

Pentecostal Experiences in the Ministry of Ignatius (Engenas) Lekganyane (1885–1948) in the Zion Christian Church in South Africa

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Abstract

Ignatius Lekganyane (1885–1948), popularly known as Engenas Lekganyane, was the founder and bishop of the Zion Christian Church (ZCC) in South Africa (SA) which he led from its inception in 1924 until he died in 1948. Historians and theologians have studied the life and ministry of Lekganyane; however, what remains under-researched are the links between his ministry and the Pentecostal movement. This article discusses a study that aimed to bridge this gap by using a literature review in qualitative research to trace the Pentecostal experiences in the life and ministry of Lekganyane using the ecclesiastical history framework. In simple terms, Lekganyane's Pentecostal experiences were traced to analyse the ZCC's historical implications. This was achieved by conducting a biographical study of the life and ministry of Lekganyane from an early age until he died in 1948. The article discusses Lekganyane's Pentecostal background by linking his ministry with Pentecostal leaders and movements of the early 20th century. The article also discusses the main Pentecostal characteristics identified in his life and ministry, including Spirit baptism, prophecy, divine healing and triple immersion baptism. The rationale behind the loss of the Pentecostal flavour in his life and ministry was discussed in detail. Furthermore, the article looks at the ZCC's historical implications of the Pentecostal influence in the life and ministry of Lekganyane in order to offer recommendations for further studies.

Keywords: Engenas Lekganyane; Pentecostal experiences; Zion Christian Church in South Africa; church history; African Independent Churches

UNISA 

Studia Historiae Ecclesasticae

Volume 51 | Number 1 | 2025 | #17465 | 13 pages

<https://doi.org/10.25159/2412-4265/17465>

ISSN 2412-4265 (Online), ISSN 1017-0499 (Print)

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Introduction

The Zion Christian Church (ZCC) in South Africa (SA) is one of the largest African Independent Churches (AICs)¹ in South Africa and elsewhere on the continent (Anderson 2015; Cabrita 2018; Daneel 2019; Kruger and Saayman 2016; Müller 2015). Anderson (2015, 317) explains that the church's 5-6 million membership is about 10% of the AICs. Müller (2015, 174) acknowledges that the numbers in the ZCC in SA may not be accurate but he estimates there are about 5 million members. Kruger and Saayman (2016, 27) indicate that the numbers during the ZCC in SA conferences can exceed 3 million people. Cabrita (2018) points to the Zionist churches having a membership of about 15 million people across southern Africa. According to Daneel (2019, 9), these members are made up of about 6 000 churches in the region of which the ZCC in SA is part. This makes the ZCC in SA a major contributor to the total membership of the Zionist churches in southern Africa.

Different factors have contributed to this growth including divine healing, prophecy, and the church's ability to incorporate African culture, customs, and traditions in its religious practices (Anderson 2003, 107). Of these three factors, divine healing remains the most contributing factor as many Africans seek African solutions to the problems they face concerning sickness and diseases. However, it is important not to take away the role played by the oracular diagnostic prophecy and oracular prescriptive prophecy in the growth of the church. In summary, churches like the ZCC in SA are known for the reconfiguration of Christianity in Africa in making the gospel relevant to the African people in the African context through divine healing and prophecy. This is one of the reasons that make the ZCC and other AICs very influential in the religious landscape in Africa and elsewhere in the world.

The ZCC in SA was founded by Ignatius Engenas Lekganyane (1885–1948), which makes him a popular figure in the church and the AICs. Therefore, this biographical study of the life and ministry of Lekganyane is an important one given the growth and influence of the ZCC in SA both in Africa and the world within the context of the religious landscape. The life and the ministry of Lekganyane have been studied by different scholars. One of the seminal works referenced in the current study is the master's dissertation of Elias Khelebeni Lukhaimane (1980) who looked at the life and ministry of Lekganyane in the ZCC in SA. Lukhaimane's dissertation is important in the current study as it helps in understanding the contribution of Lekganyane to the establishment of the ZCC in SA. Lukhaimane (1980) pays particular attention to the intersections of African experiences and Christianity in the ministry of Lekganyane in the ZCC in SA. The current study looked specifically at the Pentecostal experiences in

1 Some scholars, such as Anderson (2001), Daneel (2000) and Chitando, Gunda, and Kügler (2014), use the category African Initiated Churches. Mwaura (1999; 2004a; 2004b) prefers the category African Instituted Churches, while Chidester (1989), Ayegboyin and Ishola (1997) and Adamo (2001) prefer African Indigenous Churches. I prefer African Independent Churches in articulating the AICs' independence from Western forms of Christianity.

the life and ministry of Lekganyane. Other important studies are those of Anderson (1999; 2000; 2003; 2018) who explored the intersections between Pentecostalism and Zionism by using the ZCC in SA as a case study. Anderson's works were also important for the current study; hence, the article will build on the same by paying particular attention to the ecclesiastical historical implications. Therefore, the contribution to the current study is twofold: firstly, the ecclesiastical historical implications on the Pentecostal experiences in the life and ministry of Lekganyane; and, secondly, the understanding of the ZCC in SA as a church with a strong Pentecostal background and as an AIC.

This means that the links between the ministry of Lekganyane and the Pentecostal movement remain under-researched. These links have been ignored by some scholars, such as Ositelu (2002, 55), who consider AICs to be syncretistic and not part of Pentecostalism. Nonetheless, the links are important as they are historical links connecting the two movements in historicity. Hence, the current study sought to fill this gap by tracing the Pentecostal experiences in the life and ministry of Lekganyane using an ecclesiastical historical analysis. This methodological approach is aimed at studying the development of the church using an historical perspective. Van Liere, Ditchfield and Louthan (2012, 2) explain that an ecclesiastical historical analysis helps in "writing on the history of the Christian Church, its leaders and saints, and its institutional and doctrinal developments". This approach also helps with outlining various characteristics of the church in its development chronologically. This means that the history and historical implications of the particular church tradition are pivotal within the framework of an ecclesiastical historical analysis. In the current study, the ecclesiastical historical analysis was relevant in studying the Pentecostal characteristics in the life and ministry of Lekganyane within the ZCC in SA. The study aimed to trace the Pentecostal experiences in Lekganyane's ministry in the ZCC in SA. This was achieved by conducting a biographical study of the life and ministry of Lekganyane from an early age until he died in 1948. The article will discuss Lekganyane's Pentecostal background of by linking his ministry with Pentecostal leaders and movements of the early 20th century.

The article will discuss the main Pentecostal characteristics identified in the life and ministry of Lekganyane, including Spirit baptism, prophecy, divine healing, and triple immersion baptism. The rationale behind the loss of the Pentecostal flavour in the life and ministry of Lekganyane will be discussed in detail. The article will also look at the church's historical implications of the Pentecostal influence in the life and ministry of Lekganyane to offer recommendations for further studies. The data for the current study was collected by reviewing the literature on Lekganyane and the ZCC in SA. The literature was sampled by looking at the sources that discuss the history of the ZCC in SA and Lekganyane. The next section provides an historical background of Lekganyane's life and ministry.

An Historical Background of Engenas Lekganyane and the Zion Christian Church in South Africa

Ignatius Engenas Lekganyane was born in 1880 in Thabakgone near Ga-Mamabolo in the former Northern Transvaal Province, which later became Northern Province and more recently, Limpopo Province (Clarke 2004; Morton 2018). Lekganyane's parents were Barnabas Lekganyane and Sefora Raphela, who were all of the northern Sotho tribe and lived in Thabakgone. It is reported that his mother, Mme Raphela was one of the first converts of the Berlin Missionary Society. Morton (2014, 36) explains that both Lekganyane's parents were Christian converts which also proves that Lekganyane grew up in a Christian family with a strong Christian background. Lekganyane went to a school called St Andrews adjacent to Spitzkop and Cyferkuil which was built by the Anglican missionary station (Morton 2014, 40). Lekganyane completed three years of schooling at St Andrews which in today's system is the equivalent of Grade 3. Many of the members of the Lekganyane family were baptised into the Anglican church, but for some reason, Lekganyane was not too keen to be baptised there. During his three years of education at St Andrews, Lekganyane worked part-time in construction companies and did other casual work in various companies and farming areas. Morton (2014, 41) points out that:

His schooling consisted of a heavy dose of construction work – building the missionary's house, a church, the schoolhouse, and a dormitory out of brick, as well as helping build a successful dam.

During this period, it was common for many young people to work in their early adulthood to earn a living and support their families. It was also around this period that Lekganyane joined the Presbyterian Church where it is reported that he also received some form of training as a missionary or freelance evangelist (Morton 2014, 36). Therefore, it can be pointed out that Lekganyane was involved in the ministry from an early age while attending school and working as a casual worker around his town and the village of Mamabolo.

In 1910, at the age of 25, Lekganyane had a vision wherein he saw a large crowd of people following him (Lukhaimane 1980). It is important to point out that in African Pentecostalism and the African Initiated Churches, many pastors do receive their calling through visions and dreams. It must also be pointed out that this date does not mark the foundation of the ZCC in SA, but rather the date when Lekganyane first had the vision which some have mistakenly taken as the date for the foundation of the church. Lukhaimane (1980) points out that the ZCC in SA did not immediately start in 1910 and there are various reasons or activities that Lekganyane was involved with outside of Thabakgone to back this up.

In 1912, Lekganyane had another vision where he was told to leave Thabakgone to go to Johannesburg, in the former Transvaal Province (now Gauteng), where he would find a church that baptised believers by triple immersion (Lukhaimane 1980, 6). Lekganyane

then met Elias and Joseph Mahlangu, two brothers who were baptising people by triple immersion in the Zion Apostolic Church. Lekganyane was then baptised by triple immersion by the Mahlangu brothers in the same way as he saw in his second vision in 1912. He then became part of the Zion Apostolic Church until 1917. It was only in 1918 that Lekganyane was ordained and released to start a branch of the Zion Apostolic Church in his home village in Thabakgone. At this branch, Lekganyane continued to baptise the believers by triple immersion and the branch grew to greater numbers given Lekganyane's charisma including his prophecy and divine healing. However, Lekganyane was unhappy with some of the practices in the Zion Apostolic Church, including: wearing long white robes; the men growing their beards; and adherents taking off their shoes when entering the Church premises. These, together with Lekganyane's marriage to his second wife, caused some grievances between the Mahlangu brothers and Lekganyane (Lukhaimane 1980, 10). Other reasons for parting ways with the Mahlangus included their perceived overshadowing by Lekganyane's great gifts and presence.

The grievances that Lekganyane had with the Mahlangu brothers caused him to leave the Zion Apostolic Church in 1920 to join Edward Motaung's Zion Apostolic Faith Mission whose headquarters were in Lesotho (Lukhaimane 1980, 32). Lekganyane continued serving God under the tutelage of Edward Motaung whom he admired for his great gifts in the ministry of divine healing, prophecy and performing other miracles. However, just like with the Mahlangu brothers, challenges started to emerge between Motaung and Lekganyane. The first challenge was that of Lekganyane marrying his second wife which, according to Anderson (1999, 289), did not sit well with Motaung. This is because most Pentecostals believe in the practice of one husband, one wife; they practise monogamy and do not support polygamous marriages. The second challenge was that because of the growth of the church in Thabakgone, Motaung started being more dictatorial toward Lekganyane, for example, asking him to bring all the money to the headquarters in Lesotho (Lukhaimane 1980, 14). This made Lekganyane very uncomfortable and so he travelled to Lesotho to complain to Motaung about his unhappiness. The third challenge was that, similar to what happened with the Mahlangu brothers, there was a power struggle between Lekganyane and Motaung as both were gifted, Lekganyane's ministry was growing in a way that his mentor, Motaung, found intimidating.

These three challenges caused conflict between Motaung and Lekganyane as the latter could not continue serving under and submitting to Motaung. However, it appears that the main challenge was the vision that Lekganyane had in 1910 in which many people were following him, and his leadership was not yet fulfilled. It is for these reasons that it is incorrect to say the ZCC in SA started in 1910. It was only in 1924, after separating from Motaung, that Lekganyane started the ZCC in SA in Thabakgone, Moria, Limpopo. The church grew from a membership of 1 000 at its inception to a membership of 50 000 at the time of Lekganyane's death. The leadership of Lekganyane and the

current bishop, Barnabas Lekganyane, took the church to a membership of about 6 million members. In the next section, I discuss Lekganyane's Pentecostal background.

Pentecostal Background of Engenas Lekganyane

The literature review demonstrated that Lekganyane had some connections with the early Pentecostal movement in South Africa. In the first instance, even before his vision in 1910 where he saw a large crowd of people following him, Lekganyane travelled to Johannesburg in search of healing for his eye problem in 1908 (Anderson 1999, 287). Muller (2016, 71) concurs that "Lekganyane had previously been in contact with Le Roux himself when in 1908 he had gone to Johannesburg to seek a cure for an eye disease he suffered from". Pieter le Roux served under John G. Lake, the founder of the Apostolic Faith Mission, who came from the United States (Nel 2005). Before meeting Lake, Le Roux had met Daniel Bryant, who was sent to South Africa to establish the Christian Apostolic Church in Zion (Nel 2015). According to Lukhaimane (1980, 26), "In 1904 Daniel Bryant baptised 27 Africans and a White man, Mr P. L. le Roux, joined the Church".

This is the same movement that prepared the establishment of the Pentecostal movement before Lake's arrival. The zeal to receive divine healing became a point of contact for Lekganyane to have an encounter with Pentecostalism. It was also around this time that Lake was still in the country with his entourage including Thomas Hezmalhach. This is Lekganyane's rich historical connection with Pentecostalism² and Lake also emphasised the ministry of divine healing while in South Africa. In the second instance, when Lekganyane returned to Johannesburg for the second time because of his 1910 vision, he had contact with the Mahlangu brothers who were also part of the Apostolic Faith Mission and had learnt triple immersion baptism from the church. It is believed therefore that Lekganyane did not only attend the services at the Zion Apostolic Church but also at the Apostolic Faith Mission. It was around this time in 1910 that the Mahlangus seceded from the latter to form their own Zion Apostolic Church. In the third instance, Motaung's Zion Apostolic Faith Mission, where Lekganyane served as a pastor in Thabakgone, was also a splinter group of the Apostolic Faith Mission, a classical Pentecostal church. This means that Lekganyane learnt Pentecostal experiences from Motaung who was part of the Apostolic Faith Mission.

Pentecostal Characteristics in the Ministry of Engenas Lekganyane

As per Lekganyane's second vision in 1912, the ZCC in SA practises triple immersion baptism which is also common in the classical Pentecostal churches such as the Apostolic Faith Mission (Anderson 2015). Triple immersion baptism is conducted by baptising people in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit which

2 Pentecostalism is defined as the movement that emphasises baptism of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. Pentecostalism is known for preaching a full gospel that includes Jesus Christ as the saviour, healer, spirit baptiser, and soon-coming king.

is also consistent with the biblical practice in Matthew 28:19. This is something that Lekganyane and the ZCC in SA treasure the most as it was revealed to him in his second vision wherein he saw himself baptising people by triple immersion. Hence, to this day, the ZCC in SA does not baptise people through sprinkling or other methods of baptism but by triple immersion. It is also important to point out that this is one strong characteristic which brings together the Pentecostal movement and the Zionist movement in South Africa. However, it is also important to point out that, unlike many classical Pentecostal churches, the ZCC in SA and other AICs do not use the baptismal pool but baptise their members in dams and rivers as they believe that baptism should be done in large expanses of living water (Oosthuizen 1992, 149–164). Therefore, to these churches rivers represent running water and therefore also living water. This is something that separates the classical Pentecostal churches from the AICs. The latter perceive running water to be relevant for the healing and deliverance of the members being baptised. Therefore, in the ZCC in SA, baptism with water is not only practised as a sacrament signifying the death and resurrection of Christ, but also as a healing ritual.

In the early development of the ZCC in SA, Lekganyane followed the fundamental teachings of Pentecostalism which included baptism of the Holy Spirit. Lekganyane did not put much emphasis on baptism of the Holy Spirit and the initial evidence of speaking in other tongues. However, the church remains pneumatological in its approach to the reliance on the Holy Spirit particularly in the practice of the gift of prophecy. This is another characteristic connecting the Pentecostal movement and the ministry of Lekganyane in the ZCC in SA. Anderson (1999, 297) states that

those participating in the religious activity in the Zion Christian Church in South Africa directly attribute much of that activity to the working of the Holy Spirit. He is the one who gives revelations to the prophets and causes them to behave “abnormally” with jerking, jumping, snorting, and various other contortions of the body.

This presents a challenge in that sometimes in the ZCC in SA and many other AICs, there is no distinction between the Holy Spirit and any other spirit. Therefore, it is not clear at times to which spirit a prophet or any other believer is referring. This is a challenge because in African pneumatology, a spirit may refer to many spirits including that of an ancestor or even that of a traditional healer. However, the classical Pentecostal churches are very clear when talking about the Holy Spirit and perceive Him as having the power to confront and defeat other evil spirits in the spirit realm.

In following the leaders John G. Lake, Edward Motaung and Elias and Joseph Mahlangu, Lekganyane practised divine healing in the ZCC in SA. It is important to point out that the ZCC in SA and Lekganyane became very popular in the practice of divine healing. Lukhaimane (1980) recalls moments in Lekganyane’s ministry where the sick, including the crippled, would be brought to him to receive healing. Anderson (1999, 290) concurs that “the healing of cripples, barrenness, provision of employment, rainmaking, and other miracles as some of the acts that attracted many people to the

Zion Christian Church in South Africa". The performance of these miracles and healing practices was responsible for placing Lekganyane as one of the popular leaders in the AICs and the Christian tradition worldwide. To this day, many believers from across the world attend the Annual Easter Conference at Moria and other important gatherings in search of divine healing. Zion City is located in Moria and is known as a sacred place where healing and deliverance take place as practised by leaders such as Lekganyane. Many believe that by touching the ground of Boyne near Moria, they will be healed. Therefore, people do not visit Moria as part of their tourist activities, but rather in the belief that those who are sick will be healed. Anderson (1999, 297) explains that Boyne is more like an African Zion

a place of blessing, of deliverance, of healing in short, the place where divine immanence is keenly felt. It is also the place where the means of grace and the manifestation of God's presence in the sacraments are administered by the bishop.

This is how important the gift of divine healing is in the ministry of Lekganyane and the ZCC in SA.

Lastly, Lekganyane is also known for his prophetic gifts which were also the pneumatological gifts practised in the Pentecostal movement (Anderson 2018). It is believed that before a person can start prophesying, the Spirit must enter them so that they are empowered to speak the word of God (Anderson 1999). Therefore, all the prophets, also known as *mabone* in the ZCC in SA, are expected to be full of the Spirit in order to give the prophetic word. Generally, in the AICs, the leader is expected to be gifted in prophecy and be known as a prophet in addition to having the gift of healing. Thus, Lekganyane was known as a prophet and gave important prophecies including the defeat of Germany by Britain (Anderson 1999; Morton 2014). This important international prophecy made Lekganyane a well-known prophet even outside of Africa. The predecessors of Engenas Lekganyane, Edward Lekganyane and Barnabas Lekganyane, also became known as prophets in the ZCC in SA. However, it must be pointed out that the prophetic gift became much stronger during the reign of Engenas Lekganyane than in any of the other leaders to date. It is also important to point out that the leaders of other AICs would also assume the prophetic office by virtue of being the founders and leaders of their churches. But Lekganyane was outstanding among other leaders such as Frederick Samuel Modise of the International Pentecost Holiness Church and Isaiah Mloyiswa Mdlwamafa Shembe of the Ibandla lamaNazareth.

The Loss of Pentecostal Flavour

The literature review demonstrated that the ZCC in SA lost its Pentecostal flavour, particularly after the death of Lekganyane (Anderson 1999, 290). In some areas, such as divine healing, Lekganyane started by using conventional ways such as the laying on of hands. However, as time went by, particularly due to the high numbers of people attending his services, he then changed towards the objectification of healing and used materials such as blessed water (Anderson 1999, 290). Lekganyane also wanted to retain

the power and authority of the healing gift for himself. Although he could have asked his leaders to lay hands upon the followers if there were too many for him, he opted to bless the water so that they would always depend on him as the main leader of the church. Anderson (1999, 290) explains that:

In 1930 he instructed that the practice of leaders in out-lying branches praying for the sick themselves by laying on hands be discontinued, “because it was found to be dangerous on the part of the Church”.

The reason for Lekganyane taking this position was that he did not want the leaders to be able to claim the power of healing the sick without referring to him as the source of such power (Lukhaimane 1980, 26). In many Pentecostal churches, the practice is that if there are many people, there will be a delegation of other pastors to help the main leader pray for the sick. Therefore, in the use of blessed water, Lekganyane and the ZCC in SA moved from the practice of divine healing towards the ritual healing practice. What started as the need to reach out to many people by using blessed water during the reign of Lekganyane later became a doctrinal practice during the reign of Edward Lekganyane and Barnabas Lekganyane. During the reign of these two leaders, it became normal practice to bless water to heal the adherents or sick people. Other than the blessed water, there are other healing rituals, such as pricking, steaming, enemas, copper wires, blessed tea, and others which are used in the ZCC in SA. These practices are not consistent with the practices of the classical Pentecostal churches, such as the Apostolic Faith Mission and others, where the conventional practice remains the laying on of hands.

In the practice of prophecy, the ZCC in SA aligns with the Pentecostal movement in the source of prophecy as being the Holy Spirit. As discussed previously, the ZCC in SA believes that the person of the Holy Spirit should empower the prophet to receive a revelation to be able to prophesy. Similarly, in the oracular diagnostic prophecy, the ZCC in SA prophets rely on the power of the Holy Spirit to be able to diagnose the root cause of problems and challenges in their lives. The challenge in the prophecy of the ZCC in SA is its prescriptive function which seems to be aligning with divination in the African Traditional Religions. A ZCC in SA prophet would prescribe certain healing rituals to the patient in the same way that a traditional healer would prescribe healing rituals in the African Traditional Religions. Therefore, in the prescriptive function of prophecy in the ZCC in SA, there is a departure from the Pentecostalist practices towards the practices of the African Traditional Religions. Here, there is evidence of the loss of the Pentecostal flavour within Lekganyane’s ministry in the ZCC in SA.

The ZCC in SA is also very accommodating to the veneration of ancestors which is also not common in the classical Pentecostal churches. The embracement of ancestral practices by the ZCC in SA is very un-Pentecostal. For example, Anderson (2018, 84) points to a widely accepted assertion in the ZCC in SA where there is an acknowledgment that God is not able to do anything on earth without the help of an

ancestor. Some members of the ZCC in SA believe that an ancestor can save them from facing a dangerous situation such as a car accident, suicide, or any other form of misfortune (Anderson 2018, 88). This kind of assertion would not be popular in the classical Pentecostal churches, such as the Apostolic Faith Mission, where there is much reliance on the person of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. Anderson (2018, 96) continues to say:

For some members of Zionist and Apostolic churches in particular, ancestors still play an important role and should be respected and obeyed. They are the mediators for God, who sometimes reveal the will of God to people, and who inspire the prophets.

So, there is a general acceptance of the practice of ancestral worship even though at times it is not openly pronounced in the church but is practised by members on the ground. In the fieldwork conducted by Anderson (2018, 99), one member of the ZCC in SA said that “it was important for people to pray to the ancestors, to keep their graves clean and watered, and to unveil tombstones in their honour”. There is, therefore, open recognition and acknowledgment of the ancestral spirits and practices by some of the members of the ZCC in SA. This kind of position is very unpopular among the classical Pentecostal churches. While the ZCC in SA seems to be embracing the ancestral practices, the classical Pentecostal churches are in confrontation with the same. Again, this is evidence of the loss of the Pentecostal flavour in the embracement of the ancestral practices.

Ecclesiastical Historical Implications

The life and ministry of Lekganyane in the ZCC in SA have some implications for church history. The ZCC in SA should be considered an AIC with a strong Pentecostal background, hence its growth. The ZCC in SA has its foundation in the classical Pentecostal churches such as the Apostolic Faith Mission. This is evidenced in the connections that Lekganyane had with various leaders who had Pentecostal roots such as Pieter le Roux, the Mahlangu brothers (Elias and Joseph), and Edward Motaung. The Pentecostal roots are also visible in the Pentecostal characteristics of the ministry of Lekganyane in the ZCC in SA which include among others Spirit baptism, the practice of prophecy, and divine healing. However, given the loss of the Pentecostalist characteristics over the years, this means that the ZCC cannot continue to be classified as a Pentecostal church even in the broader definition of Pentecostalism. The reason for this assertion is that in the practice of divine healing, the ZCC uses healing rituals which are not consistent with the practices of divine healing in the classical Pentecostal churches. Thus, in the use of healing rituals, the ZCC has moved from divine healing to ritual healing. The second reason is that although the ZCC perceives the Holy Spirit to be the source of prophecy, the prescriptive function of prophecy in the ZCC aligns more with divination in the African Traditional Religions than Pentecostal prophecy. Lastly, the members of the ZCC in SA are more accommodating to the practice of ancestral veneration which is also very un-Pentecostal.

Conclusion

The article has discussed an important figure in church history in South Africa, Lekganyane, who founded and led one of the largest AICs, the ZCC in SA. The article traced the Pentecostal experiences in Lekganyane's life and ministry with some ecclesiastical historical implications. This was done by looking at the biographical information on Lekganyane's life to analyse his ministry. The article argued that even though there were links between Lekganyane's early ministry and the Pentecostal movement, the latter part of his ministry demonstrated the loss of a Pentecostal flavour. The article found that the early ministry of Lekganyane had Pentecostal characteristics such as Spirit baptism, prophecy, divine healing, and triple immersion baptism. However, with time, Lekganyane somehow lost some of the Pentecostal characteristics, particularly with the growth of the ZCC in SA in Africa and elsewhere in the continent. This loss of the Pentecostal flavour in the ministry of Lekganyane in the ZCC in SA has some implications for church history. The ZCC in SA should be considered an AIC with a strong Pentecostal background, hence its growth. However, the article contends that the church cannot continue to be classified as a Pentecostal church given its loss of touch with the Pentecostal characteristics as evidenced in the life and ministry of Lekganyane. These dynamics are important to consider when studying church history within the Pentecostal tradition and the AIC, particularly the Zionist churches.

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