in the bondage and oppression of Satan's kingdom. Jesus said "Peace be with you, as the Father has send me, I am sending you" (John 20:21). The Church is community of believers who have been called by God and who confess the Lordship of Christ. Jesus gives a parabolic explanation of the meaning of his exorcism in the Synoptic Gospels (Mark 3:20-30; Matt. 12:22-30 and Luke 11:14-23). According to Twelftree (2007:30) the interest in exorcism along with miracles in general diminished over time and alternatively the variation seen in the New Testament maybe accounted for in terms of cultured variations across time and places.

According to Montgomery demon expulsion ought to be used as the last resort and only when possession seems apparent (1976:248). In exorcism it is of great importance to make a distinction between mental illness and demon possession. Mental illness signifies disorder of the mind whereas demon possession represents the bondage of the will to radical evil. Twelftree (2007:46-47) names five features discernible in the deliverances ministry of Jesus as portrayed in the Gospels. These include:

- (i) The exorcism portrays one of the most obvious and crucial aspects of Jesus' ministry,
- (ii) They are portrayal of what could be called power encounter (Mark 9:20),
- (iii) In his exorcism Jesus is depicted as one revealing a standard formula in the field of demon exorcism,
- (iv) Jesus demonstrates the power of demon transfer from suffering people to the other object and lastly,
- (v) The testimony of the early historians like Josephus and Philostratus their works are associated with Jesus (Mark 1:26) and that Jesus' methods of exorcism are nearer

those others who lived in the first century Jewish charismatic world. (Twelftree 2007:46-47)

2.4. Categories of demon discernment

The ability to make an informed decision or proper diagnosis is critical in the ministry of demon deliverances. The manifestation of the evil spirit in lives of their hosts shares a lot in common with other illness which are not demonic in nature. According to Green (1981:133) when demons indwell a person, it can only manifest itself through that person's personality and through his/her psychological expressions. According to Ramsay (1998:1) the word diagnosis is derived from the Greek term *dia* and *gnosis* (knowledge attained through careful observation that is verifiable), and suggest knowledge discerned as true (Ramsay 1998:9). Thus diagnosis reiterates the anthropological and philosophical assumption for naming reality. Diagnosis and discernment are treated interchangeably in this thesis. Discernment is one of the God given gifts (1 Cor.12:10): 'Now each one of the manifestations of the Spirit is given for the common good'. Green (1981:35) further explained that diagnosis of demonization should be arrived at after proper examination and consultations. At the first sight or encounter with suspected victims of demon possession conclusive remarks should not be reached. Rather considerable time should be allowed before the diagnosis should be reached.

Ing (2012:24) notes the importance of having the ability to discern before carrying out any act exorcism of the evil spirit. The knowledge comes through the experiences will guarantee a successful ministry. Thus for Ing experience in the ministry with regard to encounters with demons is key to success in demon exorcism. Given the diverse origins of infirmity and the fact that the same malady may be attributed as many as three separate cause respectfully on different occasion in the New Testament, it is clear that discernment plays a critical role in the in the process of responding to infirmity (Thomas 1994:305). According to Thomas (1994:306) the New Testament offers readers with two categories of demon discernment:

- (i) Demon possession seem to readily identifiable by almost every one close to the individual so affected (Mark 5:1-20);
- (ii) In addition to discernment of this more general in nature the New Testament also testifies to the ability to discern the presence of demon activity behind an infirmity which might not otherwise be known. (Thomas 1994:305).

Driskill (1999:45) explains that learning to examine our routine activities with any eye toward the work of the spirit deepens our faith and draws us more closely into a relationship with the holy. Spiritual discernment can be both a gift for the group or to individuals. “Providing quite spaces for reflection on the movement of the Spirit during decision making process are quite new to many parishes. Although most church meetings begin and close with a prayer, few actually listen to the spirit during time of deliberation,” (Driskill 1999:46). Spiritual discernment requires examination of one’s daily life with Christ. The Church has been given the gift of spiritual discernment in order to see through the deception of the devil (Brateen 2000:105). Discernment is one of the spiritual gifts enlisted by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 (Tenny (1975:125). Discernment is therefore being seen as the ability to diagnosis a spiritual sickness.

2.5. The Exorcist

The person who acts on as a performer of the act of expelling or casting away demons thereby releasing the person from the bondage of possession evil is called an exorcist. Several cultural groups had ways and means of dealing with the problem of evil amongst their people. From the Old Testament stories either the priest or the prophet occupied the office of the exorcist. They were consulted in times of such need and would give spiritual direction. The worship of idols in the case of the Old Testament signified a form of possession and times of sickness the priest’s was essential in achieving the health of the society. When Jesus healed the ten lepers in Luke (17:11-18), he gave them instruction to show up themselves before the priests. According to Tenny (1975:450) possession by a god or an evil spirit as well as methods of exorcism are found in ancient incantation texts. Usually exorcists made use of specific formulae, have extra-ordinary powers and occasionally used magical objects. Jesus’ exorcism is a sharp contrast whereas His power rest primarily upon the word of his command. Twelftree (2007:46) describes about six characteristics features of the nature of Christ as an exorcist. These features according Twelftree includes:

- (i) The exorcism in particular forms a large group and one of the most important aspects of his ministry;
- (ii) Exorcism conducted by Jesus are displayed as the revelation of his power in contrast with the evil (Mark 1:24);
- (iii) In his deliverance ministry Jesus did not provide a standard for his disciples and the church of all ages(Mark 1:25; 9:25);

- (iv) The practice of casting out demons involved transfers of demons from the sufferer to an object (Mark 5:1-20);
- (v) The violence in exorcism stories from Josephus and Philostratus and implied in the magical papyri is also apparent in those associated with Jesus and
- (vi) The methodology of Jesus in expelling the evil spirits is that which is power based and sharing in principle with either tradition by him becoming par-excellent and of divine origin. (Twelftree 2007:46).

Thus in the Synoptic gospels the sending of the disciples on a missionary outreach by Jesus set a tone that they were commissioned exorcists. So indeed the church of Christ is that one which is sent into the world and the power of Christ accompanies it. The church which Christ commission for evangelism is graced by such gifts which bear testimony to the Kingdom of God and is power based. The goal of exorcism is multi-dimensional, firstly it sets people free from the bondage of evil spirits, declares the presence of the Kingdom of God, authenticate salvation and point to the eschatological future. Twelftree (2007:154) said that the content and methods of exorcism are not only to be modelled upon Jesus, but it is the continuation activity of Jesus himself, the work of God the Father in bringing about eschatological salvation. Therefore successful ministry of deliverance rests upon the church's faithful obedience to Christ. Deliverance should never bring glory to the exorcist but should work to build the Kingdom of God.

Bond (2012:105-106) noted that the belief in demons was real and wide spread in the first century world and was accepted in the Jewish context just as much as pagans. Thus Jesus' contemporaries had a number of ways to protect themselves against demons. They used special amulets to ward off evil spirits. The practice of demon exorcism by the specialized groups and the use of certain objects to prevent and cast away evil spirits are common in many biblical tribes. For example, David exorcised the evil spirit whenever it possessed King Saul by playing a musical instrument (1 Samuel 16:14-23)... Another famous act of exorcism recorded in the Jewish history was that of Asmodeus, a demon who had killed a woman's six husbands on their wedding night. The book of Tobit (3:7-16) describes how the seventh husband smoked the heart and liver of a fish in bridal chamber and frightened the demons away (Bond 2012:106). Jesus as an exorcist evoked all evil spirits and they fled away. Mathew 9:34, 'But the Pharisee said, "It is by the prince of demons that he drives out demons". The Beelzebub controversy shows the world

view of the time of Jesus. Questions and comments are generated in respect of the people's social and religious experience. The comments by the Pharisee reflected their religious beliefs about the demons and the idea of how such demons ought to be driven away (c.f. Moxness 2003:129). According to the Gospel of Luke 10:17-19, when the seventy evangelist returned from the mission work Christ gave a warning to them that exorcism should not attract joy to them for it is not their power but God's power in them and therefore he deserves the praises.

2.6. The significance of prayer in the ministry of exorcism

Exorcism is a recognized practice in the Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and some protestant churches. Early Christian writers discussed exorcism as not only being done by the clergy alone but everyone who had received authority from Christ. The present rite in the Roman Catholic fully agrees with the patristic teaching and is a proof of the continuity of the Catholic tradition in the matter. Formal prayer intended to prevent or to cast out the devil from a physically or mentally possessed person is being used. Formal prayer is the invocation of the Holy Spirit upon a person afflicted by or influenced of evil. It consists of a prayer of deliverance that may follow a prolonged retreat and symbolic blowing away of the evil and laying on of hands on the head of the possessed person. Exorcism in the Roman Catholic Church is a sacramental but not a sacrament, unlike baptism or confession. The *Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church* the following regarding exorcism as sacramental:

When the Church asks publicly and authoritatively in the name of Jesus Christ that a person or object be protected against the power of the Evil One and withdrawn from his dominion, it is called exorcism. Jesus performed exorcisms and from him the Church has received the power and office of exorcizing. In a simple form, exorcism is performed at the celebration of Baptism. The solemn exorcism, called "a major exorcism," can be performed only by a priest and with the permission of the bishop. The priest must proceed with prudence, strictly observing the rules established by the Church. Exorcism is directed at the expulsion of demons or to the liberation from demonic possession through the spiritual authority which Jesus entrusted to his Church. Illness, especially psychological illness, is a very different matter; treating this is the concern of medical science. Therefore, before an exorcism is performed, it is important to ascertain that one is dealing with the presence of the Evil One, and not an illness.

The *Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church* states clearly that a major exorcism can be performed only by a priest and with the permission of the bishop, it is called exorcism. The priest will make use of the rite of exorcism. Having before him the person possessed, he traces the sign of the cross over him, over himself, and the bystanders, and then sprinkles all of them with holy water. After this he kneels and says the Litany of the Saints, exclusive of the prayers which follow it amongst others he will utter the following prayer:

Prayer exorcism rite : I adjure you, Satan, enemy of man's salvation, acknowledge the justice and goodness of God the Father, who by just judgment has damned your pride and envy: depart from this servant of God, whom the Lord has made in His own image, adorned with His gifts, and has mercifully adopted as His child. I adjure you, Satan, prince of this world, acknowledge the power and strength of Jesus Christ, who conquered you in the desert, overcame you in the garden, despoiled you on the Cross, and rising from the tomb, transferred your victims to the kingdom of light.... I adjure you, Satan, deceiver of the human race, acknowledge the Spirit of truth and grace, who repels your snares and confounds your lies: depart from this creature of God, whom He has signed by the heavenly seal; withdraw from this man whom God has made a holy temple by a spiritual unction. Leave, therefore, Satan, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; leave through the faith and the prayer of the Church; leave through the sign of the holy Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

Lukwata (2003:89) said that when Pope VI refined the liturgical ministries he dropped the ministry of exorcism but never suppressed it.

There are several ways in which prayer can be defined in its functional context. In the context of this topic prayer is seeking God's guidance and will in every situation. When the disciples had failed to cast out a demon of the boy Jesus indicated much prayer coupled with fasting was the answer to the success in the casting out of the demon (Matt. 17:19-21). According to O'Donovan (1992:214) mentioned that prayer connects people to God. It brings people into the realm of their Creator. Boyd (2001:204) said that the primary function of prayer as portrayed in Scripture is precisely to change the way things are. Prayer moves God and he makes incredible difference in the world. Boyd (2001:227) noted that one of the fundamental assumptions that runs throughout Scripture is that prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective (James 5:16). According to Anold (1992:93) the Cross of Christ is the pivotal point in the salvation history, namely Christ won a decisive victory over the evil

powers. Therefore the authority of believers over the evil powers is rooted in their identification with the resurrection of Christ. The power that raised Christ from the dead is the same power now available to believers (Anold 1992:115). Bloesch (1970:127-128) mentions that all Christians share in the ministry of healing but others are given the charismatic gift of healing and might therefore be commissioned as healers or exorcist. According to Leith (1993:263) prayer is determined by the supplicant's understanding of God. Prayer is a human activity that can either enhance life or corrupt it and can either confirm the reality of God as God has been made known in Jesus Christ (Leith 1993:264).

2.7. Conclusion

In chapter 2 some of the positive biblical and theological perspectives on demon exorcisms are being highlighted, for example from the ministry and mission of Jesus, highlight themes of salvation, healing and liberation in the Kingdom of God as well as theological and religious perspectives of African Traditional Religions which mostly address demon exorcism to restore a person or affirm life in contexts of human reality and divine reality are being highlighted. In fact, within the conceptual framework of the thesis, practices of demon exorcism or articles of the church order are not ends in themselves: they are about affirming or restoring life according to understandings, values and practices in the Kingdom of God in a particular African context, expressing and demonstrating something of the nature of African Reformed Christianity in Zimbabwe.

The Bible mentions of the practice of divination which may correspond to the Shona one which comes after the inspiration of a spirit. "Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or cast spells, or who is a medium or who consult the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the Lord, and because of these detestable practices the Lord your God will drive out those nations before you. You must be blameless before the Lord your God," (Deuteronomy 18:10-13). The Bible totally condemns the aforementioned. However, the Bible does not just condemn without offering an alternative, Israel was to look unto to God for all their problems. God acted as the first exorcist who drives away all the nations engaging in acts of divination.

King Saul when the Spirit of the Lord had departed from him, he consulted all the oracles of God and could not get an answer, and so later went to the woman diviner seeking for guidance.

Belief in Satan and demons is universal. In principle the reality of demons and spiritual possession is testified within the scriptures both the Old and New testaments. The practice of demons exorcism is discernible in the Bible. Both the Old and New Testaments provide windows to the issue of demon possession and exorcism. Generally, the Bible testifies to the importance of exorcism but does not provide and prescribe a single method as the first and final way; instead offers guide lines to the process. For instances the exorcisms of Jesus were not confined to a single method. Sometimes the demons were allowed to express recognition of Jesus as the Lord and the Holy one of God. The gospel testimony shows that Christ had power over nature. . Indeed, all who accepted his word and have been called according to his divine purpose will be given power to cast out demons (Mark 16:16-17). Exorcism especially pre-occupied the early church. Exorcism is therefore expressed in the Roman Catholic Church as a religious rite.

Chapter 3

African Theological perspectives on demon possession and exorcism

3.1. Introduction

The sense of relationship between the physical world and spiritual world is strong in Africa. According to O'Donovan (1994:4) in Africa there is a strong feeling of common participation in life, a common history, a common destiny. According to Michael (2011:158) the African understanding of the spirit world is not the same as the biblical conception .Even though there are similarities, there are equally different. In a particular sense Africans have no angelology .This in an African world, spirits have no singular duty. They do not have the concept of spirits with specific names and are given special function. In denying the existence of demonic beings and personalities the Modern psychology for example have sought to explain away demonic possession with terms as multi-personality disorder schizophrenia and other high sounding psychological labels (Michael 2011:160). According to TerHaar, Moyo & Nondo (1992:117) spirit possession constitutes important elements of communication with the spirit world. Furthermore they observe that amongst the Western World, the most sticking aspects of possession beliefs are viewed as acts of involuntary and undesirable, which may cause harm and should be driven away (TerHaar, Moyo & Nondo (1992:119). According to Rich (2011:17) spirit possession is a regular part Malagasy traditional ritual in Madagascar. The country has a rich documented history of spirit possession and medium activity to its present day.

The moral and religious perspectives of African people are essentially alive throughout the continent. Similarly across the globe nations have different perspectives which determine the way people define demon possession and exorcism. Davies (1995:23) observes that spirit possession is an altered state of consciousness indigenously interpreted in terms of the influence of an alien spirit. Possession can be also defined as the substitution of an altered form of consciousness for individual's moral form of consciousness with the consequence of that the identity of the individual is believed to have been replaced with the consciousness and identity of the possessing spirit. The researcher defines possession as a form of colonization upon which the colonized is stripped off all his/her faculties and changes behavioural patterns as the spirit which possesses him/her leads. Davies (1995:24) says that the social roles and expectations of the possessed are appropriated to the possessing spirit. Mugambi (1989:64) concurs that the belief in

spirits varied from community to community. Communities in which there was high regard of spirit possession had established cults of spirit mediumship which specialized in the exorcism and issues of communication with the spirit world. According to Magesa (1997:17) African Theological perspectives regarding spirit possession persist despite the odds against it. The communal life of Africans value group health, care of one another and has no tolerance to evil. The elders pass on their knowledge on how to fight against diseases through approved systems of the society. Each homestead, as well as individuals, has to be protected from possible attacks by demons or evil spirits. The belief in the spiritual realm is prevalent in Africa. Africans recognize and accept the existence of evil spirits who may use material objects as temporary residence and may manifest their presence and actions through natural objects. According to Michael (2011:158) the African understanding of the spirit world is not the same as the Biblical conception. Even though there are converging similarities, there are equally differences. In a particular sense Africans have no angelology. Thus from the above perspective African spirit world it seems that spirits have no singular duty. The Creator who is powerful and good does not effectively control or limit the activities of the spirits (Gehman 1989:171). Africans are born with the sense of a Creator God whose throne is beyond explanations. According Michael (2011:165) in many African communities' demons or angelic beings are beings that are being considered as part of human spiritual habitat. The belief in such spirits is normally accompanied by fear and the need to be protected against them. Spirit possession in the African communities is therefore not a fiction, nor pretence or a kind of folk belief.

3.2. The concept of demon possession an African perspective

An outstanding feature of the Shona religion is its openness to communication with the invisible realm of spirits. There are however certain differences of emphasis among various clan groupings in Mashonaland regarding spirit possession (Thorpe 1991:56-57). In Shona culture spirit possession is generally viewed positively. According to Thorpe (1991:57) there are three major types of spirits which can possess human beings. These include *midzimu* or ancestral spirits, the *mashavi* or alien spirits and the *ngozi* or angry spirits of vengeance. Their presence is made known when they attempt to inhabit or possess the living. Demon possession is a condition in which one or more evil spirits or demons indwell in the body of a human being and take control of their victim at will. By temporary blotting out his consciousness, these demons can

speak and act through their human being as their complete slave and tool (Gehman 1989:175). So spirits are seen as invisible forces that wonder from place to place and can be domesticated by people and discharge certain spiritual powers upon their subjects. Traditional the Shona people of Zimbabwe believe in the existence of evil spirits in contrast with the good ones. The origin and nature of these spirits are not usually known but shrouded in mysteries.

According to Turak (1999:176) evil spirits can possess people and inflict all kinds of diseases and suffering. Considering this view point of Turak, the need to deal with the problem demon possession becomes inevitable amongst the Shona people. Within its social structures, the Shona religious practice acknowledges the menace of demons and had approved ways of thwarting them. The Shona believed that such evil spirits can be exorcised or appeased through sacrifices and offerings. Amanze (1998:17) mentions that some evil spirits are believed to emanate from evil people in the society who may be full of malice against their neighbours. Among the Shona communities evil spirits cause illness, diseases, miscarriages, accidents, failure in academic studies and many other issues. The most serious one is illness as it threatens people's lives. Evil spirits may appear as ghosts taking the form of human beings according to traditional Shona beliefs. According to Thorpe (1991:105) spirit possession amongst the Shona people is very complex. Neither alien spirit possession nor ancestral possession is welcome. For the Shona people religion is a necessity and not an option.

According to Burret (1988:163) spirit possession is often being described by as having been ridden or mounted by a god or spirit, in an analogous way to a person riding a horse. During periods of possession the victim may demonstrate outstanding abilities. These include unnatural strength and even uncontrollable violence (Mark 9:17-18 and Acts 19:13-16). The African traditional belief views demons as those spirits which the society regards as being harmful both for the individual and the society as a whole. Mugambi (1989:64) further explains that according to African traditional beliefs, the world was inhabited by spiritual beings with which peaceful and harmonious relationships should be maintained at all times. The spirit beings are believed to affect the order of life on a day to day basis. The details of beliefs and functions of the spirits vary from one community to the other. Generally spirits are believed to be particularly harmful to the members of the community unless the members live in accordance with the commands of

the governing spirits. Against this background Christianity came with new teachings about spirits and the spiritual realm (Mugambi 1989:64).

The concept of demon exorcism in Africa is equally as old as its culture. The wide spread emphasis on the possession by the Holy Spirit in African independent churches as an expression of the Christian faith may be attributed largely to the fact that the traditional beliefs in spirits which are being completely replaced by the Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Wasike (2000:61) observes that the struggle between good and evil, Satan's forces and God's forces is real to Africans. More importantly, the world the world of spirits, the invisible world is regarded as a distinct world on its own right. Generally the spirits are regarded as above human beings and below the status of divinities.

3.3. An African view on demon possession

In an African context possession by demons and possession by the spirit of God is difficult to differentiate. According to Daneel (1988:378), the difference is only seen when the Holy Spirit drives away demons. This claim is made by African independent churches' prophets in Zimbabwe. To this effect both the Holy Spirit and demons seem to favour certain forms of gatherings and ceremonies in the light of these spirit type churches. When someone is possessed he or she displays unusual powers, the personality changes and a person comes under influence by the spirit or spirits. Demons will operate from the person whom they have possessed. One's normal way of behaving is being robbed. When such form of a super power is in control, people are made to move according to the appointed times, reside in selected places to suite the demands of the master.

Bucher (1980:98) describes the accommodation of certain spirits by the Shona and the young children and women being the main victims of such possession. Indeed with regards to the Shona tribes, it varies depending on the type of the spirit and experience of the medium, possession be induced by the attendance merely by clapping of hands in a rhythmic fashion or by simply giving the medium a little snuff. "Spirit possession , while not without its dangers, is something of recognized language through which both communal and individual problems can be uncovered and talked out with frankness not possible in common talk" (Hastings 1976:66).

According to Idowu (1973:172) demons can maybe be conceived anthropomorphically, but constitute and assume various dimensions whenever they wish to be seen. This provides an assumption to say in Africa there is pluralism in the spirit world. Demonization is seen as either as voluntary or involuntary inducement. Two forms of possession, namely unexpected possession or expected or voluntary possession exist in an African context.

3.3.1. Unexpected or involuntary possession

Unexpected possession is characteristic feature of the strange or alien spirits. Gehman (1989:159) says that strange spirits wander from place to place because no one remembers them. Thus they threaten the living and compel them to offer gifts. According to (Matt. 12:43) evil spirits wonder around looking for place of habitation. Anyone can be possessed at any time or place. This is involuntary possession and brings around tragedies such as illness, misconception and all sorts of misfortunes. Africans regard such spirits as foreign spirits whose position has been denied in the religious circles of the African people. Gehman (189:158) notes that at the time of possession one loses his own being, he senses are gone; he is transformed and becomes simply a tool of the spirit in him. The evil spirits will make their host speak and behave strangely to suit their will. “Amongst the Shona people territorial spirits are believed to choose as their mediums people from faraway places who are complete strangers to the territory in which they were the owners of the land during their life time” (Bucher 1980:48). In this way spirits are then believed to take control of their subjects and to communicate directly with their mediums. Possession is manifested in more or less jerks of the medium’s body and making loud screams. Bucher (1980:49) further went on to say that in times of drought, other natural disasters like pests and diseases people would consult the spirit mediums for their spiritual advice. According to Gehman (1989:158) at the time of possession one loses his own awareness of his senses, he is transformed physically and physiologically and becomes a tool of the spirit in him. Demon possessed victims would speak according to the wishes of the spirit that that has found refuge in them. Anyone can be possessed at any time or any place. Spirit possession cuts across all ages and does not respect seasons and times of the people. Passers-by who may violate certain traditional norms or taboo areas may be seized by as spirit. According to Idowu (1973:170), demons are conceived by human beings through human means and systems. Africans believe

that persons, animals, or birds could be instruments of possession by spirits (Gehman 1989:150). Africans therefore view demons as spirits that indwells people involuntarily and causes serious consequences such as death, illness, miscarriages and possessed people are made to change usual place of residences.

Demons are vicious in nature, invading spirits who involuntarily or voluntarily indwell their hosts. In the Shona culture women, young children and other people of physical handicaps in life are being seen as more vulnerable to demon possession than the rest. For example Gehman (1989:160) describes that women are more vulnerable to demon possession during special dancing ceremonies. In African Traditional Religion practices those who are delivered from being possessed are given amulets or other objects to act as protective tools against any re-attacks. Poverty exposes people to be vulnerable in other circumstances.

3.3.2. Expected or voluntary possession

Demonization may also be voluntary induced. According to Gehman (1989:302) mediums can induce spirits and falls into a trance in order to offer information to a client. This is called voluntary possession. A trance is an altered state of consciousness that deviates from normal waking consciousness. There is loss of voluntary movement and repeated involuntary actions. In this state, an alien spirit may control a person. Psychological factors may also play a significant role in the preparation of spirit possession, such as group excitement, heightened expectations and masks a general permissive atmosphere. Dancing at designated grounds is an important feature in trying to understand induced possession. In most African villages or cultural societies people are taught to know the spiritual importance of these places. Dancing prepares the people for spirit possession. Nthoi (2006:104) maintains that dancing remains a central feature in Africa which prepares people for spirit possession. According to Gehman (1989:159) possession by spirits happens when people prepare themselves in anticipation of the spirit possession. This is also called induced possession and women are more susceptible to be possessed than men. Under this category dancing, singing and drum beating remain an important feature for spirit possession. “In dancing one gets into ecstatic condition in which one comes into communication with the spirits more easily” (Gehman 1989:160). The dancing is usually accompanied by special songs which have an effect to the kind of spirit that may inhabit a person. Basically the Shona culture has a

rich heritage which when properly articulated can offer methodological points of departure that can enrich the Christian message to suit the African context.

According Burnett (1988:172) in African Traditional Religion priests may voluntarily seek to become possessed by a god of which he/she is a devotee. Fisher (1998:124) mentions that possession by a spirit or deity normally occurs for the good of the society. Amongst others it graced some people with the gift of healing and exorcism. Bourdillon (1990:329) further mentioned that there are physiologically characteristics generally associated with demon possession. For instance among the Shona people of Zimbabwe demon possession involves some kind of personality change, the possessed person he/she acts according to the character of the possessing spirit.

According to Tehran (1992:117) evil can manifest itself in the form of spirits taking control of human beings. This testifies to the prevalence of spirit possession as a common religious experience amongst the Shona people. Spirit possession is viewed as means of communication with the spirit world and demon possession as a signal of broken relations with the ancestral spirits or other nature spirits. For instance, among the Shona people spirit possession is primarily a voluntary procedure. Possession is usually induced by the help of rhythmical possession which involves some kind of personality change, the possessed person he/ she acts the character of the possessing spirit.

Wink (1992:43-50) observed that there are three levels of demon possession namely;

- (i) Outer Personal possession. This form is well defined in the narrative story of the man of Gerasene (Mark 5:1-20).The possession of this man was both the result of oppression and expression of his resistance to it;
- (ii) Collective Possession; this manifest itself when societies approve and engage themselves into actions of mass destruction;
- (iii) The inner Personal Demoniac. It is described as a split off or uninterrupted aspect of the self which is alien, but intrinsic to the personality and which needs to be owned, embraced, loved and transformed as part of the struggle for wholeness. (Wink 1992:43-50).

According to Lowe (1998:16) demons manifest themselves in three basic forms: ground level, occult level and strategic level. Ground level spirits are the sort that possesses people. Occult level spirits empower magicians, witches, warlocks and shaman. Strategic level spirits also

known as cosmic-level or territorial spirits are the most powerful of the three categories. Their function is to rule over specific domains, preventing the people that reside there from coming to faith in God. Satan delegates high ranking members of the hierarchy of evil spirits to control nations, regions, cities, tribes, people groups and other significant social networks of human beings throughout the world (Christenson 1998:20). Their major assignment is to prevent God from being glorified in the territory.

3.3.3. Communal and Shamanism possession

Possession is in most cases individualistic but at other incidences it is communal. According to Burnett (1988:172) during communal activities for example when people spent a long time in dancing and singing some may be possessed and be propelled by the spirit to perform particular activities. This is called communal or group possession. The Dutch Missionaries therefore forbade the use of drums and use of drums, dancing and the singing of African melodies in the RCZ.

According to Lewis the Shamans are spirits of the long dead who exercises control over the rain fall and fertility (2003:122). The Shamans for both the Mokorekore and Zezuru and Karanga tribes of Zimbabwe are considered to deal with the moral order and with the relationship of man to the earth. Therefore mishaps among the people such as natural disasters, drought or famine, unsuccessful hunting expeditions, defeat in wars are all believed to be caused by the angered spirits of the dead who may punish the whole group. Lewis (2003:124) noted that amongst the Shona there is a clearly a defined morality cult that watch over the conduct of men and control their interest make known their wishes through a group of chosen agents who are organized in a clearly structured shamanistic hierarchy. According to Van der Merwe (1981:22), many of the Africa tunes, songs and some musical instruments associated with the Shona tribal religion should be used with discernment in worship service. According to Lewis 2003:122) the Shona-speaking tribes of Zimbabwe have a very vigorous shamanistic religion. He admits that since their colonization, various Shona groups have been subject to very different. According to Lewis (2003:122) the isolated and relatively conservative Mokorekore Shona of the Zambesi Valley have an elaborated central shamanistic religion addressed to the ancestors and concerned primarily with the control of natural phenomena which are of direct importance in day-to-day

living. The Shamans played a crucial role in promoting divinely inspired unity against the foreign intruders. Shamans, who are mainly men, incarnate ancestor spirits of the long dead, and these spirits, are believed to control the rainfall and fertility in particular tracts of country. The entire Korekore tribal area is in fact divided into provinces presided over by particular ancestor spirits, each of which is linked with the founding settlers of a given region. Shamans are considered to deal with the moral order and with the relations of man to the earth. Natural disasters such as drought or famine are believed to be caused by the anger of the spirit ‘owners of the earth’, who must be approached and appeased through their Shamans. Sickness and misfortunes is being seen in the Korekore as expressions of ancestral wrath (Lewis 2003:124). These misfortunes are interpreted as the consequences of breaches of the moral order, so that the spirits communicating through their chosen mediums act as the censors of society (Lewis 2003:123). The shaman embodies and gives expression to the sentiments and opinions of the people in his area. Disputes are taken to him for settlement, as well as to the official secular courts, and he is also asked to decide issues concerning succession to chieftaincy and quarrels between neighbouring chiefs. In these matters it is the judgement of the guardian spirit that is delivered by the shaman. Every Mokorekore is directly bound by descent to his own ancestor spirits which will also figure as guardian spirits in some provinces but not in others.

In the Zezuru Shona tribe, positions of religious leadership and power are obtained through possession by spirits of the dead (Lewis 2003:126). Here there are two main classes of spirits: the patrilineal ancestors (the *vadzimu*), and the more powerful makombwe spirits which are considered to be closer to God and have no precise genealogical relationship with living Zezuru. Both types of spirit solicitously guard the traditional morality. They allow misfortune and sickness to strike those who flout public opinion by withdrawing their protection, thus leaving their wayward dependents at the mercy of witches, malevolent spirits of foreign origin, and other sources of mystical danger. The shamans are the foci for relations between the living and dead members of their localized kin groups, and also act as arbiters of minor disputes and prophetic pronouncements, his success as a healer, and his reputation as a rain-maker. (Lewis 2003:126). Here there is no fixed hierarchy of particular spirits, or of those who claim to incarnate them. A large proportion of Zezuru men indeed spend most of their lives working in nearby Salisbury (Harare) or in other urban centres. After the failure of the rebellion of 1896, in which they participated, the Zezuru were subjected to intense missionary endeavour and soon began to

abandon their traditional religion in favour of Christianity. The Zezuru warmly embraced Christianity and European values (Lewis 2003:131). European education, and the culture which went with it, were warmly received and accepted with enthusiasm. Spirit mediums dwindled in their numbers and following and lost their power and prestige to the rising new élite of Shona evangelists and teachers. A new morality, validated by the Christian faith, thus gradually replaced the old authority of the ancestor spirits which appear to have been relegated to the status of mere peripheral spirits and left to plague women (Lewis 2003:127). During the 1960s many evangelists dropped out of the church and became shamans. Teachers, and others who had secured positions within the European dominated world, were dramatically recalled to the faith of their fathers. The newly restored traditional religion was highly expressive of Zezuru (and, in a wider context, of Shona) cultural nationalism. A considerable number of modern Zezuru shamans, possessed by ancestor spirits, are women. What, at an earlier stage, the men had rejected, women clung to (Lewis 2003:127-128).

Among several other cultural tribes spirit possession by external agent can only occur if the subject's own soul is temporarily displaced is not emphasized and sometimes receives no explicit recognition. Lewis (2003:42) further explains that in many other societies where little emphasis is given to possession in the interpretation of the trance and illness, soul lose is the primary idiom in which these phenomenon are described. In African for instances this pattern of explanation involving soul lose is generally rare. According to Burnett (1988:175) possession of this kind manifests itself in two distinct categories. In addition the powers of the shaman are as a result of his initiatory experience which radically affects his life. The act of possession is seen as a product of self will and the person has confidence of having a particular ministry. The objective of being called into shamanism is premised at both to cure the initiate and produce a valuable healer in the society. Shaman passes through a kind of orientation before they are passed out practitioners and the period last for five days. A Shaman according to Burnett (1988:182) is one such a person who goes into trances and sees visions and displays many behavioural patterns. According to Lewis, a former Professor of Anthropology and head of department at the London School of Economics and author of several works on anthropology and religion including Religion in Haitian voodoo when a *loa* spirit moves into the head of an individual it does so by first displacing his *gros bon ange*, one of the two souls which each person carries in himself (2003:41). This temporary eviction of the 'good angel' soul, causes trembling and convulsions

which are according to Lewis the characteristic of the opening stages of possession and trance. Spirit possessions are a state where believers feel themselves to be ‘possessed’ by the deity and rose to a new plane of existence, is found in almost all known religions. This is common cultural belief amongst Africa people. According to Lewis (2003:43) in Africa soul-loss without possession seems generally rare, for example the Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert in South Africa work themselves into a state of trance in the healing dance ceremonies to the accompaniment of singing and hand-clapping. Soul-loss trance occur than. According to Lewis (2003:72) in the Kamba of East Africa a sharp distinction is made between the local ancestral spirits which uphold morality and represent the ongoing interests of their descendants, and other, capricious spirits. These latter demons are being seen by the Kamba as typically spirit representations of neighbouring peoples—Masai, Galla and other tribes—including Europeans. In Lewis (2003: 73) also refers high incidence of spirit possession in among the Swahili Tanzania, southern Kenya and amongst the Luo of Kenya. For example the Luo ancestors cause sickness and misfortune amongst their descendants when people, neglecting customary rules, commit sins. Spirit possession alters the behavioural patterns of a human being. In biblical accounts it's also clear that all those who came under the influence of the Spirit of Yahweh behaved indifferently. According to Lewis (1988:40) there are several forms of spirit possession. Spirit possession is a mystical interpretation of trance and other associated conditions.

3.4. The Practice of Demon Exorcism in Africa

3.4.1 Kinds of Spirits

Many Bantu societies believe in the existence of two main streams of those spirits (Gehman 1989:136). The most domesticated spirits are those of people who had departed from the clan through death and are now regarded as the living dead. Traditionally these are regarded as ancestral spirits. Turak (1999:176) says that the ancestral spirits are the most powerful basic and primary kinship system in African community, where death and life co-exist communally in interdependence and solidarity. The belief in the ancestral spirits is the also fundamental in the religious system of the Shona tribes. The right relationship between the living and the dead is tantamount to harmony and spiritual blessings in Shona culture. Any violation or infringement upon the ancestral spirits will result in the exposure of the people to punishment and invasion by demons.

In the African traditional world view ancestors were another category of beings who believed to inhabit the world. Physical death was not the end of existence. After death a person changed his mode of existence and become a spirit (Mugambi 1989:66). The Shona tribes' belief that life was not discontinued because of death, but the spirit of the departed would continue to influence the lives of the living. Their influence would be either positive or negative depending on the conduct of the people. Any offense against the evil spirits would also affect relations with the unseen God and consequently inviting wrath upon the people. When males die their spirits are believed to form the invisible but yet functional council of the living dead *vadzimu* (Gelfand 1966:62). These ancestral spirits are annoyed when a religious practice is neglected or broken. They reveal their displeasure by causing an illness for no special reason except that they wish to be worshipped. According to Bucher (1980:89) among the Shona people of Zimbabwe there are several categories of spirits of which the common one is the *shavi* spirits. These spirits inhabit people and induce them with supernatural abilities.

According to Gehman (1989:151) harmony must be maintained with the living dead. Therefore the ancestral spirits are the guardian of the tradition and play a protective role among the people. Angry ancestors may allow the people to be subjected to all misfortunes which include attacks by the demons. Ancestral spirits communicates with the living via a spirit medium (Gehman 1989:152). The spirit medium receives and acts upon the message that may bring or restores peace and wholesome to the affected persons or community. The ancestral spirits have the following functional duties according to Gehman (1989:152); (i) act as a protective agent. They provide spiritual protection to human communities, (ii) they forecast the future and give advice to the people to prepare for times to come and to take precautionary measures, and thirdly they act as mediators to the Creator. Adherents of the African Traditional Religion believe that the elderly people speak to the ancestors and the ancestors speak direct to God. "In the African traditional world view ancestors were another category of beings that were believed to inhabit the world. Physical death was not the end of existence. After death a person changes his mode of existence and becomes a spirit", (Mugambi 1989:66). The belief in the ancestral spirits is the most fundamental religious beliefs of the Shona tribes. Thus the relationship between the living

and the living dead produces not only the elaborate religious and social practices but also moral and ethical practices.

The second division has several interpretations in regards to the group. There is a view according to Gehman (1989:13) that such spirits may come from the once living but now dead but whose position in the spiritual realm could not be secured. They are believed to have been denied recognition in the realm of the dead. These rejected spirits form a host of spirits called ghosts. These groups may include people who committed suicide, stricken by lighting and those who died unhappy death (Gehman 1989:137). By implication spirits of such people will wander from aimlessly in search for places of habitation or to people to possess. According to Idowu (1973:174) the general of such spirits is that of molesting and harming people. Generally speaking spirits are everywhere present. They either take their hosts by surprise or they are voluntarily invited into the people's lives. In the African Traditional Religion man is both body and spirit and his life long experience is both earthly and spiritual, each affecting and interpreting the other. The spirit world is alive and believed to be infested with a variety of spirit beings (Gehman 1989:124).

Mugambi (1989:64) says African traditional beliefs the world is inhabited by spiritual beings with which peaceful and harmonious relationship must be maintained at all times. The spirit beings are believed to affect the order of the daily lives of the people. He further says functions of spirits vary from one community the other. Generally spirits are believed to be potentially harmful to the life of the community unless the community members live in accordance to the governing spirits. According to Mugambi (1989:64) this general background Christianity came with new teachings about the spirit.

Another group of spirits is the angered spirit which represents the most dreadful and feared ones. These bring harm to the people. Gelfand (1966:70-71) describes them as appearing in various categories. The main groups include, (i) the spirit of a murdered person, (ii) the spirit of a woman died after being angered by her own children *ngozi yamai*, (iii) another type is called *mamhepo* wind, it arrives at villages in form a great wind and homes are blown away. Nurnberger (2007:29) describes ancestors as particularly those who have recently died and are of the prime

religious counterparts of the living. They define collective and individual identity. They make their will known and express their displeasure in the form of droughts, barrenness or other mishaps in the lives of their descendants.

3.4.2 The spiritual world of the Shona people

The practice of demon exorcism is discernible in many cultures of this world. What are quite clear are there differences in the methodologies and terminology. It is generally believed that about 90% of all nations across the globe have a concept of spirit possession (Burnett 1988:162). According to Thorpe (1991:49) the first people to inhabit the land now known as Zimbabwe today were the Khoisan hunters who lived a semi nomadic life. Historical information suggests that prior to the nineteenth century there was large scale migration of Africans moving to the south of Africa. The first of these migrants reached Zimbabwe in about the second century AD (Thorpe 1991:49).

The Shona people are those classified as the majority of the indigenous Bantu speaking population of Zimbabwe (Bucher 1980:21), the term Shona is rarely used by the people themselves but rather preferred to be identified by the name of the particular speaking dialect. According to this view all primal societies believe in the possibility of an individual being possessed by an external spiritual being. The Shona people like other tribal groups are known for their cultural practices.

Like the majority of African people, the Shona believe in the existence of a supreme being who is the creator (Thorpe 1991:54). Even before the entry of the Western missionaries the Shona people had a high recognition of the existence of the creator of the universe who could be approached through intermediaries. The Supreme Being, Mwari, was the final authority above and beyond the control of the ancestors and such must be approached by mediums representing the ancestral spirits. Mwari works through his designates and has no direct communion with the people. Mwari is regarded as the ultimate source of rain and help is requested in times of drought or when some other form of national crisis threatens. He is expected to advise on the course of action to be followed in times of crisis (Thorpe 1991:54).

An outstanding feature of the Shona religion is its openness to communication with spirits. According to Thorpe (1991:57) spirit possession is generally viewed positively in the Shona culture. The major categories of spirit which have communion with human beings are the ancestral spirits, *shave* spirits or alien and *ngozis* spirits *ngozis* spirit or vengeance. According to Thorpe (1991:57), the ancestral spirits are believed to be protective spirits who are responsible for the welfare of the family or the whole clan. They mediate on behalf of the people through visions in dreams and in some cases physically present themselves. Foreign spirits (*shave* spirits) are spirits of people who died in the territory and did not receive customary burial rituals. They could be spirits of foreign tribes and a common belief among the Shona refers them to be of the Ndebele people. Thorpe (1991:57) explained that such invasion by foreign spirits has the intention of bestowing some particular skill on their hosts. People possessed by such spirits often unite to form cults according to the skills which they are endowed. Dancing and entertainment is common features of the gatherings of the possession cults. Burnett (1988:163) mentions that the first aspects of the possession are where a person claims to act as an intermediary between human beings and spirits or ghosts. The emphasis lies on the ability of the possessed to communicate with spirits and its world. The people of southern Africa believe that any spirit can bring about physical or mental illness (Burnett 1988:165).

The Shona believe is that when a person is possessed by a spirit of her/ his ancestors or ghosts he/she may displays the abilities of the possessing ancestor spirit. Thus during times of possession victims demonstrate outstanding abilities which include unnatural powers or even uncontrollable violence. According to Burnett (1988:189) the spirit possession sometimes also involves speech utterances of some form. Differences in social context, cultural backgrounds and other factors spiritualism cannot offer uniform descriptions or forms. According to Burnett (1988:189) spiritualism manifests itself within many religious systems *inter alia* primal religions as well as among Christian communities. Burnett (1988:189-192) observed the following as in common features around spiritualism. These include:

- (i) At death the body of the individual dies, but some aspects of the immaterial part of the individual lives on,
- (ii) The spirits of the dead are believed to enter a spiritual world of the dead. Indeed many spiritualists have regarded the so called proofs of communication with the spirit world to be a message of good news to humankind.

- (iii) The medium enters into some form of possession trance in which he is believed to enter into close relationships with the spirits. Being such trance possession mediums have been known to speak in other voices, give protection and provide medical advice.

To those who adhere to principle of life after death, the third feature represents the possibility of communication with the spirit world. Communication can only occur through the medium that is sensitive to the spirit world and is able to convey messages to the living.

3.4.3 Medium Spirits Possession

According to Bucher (1980:48) some Shona tribes believe that territorial spirits choose as their medium people from faraway places. They are complete strangers to the territory in which they reside during their life time. Nevertheless these spirits are believed to control the affairs of the chiefdoms and to communicate directly with the people when they take possession of a medium. Possession usually take place in the early hours of the day and is heralded by more or less violent jerks of the medium's body and by emitting deep roars and grunts. According to Nthoi (2006:27) ancestral spirits as those of the dead persons or simply relatives who had passed on and yet continue to show interest in the lives of the living generations. Thus ancestral spirits have functional role in the world of the living. Ancestral and traditional spirits are believed to have the capacity of communicating with the living in two ways, thus through dreams and visions and through possessions. Bucher (1980:49), said that if the rain fail or pests or wide spread diseases occur; people continue to approach the spirit mediums in large numbers in order to seek their advice. According to Lewis (2003:115) possession by an ancestral spirit is an explicit and open encouraged, ecstatic communion representing the summit of religious experience and of course the idiom in which those who aspire top positions of religious leadership compete for power and authority. In this concept of religion as a mere therapy for illness is transformed into the worship of powers whose competences extends into all aspects of life. Ancestral spirits are spirits believed to indwell and become part with the members in the society. Lewis (2003:119) described the ancestral spirits as that which men incarnate and they occupy a centre stage in the religious life of the society and play a crucial and direct role in determining customary morality. In this way they act as gate keepers of the norms, values and ethos of the people. They act as the police to the social cohesion of the society and help promote good moral values. Thus among several families these ancestors are highly respected as people see them as the continuation of

human life. They are also a source of pride. In Zimbabwe even during the liberation struggle it became a common knowledge that the freedom fighters believed that the war was being supported by the spirit of a national figure in the likes of Nehanda and Kaguvi. **Mbuya** and leadership, individual chiefdoms were united to resist the colonial wave in the Nehanda spiritual leadership spanned the entire region on Zimbabwe. Nehanda was powerful and well respected her people. Another great regional Shona spirit medium by the name of Kaguvi possessed a man by the name of Gumboreshumba, known in Shona circles as Sekuru Kaguvi. Kaguvi and Nehanda used their leadership to spearhead the first war of resistance (Chimurenga CheKutanga) against European domination of the region. Kaguvi and Nehanda inspired Zimbabwean revolution against colonial rule. Under their guidance first Chimurenga War of liberation (between 1895-6) Nehanda and Kaguvi where captured and tried and sentenced by judge Watermeyer's to death by hanging in 1898-1899. Kaguvi and Nehanda. They were hung on a hill near what is now the city of Harare in Zimbabwe. To date are Nehanda and Kaguvi are considered highly and to speak contrary is a blasphemy liable of prosecution in the state courts. So when discussing about the role of mediums in possessing people it is not some mythology of the past but for Zimbabweans it is a reality which occurred in the recent past. In the Shona traditional beliefs the ancestors are also involved in the enforcement of the laws of the society and they are being seen as the highest centre of authority. Even today many people in their ordinary religious life normally say that their God and their ancestor (*vadzimu vangu*) have together brought whatever good or evil. In this view the ancestors can work with God in order to bring about good or evil.

The central possession cult of the ancestors who are the guardians of customary morality is evidently directly concerned with the basic subsistence activities of this hunting and gathering people and possessions is employed as a means of communication between man and the gods through the medium. The office of the medium is most cases defined as a specialized position in the society and is held by men. If however trance experienced by men is interpreted as inspirational possession by the ancestors, illness may also be diagnosed as possession by an evil spirits connected with the women. Lewis (2003:120).

Against background of the spiritual worldview of the Shona RCZ was born. The Christian message should have make use of the spiritual worldview of the Shona in conveying the message of the Scriptures to the Shona people. The Shona people accept that certain individuals can be graced with the gift of healing and exorcism. The Reformed Church in Zimbabwe to completely dismiss this fundamental principle.

Lewis (2003:121) mentions that the Shona tribes of Zimbabwe do have a vigorous shamanistic religion. (Lewis 2003:121).

3.4.4 Demon Exorcism

According to Tehran (1992:121) exorcism is a form of ritual control over demonic forces and therefore can lead to effective healing. Possession by demonic spirits deprives the person's will, moral and the family not free and their resources restrained. Indeed under such circumstances, demon exorcism brings a healing effect to the possessed and the entire family or society. Healing through possession is never entirely physiological. The realm of the sacred is involved (Bourdillon 1990:332). Demon exorcism in this regard is when certain sacred powers are requested to charge off demonic forces. In the case of the medicine man charms and ritual are important elements to drive out the evil spirit. The healing process is reinforced by re-asserting the moral values of the society concerned. In the idiom of possession, the spirits demand the people to observe their tradition.

According to Burret (1988:167) among the Shona tribes of Zimbabwe exorcism of the spirits take place when the spirit is transferred from the patient to an animal such as a goat, sheep or fowl. (Burnett (1988:167). Biblical stories like the story of possessed man of Gerassa (Mark 5:1-20) where the evil spirits begged Jesus to allow them find new a host relates well with the Shona exorcism practice where the transfer of spirits to animal is common. The practice of exorcism in amongst the Shona tribes share common similarities with the Jewish story as recorded in Leviticus chapter sixteen. According to Casey (2010:246), the healings of Jesus Christ in the New Testament generally falls within the parameters of what is perceived to be possible by traditional healers who operate within communities who accept their powers. Exorcism permits an exceptional sharp characterization of the traditional healer. It presupposes that a person has been possessed by a demon (Casey 2010:246). Burnett (1988:167) also indicated another form of exorcism among the Shona which occurs when the possessed is taken to a cross road and the spirit is exorcised by pronouncing a spell. The demons or the evil spirits will vacate the possessed and remains at the cross road targeting passers-by. Exorcism is being seen by the Shona's as providing relief from affliction and having a healing effect on the possessed.

In principle the practice of demon exorcism is found evident in most cultural contexts but the exorcists differ in methodology. Exorcism is therefore seen as the evicting of demons or other spiritual entities from a person or place they are believed to have possessed. The practice is quiet ancient and form part of the belief system of many religions. Faith healing and exorcisms is usually equated with the African Independent churches, Zion and Apostolic Churches in Zimbabwe (Daneel 1988 15:202). “We want to tie down the evil spirit so that it can stop doing evil in spite of its persistence,” (Daneel 1988:202). These are words of the leaders of churches warding off demons from possessed people. In these prophetic words there is also the discovery of the cause of the affliction, secondly the promise of protection and thirdly, the significant admission that the task of combating the evil was done in unison with the elders. In anticipation of a mystical relation following exorcism of demons these church leaders are confident that they can prevent destruction of the individual and the community. Magesa (1992:243) explained that in African Traditional Religion an individual can exist as a person only in a community. His/her wellbeing can be assured only within the context of the wellbeing of the larger community. The African communities view demon exorcism in a holistic sense; (a) it liberates individuals from suppression, and (b) consolidates the moral structures of the corporate community.

Demon exorcism is performed by various persons in an African perspective. Different type of spirits gives their hosts gifts which allow them to perform exorcism. Bucher (1980:114) explains that both professional n’angas and the diviners need a special knowledge to perform the exorcism. The *n’anga* is a traditional healer, but also exorcises evil spirits. “N’anga are able to consult spirits through the use of divining dice, the Shona wooden bones, animal bones, or *mungomo* (seeds popular among the Ndebele), and are versed in the knowledge of medicinal herbs...”¹ Demon exorcism is seen as an act of spiritual cleansing through the aid of divine healers or a ritual practice. Amongst the Shona tribes of Zimbabwe the driving away of the evil spirits is seen as an act of spiritual cleansing through the aid of diviner or ritual practice (Bucher 1980:114). Traditional Africa had a vast host of specialists who are professional in their own disciplines who can exorcise demons. Turak (1999:93) mentions categories of these

¹ Shona Religion and Expressive Culture in *World Culture Encyclopedia*. <<http://www.everyculture.com/Africa-Middle-East/Shona-Religion-and-Expressive-Culture.html>>. (Retrieved 17 May 2016.)

professionals among which include, (i) the priests, (ii) medicine men or sorcerers, (iii) diviners, (iv) witches or wizards, (v) mediums and mid –wives. Each of these professionals has a set of rules and methodology in dealing with spiritual matters.

The Independent Churches of Botswana acknowledges the exorcism of demons through a ritual prayer offered in the church (c.f. Amanze 1998:182; Nurnberger 2007:43). Healing, music and dancing are central in the worship and spirituality of the Shona individual. Bourdillon (1990:189) recorded the story of a person who had been a member of the Dutch Reformed Church, but left the church in order to join the Zion Christian Church. “I was a member of the D.R.C. I found no sign in the Bible that one should visit the hospital when indisposed; only that one should pray. When my children fell ill, I decided to take them to the Zionists for the laying on of hands and prayer. Before that time the ancestor’s *midzimu* had never given my family a moment’s peace. I am convinced that I had remained in the D.R.C or had joined Roman Catholic these *vadzimu* ancestral spirits would never leave us. But now the Zionists have prayed for me and my children, the spirits have stopped affecting us. Our problems are stopped.” It is evident from both recorded and oral sources that the then DRC, now being named the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe, has encountered numerous problems regarding spiritual realm in which the Shona operated. The RCZ should therefore be sensitive to the cultural contexts of the people they are serving

3.4.5 Spiritual Exorcism as a form of healing

Demon exorcism brings about healing to the one who was under the bondage of the evil spirit. If a person is under the attack of an evil spirit he/she is regarded as a patient who need the service of diviner or other practitioners in the society who can deal with problem in an appropriate manner. Nyamiti (2006:144) says that healing power plays an important aspect in the ancestral quality in African Traditional beliefs. Healing is a fundamental feature of both African Traditional Religion and Christianity (Shoko 2011:19). Shoko (2011:18) observes that earlier healing in the mainline churches in Africa has not drawn much attention, but there is currently a growing awareness of the importance of healing ministry in these churches. Daneel (1988:457) mentions that one of the key attractions of the African independent churches movements is its ability to combine the Christianity with the philosophy of the African Traditional beliefs. What

remains critical in the mainline Christianity is their approach to healing which stand demanding a radical change. Therefore it is critical and vital to relook into Christ's healing methods with regard to the African perspective on the healing and exorcism. The healing and exorcism of Jesus had an apologetic and salvific function; it manifested Christ's power, love messianic and divinity.

Healing is central to African worldview; it includes restoration of the broken physical, psychologically and spiritually. It means a return to wholeness; it includes inner healing and rebuilding broken relationship (Healey 1996:298). Exorcism has double effect to the people, it drives out a demon and brings normalcy. Healey (1996:298) notes that healing and casting out of demons can be one of the contributions the African churches can make Christianity. Many African independent churches feature healing at the centre of their worship. Demon exorcism restores the individual back to his/her full capacities and re-establishes his/her relation with the family, community and nature (c.f. Gaiser (2010:124).

3.4.6 Demonic Activities

According to Arnold (1992:133) Satan and his forces are actively engaged in their malignant activity. According to Dickerson (1975:141) demons seek to defeat believers in their individual and corporate life and service. Dickason (1975:141) further explains that Satan's power and activity are wide and varied, but counteracting God's authority in four dimensions:

- (i) Tempting to sin: Satan is the author of all lies and tempt others to act against the truth;
- (ii) Inciting persecution: persecution and privation and imprisonment may be motivated by demons. The Church and Israel are the primary objects of this attack by demons (Rev. 12:13 and 13:7);
- (iii) Infiltrating the Church: Satan sends his demons disguised as messengers of the light. They oppose true ministers and promote a legalistic or humanistic form of religion;
- (iv) Promotes division: The Corinthians church is a good example of such one which was rocked by divisions.

According to Arnold (1992:135) evangelistic activity presents a frontal assault on Satan's power and activity. Satan is the god of the age who has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel. The Church's mission is to bring sight to the blind. The Church faces an enemy of supernatural proportions who commands a host of spiritual powers seeking to prevent the spreading of the Kingdom of Christ. The Church which preaches the true

Gospel must be prepared to encounter powerful demonic hostility. According to Ing (1996:108) demons display amazing ability to weave myth and legends together to encourage vulnerable humans to worship them. Gehman (1989:172) observe five major functions of demons:

- (i) Unclean spirits are very active in nature and can influence mankind (Matthew 8:16; Luke 10:17; Ephesians 6:12);
- (ii) They stand in opposition to God's kingdom. Thus their moral character is described as unclean;
- (iii) They are powerful creatures who can oppress men. They cause physical harm to their hosts;
- (iv) They promote idolatry and heathen worship which is contrary to will of God (Psalms 106:35-37);
- (v) They can invade and possess men. Therefore the basic foundation of Christian belief in demon possession is found in the teachings of Jesus Christ and his authority over them and the mandate he gave to his disciples.

The African world view acknowledges that both evil and good spirits can cause illness. In the case of good spirits, the ancestors can cause illness if the people disrupt the regulations laid down. Montgomery (1976:56) also stated that demon carry out their work by means of possession in a very specific sense or by means of physical handicaps or illness. It is therefore obvious that Satan and demons are both personifications of evil that exercise dominion over human beings.

3.4.7 The significance of the office of the diviner

In Africa, divination is a traditional method to discover the cause of the mishap such as illness, death, drought and other natural calamities. The knowledge is sought from the traditional practitioners called diviners. O'Donovan (1992:242-243) describes divination as way of getting knowledge or advice about a situation without depending of God. Divination is practical in nature and takes practical approaches to produce the desired results. It takes place by shaking of gourds, observing the organs of animal, observing the pattern of small sticks or pieces of pottery thrown on the ground. At times it is by interpretation of dreams, touching the fingers and the examinations of the lines on the palm of the hand (O'Donovan 1992:242). Thus the diviner is any person female or male who possess the power to communicate with the spirits and receives secret information from the spirit world for the benefit of his or her clients. The secret information and powers possessed are used to drive away any form of evil spirit possession. A diviner or soothsayer is a specialist who seeks to diagnose diseases or discover the solution to

problems, by means of manipulation of objects with various techniques (Parrinder 1962:103). Thus the functions of the diviner and that of the spirit medium share certain aspects in common in the African Traditional Religion. Diviners are African exorcists. In times of spiritual challenges members of the society would visit such well-placed practitioners and seek their help and people would leave their courts happier after receiving the much needed help. Societies were ordered under the themes of good health, clan relationships and balanced cordial relations with their departed ones. Thus within the Shona communities the diviner occupied one of those central positions which formed centres of hope and assurance for the continuity of a productive life. The Shona ways of dealing with evil spirits and other ills of the society share some common approaches to the issues of health. In today's scientific world sick people seek specialist to deal with their problem. The diviners performed their tasks or duties in two distinct ways, firstly it is either by spiritual inspiration or some would claim that was an inborn talent. They have received that grace as gift from the ancestors and are passed on within the family genealogy. Thus such categorization has rendered everything of African origin demonic or spiritual and therefore nothing good would come out of the Shona methods of healing. Maboea (2002:47) described diviners as professional therapists whose roles include a wide range of magical practices. In this view magic implies the ability to manipulate the spirit world or power laden objects to achieve desired ends. The diviner's main function according to this view is to determine and prescribe the remedy for any evil spirits that may attack the community or individuals. According to the worldview of the Shona and many other African traditional commonalities they believe that the diviners are the only people who have the answers to control the powers that destabilize the normal order. "Though divination, diviners must establish whether an ailment/problem is caused by witchcraft or sorcery or a combination of the two. Diviners need to diagnose and apply therapeutic treatment by removing the magical causes of the illness by exorcising the spirit or by prescribing the rightful rites to be conducted. Diviners can also treat with necessary medicine to cure the physical pain already sustained," (Maboea 2002:48). In view of the above life is seen a whole unit and with sound health. Therefore the role of the diviner is critical for they are seen as having the capacity to expel evil spirits that may cause harm and promises security and restoration of harmony in the society. Traditional healers are usually consulted for treatment of troubles either caused by witchcraft or spiritual possession. Diviners as traditional healers are believed to possess the knowledge on how to deal with these various diseases or spiritual

possessions. These practitioners of traditional healers employ a variety of ways to establish the cause of the event and the most common is called divination. They diagnose the cause of the disease by using a set of animal bones known as a divination set. According to Maboea (2002:25) it remains the duty of the diviner to explain what events led to the misfortune and to prescribe the remedy. Nthoi2006:32) mentioned that there is a general belief in certain people who are believed to have super human power that enables them to communicate with scared power.

3.5. Towards an African Reformed Identity

In the quest for African Reformed identity certain aspects have to be considered and evaluated. According to Turaki (1999:13) the African inquiry in matters of identity should consider the following; (i) the need to clarify our understanding of the historical dimension of Christianity and historical Christian experience of the Gospel and (ii) the need to clarify our understanding of the nature of Biblical truth and revelation of God in Christianity and in relationship to non-Christian religion. Bediako (1995:25) observed that the conflict over the meaning of being African runs through all African life today, its religion, the arts and popular culture and education. It is in these crucial areas that many of the crucial struggles over Africa's future in the world can be decided. According to Stark (1974:175) mentioned that if Christianity has to speak meaningfully to Africa today it must take seriously the challenge of addressing itself to the problems created by existence of evil and ambiguity of life. Thus the task of the African Christian church is perhaps in the long run not so much to provide fully satisfactory intellectual answers as it is to recognize the reality of the open door to the discussion of it in all its fullness in the Christian context. Too often in the past missionaries and African pastors have refused to concern themselves with the reality of evil (Stark 1974:176). African missionary founded churches had either ignored the problem entirely or suggested that it be explained satisfactorily in the context of human sin. A climate of change must be created in Africa missionary founded churches. There is needy to start the process of engagement with the intention of creating an African Reformed Identity. Appiah-Kubi (1979:110) mentioned that the outcry for van African theology arose out of the recognition of the poverty liturgy and theology emanating from European and American Christianity. Their form of Christianity and theology does not touch the African soul at its deepest. The Reformed Church in Zimbabwe is situated in larger world which is in need of religious tolerance based on recognition of one God from whom all movements of

the spirit takes their origin. According to Appiah-Kubi (1979:111) the African belief of the one God who is the origin of human race renders all racism and other types of ethnocentricity and exploitation of persons heretical and blasphemous with its mythology based on African traditional beliefs. African Christian contributes new symbols and myth for promoting justice, reconciliation. Moreover, Africans can now contribute substantially to the reconstruction of a theology on healing through exorcism. The theological and missionary heritage of the Reformed in Zimbabwe should be defined in terms of its openness to provisional transformation. Thus it should be ready to describe itself in the context of basic fundamental spiritual needs of its people. According to Appiah-Kubi (1979:111) to deny history is to deny one's roots and source of self-identity .It is also to deny that one embodies in themselves both the past and the future. A careful transformation process has to be nurtured in order to capture every member and catching them whiles the young. Another facet of this nurturing process is the effort safeguarding the purity of the gospel which rides above every human cultures and contexts.

This identity does not seek compromise the gospel message or incorporating traditional practices into the daily life of the Church. For instance in the Reformed Church in the acceptance of drums and other musical instruments in worship services was milestone achievement. Now that it is part of the liturgical order of the Church it can be done also with other areas of concern. Our Reformed Identity that churches feel is to be safe guarded jealously was there as product of protest by the Christians of that time. Now the age of protest have gone and was replaced by the age of dialogue and engagement. The fear to express one's views and the suppression of ideas through other dubious means will actually deform the church. A church in Africa is a church together and hence the African Reformed Identity is achieved through collective responsibility. According to Stark (1974:176) it is hoped that African theologians because of their own grounding in traditional thought forms may a deeper understanding of the question as they increasingly address themselves to it. Theological reflections which may be conducted on specific topic and all church members given equal ground will help to allow members to won an identity. Identity should be owned and lived by the faith community for it to sustain against external challenges. Stark (1974:179) explains that Jesus, healed, forgave sins and exorcised demons as he demonstrated God's grace. By performing all these various acts of power Jesus' identity never changed. The value of the gospel is not it to change every aspect of the culture

which comes in contact. Thus the objective is salvation and that salvation does not imply Westernization of the African person. The role and influence of Reformed Church in Zimbabwe's theologians and the laity is essential in the development of African Reformed Identity. In Africa life is considered as whole and expressed in community with others. In this view a communal kind of life system is followed and the identity is that which the group would willingly want to identified with.

Engagement with demons and casting them out poses serious challenges which are to do with Reformed Identity and maintenance of Church Polity. The ministry of demon exorcism is more pronounced in African Independent churches and in the Pentecostal and Charismatic church movements. According to McGrath (1995:115) the Scripture itself contains or legitimatizes a range of appropriate approaches which any evangelizing any evangelizing church may present within its ranks. Hofmeyr (1991:210) observes that cultural diversity influenced Christianity in a new way. In Africa for example Europeans missionaries brought Christianity and with it their culture. Christianization of Africans meant also westernization as well. Mugambi (1989:141) stated that African cultural identity includes his religious background which is an integral part of his culture. Christianity is viewed by Nationalists throughout the continent as a non-African religion (Bediako 1995:26). Furthermore it is a religion which is connected with colonialism. Bediako (1995:26) further explains that Christianity is generally viewed by Africans not indigenously African but rather a white man's religion. Christian missionaries often opposed or denigrated traditional local customs and institutions of veneration of ancestors, tribal ceremonies and authority systems. "To contribute more effectively to the religious development of people, African Christian theologians have a duty to theologize this context and incorporate the authentic African idiom into Christian theology. Utilizing African religious beliefs in Christian theology is not an attempt to assist Christianity to capture and demonstrate the African spirit, rather it is an attempt to ensure that the African spirit revolutionizes Christianity to the benefit of all those who adhere to it," (Appiah-Kubi 1979:116). Therefore the quest for the ministry of exorcism in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe is not attempt to re-introduce some of the obvious wicked healing exorcism practices among the peoples

According to Mugambi a theological error was made by missionaries who taught Africans in order to become a Christian means to adopt the cultural norms and values of the missionaries (1989:89). This resulted in life of double standards among African converts. On the one hand they accepted the norms and values introduced by the missionaries, who saw nothing valuable in the African culture. On the other hand the converts could not deny their own identity; they could not substitute their denominational belonging for their cultural identity. Therefore a critical theological reflection and tolerance was vital and imperative in the past and is equally useful to the present African church. Conversion to Christian faith demands that converts identifies themselves with Jesus Christ and does not demand a wholesale or rejection of one's cultural religious heritage. An African cannot denounce his traditional culture without at the same time denouncing his total heritage of his people. The missionaries' attitude towards African culture was generally negative. It is therefore believed that missionaries considered African cultural and religious background to have nothing to contribute to the evangelization of its people.

According to Nyamiti (2006:144) healing power is an important aspect in the African Traditional belief system. Healing as an integral part of the narrative of conversion and salvation and accounts of healing is prevalent amongst African and Asian Christians (Jenkins 2006:114-118). According to Jenkins (2006:110) a counter piece of the Zimbabwean's devotional life is the vigil or *pungwe*, namely a huge gathering of prayer and preaching, praise and worship deliberately held through the night to proclaim the victory of Christ and to challenge the potential forces of darkness. Turak (1999:10) explains that the efforts of Western Christian mission in Africa has come under tough criticism and attacks coming from both Christian and non-Christian communities. This alluded to the fact that the missionaries' approach to the study of African traditional religious and cultures have raised of questions than answers. Thorpe (1991:2) explains that religion is such an integral part of life in the primal cultures, early Western explorers and missionaries often failed to recognize it as such. In their reports and accounts some expressed the belief that the people with whom they came into contact had no religion. It is because of the misconception that the terms pagan and heathen came to be applied to these people. According to the perception the missionaries expected the Shona converts to abandon all their traditional religious ways of life and pattern their life in accordance with their new teachings and to the message of the gospel. Mugambi (1989:90) mentioned that conversion to Christianity does not

demand a wholesome denunciation of one's cultural and religious heritage. In view of the above African were made to denounce everything what identified them with the past.

Amanze (1998:52) mentioned that when Christianity came to Africa it was like a military expedition. The early missionaries looked upon themselves as engaged in a moral battle against Satan. This Satan was disguised and active through African religious traditions and practices. According to this view the Shona people were asked to confess their sins in order to be born again and truly saved. Therefore, salvation was only possible if they renounce their African past, that's their beliefs and practices and showing willingness to live according Christian principles. According to Sinton (2004:63) observes that missionaries tended to deny the reality of malevolent powers at in the community and dismiss belief in demon possession and exorcism as superstition and heathenism. Instead of attending to the needs within the African worldview of spirits and sickness, missionaries often reproached or ignored African approaches to exorcism and illness and denounced it.

According to Amanze (1998:53) further explained that the early missionaries assumed errors of cultural superiority which was essentially Euro-centric. They propagated a brand of Christianity that expressed western cultural values and which was set against any form of indigenization. In their view to accommodate Shona institutions and traditional customs was not only unthinkable but also ungodly. Sinton (2004:63) further states that as result of the dissonance between aspects of mission Christianity and traditional views regarding health, ambiguities and contradictions often is cause in African experience of Christian faith; hence the notorious characterization of African Christians adopting forms of piety from the missionary enterprise while still maintain their traditional belief and practices, especially sickness or critical life stages. The work of Western Christian missions in Africa has been criticized by both groups from a non- Christian background and within Christian circles. This is due to the fact that the missionary approach to the study of African cultures raised pertinent questions on the nature of the presentation of the Gospel of Christ and consequences of the missionary work (Turaki 1999:10). The Christian life of the members of the Reformed Church has to be examined in the context of two major sources; (a) their traditional world view and (b) the modern worldview. The Africans received the gospel whilst standing on the platform of their religious and cultural heritage. Their society and

traditional world view was heavily loaded with both religious and cultural values. The state of Christianity that was instituted by the missionaries motivated the researcher to search for an Africa Christian identity theology and identity.

Buyo (2002:185) said that it is absolutely essential to rethink Christianity in the specifically African context, stripped of European cultural accretions and implementing African ways of worship and African formularies of theology and Christian doctrine within the frame work of African life and thought. The African Church through its theologies and believers ought to fearlessly examine Christianity implanted in Africa and rid of the entire missionary and elements which are not integral part of it. The Dutch Reformed missionaries expected the Shona converts to abandon their traditional way of life and live as the missionaries taught them to do. According to Mugambi (1989:151) missionaries as a whole viewed evangelization in terms of civilization and conversion. Ndiokwere (1994:24) states that the church should truly respect the culture of each people. In offering the gospel truth, the church should not have intentions to destroy or to abolish what is good and beautiful in the people's cultural heritage. In fact the church must recognize many cultural values and through the power of the gospel purifies and takes into Christian worship certain elements of people's customs. The principles and the teachings of the Reformed Church should therefore guide all in the strong attempt to critical study, purify and introduce those aspects of the Shona culture that would help to bring Christ nearer to the people. Hastings (9176:44) observes that no group can conceivably change its religious beliefs and philosophy without noticeably changing its culture. Conversion to Christianity was bound to bring noticeably change to cultures with it.

According to Mugambi (1989:106) says that while African Christians accepted the basic Christian teaching almost without debate, they did not necessarily abandon their basic traditional values and ideas. Bediako (1995:26) states clearly: "The time has come when the African Church must take a new look and resuscitate Traditional African Religion to enhance worship in Africa." The challenge of Christianity and Christian theology in Africa is to be the authentic inheritor and as well as true interpreter of the spiritual heritage of the past.

According to Ramsay (1998:83) one's theological tradition also stabilizes the dynamics process formation and maintenance of one's own identity as a Christian. According to Ela (1990:142) Christian communities must have the courage to abandon the comfort of missionary praxis organized around centres of worship and instead take up radical concerns of the people. Furthermore Ela (1990:143) stress that Christians in Africa just repeats previously articulated doctrines that been objectivized and institutionalized, and contribute to the development of passive receptivity of Christianity amongst Africans. Gehman (1989:124) explained that in the African Traditional Religion men is both body and spirit and his life long experience is both earthly and spiritual each affecting and interpreting the other. The early western missionaries' had a negative view of the whole phenomenon of traditional spirits, spirit possession and traditional practices (Dube 2011:155). The early missionaries dismissed anything African as evil and had a belief that truth could be found only in the western type of Christianity.

3.6. Conclusion

This chapter shows that factors from both African Religious and African Christian Theological perspectives on demon possession and exorcism have influenced the RCZ. The chapter deals therefore with issues of spiritual beings, demon possession and exorcism, healing, African traditional healers (sangomas / shamans), identity, etc. The missionaries wrongfully equated traditional healers (sangomas / shamans) with 'witch doctors.' The significance of the office of the diviner in a spiritual pluralistic worldview of the Shona is that it is the guarantor of a life free from spiritual attacks. It offers a sense of hope and emotional security to the society which may find it vulnerable to evil spirits attacks. In the historical development of the Shona like many other tribes before the gospel was brought to them the diviner was an important figure in the communal life.

Chapter 4

The Historical background of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe

4.1 Introduction

According to Mugambi (1989:13) contacts between Europe and Africa south of the Sahara took place in the fifteenth century when Portugal and Spain were competing for alternative routes to India. Thus the Portuguese managed to sail and reached the southern cape and reached India in 1498. Porterfield (2005:119) explains that in the middle of the 19th century British, Germans, Dutch and Danish Protestants began to organize mission societies. These western mission activities coincided with the Western political and economic expansion. The missionaries believed that Christianity and Western civilization were closely related and that Christianity would make global expansion of the Western civilization beneficial to everyone.

The people classified as Shona form the majority of the indigenous Bantu speaking population of Zimbabwe. The term Shona is rarely used by the people themselves, who tend to refer themselves rather than by the name of the particular Shona speaking clan to which they belong (Bucher 1980:23). This implies that the word Shona is a collective name of various smaller dialects. These smaller units were scattered all over the land of Zimbabwe with the exception of the Western parts which is currently populated by the Ndebele speaking people. The forefathers of the Shona speaking clans are thought to have come from the Zambezi valley and most probably from the Congo basin. For centuries what is now Zimbabwe was inhabited by people speaking related languages, with a similar culture that are known as Shona (Bourdillon 1990:19). In the nineteenth century the land was invaded by Ndebele speaking people and later by the White settlers under the control of the British South Africa Company which was established and controlled by Cecil John Rhodes (Dube 2011:4). The Ndebele originated from what is now KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa.

Several missionary societies undertook initiatives to spread Christianity in what was known then as Southern Rhodesia. From the middle of the nineteenth century, missionaries, traders and adventurers paid sporadic visits to the courts of Lobengula and various Shona chiefs (Bucher 1980:23). Thus in around 1888, the territory suddenly became under the European spotlight

under the disguise of what was known as the scramble of Africa. This European foreign policy saw the super powers of Europe grabbing African states by themselves at the expense of indigenous people. The history of the Christian mission expansion in Southern Rhodesia happened along with the colonization of the country by British South Africa Company (B.S.A.C). Both the Missionaries and the Colonizers needed the support of each other for the advancement of each other's cause. According to Zvobgo (1996:2) the missionaries needed the support of the secular power if the evangelization of the indigenous people was to be successful. Therefore an informal alliance was established between the missionaries and the British South Africa Company. The missionaries needed the Company's protection and material support in order to proselytize the Shona without fear of being ill-treated by the hostile tribes. Rhodes needed the moral support of the missionaries to execute his plans. A close relationship existed between the missionaries and the Company. This ultimately led that many missionaries acquired large portions of land.

Cecil John Rhodes's business and empire building ambitions played a major role in this development and gave birth to the so called Rudd Concession which were signed by Lobengula and formed the basis of the Royal Charter (Bucher 1980:23). Queen Victoria in 1889 signed a Royal Charter which gave the British South Africa Company (B.S.A Company) authority to operate in Bechuanaland (now the present Botswana) and the land beyond the Limpopo River for period of twenty-five years (Bucher (1980:23. Cecil John Rhodes' business and empire building ambitions played a major role in the colonisation of Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The Royal Charter granted the British South Africa Company complete and exclusive charge over all metal and mineral contained in Lobengular's Kingdom (Bucher1980:23). In 1888 after the institution of the scramble for Africa as a policy by the Western governments, the territory became under European rule. In 1890 a pioneer Colum of White settlers was organized by Rhodes and set off from Kimberly to occupy Shona land.

Christianity among the Shona tribes dates from the occupation of their country by the British South Africa Company in 1890. The British South Africa Company acquired large tracts of land to the settlers and mission boards. They forced the local black people to provide them with cheap labour and made introduction of several oppressive taxation upon them. In 1896 the Legislative

Council which made up of representatives of the Company and White settlers imposed a personal tax of ten shillings per annum on every adult African (Bucher 1980:24).

Since the African person had no source of income this made them to work on the farms for no pay as a way to cancel off their debts. This form of labour was called (*kubatwa chibharo*) forced labour. These and quite a number of factors gave rise to the Anglo Ndebele wars of 1893 popularly known in the Zimbabwean terms the First Chimurenga Wars, meaning wars of liberation. However, the war was not in favour of the locals and saw a tighter white rule being extended across the Zimbabwe. During 1902 the Native Affairs Department was established and the African Chiefs were stripped off their traditional powers and was by the virtue of this act transferred to the Native Commissioners (Bucher 1980:24). Land ownership now resided with this new arrangement and the African chiefs become spectators in their own backyards. One of the most notorious acts which had far reaching consequences to the present day situation was the Land Apportionment Act of 1931. This act legalized the existence of the division of land between the Blacks and the White. This arrangement is also evident in the manner upon which mission station were organized. There geographical location of the mission inhabitants portrayed a White settlement pattern and ideology. With a degree of involvement in the European dominated world, it was only natural that the Zezuru (a Shona tribe) should have been actually sensitive to changing political conditions (c.f. Lewis 2003:126). After the failure of the rebellion of 1896 (known as the first Chimurenga war- a war of self-rule) in which they participated, the Zezuru were subjected to intense missionary endeavour and soon began to abandon their traditional religion in favour of the Christianity. European education and the culture which went with it were warmly received and accepted with enthusiasm. Spirit medium dwindled in number and following and lost their power and prestige to the rising new elite of Shona evangelists and teachers. A new morality, validated by the Christian faith, thus gradually replaced the authority of the ancestor spirits which have been neglected to the status of mere peripheral spirits and left to plague women (Lewis 2003:126).

In the early sixties when nationalism rose up in Zimbabwe (formerly Rhodesia), there was a great rift in the reconfirmation of the role of the medium spirits as the guardians of the people. The 1960s also gave rise to the recognition of traditional religion (Lewis 2003:127). Many evangelists, who had secured positions within the church, dropped out the church and became

shamans again. However, the colonization of Zimbabwe by the British created an environment conducive to the evangelization of the tribes in Southern Rhodesia.

4.2 Early Missionaries

The first missionary attempt to introduce Christianity to the Shona was made by a Portuguese Jesuit missionary, Father Gonzalo da Silveira at the court of Monomutapa empire in 1561 (Murphree 1969:6). He was murdered shortly after he commenced his missionary's activities amongst the Shona. On the 16th of March 1561, eighty soldiers of Monomutapa entered the hut of the missionary and strangled him to death. In so doing Gonzalo died the first Christian martyr in this part of Africa (Van der Merwe 1953:3). Van der Merwe (1981:28) says as the first Christian missionary in Zimbabwe sealed his labours with his own blood, all Christian missionary efforts among the Vakaranga people were greatly affected in the land and came to a sudden halt. A second attempt at evangelizing the land of Monomutapa was made in the seventieth century.

The Roman Catholic through the Dominican fathers made converts again among the Vakaranga people. The Roman Catholic mission in the 19th century and early 20th century was primarily the work of the Dominican order. From the beginning new converts from local people would enjoy full sacramental life. A disadvantage was that an indigenous sacramental ministry was slow to develop (Dube 2011:9). In 1607 the paramount chief (Monomutapa) was obliged to seek the help of the Portuguese at Tete in subduing a rebellious vassal. The Europeans agreed and gave military support to Monomutapa and in return received certain mining rights. Lack of education and thorough Christian instruction prevented Christianity from really striking root in the early centuries (Van der Merwe 1953:5). The Roman Catholic priests withdrew. Between 1830 and 1840 Zulu hordes from South Africa created another social and political challenge to the Shona tribes both in the Southern parts and Mashonaland.

4.3 Early Protestant mission work among the Shona tribes

The land across the Limpopo was first pioneered by London Missionary society under the leadership of Robert Moffatt in 1859. The London missionaries abandoned the work very difficult and said that it was uninspiring (Smith 1928:53). Robert Moffatt led the first expedition

among the Matebele in 1859 (Van der Merwe 1953:6), In 1860 Inyati Mission was founded near the administrative centre of King Umzilikazi. For the first thirty years there was hardly any visible fruit on the missionary labours (Van der Merwe 1953:7). The paramount chief of the Matebele had given permission to the London Missionary Society to operate on his land but he was opposed to his people accepting any of the tenets of the Christian religion. During the course of the 19th century, Protestant missionaries also turned their gaze towards the harassed Mashona. Stephanus Hofmeyr the first South African born foreign missionary of the Dutch Reformed Church had shown unfailing interest to take the gospel to the Banyai (Van der Merwe 1953:8). In 1865 Stephanus Hofmeyr came to Zoutpansburg in the Transvaal as a missionary of the Dutch Reformed Church (Cronje 1982:114). Rev. S. Hofmeyr arrived on 6 February 1865 in Transvaal as an assistant to Rev. A. McKidd who had started a mission station for the Dutch Reformed Church at the foot of the Zoutpansburg Mountains. Hofmeyr laboured amongst the people of Eur-African background, called the Buys tribe, as well as amongst the surrounding African tribes.

According to Van der Merwe (1953:8) the first ambassador for Christ amongst the Banyai was Gabriel Buys who crossed over the Limpopo in 1872 and laboured in the Zimuto communal lands. Rev. Hofmeyr recommended the setting up of a mission station among the Banyai. A deputation, consisting of evangelists from Goedgedacht and Basutoland was sent to the Banyai people in 1874 to enquire whether they were desirous of receiving bearers of the gospel. Cronje (1982:115) explained that in 1883 four church members were sent by the congregation to the Banyai and these were Gabriel Buys, Petrus Buys, Micha Makgato and Jacob Moemi. Once more in 1883 Gabriel Buys was once sent across the Limpopo in the company of Micha Maghto. While he was amongst the Banyai, Gabriel was involved in local conflict which had arisen between the people and the people of Zimuto and certain European hunters. Tragically Buys lost his life in this conflict of 31st of July 1883. In 1889 three African evangelists volunteered to enter Banyailand in spite of the prohibition of Lobengula (Van der Merwe 1953:10). The names of the African evangelist who volunteered to enter Banyailand were Micha Maghto, Lukas Mokoel and Jozua Masoha. In a letter to the mission society at Stellenbosch, Stephanus Hofmeyr wrote of the three; “The names of these men should not be forgotten. Together the team of African evangelists who worked together with the White missionaries comprise of Micha Makgato,

Jozua Masoha, Izak Khumalo, Lukas Makoele, Petrus Murundu and Jeremia Murundu. Izak Khumalo was a grandchild of Umzilikazi and was one of the longest serving evangelists. He served for 43 years and was a man of great humility.” (Van der Merwe 1953:10). These evangelists were sent to establish a mission station amongst the Banyai.

After the entrance of the Pioneer Column of the British South Africa Company in 1890 conditions improved as it was more peaceful amongst the Shona (Van der Merwe 1980:45). The missionary situation greatly improved. The colonization of Zimbabwe by the British provided a better working environment for the missionaries as roads and security issues greatly improved. The missionaries under the leadership of Andrew Louw had good relationship with administrative powers of Rhodesia in Salisbury. Five months after their arrival at Morgenster the missionaries were faced with short supply of basic needs and Louw’s father approached Rhodes in Cape Town whether it was possible to dispatch things on his company to Morgenster. Rhodes wired authorities in Fort Victoria instructing them to supply the mission with the necessary basic supplies. Afterwards Rhodes visited Louw and his team and brought to him eucalyptus seeds that he had obtained from Australia which is the origin of the towering avenues of trees and plantation that characterizes the mission today. Rhodes offered a 1,500 morgen farm to each pioneer settler and the eldest son of the pioneer. When Louw later learnt that this entitlement also applied to him and his infant son, he turned it down, since he was of the conviction that a missionary’s calling could easily be compromised by the ownership of landed property. According to Cronje (1982:115) the Shona (Banyai or Vakaranga) in the surrounding areas of the Great Zimbabwe and those under Chief Mugabe were willing to accommodate missionaries. The biggest challenge of the missionaries was the hostility of the Matebele under Chief Lobengula who categorically refused any mission work among the Shona.

4.4 The establishment of Morgenster Mission (1891)

The evangelization of Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) was pioneered by the Dutch Missionaries from the Cape Synod in the late nineteenth century. Cronje (1982:122) mentioned that the Dutch Reformed Church, Cape Synod need to be commended for their commitment in the extension of the Gospel message from South Africa to the people across the Limpopo River. Andries Adriaan commonly known as Andrew Louw was born on the 26th of February 1862. His

father was a Dutch Reformed minister at a congregation in Paarl in the Cape Colony. Andrew Louw grew up in an atmosphere of piety and devotion (Van der Merwe 1953:11). Andrew Louw received a call to mission work in Mashonaland after listening to a sermon delivered by Rev. S.P. Helm. His father was at first not convinced that his son would take up the challenge considering that twice his ill-health had prevented him from continuing with studies at Stellenbosch Seminary. However, the home board accepted Mr. Louw's offer of his services as a candidate for Mashonaland. Andries Adriaan Louw was commissioned to the work amongst the Banyai on 30th of March 1891 (Van der Merwe 1953:13).

Andrew Louw started off from Kimberly towards Mashonaland on the 8th of April 1891. The journey to reach to the place of Chief Mugabe took five months. On the 9th of September 1891 the missionary party landed on the mountain plains of Chief Mugabe. The early Dutch Missionaries who settled at Mugabe's mountain named the new site Morgenster in memory of A.A. Louw home place in Paarl Cape town (c.f. Zvobgo (1966:4; Merwe 1953:18.) it was the hope of Andrew Louw that the opening up of this mission station, Morgenster, will enhance the proclamation of the gospel to the Shona. The site of Morgenster as the first mission station was chosen at the top of Mugabe Mountain. It was perceived be a good health spot and had a perennial spring. The area was densely populated by the indigenous groups under Chief Mugabe. After the first days of their settlement Andrew Louw became seriously ill and was visited by the local chief Mugabe. The local chief asked Andrew Louw, "Why does your God make you ill? Is He angry with you? Let us consult the witch doctor and find out what will satisfy Him. If He wants cattle, I shall pay," (Van der Merwe 1953:18). Upon receiving these words Louw was deeply moved and went on to his knees to pray seeking God's intervention. He desired that that God to triumph over the false gods of the heathen. The words of the chief showed his personal beliefs and that whenever illness comes to the people consultation of a witch doctor was needed first in order to get a remedy. Among the people under Chief Mugabe and other Shona tribes sickness was considered to be either a punishment by ancestors or caused by evils spirits. In each of the case an exorcism rite was necessary. However, God heard the prayers of Louw and he regained his health. The first mission station was established at Morgenster on the 9th of September 1891 in Victoria province (now Masvingo) and the missionary work grew and spread over the greater parts of the country. The founding of the Dutch Reformed Church in

Mashonaland particularly at Chief Mugabe's area was unique from its first stage. Van der Merwe (1981:2) mentions that the mission to Zimbabwe was the only Dutch Reformed Mission to be initiated by a black congregation in co-operation with a white congregation and the only where black and a white pioneer missionary worked together side by side. This was exceptional when compared with other Dutch Reformed and other missions in Southern Africa. The Reformed Church in Zimbabwe is brain child of the mission work of the Dutch Missionaries from the Cape Synod.

In 1892 Andrew Louw went on an ox wagon to Salisbury in order to meet the Administrator, Dr. Star Jameson about the acquiring of land for the mission. The missionaries under Andrew Louw were granted a farm of six thousand hectares. A new mission station, named Morgenster, was established on the piece of land, which signified the growth of the church. For fourteen years Morgenster remained the only mission station in the area. The mission in the southern Mashonaland was an offshoot from the mission planted in 1861 in the Zoutpansburg region of the northern Transvaal (Smith 1928:62). Hofmeyr who is described as a fine missionary had laboured for thirty years in trying to establish mission work among the Banyai people living around the great Zimbabwe area. Rev. S.P. Helm travelled northwards to the vicinity of the Zimbabwe ruins and described that the natives were friendly and welcoming and desired to have a white missionary. According to Smith (Smith 1975:63) in 1890 Helm and Andrew Louw set out to start the work. Shortly after the arrival Rev. S.P. Helm, the new missionary, at Morgenster the latter wrote: "The darkness is so frightful dark. What is the use of a few candles in a pitch-black night at a distance of several hundred yards from one another?" (Van der Merwe 1953:19). During his time a church building was erected at Morgenster. Rev S.P. Helm mission endeavours at Morgenster was however short lived. In 1894 Andrew Louw journeyed to Cape Town from Morgenster. In that same year he was examined for ministry. He succeeded and ordination service was organized at Stellenbosch on the 21st of March 1894 and was presided over by Professor Hofmeyr, a lecture of the Theological Seminary of Stellenbosch. Before returning to his mission work, the newly ordained pastor Andrew Louw got married to Miss Cinie Malan of Riebeeck West. The minister and his wife Cinie later went back to Morgenster and shortly after the arrival of Cinie a sewing class was started for the Shona women. These first missionaries discovered that the Shona people believed in a supreme being called *Mwari*

who rules over all things and who sends or keeps back rain (Cronje 1982:122). However, *Mwari* lives far away from the man and is not directly concerned with their daily life and that numerous spirit mediums occupy certain designated places. It is within such a context that the missionaries from South Africa introduced the gospel message and brought the Bible to the Shona people around wat was named the Morgenster Mission.

4.5 Opening of other mission stations

Van der Merwe conveyed in his two books, ‘The Day Star Arises in Mashonaland’ and ‘From Mission Field to Autonomous Church in Zimbabwe’ the background of the establishing of the second mission station. According to Van der Merwe (1953:28) the second mission out post, called Hararwe opened in 1895. This is about forty kilometres east of Masvingo today. The mission station was shortly afterwards moved to the present Jichidza Mission. According to Van der Merwe (1953:28) the loss of lives of the missionaries contributed to the abandonment of the mission out post at Hararwe. Van der Merwe (1980:74) points out that the second mission outpost, named Pamushana, was only opened in 1901. P.H.A. Fouche and L. du Plessis were the first two to be in charge of Pamushana. Both due to ill health discontinued their services at the station during 1906. After the closure of Hararwe mission a new mission station was established at Jichidza in 1908.

The decline in the Berlin Society was blessing in disguise to the growth of the Dutch Reformed Church mission endeavour in what was then called Rhodesia. According to Merwe (1953:28) the missionary efforts and commitment of the Dutch Reformed Church was rewarded by the mutual transfer of three mission posts founded by the Berlin Missionary Society to the DRC namely Gutu in 1907, Chibi 1907 and Zimuto in 1907. These three together with other stations functioned as strategic points to reach the unreached with the Gospel. Other mission stations were opened also in the area. In 1909 Hubwe was opened under Rev. S.P. Orlandini. The station went through significant changes of names from Hubwe; it was named Chingombe the name of the Local chief and later to Alheit (Cronje 1982:121). Through its missionary piety evangelization was taken serious and the gospel was taken beyond the borders of Masvingo province into Manicaland.

According to Zvobgo (1966:67) the Dutch Reformed Church expanded its missionary activities in Victoria province. Reverend P.H. Fourie and L.A. Du Plessis opened up Pamushana mission station in 1901 some fifty kilometres outside Victoria town in the eastern direction. Initially mission work among the people of under Chief Mugabe area was difficult, for it took them more than seven years to register a convert to the new teaching and way of life. According to Zvobgo (1966:100) there was a general suspicion among the Shona of the motives of the missionaries to evangelize them.

4.6 Theological Seminary

According to Van der Merwe (1953:48) mentioned that the Christianization of Africa was not going to be complete without the training of African leaders. Lay leadership training was commenced on the 22nd June 1925 with Andrew Louw Jr as a lecturer. The missionaries found it to be of great importance to set up seminaries for the African leaders. Training was offered at the seminary to evangelists. The programme was a two year course with completing students offered with certificates (Van der Merwe 1981:112). Before the opening of the Seminary the missionaries made use of the teachers to evangelize the Shona people. There first evangelists to be trained were Shadreck Shumba from Chipinge and Ezra Shumba from Chibi area and Josias Chipadza from Makumbe Buhera. They played a pivotal role in the evangelization f their own people.

In 1936 the training of ministers started at Morgenster with Rev W.H. Murray as the principal lecturer. He was assisted by Rev. Andrew Louw Jr. Evangelist Ezra Shumba and Shadreck Shumba were enrolled at the seminary and became the first black people to complete theological training (Cronje 1982:132). Ezra Shumba was ordained on 27th of August at Morgenster Mission and Shadreck Shumba was licensed, but he was never called or ordained in the RCZ. He later went back to his farm. The first black lecturer to be appointed at the Theological Seminary was Rev. D.P. Mandebvu in 1973 (Cronje 1982:132).

4.7 Mission and medical centres

Mugambi (1989:45) observes the importance of medical care for missionary work. In their pioneer phase missionary societies lost several members though tropical diseases such as

malaria. The missionaries saw the establishment of medical centres as a means of bridging between the fading Christian faith and the new scientific medicine. The medical personnel were active in evangelization. Medical centres acted as strategic places to the witness the message of the gospel and gave the missionaries opportunities to exercise their faith in a health environment (c.f. Porterfield 2005:51). Medical care and the use of drugs challenged the Shona belief system (Bennett 1971:52). The Shona people had several traditional ways of dealing with diseases. The missionary medical centres and the message of the gospel compelled the Shona converts to shun their traditional sources of health care.

Three years after the establishment of Morgenster Dr. John T. Helm arrived as the first missionary medical practitioner (Cronje 1982:126). He was indeed a rare gift to missionary community and the Shona people. In 1929 a hospital was opened with 50 beds. The hospital was named after him, Jon Helm Memorial Hospital. The second mission hospital was opened at Gutu. Dr. Helm brother was assisted by his brother, Sam Helm. With his knowledge of Greek and some Sotho, he immediately joined Rev Louw in Bible translation work together with evangelist Isaak Khumalo. According to Van der Merwe (1953:46) due to falling health Dr. Helm left Morgenster in 1914. For the next decade medical work was carried out by European sisters.

In 1924 Dr. Marrthinus Helperus Steyn came to Morgenster and there was a revival in the medical fraternity again. In 1924 a home for African orphans under the supervision of Miss. M. Hodgskin opened near the hospital. It closed down in 1944 (Van der Merwe 1953:46). The two wards at Morgenster hospitals were given names in honour of Dr. Helm and Cinie Louw. The Cinie Louw Memorial Hospital was opened in 1943 with wards for women and children. On the 5th of December 1952 an outpatient building was officially opened by the Honourable Mr. Greenfield the then minister of Justice and minister of Internal Affairs. A nursing course for African and boys and girls was offered at Morgenster. In 1952 approximately 40 girls and 10 boys enrolled as trainee nurses. The Morgenster Hospital also supervised other clinics outside it including one in Nyajena and one in Fort Victoria (Van der Merwe 1953:48). The healing of the sick was combined with the proclamation of the Gospel. Hospitals were used as means to reach

out with the gospel message. This approach is still one of the evangelism methods of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe. The hospital functioned both as a treatment centre of tropical diseases and referral centre of the demon possessed. The latter cases were later referred to Ngoma Huru psychiatric centre which was opened about 35 kilometres south west of Masvingo. According to Bourdillon (1990:133) another way of breaking down the traditional belief system especially regarding health issues and practices was to set up of a medical institution. Despite the introduction of medical institutions and the enforcement of restrictive church order observance the manifestations of demons never ceased to be a menace amongst the Shona worshipping communities.

The Karanga (Shona) people heal illness and diseases through a variety of ways that involved rituals and treatments carried out by the *n'angas* ‘traditional doctor’. Since the Karanga had a high regard of spirits, they are responsible for their health and welfare. They constantly performed ritual acts to remain in contact with the spirit world and to ward off illness and other forms of ills of life (Dube 2011:38). Church hospitals and clinics did play a part in evangelism, but the main way of achieving this was to get people within a range of verbal proclamation of the gospel (Dube 2011:177). A ward of full patients could be in some way providing opportunities of preaching. Western missionaries who came to Africa in the 19th and 20th century believed that sickness and disease were not only caused by witchcraft, but by bacteria, parasites and viruses and therefore tended to exercise the Christian ministry of healing through building hospitals and clinics (Dube 2011:178). According to Hagstad (2013:85) taking care of the sick, poor and destitute have been an essential ministry throughout the history of the church. According to Hastings (1976:64) Africans had inevitably challenged both in practice and in theory the Christian mission hospitals. According to Merwe (1980:86), many of the patients in mission hospitals had not been delivered from the grip of fear that their illness had largely been caused by magic or by malevolent spirits. According to Mugambi (1989:46) medical treatment was regarded as superior to the traditional indigenous methods of healing. “In 1953 it was reported that from Gutu; although the people freely avail themselves of our services, this does not mean imply that they have discarded their belief in witchcraft and traditional doctors. On the contrary, investigation has proved that they quite a large number have consulted the latter before coming to hospital,” (Van der Merwe 1980:86). This was a very important observation made by van de

Merwe but little was done to address the problem. Even today patients may visit the hospital after having consulted first other traditional or Pentecostal leaders for help. The challenge of the past is real to the present time and holistic approach may be of benefit to address the problem. According to Rich (2011:37), culture can act in a positive ways, offering strategies and paradigms that allow people to live in health and wholesomeness. Culture can also be path generic causing illness to those bound by the particular norms and values of their context.

4.8. The constitution of an indigenous church 1952

The missionary activities in the mission field left an indelible mark and their evangelism method proved effective in terms of converts who accepted the new religion. Both W.J. Van der Merwe and Dr. J.M. Cronje agree that the mission to the Shona was the only one were the White missionaries of the Dutch Reformed Church operated side by side with blacks. The idea to have a full properly constituted synod was raised elder C.A Nhapata. Thus from 1891 -1952 the young church in Rhodesia was under the Synod of DRC Cape. The motion was investigated and was later accepted that gave birth to an autonomous Shona African Reformed Church on the 9th of September 1952. This also its decisions and regulations were no longer to the approval of the Mission Council and the Mission Board (Van der Merwe 1981:124). Van der Merwe (1981:79) mentioned that in early missionary stages the Mission Council and Supervisors (*Vakururu*) were appointed by the local minister. Thus the local minister in collaboration with the nominated elders would exercise church discipline. In 1920 (Merwe 1981:79) the first local church council (*Rangano doko*) was established with laid down regulations for the African Reformed Church in Rhodesia. The Rangano *doko* consisted of the local missionary and one more elders according to the need of the congregation. The Mission Council constituted two presbyteries (*Rangano Huru*). The constitution of these two assemblies paved way to the constitution of the autonomous indigenous synod. According to the constitution of the RCZ section 2 (*Bhuku yemirairo yeKereke* 2010:1) “The Reformed Church shall consist of all the congregations in Zimbabwe founded or ceded to the Dutch Reformed in South Africa and other congregations found by it in and outside Zimbabwe.”

Van der Merwe (1953:52) indicated that by 1917 African congregations were organized into ten congregations and being supervised by two presbyteries. Another historic moment was set in

place on the 9th September 1952. This marked the establishment of the first synod of the Shona congregations with a constitution and laws as passed on from DRC. The church was then called the Shona Reformed Church. This young church was organized and was governed in a Reformed Presbyterian system. This autonomous position gave the Shona Reformed Church Synod the powers to organize its affairs. A second synodical meeting was held in 1954 and Rev Ngara was elected as the first black person on the Moderator. The Shona congregations which were founded by the mission of the Dutch Reformed Church Regional Synod Orange Free State) on 9th July of 1954 were transferred to Dutch Reformed Church Regional Synod Cape (Van der Merwe 1980:125). These congregations consisted of members in the rural and urban areas were affiliated to the Shona Reformed Church. In 1977 the name of the Shona Reformed Church was changed to the African Reformed Church (A.R.C). The official handover of the African Reformed Church took place on the 4th of May 1977 (Cronje 1982:132). After independence in April 1980 the church was renamed as the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe (RCZ).

According to Van der Merwe (1980:110) church discipline was executed where members of the Shona Reformed Church consulted diviners. The Shona Reformed Church also outlawed the use of African drums and clapping of hands in worship service. According to Van der Merwe (1980:22) many of the tunes and songs and even some of the musical instruments are associated with Shona tribal religion for this reason they were to be used with discrimination in Christian worship. An African has a distinct way of expression and the use of drum in worship service would actually play a complementary role. Mbiti (1975:61) mentions that Africans enjoy celebrating life and when people meet together for public worship they like to sing, dance and clap their hands and express their joy. People beat their drums, play musical instruments, dance and rejoice. Therefore music and dancing penetrates into the very being of the worshipping communities. Music in the Shona context communicates messages. It brings people together as they dance and all their worries are temporarily carried away. According to Van der Merwe (1980:81) the proclamation of the Gospel was supposed to lead the adherents of traditional African religion to a decision not to reject their African culture but a continuous purification of their culture and submission to Christ. The missionaries had a negative attitude to the African culture of drumming (Phobee 1979:57). In traditional societies drumming featured prominently whether for funerals, wars or entertainment. They were a means of conveying a message or

structuring a rhythm of songs. Africans cannot do without music and dancing (Ndiokwere 1994:181). Liturgies and doctrinal formularies that restrain dancing, the use of drums and the clapping of hands in the Church are simply exposing their un-African and European mentality. Thus music, the use of its instruments and dancing are such important pillars in the worship and religious life of the Shona people.

4.9 Demon possession and exorcism and Shona believers

According to Van der Merwe (1981:50) the Shona tribal religion has been ignored by the missionaries in their mission endeavours amongst the Shona. Kurehwa (1997:50) states that it was unfortunate that the missionaries did not study the African traditional religion. The missionaries emphasized on the submission to Christ. Categorically, demon possession and exorcism were regarded as heathenism. The Dutch missionaries from 1891 to 1956 encountered numerous challenges in their efforts to evangelize among the Shona people of Fort-Victoria province ‘now Masvingo’. The missionaries neglected and suppressed the Shona’s belief in the spirit world. A major error made by the early White missionary activity in Africa was that it forbade amulets, fetishes or ceremonies since all were seen as symbols of pagan worship. The overall attitude of missionaries towards African cultural practices was generally negative (Mugambi 1989:142). The Dutch Reformed Missionaries demanded that the Shona converts denounces and abandon their cultural and religious heritage before being confirmed as full communicants. Upon baptism the new converts to Christianity received a new name. Many Shona church members changed their traditional and clan totems in order to suit the demands of the Shona Reformed Church. The Shonas believe in good spirits “ancestral spirits” and evil spirits. According to TerHaar, Moyo and Nondo (1992:116), ancestors generally hold an important position in the cosmological order as being regarded with to have close relationship with the living beings. The spirits of the dead one form a united force called *vadzimu* ancestor spirit and this has multiple functions. To the whole group, the spirit provides protection, fertility and gives other the gift of healing. The distinction between these spirits is quite clear in the Shona tribal religion. According to this belief both these spirits can possess human beings, animals and nature too. Possession disregards age, sex, marital status and social position. The main difference lies in their functional roles. According to Merwe (1981:22) in the Shona people the issues of spirit possession remains evident. The missionaries however did not fully

comprehend the uniqueness of the Shona tribal religion. Hence they chose to ignore issues of spiritual concerns. This may explain why only few references are being made in the archival material of the Shona Reformed Church regarding to demon possession or exorcism. Bucher (1980:17) rightly confers that before the traditional tenets can be confronted with the gospel and judged by it there is need understand the cultural wrappings of the contexts of the people. Only then is one able to grasp their theological relevance and develop a strategy for their integration into the life of the local Church.

Spirit possession and or demon possession was rampant in the Shona traditional culture and the witchdoctors, magicians and diviners were consulted for exorcism rites on a regular account. Accepting the Christian God the converts of the Shona Reformed Church looked unto to the church for their spiritual problems. In order to answer the need the missionaries developed medical centres and offered medical health care a psychiatric care as well as training centres opened to their members and to the Shona tribes at large. During worship services of the Shona Reformed Church the demon possessed would scream and that caused disturbances and regularly interrupts the services. This was of great concern to the missionaries. The Reformed Church in Zimbabwe though its first Synods instituted penalties to anyone who practice demon exorcism in church or in private homes. The Synods of 1954, 1956 and 1976 made binding resolutions and church order regulations to this effect. According to the rules and regulations of the African Reformed Church (1976 articles 132:10) the use of all African musical instruments, songs and dancing in worship service was disallowed. These and other regulatory resolutions were crafted in attempt to minimize demonic related activities in the worship service. According to Hastings (1976:37) European missionaries with some few exceptions admitted that little if any value can be extracted from African culture and others really deny that Africa had a religion at all. Many missionaries were ignorant of the rich cultural heritage of the African societies in which they worked and resided. The assumption of the missionaries was that Christian mission, evangelization, civilization and conversion were inseparable (Mugambi 1989:42). Thus the new converts were expected to part from their traditional beliefs and live a new life in accordance with the teachings of the Gospel as presented to them by the missionaries. Mugambi (1989:23) mentioned that many Africans publicly declared their acceptance of Christianity under the terms and conditions set by the missionaries.

Zvobgo (1996:112) mentions that Reverend D.P.Mandebvu a retired minister and former principal of Murray Theological College at Morgenster categorically stated that missionaries were wrong in condemning African cultural practices such as demon exorcism and polygamy. Rev Mandebvu suggested that they should have started teaching the evils of such practices in worship service and the Shona would formulate rules for themselves. The early missionaries in Zimbabwe failed to adapt the gospel to the foreign cultures, but instead disregarded demon possession and exorcism in all its forms. The Shona people had practitioners amongst them who could have dealt with issues of demon possession and exorcism more appropriately than the missionaries. They should have been consulted to perform known rituals that would have cast away the evil spirits.

4.10 Conclusion

In Chapter 4 the key and some of the other research themes in the history of missionary Christianity and, especially, African Christianity – the RCZ namely conversion, colonialism, and land; different responses of white missionaries and African Christians, including the first generations of evangelists, clergy and lecturers; recognition and affirmation of ancestors, spirits and other issues in postcolonial Zimbabwe; medical care and healing of the sick as a condition and instrument of evangelism and denial of demon possession and exorcism are being expanded.

After a period of sixty years in the mission field the Dutch Reformed Mission gave autonomy to the indigenous Church. 9th of September 1952 marked the beginning of an autonomous Shona African Reformed Church. The church is currently known as the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe. The RCZ is therefore the brain child of the Dutch Reformed Church. The missionaries had long since surrendered the administration of the church in the hands of the indigenous black Shona people. The missionaries through the introduction of Christianity impacted the local African society positively namely access to education and health care. The Reformed Church in Zimbabwe is challenged to consider reviewing its Order of worship and practice in relationship to the spiritual needs of its congregants. Since 1891 to 2010 some sections of the Rules and Regulations of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe still reflects the world views of the missionaries in matters of demon possession and exorcism. Presumably,

Reformed Church in Zimbabwe's heritage and practice calls for a strategic transformation. It is a known fact that the Reformed Tradition provides resources for identity. The pathways/ traditions chosen by the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe create resources for identity. The traditional Shona person had trust in the natural ways regarding demon exorcism.

Although Van de Merwe should be credited for penning the history of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe in an academic research, it should be noted that Van de Merwe as a white missionary lacked appreciation and understanding of the Shona traditional worldview. Hence the reconstruction of a contextual Shona worldview with regard to demon exorcism remains a challenge for the RCZ.

CHAPTER 5

Church judicial analysis of restrictions of the Shona belief system in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe

5.1 Introduction

The Reformed Church in Zimbabwe was formed in a specific cultural context where the Shona people believed in the existence of the spirits. The Shona's believe that evil spirits are the prime causes of sickness and other misfortune in the society. The Reformed Church in Zimbabwe's members is being influenced by their cultural background. There is great need today in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe's members to repent of non-Christian beliefs and practices which they still adhere too. There are two groups of people with in Reformed Church in Zimbabwe. Exorcism as a form of healing which in turn brings about reconciliation and integration appears to be a better solution. The Reformed Church in Zimbabwe though it's first Synods instituted regulations that saw the harsh penalty be prescribed to anyone who practice demon possession and exorcism in church or in private homes. The practice of demon possession and exorcism has not received any meaningful attention in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe. Under the current scenario those who claim to have the gifts of an exorcism fear to display the God given gift. It is punishable offence in the Rules and Regulation of the Reformed Church to practice exorcism in the Church.

One should take cognizance of the fact that the cultural background of the African Reformed Church in Rhodesia (ARC) is the traditional Shona religion, whereas the communication with ancestral spirits and Shavi spirits forms a vital part of the Shona people. The Shona's believed in the good spirits "ancestral spirits" and the evil spirits. The nature of the Shona tribal religion has often been ignored in the missionary approach amongst the Shona people and with the draft of the Church Order of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe (c.f. Merwe 1981:50). The missionaries did not fully comprehend the rich Shona tribal religion. Hence they chose to ignore issues of spiritual concerns. For example during worship service possessed people would regularly interrupt worship. This is of great concern to the missionaries. The synods of 1956 made a binding resolution to this effect and were made into a rule. According to the rules and

regulation of the African Reformed Church in Rhodesia (*African Reformed Church rules and regulation* 1976: rule 132:10a) all musical instruments were disallowed in a worship service.

According to (Van der Merwe 1981:19) the *n'angas*, diviners and the herbalists played a protected in the Shona society against evil spirits and witchcraft. The prevalence of the spirits, spirit possession amongst the Shona could provide clues to the formation of some sections of the *African Reformed Church in Rhodesia Church Order*. The rules for the African Reformed Church in Rhodesia were laid down by the Mission Council. Van der Merwe (1981:79) mentioned that in early missionary stages the Mission Council and Supervisors (*Vakururu*) were appointed by the local minister. Thus the local minister collaboration with the nominated elders would exercise church discipline. The researcher will attend to decisions of the Synodical commission and synod regarding to the discipline of people who consulted diviners or witchdoctors. The Shona African Reformed Church, later called the African Reformed Church, was constituted in a rich cultural and spiritual background where communication with ancestral spirits and *shavi* spirits formed a vital part in the traditional Shona religion. Demons are regarded as causative agents of physical sickness, anti-social behaviour, witchcraft and many other form of satanic behaviour. The rules and regulations of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe are loaded with the perspectives of the missionaries regarding the belief system of the Shona congregants. Under the current scenario those who claim to have the gifts of an exorcism fear to display it in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe. It is punishable offence in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe to practice demon exorcism. In this chapter attention will be given to a church judicial assessment of the church order regulations in place in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe concerning consulting of diviners, witchdoctors or healing ministry.

5.2. Discipline in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe

Discipline of the Church refers to is when it exercises its authority on behalf of Christ in order to promote unity and purity of the assembly. According to Hanko (1963:111) Christian discipline has a spiritual nature. Its aim is to reconcile the sinner with God and the neighbour, and to remove the offence from the church of Christ. According to Hanko the exercise of Christian discipline is itself the preaching of the gospel. Offense must be removed from the church of Christ. “Offense,” in the scriptural meaning of that word, is that which causes another to stumble. The Church Order mentions two classes of sins for which censure is applied: error in

doctrine and offense in conduct. The idea of the Church Order is surely not that all sins become the object of ecclesiastical discipline.

In the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe the elder is responsible for bringing a written charge before the secretary of Council. Issues of rebuke may not necessarily require a judicial hearing unless if there are written charges. In doing so the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe embraces a church judicial principle regarding discipline which was approved by the Convention of Wezel, 1568, namely “In case anyone errs in doctrine or offends in conduct, as long as the sin is of a private character, not giving public offense, the rule clearly prescribed by Christ in Matthew 18 shall be followed.” Matthew 18:15-17 reads as follows: “Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglects to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.” (Hanko 1963: 116-117).

In the RCZ drinking of beer, smoking and consulting of diviners and witch doctors is being seen as gross offences. The articles in the *Church Order of the African Reformed Church 1975* (90-91 article 151.a- f) and *Reformed Church in Zimbabwe's Church Order 2010* (article 120.0 – 120.8) is more or less the same:

- Article 120. *Zvivi zvingapiwa chirango*: Offenses that may attract discipline.
- 120.1 *Mutezo unonwa doro nokufuta fodya*: Christians who drink beer and smoke.
- 120.4 *Mutezo unoenda kugumbwa*. A member who consult diviners’
- 120.5 *Kuenda kugumbwa uye kuenda kun'anga nekiuta upombwe* Consulting the diviners and witch doctors as well as adultery
- 127.1 *Mutezo weKereke haatenderwi kubika, kunwa, kutengesazvose zvinodaka*: Christians are not allowed to brew beer, drink or to sale it or any intoxicating liquor.
- 128.1 *Mitambo yakanaka inoitwa pasina doro*: Good Christian programs are where there is no beer.

This is an indication that from its conception the Shona Reformed Church regulates the drinking of beer, smoking and consulting of diviners and witch doctors. According to Lewis (2003:121-122) the Shona-speaking tribes of Zimbabwe have a very vigorous shamanistic religion. The above regulations drafted by the missionaries therefore try to restrict any shamanistic activity in

the Shona Reformed Church, which is currently known as the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe. Numerous Reformed Churches across the globe also listed a number of gross sins. For example the Christian Reformed Church in North America list the following gross sins which are worthy of being punished with suspension or deposition from office, namely: false doctrine or heresy, public schism, public blasphemy, simony, faithless desertion of office or intrusion upon that of another, perjury, adultery, fornication, theft, acts of violence, habitual drunkenness, brawling, filthy lucre; in short, all sins and gross offenses as render the perpetrators infamous before the world, and which in any private member of the church would be considered worthy of excommunication (Hanko 1963: 116-117).

5.2.1 Discipline regarding drinking beer and smoking

Members of the RCZ can be disciplined for drinking beer and smoking. According to Article 120.1, (*Mutezo unonwa doro nokufuta fodya*: Christians who drink beer and smoke.) article 127.1 (*Mutezo weKereke haatenderwi kubika, kunwa, kutengesazvose zvinodaka*: Christians are not allowed to brew beer, drink or to sale it or any intoxicating liquor.) and article 128.1 (*Mitambo yakanaka inoitwa pasina doro*: Good Christian programme is where there is no beer) brewing, drinking or selling of beer is an offence liable to be disciplined by either the church council, presbytery or synod (*Church Order of the RCZ*) . A member of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe guilty of such an offence could be suspended for a period of approximately six months. Van der Merwe (1981:81) indicated that the question of beer drinking came repeatedly under discussion in the Shona reformed Church and the later African Reformed Church. Most important ceremonies in the Shona culture involve offerings of millet beer to the spirits concerned. Small libations are poured, and the remainder is consumed by the gathering, amid singing and dancing. From 1908 to 1915 the Mission Council rejected the Shona converts requests to be allowed to continue with beer drinking. The missionaries agreed to teach the Shona on the evil of drinking rather than imposing severe punishment. According to Merwe (1981:108) the brewing and drinking of beer was of grave concern in the Shona Reformed Church. The Shona people were subjected to the influences of the missionaries at the mission stations, mission hospitals and mission training cents. These restricting's embedded in the church order of the RCZ altered the worldview of the Shona people regarding beer drinking,

smoking and consulting of diviners and witch doctors. In Chapter 4 the researcher refers to the worldview of the Korekore Shona and the Zezuru Shona. The missionaries knew that these two tribes have an elaborated shamanistic religion. For example before the bira ceremony, welcome the wandering spirit of the deceased, is conducted huge quantities of beer is brewed from *rapoko* or *kiffir* corn. The Shona usually travels to the grave with a pot of beer, a wooden plate of snuff (ground tobacco) and *sadza nenyama*. At the grave site, they will pour the beer over the grave and place the other items on it. An elder person, maybe the deceased's son will kneel and say a prayer of welcome to the deceased name, "We are calling you back home to be with us. Please guide and protect your family. If there is anything you need please let us know. Be kind to us". These words mark the incorporation of the wandering spirit back into the family circle. On the next morning, the relatives take several small pots of beer to the cattle kraal. They pour the beer on a bull's head. If the bull shakes its head, then it is believed the spirits are happy otherwise the next person pours their pot of beer until the bull shakes its head. As soon as the bull shakes its head, the family will celebrate and women in attendance will ululate (*Kupururudza*) to signal the grand finale of the ceremony.² Due to above connotation regarding beer in the Shona culture, the missionaries laid therefore restrictions in the Shona Reformed Church regarding the brewing, drinking selling of beer. Church discipline was executed against the offenders

Van der Merwe (1981:81) stated that the question of beer drinking repeatedly came for discussion in various Synods stretching from early as 1956. From 1908 to 1915 the Mission council turned away the Shona request to be allowed to continue with beer drinking. The missionaries agreed to teach the Shona on the evil of drinking rather than imposing severe punishment. According to Van der Merwe (1981:108) said that the brewing and drinking of beer was of grave concern. Hence the tradition still is practiced in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe. Later a form of what was presented as moderate beer (*Mangisi*) was permitted represented by article 165 of the African Reformed Church.

Later provision was made in the Church Order of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe to allow members to drink a moderated form of beer (*Mangisi*) (article 165. *Chidya mangisi chisina*

mvuviro chinovata usiku humwe chinotendwa. The aforementioned article was revoked between the synod of 2002 and 2004 (*Reformed Church in Zimbabwe Acts of synod 2002 and 2004*). Meaning that currently members of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe is restricted to brew, drink or sell beer.

5.2.2. Discipline regarding consulting of diviners and witch doctors

According 120.4. (*Mutezo unoenda kugumbwa*) a member who consult diviners and article 120.5 (*Kuenda kugumbwa uye kuenda kun'anga nekiuta upombwe*) or visits diviners or wizards even in the case of adultery, is liable to be disciplined by the church council, presbytery or synod. The missionaries knew that diviners were considered to deal with the moral order and with the relations of Shona people. The missionaries equated traditional healers (sangomas / shamans) with "witch doctors." The missionaries therefore restricted visitation of members of the RCZ to the diviners and witch doctors. According to Lewis (2003:123) at ritual séances held to honour the spirits, the possessed diviner exhorts the people of his neighbourhood to shun such evils as incest, adultery, sorcery and homicide, and emphasizes the value of harmony in social relations. The missionaries therefore restricted the Shona people to visit diviners and witch doctors even in the case of adultery. Disputes are usually taken to the diviner for settlement in a Shona cultural context. *The Rules and Regulations of the Shona Reformed Church* drafted by the missionaries replaced the latter. Church Council, presbyteries as well as synods function in the Shona Reformed Church, currently the RCZ, as the judiciary in the case of disputes. In such cases the Church Council may call the offender to appear before the church council as stated in article 118 of the *Church Order of the RCZ*. If the offender deliberately refuses to appear before the Church Council a decision may be taken in his/her absence as guided by article 118.3 of the *Church Order of the RCZ*. The provisions in Article 120.4 (a member who consult diviners) and article 120.5 (Consulting the diviners and witch doctors as well as adultery) should be read against the cultural back ground of the Shona Reformed Church. According to Lewis shamans are the foci for relations between the living and dead members of their localized kin groups, and also act as arbiters of minor disputes (Lewis 2003:126). The missionaries tried to restrict the influence of the diviners on the members of the Shona Reformed Church. Therefore they restricted any consultation with a diviner or a witch doctor (Lewis 2003:126). Due to the mission endeavours spirit mediums dwindled in their numbers and following and lost their power and prestige to the rising new élite of Shona evangelists and teachers in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe.

Members of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe are deeply affected these regulations. A new morality, validated by the Christian faith, thus gradually replaced the old authority of the ancestor spirits (Lewis 2003:127)

In *Synod African Reformed Church Report 1972* about concerns regarding the strict disciplinary measures which were supposed to be taken against members who are guilty of offences as listed in Rule (*murairo*) 120.0 to 120.8 (See Addendum 1 item c *Doro; Kuporeswa 1; Shamhu yeKereke 3*). According to this *Report* the problem of beer brewing and drinking was prevalent among all Christians. The report reveals that the membership of the African Reformed Church in Rhodesia dropped with about 11% due to members in order to avoid being discipline left the African Reformed Church in Rhodesia or after being disciplined simply left the church due to these harsh restrictions. Furthermore the Report shows that the majority of these members who left the African Reformed Church in Rhodesia are males. The *Report* indicated clearly that members of the African Reformed Church in Rhodesia migrated to other denominations which have no objection to beer drinking (See Addendum1). The Synod of 1972 resolved that “drunkards” be suspended from participating at Holy Communion, praying in the public and restricted from taking any leading role for a period not less than six months (*Synod African Reformed Church Report 1972; item c Doro; Kuporeswa 1; Shamhu yeKereke 3*).

Van der Merwe (1981:86) mentions already in the 1980’s that was evident that many patients in mission hospitals had not been largely been delivered from the grip of fear that their illness was caused by malevolent spirits. Many members of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe would come to church and hospital after seeking consulting the diviners. However any member of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe who may either attempt to cast out demons is liable for church discipline (c.f. Article 120.4 and 120.5). Consulting the diviners and witch doctors as well as adultery is being treated in the same category. According to Merwe (1981:109) especially during the pioneering stages of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe issues of polygamy and other marriage practices were discussed in successive synods. There is however no case studies of people who have been discipline regarding practicing demon exorcism. The possibility is there that people could have left the church, lapsed, backslid or joined other faith groups

In 2005 five members of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe, *inter alia* Mr. Jacob Muyeye, Mr. Madzimure, Mr. and Mrs. Marimira and Mr. F. Mudadi were disciplined and suspended for a period of twelve months each. They were accused of being habitual drunkards and indulged in smoking. The Jichidza Mission Church Council constituted during June 2005 in order to hear the case. The researcher was the chairperson of Jichidza congregation when the above mentioned members received their suspensions. Of the five suspended Mr Jacob Muyeye was disciplined on two accounts of drinking and smoking.

Article 120.4 (*Mutezo unoenda kugumbwa*. A member who consult diviners) and article 120.5 (*Kuenda kugumbwa uye kuenda kun'anga nekiuta upombwe* Consulting the diviners and witch doctors as well as adultery) makes provision that the vocation to a diviner is an offence liable to be disciplined by the governing structures of the RCZ. Shamans are the foci for relations between the living and dead members of their localized kin groups, and also act as arbiters of minor disputes (Lewis 2003:126). The missionaries therefor try to restrict the influence of the diviners on the members of the Shona Reformed Church. Therefore they restricted any consultation with a diviner or a witch doctor (Lewis 2003:126). Members of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe are deeply affected these regulations. According to Lewis spirit mediums dwindled in their numbers and following and lost their power and prestige to the rising new élite of Shona evangelists and teachers A new morality, validated by the Christian faith, thus gradually replaced the old authority of the ancestor spirits (Lewis 2003:127)

5.2.3. Discipline regarding involvement in demon exorcism and divine healing

In May 2011, two first year students, Simbarashe Mutimhodyo and Paddington Chibonore, training as ministers of the Word were suspended from Murray Theological College after attending a deliverance crusade in Harare (c.f. Addendum 2 *Murray Theological College 3 July 2011 Circular*). One of the reasons for suspension was that they fellowshipped with churches which execute demon exorcism and divine healing.

The Synodical committee of the RCZ deliberated on 27 January 2012 over the case of the Hatcliff presbytery. The issue was about healing ministry that was believed to have started among some members of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe within the resort of the presbytery.

The presbytery suspended two elders and other members for advancing this ministry which teachings were in contrast with the doctrinal teachings of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe. Amongst others the suspended members were engaged in demon exorcism and other faith based healing practices. The Synodical Committee meeting of 2012 endorsed the suspension of the members and tasked the General Secretary to notify all congregations that such healing ministry was not a welcome to Reformed Church in Zimbabwe and that all the followers of this movement would be disciplined (*RCZ Synodical Committee Minutes 27/01/2012*). The office of the General Secretary issued a *Circular* which was send to all ministers of the Word and Church Councils (*Reformed Church in Zimbabwe Circular No GS 03/12*). The *Circular* states the following regarding the Heartfelt Ministries:

The Synodical Committee that sat on 27 January 2012 received information from Hatcliff Presbytery that Heartfelt is causing confusion in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe (RCZ) Congregations of the same Presbytery. May you be informed that Heartfelt Ministries is not acknowledged in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe? (*Reformed Church in Zimbabwe Circular No GS 03/12*).

The ministry of demon exorcism and all the adherents to such belief and practice are subject to discipline in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe. The Church Councils were encouraged to use this circular, *Reformed Church in Zimbabwe Circular No GS 03/12*. in conjunction with rule 120.5. Consulting diviners and demon exorcism are judged under one act. The Reformed Church in Zimbabwe has no place for demon exorcism. The suspension and the dispatch of the *Circular* to all Reformed Church in Zimbabwe congregations may signal the need to have a clear defined position in regards to demon possession and exorcism. Van der Merwe (1981:86) mentioned that it became evident that many patients in Mission hospitals had not been largely been delivered from the grip of fear that their illness was caused by malevolent spirits. Thus many Christians would come to church and hospital after seeking consulting the diviners. Demon possession was a reality among the people. Any member today who may either attempt to cast out demons is liable for church discipline under the code of this rule. Practicing demon exorcism is viewed with different perception in the RCZ and could be seen as a revival of spirit of divination.

5.3. Church governance structures of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe

According to the constitution of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe the Reformed Church shall consist of all the congregations in Zimbabwe founded or ceded to the Dutch Reformed in South Africa and other congregations found by it in and outside Zimbabwe (section 2 *Bhuku yemirairo yeKereke* 2010:1); 2.1). The governance structures of the RCZ comprise of the Church Council (*Dare rekereke*); the presbytery (*Rangano Huru*); Synodical Committee (*Komiti yeSynod*) and the General Synod. The administrative function of the four governing structures is being carried out through the procedures in the *Rules and Regulation Manual Book* as approved by the General Synod.

5.3.1 The Church Council (*Dare rekereke*)

The Church Council is made up of all serving elders, deacons/ness, minister(s), youth counsellors who by virtue of their office reside in that congregation (*Bhuku yemirairo yeKereke* Section 7. 2010:3). Offenders are invited to attend and give their account. If member decides not attend a hearing the council shall pass a judgment basing upon rule 117.3 *Kana Mutezo ichriramba kuuya kudare mhaka yake ichatongwa kunyange iye asipo* 'If a member refuses to appear before the church council, judgment shall be passed in his/her absences. This principle applies to both assemblies that have the mandate of passing on church discipline. However, extensive investigations are done to avoid judgment of error. Both the church council and presbytery meetings are held under closed doors meaning observer are not allowed in. The Reformed Church in Zimbabwe is modelled and governed according to Presbyterian system. The resolution of a church council after the hearing is communicated in two ways, either it is pronounced in his/her presence during the full a church council or the secretariat may be requested to inform the member in written of the verdict. Members have the right of appeal if they feel the decision passed lacked merit. Appeals are considered worth if they are written and submitted within a period of two weeks. Depending on the gravity of the case the council may decide to invite the candidate for re-trial or may simply forward it to the presbytery committee. In the case of elders and deacons and all spiritual workers the church council forward their names to the presbytery committee for a hearing. In the case of the ordained clergy the

presbytery recommend the case to the synod or its executive committee for judgment. Offenders are invited to defend themselves, and if they fail to appear without any reasonable excuse a verdict is passed on.

5.3.2 Presbytery (Rangano Huru) (Rule 24 to 41.6)

Presbyteries are formed by all congregations which fall under (Section 9.1 to 9.4 *Bhuku yemirairo yeKereke* 2010:3). The presbytery has judicial responsibility over all the congregations it superintends. In the RCZ governance procedure they are the second legislative council which passes on judicial decisions on its members. The presbytery presides over issues pertaining the elders and deacons, all spiritual workers under its jurisdiction. However, on matters affecting spiritual worker it gathers all the information suspend the person and forward the case for disciplinary by the synod assembly or its synod committee. All members have the right to be heard and right of appeal if they feel they were not fairly judged. The presbytery has the obligation to monitor the proper ministry of the word in all congregations which fall under its jurisdiction. The presbytery is the immediate supervisor of the councils and spiritual workers falling in its geographical area (Rule 33; 34 & 41 *Responsibilities of the Presbytery in Bhuku yemirairo yeKereke*). The presbytery presides over all issues brought before it with due diligent. It is mandated to make sure the doctrines of the church are adhered to. Like the church council, the presbytery has the judicial responsibility over all congregants under its spiritual care. During its business meetings the *Bhuku yemirairo yeKereke* of the RCZ remains an important instrument in passing on judgments.

5.3.3 The Synod (Rule.10-12 and & 43-48)

The synod of the RCZ is the supreme body of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe and is constituted by all, serving ministers, minister assigned to other departmental duties, all spiritual workers and each nominated delegate (*Bhuku yemirairo yeKereke* 2010 Rule.10-12 and & 43-48. *The Synod assembly*). The synod of the RCZ is authorized to make, amend and repeal laws and provisions of its own management. The synod has both legislative and judicial authority over all matters and is responsible for maintaining compliance with the provisions of its constitution (*Bhuku yemirairo yeKereke* 2010.4). Any member or council that may feel a synod resolution was not well taken shall raise a complaint in written form with his /her signature(s) appended and

should be done six after the sitting of a synod. All synod deliberations are done in open door as opposed to council and presbytery meetings. The synod has the right to excommunicate and to pronounce disciplinary action upon its spiritual workers. The synod is the last court of appeal by its members and councils and has powers to discipline all of its members. All matters of discipline at the synod level do not require a judicial hearing unless there are written charges that either party or the presbytery determines require a judicial hearing. It reserves the authority to excommunicate members who may have failed to adhere to the doctrine of the RCZ.

5.3 Conclusion

Chapter 5 shows that the views and responses in the past and present have influenced the rules, regulations and discipline of the RCZ with regards to church discipline on following matters: ‘drinking of beer, smoking and consulting of diviners and witch doctors which is being seen as gross offences’ (p. 83-84); involvement in demon exorcism and divine healing (see cases on p. 89 and 89). Church members and the leadership of the RCZ are confronted with similar cases currently.

The premise of the researcher is that guidelines should be develop guidelines from all the chapters of the thesis to dialogue with the leadership of the RCZ and thereby capacitate and enable them to change the relevant articles of the church order of the RCZ. The Reformed Church in Zimbabwe is being challenged to amend its church order and to take Reformed church polity principles regarding discipline into account in order to address demon exorcism, spirit possession, consultation of diviners and witch doctors and beer drinking appropriately.

Chapter 6

Censure and admonition in Reformed Church in Zimbabwe

6.1 Introduction

Since the establishment of the Church, the missionaries and African Christians (re)formulated and grappled with the articles due to diverse responses of leaders and members. Members who were or are affected by decisions either remain silent or leave the RCZ and join other churches, particular the African Independent Churches and African Pentecostal Churches. From the beginning of postcolonial Zimbabwe, new challenges and opportunities emerged for the RCZ: re-recognition and reaffirmation of traditional diviners or healers, exorcism rituals, and the formation of a legal board of Zimbabwe Traditional Healer Association (ZINATHA). The changes have provided opportunities and encouraged some members of RCZ to approach ZINATHA. Nyamiti (2006:144) says that healing power plays an important aspect in the ancestral quality in African Traditional beliefs. Healing is a fundamental feature of both African Traditional Religion and Christianity (Shoko 2011:19). Shoko (2011:18) observes that earlier healing in the mainline churches in Africa has not drawn much attention, but there is currently a growing awareness of the importance of healing ministry in these churches. Daneel (1988:457) mentions that one of the key attractions of the African independent churches movements is its ability to combine the Christianity with the philosophy of the African Traditional beliefs. What remains critical in the mainline Christianity is their approach to healing. Therefore it is critical and vital to relook into Christ's healing methods with regard to the African perspective on the healing and exorcism. The healing and exorcism of Jesus had an apologetic and salvific function; it manifested Christ's power, love messianic and divinity. Healing is central to African worldview; it includes restoration of the broken physical, psychologically and spiritually. It means a return to wholeness; it includes inner healing and rebuilding broken relationship (Healey 1996:298). Exorcism has double effect to the people, it drives out a demon and brings normalcy. Healey (1996:298) notes that healing and casting out of demons can be one of the contributions the African churches can make Christianity. Many African independent churches feature healing at the centre of their worship. Demon exorcism restores the individual back to his/her full capacities and re-establishes his/her relation with the family, community and nature (c.f. Gaiser (2010:124).

Misconceptions about demon possessions well as [as well as] the influence of the missionaries on the RCZ [RCZ's] theological framework of thinking contributed to the current aloofness of the RCZ on demon exorcism. The Reformed Church in Zimbabwe appears to be lukewarm when it comes to issues dealing with demon possession and exorcism. The practice of demon exorcism remains controversial in the RCZ. Taking account of the research findings in chapters 2-5 attention is given in this chapter to develop guidelines from all the chapters of the thesis in order to dialogue with the leadership of the RCZ and thereby capacitate and enable them to change the relevant articles of the Church Order of the RCZ taking into account the current theological, ecclesiastical and cultural-religious contexts of RCZ. The ministry and mission of Jesus, highlight themes of salvation, healing and liberation in the Kingdom of God

The presumption of the researcher is that the RCZ should take account in the redrafting of their Church Order of the following Reformed Church Polity principles in order to

- (i) The parity of the clergy as distinct from a *jure divino* hierarchy whether papal or prelatic.
- (ii) The participation of the Christian laity in church government and discipline.
- (iii) Strict discipline to be exercised jointly by ministers and lay-elders, with the consent of the whole congregation (c.f. Schaff 1882, 333-336.; Plaatjies van Huffel 2016:29-48).

6.2 Church Judicial proposals to the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe

The researcher propose that the *Church Order of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe* should make provision for the ministry of exorcism; a liturgy on exorcism; theological dialogue, in order to address the problem of exorcism in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe. Taking the rich Shona cultural background in to account (c.f. Chapter 3), the church judicial provisions build in by the missionaries in the church order of the Shona Reformed Church and the later Reformed Church in Zimbabwe (c.f. Chapter 4) to curb any influence of the Shona culture in the church (c.f. Article 120 of *Church Order of the RCZ*), the prevalence of spirit possession even amongst members of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe (c.f. Chapter 5); the current secrecy around the consultation of diviners in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe (c.f. Chapter 5); the provisions made by the government of a legal representative board called ZINHATA (Zimbabwe Traditional Healers Association) which makes legal proviso for citizen to consult

diviners or traditional healers; the time has come for the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe to address this issue appropriately.

Theological dialogue about demon possession, spirit possession and exorcism is needed in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe. The Theological Seminary should play a leading role in the discussions. The RCZ is being challenged to revisit their theological church judicial premises regarding demon and or spirit possession as well as exorcism taking into account that both Luther and Calvin believe that the charisma of healing to be restricted to the apostolic age (Bloesch 1970:124).

The 2010 Synod of the RCZ adopted the recommendations of its functional committee, Doctrinal and Research Committee. Basically, the committee was tasked to look into issues of the work of the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues, mass prayer and laying on of hands to the sick. The Synod accepts the following as the official policy of the RCZ on the issue:

- (i) The church accepts that the laying on of hands is Biblical taking into consideration context and culture practiced in other Reformed families.
- (ii) The Reformed church cannot base on Mark 16:17-18 because it has different theological reflections which in textual criticism cannot be taken as the liturgical critic
- (iii) Laying on of hands for bestowal of health should be done by ministers as led by the Holy Spirit. The ministers should not lay hands as tradition or liturgy but should be in context.
- (iv) Healing is from God is our basis of understanding. We also hope and pray that our ministers become mature on laying on of hands.
- (v) As a church we need to be very careful because by laying on of hands evil spirits can transferred (Acts 19:13-16); (*Doctrinal Research Findings adopted by Reformed Church in Zimbabwe Synod Acts 2010*).

6.2.4. No lordship over anyone

The Reformed Church in Zimbabwe, however, should embrace the Reformed church judicial principles namely none has the right to lord it over anyone else. At the Synod of Emden (1571) the article regarding the equity of believers and church governance structures was adopted: “No church shall in any way lord it over other churches, no minister over other ministers, no elder or deacon over other elders or deacons” (c.f. Hanko 1963: 84). This article is one of the

fundamental principles of Reformed church polity. Each congregation (whether large or small) is a complete manifestation of the body of Christ, all congregations are equal in the federation of churches and none has the right to lord it over any other congregation. The same is true of office-bearers. All ministers are equal in authority and no minister may lord it over any other minister. All elders and deacons are equal and none may lord it over any other office-bearer, either in his own congregation or in another (c.f. Hanko 1963: 84). All office-bearers, occupying their own offices, are also equal in authority, each manifesting the authority of Christ in the way peculiar to the office he occupies.

All ministers and elders and deacons are equal in authority. The same power Christ bestows both on ministers of the Word and Church Council members. Therefore a special office like the office of an exorcist as in the Roman Catholic Church, Pentecostal churches, Charismatic churches or African Independent Churches cannot be installed in the Reformed Church of Zimbabwe. In Reformed churches there are only three offices namely ministers of the word, elders and deacons (cf. Beattie 2007, 1-8, Gray and Tucker 2004, 2-11; Engle and Cowan 2004 74-98).

6.2.5. Rebuking , suspension and withdrawal of privileges

The Reformed Church in Zimbabwe should take cognizance that church discipline may take place in form of rebuking the offenders, suspension from partaking the communion and withdrawal of other privileges of being a member (c.f. Hall 1994:3; Brand & Norman 2004:135; 4; Shorter 1994:121; Bloesch 1970:73; Schaeffer 1984:165; Berkouwer 1976:363; Galley 2006:62-70; White 1975:64; Evans 2002:174; Harrison 1985:166-167; Gray 1999:158-163; Hagstad (2013:138). The understanding and formulation of the Rules and Regulations (Church laws) in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe has to be understood in the context of its heritage and the wider view of the Reformed family. Reformed church orders like John Calvin's *Genevan Ecclesiastical Ordinances*, Gysbertus Voetius's *Politica Ecclesiastica*, make ample provision for censure and admonition. It seems however as if this reformed church polity principle regarding the discipline of members was ignored by the missionaries who worked amongst the Shona people. The researcher will attend in this section to the reformed principles regarding discipline as conveyed by Hanko in his Notes *on the Church Order*. According to

Hanko (1963: 71) *Christian discipline* is of a spiritual nature, and exempts to reconcile the sinner with the church and his neighbour and to remove the offense out of the church of Christ. The exercise of Christian discipline is itself the preaching of the Word of God. Admonitions and reproofs are therefore a part of Christian discipline. The basis for the exercise of discipline is completely scriptural (cf., e.g., Ex. 22:20; Lev. 24:11-16; Matt. 16:16-19 and Matthew 18:15-20; John 20:23; Romans 16:17; I Thessalonians 5:14; II Thessalonians 3:6, 14; I Timothy 5:1, 2; I Corinthians 5:1-5 e.a.). Never should the motive in discipline be “to kick out” an individual from the church. If sin appears in the body of Christ which disrupt the communion and fellowship of the faithful this offense must be removed, both for the sake of the church as a whole and for the sake of the individual members in the church. By the refusal to repent, the accused can be excommunicated (Hanko 1963: 71). The article *In case anyone errs in doctrine or offends in conduct, as long as the sin is of a private character, not giving public offense, the rule clearly prescribed by Christ in Matthew 18* shall be followed appears in our Church Order in essentially the same form in which it was adopted by the Convention of Wezel, 1568 (Hanko 1963: 72). Matthew 18:15-17 reads as follows: “Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglects to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. The Synod of Emden made also provision Secret sins of which the sinner repents, after being admonished by one person in private or in the presence of two or three witnesses, shall not be laid before the consistory. It ruled that secret sins which constituted a grave threat to the church or State ought to be reported to the minister of the church even though these sins were repented of. The purpose was to gain the advice of the minister so that the one who was aware of the sin might know what further to do about it to protect the church. This provision was dropped by the Synod of Dordt in 1578 (Hanko 1963: 73). Calvin already in his Genevan *Ecclesiastical Ordinances* states that those who have committed a public or otherwise gross sin shall be suspended from the Lord’s Supper. The following was listed as in the *Church Order of Dort* as gross sins: false doctrine or heresy, public schism, public blasphemy, simony, faithless desertion of office or intrusion upon that of another, perjury, adultery, fornication, theft, acts of violence, habitual drunkenness, brawling, filthy lucre (Hanko 1963: 80). Those who have

committed a public or gross sin after being repeatedly admonition, show no signs of repentance, the consistory shall at last proceed to excommunication as the last resort. No one shall be excommunicated except with advice of the classis. Suspension does not only involve barring the sinner from communion, but it also involves barring him/her from all membership privileges. Such an impenitent sinner has no right to the sacrament of baptism, to vote on a congregational meeting, to protest and appeal in matters other than his own case (Hanko 1963: 76).

After the suspension from the Lord's table, and subsequent admonitions, and before proceeding to excommunication, the obstinacy of the sinner shall be publicly made known to the congregation; the offense explained, together with the care bestowed upon him, in reproof, suspension from the Lord's Supper, and repeated admonition; and the congregation shall be exhorted to speak to him and to pray for him. There shall be three such admonitions. In the first the name of the sinner shall not be mentioned that he be somewhat spared. In the second, with the advice of the classis, his name shall be mentioned. In the third the congregation shall be informed that (unless he repents) he will be excluded from the fellowship of the church, so that his excommunication, in case he remains obstinate, may take place with the tacit approbation of the church. The interval between the admonitions shall be left to the discretion of the consistory. (Hanko 1963: 77).

Excommunication is the final step of discipline. When ministers of the divine Word, elders, or deacons have committed any public, gross sin they should be suspended with immediate effect (Hanko 1963: 79). This however does not mean that sinning office bearers must be suspended even before proper investigation is carried out. Removal from office is discipline. It is the statement of Christ that such a one is unworthy to function in the name of Christ in the church. Suspension means a temporary barring from active functioning in the office. An office-bearer cannot, under suspension, perform the duties of his office in any respect. (Hanko 1963: 79). Office-bearers, who are suspended, but, fail to repent, can be deposed from office. When an office-bearer is deposed from office, he/she holds that office no longer. In the case of ministers of the Word, as in the case of church council members, their suspension can take place only

with the approval of the presbytery (c.f. Hanko 1963: 79). Only a presbytery can finally depose a minister. Calvin introduces mutual censure, *censura morum* among office-bearers in the church in Geneva (c.f. Hanko 1963: 81). The Synod of Dordt, meeting in 1578, made provision that the ministers of the Word, elders, and deacons shall before the celebration of the Lord's Supper exercise Christian censure among them, and in a friendly spirit admonish one another with regard to the discharge of their office. According to the Rules and Regulations manual book of the RCZ Rule number 110 says: The purpose of church discipline is; (1) The purpose of the church discipline is done in order to benefit the church and its members, and (2) This is done in accordance with the teaching of the Word of God and the teaching of church laws. This is to be done in love such that sinners may be helped and it has to be impartial. Therefore this section together with Article 121 shows exactly the ways of disciplining the offender:

Article 121. Ways of disciplining offenders

Article 121.1. The offender is warned in the presence of the minister and an elder

Article 121.2. Offenders are warned and told of their verdict in the presence of the whole Church Council.

Article 121.3. The sinners are prevented from partaking in the Holy Communion and are not allowed to pray or preach or lead in church activity for the period of their suspension (*Church Order of the RCZ*).

When members of the Reformed Church of Zimbabwe are being encounter with demon possession the challenging question is: Who shall be consulted seeing that exorcism executed by the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe? Those who may execute exorcism or consult diviners to perform exorcism rites is currently liable to be disciplined according to article 120.4 and 120.5

120.4 *Mutezo unoenda kugumbwa*. A member who consult diviners'

120.5 *Kuenda kugumbwa uye kuenda kun'anga nekiuta upombwe* Consulting the diviners and witch doctors as well as adultery (*Church Order of the RCZ*).

As a result of this dilemma the members of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe may choose to consult the diviners and/or witch doctors in the secrecy of the night or invite Pentecostal church leaders to execute exorcism. The Reformed Church in Zimbabwe should take cognizance of reformed church principles regarding discipline as described above.

6.2.6. Provisions for reconciliation as well as *Censura Morum* in Church Order

Taking the above principles into account the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe should amend the Church Order of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe in order to make appropriately provisions for the reconciliation regarding to private sins, the reconciliation and censure of public sins, the discipline of office-bearers, the suspension and deposition from office. In the case somebody confess to that he/she had consulted diviners and witch doctors the steps in Matthew 18 should be followed rather than executing article 120.4 and 120.5 of the *Church Order of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe* with immediate effect. The first step is: "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. It implies that the one against whom the sin has been committed must go to make clear to his brother the nature of the sin and why, on the basis of God's Word, his action was sin. According to Hanko this implies to achieve reconciliation by the removal of the offense. Jesus adds: "If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." If the one who has

consulted diviners and witch doctors denies and do not want to listen take one or two witnesses (cf. Deut. 19:15). If the sinner repents of his/her has consulted diviners and/or witch doctors the matter is finished and forgotten. The offense has been removed from the church of Christ. Regarding those who secretly consulted diviners and witch doctors and repents, after being admonished by the minister of the Word in private or in the presence of two or three witnesses, shall therefore not is laid before the consistory.

6.2.4. Deletion of church order articles

The following articles of the *Church Order of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe* should be deleted:

- Article 120. *Zvivi zvingapiwa chirango*: Offenses that may attract discipline.
- 120.1 *Mutezo unonwa doro nokufuta fodya*: Christians who drink beer and smoke.
- 120.4 *Mutezo unoenda kugumbwa*. A member who consult diviners'
- 120.5 *Kuenda kugumbwa uye kuenda kun'anga nekiuta upombwe* Consulting the diviners and witch doctors as well as adultery
- 127.2 *Mutezo weKereke haatenderwi kubika, kunwa, kutengesazvose zvinodaka*: Christians are not allowed to brew beer, drink or to sale it or any intoxicating liquor.
- 128.1 *Mitambo yakanaka inoitwa pasina doro*: Good Christian programs are where there is no beer (*Church Order of the RCZ*).

The above mentioned articles referring to diviners, witch doctors, drinking and smoking should be deleted in the church order of the Reformed Church of Zimbabwe. The RCZ should rather attend to these issues on a pastoral way. According to the Church Order of Dordt Christian discipline is of a spiritual nature and aims to reconcile the sinner with the church and his neighbour and to remove the offense out of the church of Christ (*Church Order of Dordt Article 72*).

Such as obstinately reject the admonition of the consistory, and likewise those who have committed a public or otherwise gross sin, shall be suspended from the Lord's Supper. And if he, having been suspended, after repeated admonitions, shows no signs of repentance, the consistory shall at last proceed to the extreme remedy, namely, excommunication, agreeably to the form adopted for that purpose according to the Word of God. But no one shall be excommunicated except with advice of the classis (*Church Order of Dordt Article 76*).

- i. Members of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe who repented that they secretly consulted diviners and witch doctors should not be disciplined. They should rather be admonished in love. In such a case the fact that a member of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe consulted diviners and witch doctors should in this case not be

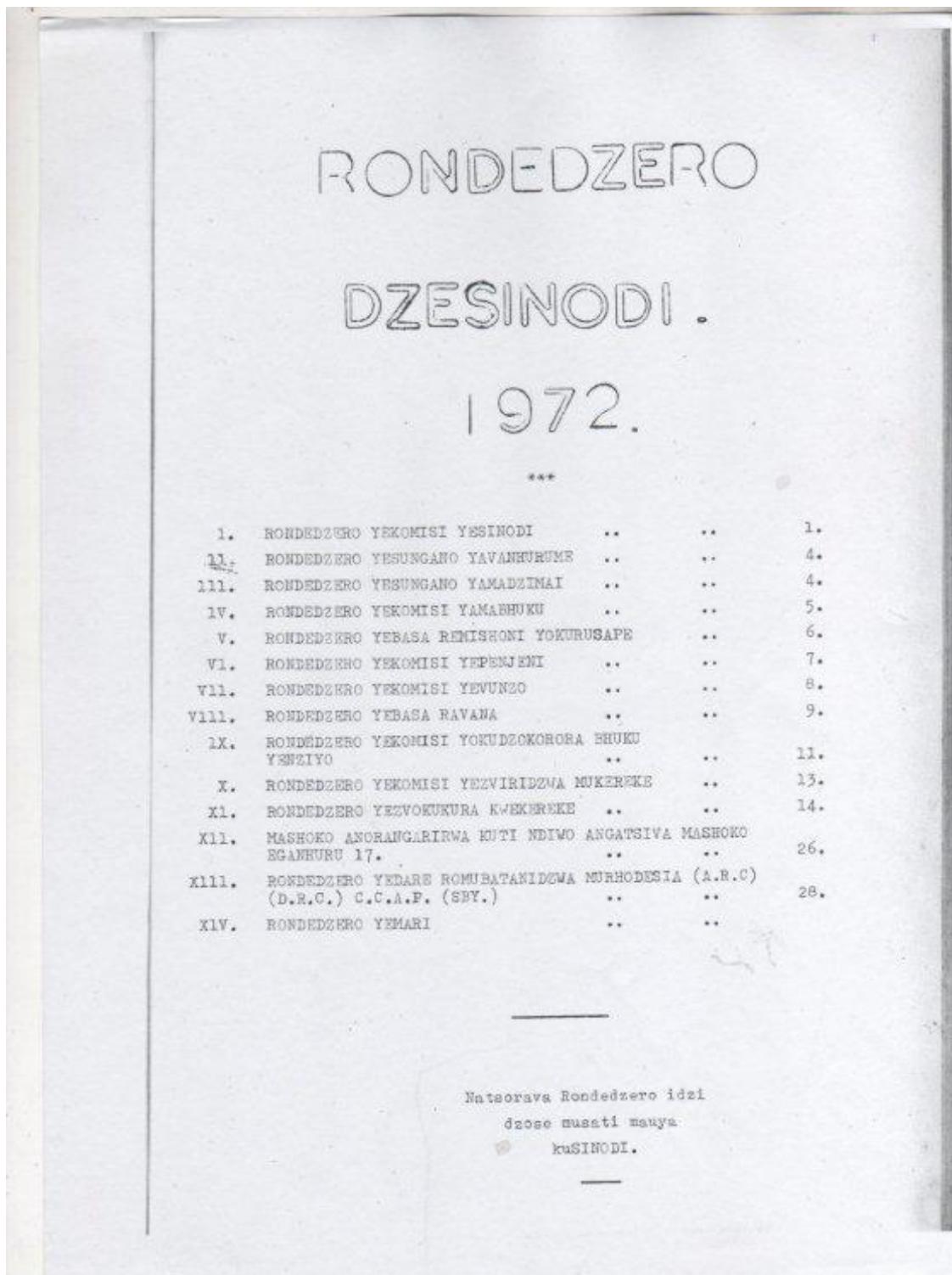
reported to the Church Council, because by repentance on the part of the sinner, the sin is removed.

- ii. When the offence has come to the attention of the Church Council because of its public nature such people is admonished by the Church Council to repent. If he /she should refuse, he /she must be suspended from the table of the Lord. Discipline must first of all be suspension from the table of the Lord. Discipline also involves barring from all membership privileges. “Such an impenitent sinner has no right to the sacrament of baptism, to vote on a congregational meeting, to protest and appeal in matters other than his own case” (Hanko 1962:123).
- iii. It is important that cases investigated by the Church Council, presbytery or Synod should be based on factual grounds and not on rumour or gossip. According to Hanko the advice of classis (Presbytery) must be sought so that all possibility of partiality is guarded against. The Church Council could become so “enmeshed in a particular case that they are no longer able to look at a case with complete objectivity. The advice of classis is important.” (Hanko 1962:126).
- iv. The Church Council should give opportunity to the person against whom charges are brought that he/she consulted diviners and witch doctors an opportunity to defend him/herself. This decision must be with grounds. In doing so the Church Council will be able to discover whether the person is indeed guilty of consulting diviners and witch doctors as reported to them and that he/she is impenitent. “Classis, before it passes judgment, must learn whether a sin has been committed, whether there is evidence of impenitence, whether Article 76 has been followed, whether the first admonition to the congregation has taken place, and if the labour of the consistory is sufficient. Classis must give its advice carefully, for it is giving the consistory its approval for excommunication if the sinner does not repent.” (Hanko 1962:126).
- v. The accused should be admonished in love. The local congregation must approve the readmission. “The penitent sinner must be received into the fellowship of the church and restored to the communion of the faithful. The congregation must receive him when he seeks their fellowship once again (Hanko 1962:128). The following procedure may be followed in order to be re admitted as member of the Reformed Church of Zimbabwe after being excommunicated:
 - a. The accused must express the desire to confess his/her sin and be restored to the fellowship of the church.

- b. The Church Council after determining that the repentance of the accused is genuine must decide to restore him/her again to the fellowship of the church.
- c. An announcement must be made to the congregation to this effect. “The reason why such an announcement must be made to the congregation is that the congregation may give its tacit approbation.” (Hanko 1962:128).

The spirit possessed or the demon possessed should be regarded by the RCZ first and foremost as a patient who need either the service of a diviner or other medical practitioners who would be able to deal with the problem in an appropriate manner. In doing so challenges arising in the Reformed Church of Zimbabwe with regard to spirit possession, demon possession, exorcism, divine healing will be address in an amicable way. Cognisanze should be taken that the African Traditional Religions attend to exorcism in order to restore the afflicted person (c.f. Chapter 3). The challenge remain to identify and connect the negative and positive factors, associated with the theological and religious perspectives of African Traditional Religions as well as Christianity, to how stakeholders had or have understood and responded to demon possession and exorcism in the RCZ (c.f. Chapter 3-5). The premise of the researcher therefore is that the relevant articles in the church order of the RCZ should be amended (c.f. Chapter 6). In fact, within the conceptual framework of the thesis, practices of demon exorcism or articles of the church order arenot being seen as ends in themselves: they are about affirming or restoring life according to understandings, values and practices in the Kingdom of God in a particular African context, expressing and demonstrating something of the nature of African Reformed Christianity in Zimbabwe.

ADDENDUM 1 Synod African Reformed Church Report 1972 (See item c Doro;
Kuporeswa 1; Shamhu yeKereke 3)



- a) Waniso:
 Figiri rakwanikwa pakurahwa kweMitezoo rinoita 40% muzana. Iri figiri rinoita sokuwiriranu nefigiri rakwanikwa noMufundisi P.Heyns pakuvorengu kusvo kwakaitwa 1964 muChiungu chokwanaGutu; ivo vakuwana figiri 33% muzana. Pashoko iri chinotyise zvikuru ndechokunyanyisa kuderera kwewaniso muKereke iyo yaiva nefigiri 360 mugore re 1960, kuchizitza 106 mugore re 1972. Shoko iri raifanira kuferefetwa chalizo. Shoko iri ringabantanidzwavo nashoko rokudzokera kwemitezoo shuro nokuda kwokuwana vakadzi vashinji.
- b) Kunyara:
 Kuratidzwa kwefigiri rinoita 15% muzana kuti ava ndivo vakadzokera shuro nokuda kokunyara baribudisi chinhu ichi pachena. Zviripo zvikonzero zvakadzika pashoko iri, uyewo huwandi hwavakadai hungepfuura figiri iri.
- c) Doro:
 Kudzokera shuro kunoratidzwa nezvakadzeka pakurahwa kwemitezoo kunefigiri rinoita 11% muzana kwakadereresa kana kuchizaniswa nokuvorengu kwakaitwa noMufundisi P.Heyns uko kunotisvitsa pfafigiri 272 muzana. Boka gura apa rinofanira kuva ravanhurumo. Aei pamazvava ano msajaya pakukura kwavo sumugatu nomumigodi, uye muzarwa anotanga kuferira zvamabawa uye kuna doro. Minwe mitezoo yeKereke inopindayo pumidzo wokubika Ndari r-kutengesa doro nokuda kweMereradzire oupenyu anogozhe.
- d) Kutizira kunedzimwe Chechi kana kuti kuzioni nokuPositori kunoitwa nemuimwe mitezoo yeKereke Reformed yaVistema (D.R.C.) muRhodesia.
 Figiri yemitezoo yakadai inoratidza kuva 1.5% muzana pakurahwa kwemitezoo inogara pasi pouwandi chaibwo hwemitezoo yedu yakaenda kudzimwe Chechi. Aei kurashikirwa kvedu kukuru pechinhu ichi kungaitzuva nokuda kwavana venitezoo, uye veKatikasi nemuwemo vanotendeukira kunedzimwe Chechi, vanhu vashinji vanokanganiswa zvikuru nokuda kweChechi dzinorumba dzichiwanda.
- Zvikonzero zvinovvinge vanhu kudzimwe Chechi:
1. Euporeswa pakurware:
 Vashinji vanowenda kuzioni nokuPositori nokuda kokutesva kuperiswa pakurware, uye kubatsirwa panadunbudzikro chupenyo hwapano ponyika. Nokuda kwebetsero idzi dzinotsvakwa vashinji vanotendeukira kuKereke idzi kuva mitezoo yadzo zvachose.
 2. Bapatidzo:
 Havasiri vanhu vashinji, vanovenga Bapatidzo yokunyudzwa muJoridani muKereke idzi. Mukereke dzakadai vanhu vanowana zviri nyore kupindamo nokuti haugatarwi oguve yesedziriro nezhira yokupinda nokudzidza Katikasim.
 3. Shamu yeKereke:
 Vanhu vanowire muzvivi akuda kokunwa doro kana kuvana nezhira isina kufanira, kana kuvana vakadzi vashinji nemvimwewo, kana vapihwa shamu yeKereke, vanotizira kuKereke idzi nokuda kokuti idzo hadzina miraire pasvinku svakadai.
 4. Waniso:
 Panwe vakadzi vanogombedzerwa kupinda Kereke dzinopinda varume vovo, nokuda kweshoko iri vanosiyu Kereke yavo. Uye mitezoo yedu mizhinji yeVasikana inowenikwa navarume vedzimwe Kereke, nokuda kwizivozvo vanozopinda Kereke dzavarume vovo.
 5. Kudzidza: Nokuda kokutesva zvikoro mitezoo yedu mizhinji inogombedzerwa kupinda Kereke dzinezvikoro apo pavarnogona

ADDENDUM 2 *Murray Theological Colleges 3 July 2011 Circular*



MURRAY THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE
SYNOD OF THE REFORMED CHURCH IN ZIMBABWE

P.O. Morgenster
Masvingo
Zimbabwe

Email address: hensan11@gmail.com
Mobile: +263912-272868
+26311915953

Vision: To be a theological college of excellence, participating in God's mission in context

03 July 2011

Mufundisi Nedare

..... Congregation

RE: Kusunungurwa neChikoro komudzidzikudzidzidzo..... kweGore rose 1July 2011 to 1 July 2012

Ndinovimba nenyasha dzaMwari munosimbiswa kupfaudza mubato wake.

Ndakamiririra chikoro chenyu chavafundisi ndinoti gamuchirai mudzidzi wedu Wakapiwa chirango chegore neBoard of Governors apo akavonekwa kuti akapinda pakushumira kusingadyidzani ne R C Z musi wa 1 May 2011. Paitorwa video iye asingazivi kuti ndizvo zvainge zvichiinika. Mugamuchirei munyasha dzaMwari, mumufudze seDare nechiunga chose.

Wakasununguka kunyorera chikoro kana chirango chake chapera. Board nechikoro vogara zve naye pasi kuona kuti vomugamichira here zvichibva namafambiro ake uye tsigiro yenu yokumufudza.

Ndinovimba nenyasha dzaMwari muchashumira naye zvakakanaka. Kana pane zvamungashuva kunzwisia pachirango chake wakasununguka kukujekeserai, uye chikoro chakasunungukavo kujekesa noMweya waMwari.

Ndatenda

Wenyu muranda walshe

Rev. Dr Rutoro
Mufundisi Dr R Rutoro

THE PRINCIPAL
MURRAY THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE
P.O. MORGESTER
MASVINGO

DATE _____

ADDENDUM 3 *Reformed Church in Zimbabwe Circular No GS 03/12*

Reformed Church in Zimbabwe

Circular No. GS 03/12

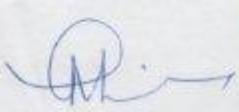
TO : RCZ CONGREGATIONS
FROM : THE GENERAL SECRETARY
DATE : 22 FEBRUARY 2012
SUBJECT : HEARTFELT MINISTRIES

Calvary greetings reference is made with regards to the above mentioned matter.

The Synodical Committee that sat on 27 January 2012 received information from Hatcliffe Presbytery that Heartfelt Ministry is causing confusion in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe (RCZ) Congregations of the same Presbytery. May you please be informed that Heartfelt Ministries is not acknowledged in the RCZ.

Thank you and may God bless you.

Yours a disciple of Jesus Christ.


Rev Christopher Munikwa

The General Secretary
Reformed Church in Zimbabwe
22 FEB 2012
P.O. Box 673
Masvingo
Tel: (039) 2631 773

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