

A decorative border consisting of a repeating pattern of palm trees, arranged in a rectangular frame around the central text.

SCHOOL OF MISSION AND THEOLOGY, STAVANGER

THE IMPACTS OF PENTECOSTALS ON THE ETHIOPIAN EVANGELICAL CHURCH
MEKANE YESUS (EECMY) WITH ESPECIAL REFERENCE TO BIRBIR DILLA SYNOD
(BDS) FROM 1967-2010

THESIS FOR THE MASTERS OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE IN
THEOLOGY, (MOPG-30)

BY

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LIST OF ABBRIVIATIONS

AACC	All African Council of churches
ADS	Abay Dabus Synod
ALM	American Lutheran Mission
BDS	BirbirDilla Synod
BGS	BegiiGidami Synod
CM	Charismatic Movement
DLM	Danish Lutheran Mission
ED.	Edit
EECMY	Ethiopian Evangelical church MekaneYesus
EOTC	Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church
GHM	German Hermannsburg Mission
GJS	GimbiJorgo Synod
GTF	Gudina Tumsa Foundation
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
MHS	School of Mission and Theology
MTh	Master in Theology
MYS	MekaneYesus Seminary
NLM	Norwegian Lutheran Mission
ONS	OnesimosNesib Seminary
PHD	Doctorate Degree of Philosophy
Rev	Reverend
SLM	Swedish Lutheran Mission
T.E.E.	Theological Education by Extension
WARC	World Alliances of Reformed churches
WCC	World Churches of Council
WS	Western Synod

DECLARATION

The work is original and it is mine except the quotations in the paper and has not been submitted previously in any degree qualification or course.

Signature

DegefeBenti Keno

Date _____

Supervisor: Professor Odd Magne Bakke

Date _____

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 A Brief Introduction to the Topic and the Context

This thesis investigates how the Pentecostals entered into the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY), and how the church responded to the challenges of the Pentecostals.

The EECMY was initiated both by foreign and indigenous missionaries. The theology and practice of the church makes her part of the Evangelical Lutheran churches in the world. Her theology and practice also makes her different from Anabaptists and Pentecostals theology and practice.

The Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus is a Lutheran church with its entire worship, doctrine and ministry. It was established at national level in 1959 with four Synods: namely, the Central Synod (CS), the Western Synod (WS), the South Ethiopian Synod (SES), and the North Ethiopian Synod (NES)¹ with a total membership of 20,000 believers². Currently, EECMY is one of the fast growing Evangelical Churches in the country and the largest Lutheran Church in Africa. According to the 2010 statistics, it has a total membership of 5,576,156 million.³ When we see her ecumenical relationships, she is the member of Lutheran World Federation (LWF) in 1963, (though the Addis Ababa Mekane Yesus Congregation was a member from 1957), a member of the All Africa Conferences of Churches (AACC) in 1974, and the World Council of Churches (WCC) in 1979. She joined the World Alliances of Reformed churches (WARC) as of 2000. There has been a good relationship with these church organizations all along. She is working with churches in the country as well like Ethiopian Orthodox Tewayido Church, Catholic Church and other evangelical churches.⁴ Further, the EECMY is also working with the

¹ Johannes Laundhardt, *Evangelicals in Addis Ababa (1919-1991), with special reference to the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus and the Addis Ababa Synod* (Munster: LIT Verlag, 2004) 145.

² MYS-TEE department: *History of Christianity in Ethiopia: with emphasis on the Ethiopian Evangelical church Mekane Yesus* (Addis Ababa, 1992), 84, 89, (Unpublished).

³ The EECMY-membership-Statistics for-2010, <http://www.eecmy.org/?page=new&article> (accessed March 13, 2012).

⁴ EECMY website: <http://www.eecmy.org/emailactivation.php?page=ecumenical>, Accessed December 15, 2011.

Joint Relief Partnership (JRP) all operating in Ethiopia. Again she is also making a contract with the leadership of the Islamic Supreme Council of Ethiopia to create a healthy relationship.⁵

The EECMY is a product of the five founding missions, namely the Swedish Lutheran Mission (SLM), German Hermannsburg Mission (GHM), Norwegian Lutheran Mission (NLM), Danish Lutheran Mission, (DLM), and American Lutheran Mission (ALM).⁶ This fact reflects that the missionaries who brought the gospel to Ethiopia were Lutherans. Of these five missions, it was the GHM who established a church in Aira in 1927⁷ where now the BirbirDilla Synod is found.

Aira is the place where the gospel is spread to some parts of the country after the coming of the GHM. This is mainly due to the fact that missionaries established a mission station there. As Professor ØvyindEide stated in his book, “*Religion and Revolution in Ethiopia*,” Rev. Dafaajammoo, was the first fruit of the German missionary effort, the first to be ordained as pastor of the emerging EECMY in 1941 and the first president of the Western Synod in 1960. Rev. Dafaajammoo played an important role after his ordination of 1940 by giving full church services like baptism, Lord’s Supper, teaching, preaching of the gospel, and in leadership.”⁸

BirbirDilla Synod is one of the synods of Ethiopian Evangelical church MekaneYesus found at the western part of Ethiopia. The congregations in the BDS were organized in to two big districts under the former Western Synod which is one of the oldest EECMY synods. This Western Synod is divided into five big synods: namely Western Synod (WS), Gimbi-Jorgo Synod (GJS), Begi-Gidami Synod (BGS), BirbirDilla Synod (BDS), and Abay Dabus Synod. The BirbirDilla Synod was established as a Synod in 2001 with 207 established congregations, and 18 preaching places organized into 12 parishes with a total membership of 218509.⁹ The Congregations in the BDS is as old as the inception of the EECMY. It was in 1927 that the German Hermannsburg Mission began mission work. As I indicated above DafaJammo was the first ordained pastor in the western Synod. The entire worship of the church was mainly pastor and trained theologians

⁵EECMY website:-<http://www.eecmy.org/emailactivation.Php?page=ecumenical>, Accessed December15,2011.

⁶Kilian MacDonnell, *Presence, Power, Praise: Documents on Charismatic Renewal, Volume II* (Minnesota: the Collegeville Liturgical press, 1980)150.

⁷ MYS-TEE department: *History of Christianity in Ethiopia: with emphasis on the Ethiopian Evangelical Church MekaneYesus*(Addis Ababa, 1992)89 (Unpublished).

⁸Øvyind M. Eide , *Revolution and Religion in Ethiopia: The Growth and Persecution of the MekaneYesus Church 1974-1985* (Oxford:James Currey 2000)52.

⁹ A Report from Rev. MulatuGadisathe former BDS President (January 15,2007)1.

oriented because of two reasons: first that they were influenced by the German missionaries who give emphasis on ordination ministry and the second reason is the existence OnesimosNesib Bible School (ONBS) and Mandi Bible School in area to give pastoral course easily. Because of the need of church for qualified trained theologians the ONBS was upgraded to degree level in 2010. The BirbirDilla Synod where the emphasis of Lutheranism existed than other parts of the EECMY synods has been influenced by the experience of the Pentecostals. This study is going to explore how the BDS has integrated the theology and practices of the Pentecostals into its liturgy. We will see the detail historical and theological background of the EECMY in chapter two.

1.2 Purpose and Limitation of the Study

The aim of this study is twofold. First it aims to investigate to which extent and how the life and theology of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church MekaneYesus (EECMY) with reference to the BirbirDilla Synod has been influenced by the Pentecostals experiences. This means how far the theological emphases of EECMY on the office of preaching, liturgical confession, doctrinal bases, and church calendar have been influenced by the Pentecostals experiences of Prophecy, speaking in tongues, exorcism, and healing. Therefore there is a need to study the traditions of EECMY, how it was before the influence of the charismatic and Pentecostal movements on its theology and practices. Secondly, the study aims to investigate how the church met the challenge of the charismatic and Pentecostal movements. How did the church deal with the challenges theologically? How did the church deal with the challenge in practical terms?

This study is limited to BirbirDilla Synod of EECMY. The following are some of the reasons: First, EECMY ministry covers all parts of the country with its 21 Synods and three area works. Therefore, it is not possible to focus on all these synods in one thesis. Secondly, the congregations in the BDS are older than the EECMY itself. These congregations know about the theology and practices of EECMY, which was established in 1959 as a national Church and also the integration of the Pentecostals theology and practices into EECMY. In addition to this, Aira, the place where the BDS is established, after many years work with the former Western Synod, had served as a station for missionaries during their mission work.¹⁰ Due to this fact the

¹⁰ Knut Andersen T.A *Brief History of the MekaneYesus Church* (Christiansfeld: Savanne, 1980) 20.

members of the BDS could contribute by sharing their experience when I conducted the field study. Thirdly, Western Ethiopia, especially Western Wollega is a place where Lutheranism was so strong and to work a research there for this area also highly influenced by the Pentecostals experience. There are over eighteen denominations which are officially registered under the name Ethiopian Pentecostals.¹¹ Instead of discussing the individual Pentecostal denominations or movements, I treat them, although I am aware the fact that they are not homogeneous currents, as one unity. The limitation of the thesis does not allow me to discuss them individually.

1.3 My Own Background

I am from a Lutheran Church of EECMY. The purpose to write on the topic, 'The Impacts of Pentecostals on the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus with the especial reference to BirbirDilla Synod of Western Ethiopia,' is the questions that I encountered several times during my young age and the continues challenges that the BDS is facing by the members of the Ethiopian Pentecostals. The Pentecostals, especially the Full Gospel or MuluWongel and MeseretKiristos (Mennonite background), asked me to leave the EECMY and join them. The Pentecostals claim that the theology and practices of EECMY have shortages. They teach that the EECMY is conservative and dry, and the manifestations of the Holy Spirit, as speaking in tongues and prophecy, and healing ministries are lacking. One of my sisters was persuaded to join the Pentecostal church in 1995.

However, today all the above mentioned elements of the Holy Spirit manifestations are present in EECMY. As one of my informants replied, in these days some of the members of the Pentecostals are interested to come and worship in the EECMY.¹² This indicates the interrelation with the Pentecostals is very high. When the freedom of religion was declared by the Ethiopian government in 1991, the young people within the EECMY started to practice the theology and practices of Pentecostals. These young people started to practice the charismatic ways of worship in the church without EECMY leaders' permission. Believers faced a new system of worship which was different from the one they were used to in the church experienced as a Lutheran. The new systems of worship are identified with elements like: less order and full

¹¹TekaObsaFogi, *The Charismatic Movement in the EECMY some Doctrinal and practical issues: The Case of the EECMY congregations in Nekemte* (EGST, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 2000) 72.

¹² Rev. Fikru Merdasa, AwateDilla parish president (oral interview 10,07,2011).

crying, shouting, jumping and dancing. It was also accompanied with speaking in tongues, prophecy, repetition of singing chores, prayer with a loud sound, and so on. During this, some leaders of the church tried to stop the young people not to mix the EECMY Lutheran traditions with the Pentecostals theology and practices. But some of the young people refused and joined the Pentecostal Churches and established new churches close to the EECMY congregations.

After some time, especially from 1991 on the EECMY has also embraced the Pentecostals ways of worship in the Church, underling the personal experience of the Holy Spirit and charismatic manifestations in the life of the Church. When the theology and practices of the Pentecostals ways of worship was accepted instead of following the church traditions like, church calendar, hymn books, and liturgical ceremonies, the trained pastors and evangelists were ignored. This ignoring pastors and following the charismatic preachers became a continuous challenge in the EECMY. It is true as Rev. Hermann Domianus said in his writing that the Pentecostals still exist in Ethiopia that represent as a challenge to the theology and practices of EECMY even today.¹³

Although many of the members of the EECMY have become positive to the charismatic movement, still there are few elderly people who are against the integration of the Pentecostals experience into EECMY. Due to this fact they sometimes complain about the changes that are going on in the EECMY. They raise the question, if EECMY is really a Lutheran Church or a Pentecostal. The aim of this thesis is to explore the influence of the church and how the EECMY, and particularly BDS, responded to it.

1.4 Methods and Source Materials

1.4.1 Methods

This thesis is written in the field of Church history, and I have attempted to follow the basic rules of what might be called historical critical research. Among other things it implies that the topic is put in its historical context, and that I attempt to describe what took place being as neutral as possible. Due to my own background, as given above, this has been a challenge. And I'm totally aware that it is not possible to be complete objective when doing an academic work like this. As

¹³Domianus, *The Charismatic Movement within the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus* (2000) 18.

Gadamer has emphasized, we are all captured in our prejudices.¹⁴ But as Gadamer underlines, our prejudice is a precondition for understanding the past. My aim is to use my prejudice to ask relevant question and then discuss or explore the topic as neutral and objective as possible. This implies that the thesis is not normative but descriptive.

The method of the study consists of a combination of close reading of primary sources and published literature. The primary sources will be read in dialog with secondary sources. In addition to written sources I will use material I collected at a field study.

Before I give the details of my informants, let me briefly present some reflections on the qualitative method that I used in my field study.

Qualitative research requires an empirical material that uses methods from other disciplines like from the social sciences in order to enrich church history. This fact is invested by recent church historians like Bradley and Miller who “...observed a growing rapprochement between institutional or social church history, and the history of doctrine and this development has occurred at a time when the disciplines of church history are increasingly influences by new methods of research particularly of the social sciences.”¹⁵ I agree with what the South African Reformed Church theologian and social anthropologist M.L. Daneel has stated with respect to the field of missiology, and think it is valid with respect to studies in Church history as well: “To my mind it is a task for theologians and more specifically missiologists to create facilities for empirical research in the field and to collect for themselves-by means of scientific sociological and anthropological fieldwork techniques-the data necessary for on-going reflections.”¹⁶ This qualitative approach supported me with data collections and gathering information from my informants to study more about the Pentecostals influence on the mainline church that helps to achieve the objective of this thesis. This field study provided me with information to examine the changes that have been taken place within the EECMY and the causes of the changes and

¹⁴ Georgia Warnke, *Gadamer: Hermeneutics, Tradition, and Reason* (California: Stanford University Press, 1987) 81.

¹⁵ James E. Bradley and Richard A. Miller, *Church History: An Introduction to Research, Reference works and methods* (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995) 1.

¹⁶ According to Hans Austnaberg, *Shepherds and Demons: A study of exorcism as practiced and understood in the shepherds in the Malagasy Lutheran Church*, (Stavanger: School of Mission and Theology dissertation series Vol.2, (Klepp: Processen Design og Trykk, 2006)13.

reactions of the EECMY towards the Changes. During the field study I interviewed several peoples in the BirbirDilla Synod of EECMY where the Pentecostals' experience was integrated into the main line church. The oral interviews constitute a significant source to discuss EECMY theology and practices of today.

My main question is: To what extent has Pentecostals theology and practices influenced EECMY and how was the church responded towards the influence? This main question was phrased into four sub-questions in order to get more information from the informants. The first question states: what were the causes for the EECMY to be influenced by the Pentecostals theology and practices? Second, which areas of the EECMY theology and practices were more influenced by the Pentecostals? Thirdly, to what extent the change in the EECMY has taken place? Fourthly, how was the EECMY church responded towards these changes and the influence from the Charismatic and Pentecostals? These questions help to explore the details of the Pentecostals impacts on the history and theology of the EECMY that approve the factuality of the paper.

The informants were 20 peoples, both men and women, who were purposely selected based on their responsibility and personal involvement in the practice of charismatic and Pentecostals. The first group was pensioned pastors who have a long time experience and still active in attending and also serving the church. The second group was pastors and evangelists who are on full time pastoral ministry with administrative responsibility, like synod leaders and parish pastors as well as other leaders. The third group is composed of those who serve with charismatic gifts, like prophecy, healing, exorcism and with other spiritual gifts. This third group is a mixed group. It includes the lay volunteer ministers and some pastors and trained evangelist. The fourth group is those who do not accept the Pentecostal or Charismatic experience in the church preferring the former Lutheran tradition.

The field study was conducted both in English and the local language, Afan Oromo. Most of the interviews were tape recorded and the rest of the interviews were done through note taking during the oral interviews. During the field study I realized that some of my informants were very normative in their response. In their understanding the tradition of the EECMY was changed. But some were interested with the charismatic ways of worship and they did not want speak against them. My intention is not to explore the Pentecostals influence on EECMY

whether it is negative or positive, but my aim is limited to investigate the influence of the Pentecostals from historical perspective.

In addition to oral interview, I accessed secondary literature, and official church documents. Some of the secondary literatures that I used in this thesis are mentioned below in the source materials.

1.4.2 Source Materials

Several scholars and students have written on the life of the Mekane Yesus church. Previous research has focused on different areas of the life of the EECMY. Some of the most relevant and important for these are two books of Engelsviken, "*Molo Wongel. A Documentary Report on the Life and History of the Independent Pentecostal Movement in Ethiopia 1960-1975.*"¹⁷ This book provides an expensive study the life and history of the Pentecostals in Ethiopian from 1960-1975. His second book is a PHD dissertation with a title, "*The Gift of the Spirit An analysis and evaluation of the Charismatic movement from a Lutheran Theological perspective.*"¹⁸ This book helps to study about the theology and practice of the charismatic movement. The full references of the mentioned books are indicated in the footnote. The third book which is unpublished but I used it in this thesis is, "*The Charismatic Movement within the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus. A Theological Foundation for an African Lutheran Church between Tradition and Revival,*" written by Herman Domianus.¹⁹ This book has helped me to investigate both the theology and practices of the Ethiopian Pentecostals and also helped to investigate how the EECMY responded theologically to the Pentecostals influence.

The fourth book that I used to explore the life of the theology and practices of the EECMY before the Pentecostals influence is, "*The word of God in Ethiopian Tongues: Rhetorical features in the preaching of the Ethiopian Evangelical church Mekane Yesus,*" written by Eskil Forslund.²⁰

¹⁷Tormod Engelsviken, *The Gift of the Spirit: An analysis and evaluation of the charismatic movement from a Lutheran theological perspective*, Part I and II PHD (Dissertation. Dubuque, Iowa, 1981).

¹⁸Tormod Engelsviken, *Molo Wongel: A documentary Report on the Life and History of the independent Pentecostal Movement in Ethiopia 1960-1975.* (The Free Faculty of Theology, Oslo: Norway, 1975).

¹⁹Domianus, Hermann. *The Charismatic Movement within the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus: A Theological Foundation for an African Lutheran Church between Tradition and Revival*(Addis Ababa: MYS, 2000).

²⁰Eskil Forslund, *The Word of God in Ethiopian Tongues: Rhetorical features in the preaching of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus*(Uppsala: International Tryckab, 1993).

In addition, I used the master thesis written by TekaObsawith a title, “*The Charismatic Movement in the EECMY some Doctrinal and practical issues: The Case of the EECMY congregations.in Nekemt,*”²¹ in order to explore the effects of the Pentecostals theology and practice on the traditions of the EECMY.

As I already noted will take into account the previous research that I have mentioned above and make use of them in my study. Although there are several studies on the issues of the Charismatic movements in Ethiopia, none of them has done exactly what I am doing. What makes my research different from the previous researches are as follows: First I have explored the life and the theology of the EECMY of the time before the Pentecostals emerged and influenced this church. The second point of my research differs from the previous researches is figuring out to what extents theology and practice of the EECMY has been influenced by the experiences of the Pentecostals. The third that makes different is that I explore how the EECMY has responded to the changes and influences from the Pentecostals both theologically and practically.

1.5 Motivation

As I am from theEECMY, there were many reasons that motivated me to write on the topic, ‘the Impacts of Pentecostals on the Ethiopian Evangelical Church MekaneYesus with the especial reference to BirbirDilla Synod of Western Ethiopia. ’Some of the motivations are: 1.The Charismatic or Pentecostal movements are growing very rapidly becoming a continuous challenge to the EECMY theology and practices. 2. The changes that taking place in the EECMY due to the Pentecostals influence. This means, the integration of the Ethiopian Pentecostals experience into EECMY for the changes. For instance, the western Ethiopia the place where the emphasis of, “Lutheranism was very high”²² than other parts of the EECMY congregations is a good example. But according the information I got during the field study, of the entire EECMY congregation this time, the AmistKilloMekaneYesus, mother church in Addis Ababa is keeping

²¹Fogi, *The Charismatic Movement in the EECMY some Doctrinal and practical issues: The Case of the EECMY congregations in Nekemte*(Addis Ababa: EGST dissertation, 2000).

²²TibebeEshete, *The Evangelical movement in Ethiopia: Resistance and Resilience* (Waco, Tex: Baylor University Press, 2010) 232.

her Lutheran Identity both theologically and in practice.²³ This does not mean she is not a charismatic church but she is being a charismatic Lutheran church by using the Liturgy book and the hymn book as previous years. This could be mainly because of the existence of more experienced theologian and church leaders in the church.

The Pentecostals experiences of speaking in tongues, prophecy and healing ministries and etc. that were regarded as missing elements in the EECMY are practiced in the church. Even as one of my informants said, “this time some of the Ethiopian Pentecostals are coming to worship with the EECMY believers due to the existence of similar experience.” The third thing that motivated me was that is Rev. MulatuGadisa wrote in the introduction to a research paper, that there is a need of doing research to which extent and how EECMY integrated the Pentecostal experience in its life and ministerial functions. Based on these mentioned motivation, I am interested to do my research study as partial fulfillment of my master degree.

1.6 Structure

The thesis comprises a total of six chapters. The first Chapter consists of a general introduction to the thesis. The second Chapter gives a brief history of the EECMY and its theological profile. Chapter three describes the brief history of the Pentecostals and their teachings in Ethiopia as of 1967. Chapter four is how the Pentecostals entered into the EECMY and their experience influenced the traditions of the EECMY. Chapter five deals with how the EECMY responded theologically and constitutionally towards the influence of the Pentecostals experience. Finally, chapter six is giving general conclusion to the study by exploring the changes that had taken place in the EECMY.

²³ Rev. ItefaGaleta, the Current president of the BDS, interviewed in his office, from 2:30-3:30PM.16,07,2011.

CHAPTER TWO

BRIEF HISTORY AND THEOLOGICAL PROFILE OF EECMY

This chapter provides a brief history and theological profiles of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus. Its aim is to examine and investigate the EECMY traditions and its theology that helps to discuss the other chapters of this paper from the perspectives of the Ethiopian Pentecostals influence. This chapter tries to investigate areas of the traditions where the EECMY gave emphasis before the Pentecostals experience was developed into her traditions. These were office of preaching, Liturgical emphasis, Confessional Creeds, Church Calendar and on the understanding of Holy Spirit.

2.1 Brief Historical Development of Lutheran Traditions in the EECMY

2.1.1 The Coming of the Missionaries

The Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) has a long history next to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (EOC) that counts its origin from apostolic periods. This is depending on Acts Chapter 8:26-39 that reveals an Ethiopian eunuch who accepted Christianity through Philip the Evangelist. But the history of Christianity in Ethiopia is silent until the 4th century that two young Syrian Christians, Frumentius and Edesius set Christian services.²⁴ The scope of my paper does not allow me to discuss how these two Syrian Christians came to Ethiopia and all about their ministry in the EOC.

According to Gustav Aren, the first Lutheran missionary to Ethiopia was Peter Heyling from Germany in 1635. By profession he was a physician. But when he came; his aim was not to plant a new church denomination but to reform the existing Orthodox Church of the country. Even though he had designed many things to work with the EOC, he was not much successful because of the opposition from this Church. But the best thing that he did is that he translated the bible into Amharic before he left the country (in 1652) to take vacation in Egypt his country

²⁴ Andersen, *A Brief History of Mekane Yesus Church* (1988) 9; Sanbeto Wakene, *The historical development and practice of self-reliance in the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus, with special reference to the Central Gibe Synod* (Stavanger, MHS, 2010) 20; Nathan B. Hege, *Beyond our prayers* (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Herald press, 1998) 31.

getting permission from the Ethiopian Emperor.²⁵ This translation of the Bible helped many Ethiopians to read the Bible in their own language and develop a new understanding. This new understanding caused a renewal movement within the Orthodox Church in 1898²⁶. And this revival continued till 20th century.²⁷ This revival took place among the orthodox priests and Deacons in Eretria that led for the emergence of the Evangelical movement within the Orthodox Church by the Orthodox priests. These priests came to Wollega as an indigenous missionaries, bringing the Good News to the Oromo People,²⁸ particularly Bodjii Karkaroo by Gebre Ewostateos Ze-Michael (ca. 1865-1905) and Daniel Dabala (ca. 1866-1904).²⁹ But the idea of reaching the Oromo people with Gospel was the vision of the GHM. The GHM has made unsuccessful attempt in 1854 and 1858 but after the Swedish missionaries reached the Oromo in 1866 with the same goal.³⁰ The GHM has also become successful in 1927 reaching the Oromo in Western Part of Ethiopia, particularly, Aira.

After many years, the Church Missionary Society (CMS) sent two missionaries in 1830, namely, Samuel Gobat and Christian Kulger. Like Peter Heyling, the aim of these two missionaries was to renew the existing EOC instead of planting new denomination. However, they also encountered a strong resistance from this Church, and their attempt was failed. This has to do with the fact that EOC is very strong in keeping its identity and traditions.³¹ This keeping of tradition is continued until the charismatic and Pentecostals movement started to spread throughout the country after the Revolution, 1990 due to religious freedom in the country.

In 1866 the Swedish missionaries came to Ethiopia for the first time and began to work among the Kunama people of Orthodox Church in Eretria.³² However, these missionaries were not chanceful to work in the Orthodox Church and also to start other evangelism work until 1872.³³

²⁵ Gustav Aren, *Evangelical Pioneers in Ethiopia : The Origins of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus* (Uppsala: Offsetcenterab, 1978) 35-36.

²⁶ Mulatu Gadisa, *The Effects of the Charismatic experiences within the Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus\Ethiopia* (Stavanger, MHS, MTh. Thesis, 1998) 23

²⁷ Aren, *Evangelical Pioneers in Ethiopia* (1978) 35-36.

²⁸ Aren, *Evangelical Pioneers in Ethiopia* (1978) 13-17.

²⁹ Eide, *Revolution and Religion in Ethiopia* (2000) 51.

³⁰ Jörg Hausteijn, *Writing Religious History: The Historiography of the Ethiopian Pentecostalism* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2011) 11-12.

³¹ Aren, *Evangelical Pioneers in Ethiopia* (1978) 54-63.

³² Nathan B. Hege, *Beyond Our Prayers: An amazing half century of church growth in Ethiopia 1948-1998* (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Herald press, 1998) 36.

The Swedish and other missionaries as they encountered strong oppositions from the Ethiopian Orthodox Church were forced to plant a Lutheran Church. This Lutheran Church was the Ethiopian Mekane Yesus Church. There are many missions those who contributed their great effort in the establishment of the Mekane Yesus Church and grow in line with Lutheran theology and practices.

1. The Swedish Evangelical Mission (SEM), was the first organized evangelical mission that began its mission in 1904 in Addis Ababa. The vision of this mission was to reach the Oromo people so that they could reach the other parts of Ethiopia. But it was after many years that they reached the Oromo people in Wollega because of the political situation of the country forbid them to enter. The target of many missionaries vision was primarily to evangelize the Oromo people so that they could easily reach the rest of the country. For instance, the visions of a German missionary Dr. Krapf, prayed to God, “Give us Oromo the center of Africa will be ours.” This is due to the fact that the Oromo People is the largest ethnic group to be a blessing for the others in reaching with the Gospel of Christ.

2. The German Hermansburg Mission (GHM), was founded in 1849 for the stimulation of missionary action and deep spiritual life. In 1927 started to send its first missionaries to the Oromo People reaching western Wollega, making Aira as their station.³⁴3. The Danish Evangelical Mission reached the southern part of Ethiopia, Bale in 1948. 4. The American Lutheran Mission began its work in the Northern part of Ethiopia (in Wollo, Gondar, and Tigray) in 1958. 5. The Norwegian Mission, Society (NMS) reached the Sidama people of South Ethiopia after 1948,³⁵ then the Oromo people living along the border of Sudan and Gumuz People in Blue Nile basin in 1971³⁶ and active in its ministry among the Gumuz people until today.

These missionaries came from different countries at different times; but they established a joint committee in 1951 before the official registration of the EECMY at national level. Even after the official establishment of the Church the need of the missionaries continued because of the

³³Hege, *Beyond Our Prayers* (1998) 36.

³⁴ Andersen, *A Brief History of the Mekane Yesus Church* (1980)19-20.

³⁵ Andersen, *A Brief History of the Mekane Yesus Church* (1980) 25.

³⁶Sanbeto Wakene, *The Historical Development and Practice of Self-reliance in the Ethiopian Evangelical Church with especial reference to the Central Gibe Synod* (2000) 23-24.

overgrowing of the church. For example, at the beginning of the Ethiopian revolution the numbers of the missionaries working in the existing EECMY synods are as follows: Southern Synod 222, mostly Norwegians, Also Danes, Finns, Icelanders; Western Synod 92, with 41 Germans, 33 Swedes, 18 Norwegians; Central Synod 33 Swedes, Northern Synod 17 Americans, Kambatta Synod 16 Finnish.³⁷ This figure shows that the number of missionaries from Norwegian constituted the largest group. This is due to three different Norwegian mission organizations that worked in Ethiopia. These were the Norwegian Missionary Society, Norwegian Lutheran Mission and, the Norwegian Lutheran Free Church (NLFC). The second largest group is the Swedes and the third is the Germans with 41 missionaries.

Although these missionaries were Lutheran in their origin, they have different theological understanding in propagating the gospel and forming a church. To mention some of them, the theological understanding of the Norwegian Lutheran Mission, was based on lay leadership in forming congregations. The Swedish Mission was very strong in transferring liturgical worship without much consideration for contextualization. The German Hermannsburg Mission focused both ordination and liturgy with contextualization³⁸

The receiving of different theological understanding of the EECMY congregations from the different missionaries had its own side effect within the EECMY. For example, in the West, where the GHM and the Swedish Missions served, the Congregations over emphasized ordination, especially in Aira, pastors are more respected than lay ministers. When the Charismatic movement started to emerge these pastors opposed for it is a new tradition for them. That means it was different from the western part where the lay ministers already involved in church services. When the charismatics controlled in participating in church ministry in BDS, they again rejected the pastors vice versa. I will discuss about the challenge in chapter four.

³⁷ Ernst Bauerochse, *A vision finds fulfilments: Hermannsburg mission in Ethiopia*, (Berlin: LIT-Verlag, Global publisher 2008) 209.

³⁸ Gudina Tumsa Foundation (ed.) *Church and Society: Lectures and Responses Second Missiological Seminar 2003, on the Life and Ministry of Gudina Tumsa, General Secretary of the EECMY (1966-1979)* (Hamburg: WDL-Publishers, 2010) 75.

2.1.2 *The Official Registration of the EECMY as Ethiopian Church*

Even though the ministry of the MekaneYesus church covers all areas of the country, there was strong resistance from the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. This resistance were for two purposes. Primarily, the EOC regarded the MekaneYesus Church as a foreign Church for it works with the foreign Missionaries. The second point is that the Ethiopian Orthodox Church wanted to continue to be the only national church of the country for it is a state church during the periods. Until it is officially registered as an Ethiopian Church, it took more than 50 years with the name Evangelical Church MekaneYesus (ECMY) in Ethiopia. It was in 1959 that the MekaneYesus Church became a national church with the name ‘Ethiopian Evangelical Church MekaneYesus.’ This name is taken from one of its congregation in Addis Ababa. “MekaneYesus means (Jesus’ dwelling place).”³⁹ In 1974 the Bethel Synod from the Presbyterian tradition joined the EECMY with full integration. At his establishment the total numbers of Synods were four with 20000 members.

According 2010 statistical report by Rev. Dr. BirhanuOfga’a the current General Secretary of the EECMY, EECMY has grown to 5, 57615 baptized members and 2,672147 communicant members organized into 7000 congregations and 3,578 preaching places. There are 2361 pastors, 7615 fulltime evangelists and 319,955 voluntary evangelists involved in the ministry of these congregations and preaching places.”⁴⁰The EECMY soon established at national level in the same year 1959, became the members of the Lutheran world Federation (LWF). Again in 1973 is accepted into the All African Conferences of Churches (AACC).⁴¹ Currently we can see the rest of EECMY’s membership involvement in the background study under point 1.1.

2.1.3 *Emphasis of EECMY on the Lutheran Tradition*

Before the coming of the missionaries, many of the Ethiopian society follow an African traditional belief that focuses the experience of abundant life by doing what pleases God like sacrifice before God.⁴² After many years of the establishment of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church,

³⁹ Ernest Theodore Bachman and Marcia Brenne Bachmann, *The Lutheran Churches in the World: handbook*, (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1989) 57.

⁴⁰Presentation from Rev. Dr. Berhanu Ofga’a, EECMY General secretary, on The EECMY International Theological and Mission Conference February 15-17, 2011, 1(getting the copy of the report on CD).

⁴¹Eide, *Revolution and Religion in Ethiopia* (2000) 56.

⁴² David TonghouNgong, *The Holy Spirit and Salvation in African traditional theology: Imagining a More Hopeful Future for Africa*, (New York: Peter Lang, 2010) 21-22.

as discussed in 2.1.1, the evangelical missionaries began to establish a Lutheran Church like the EECMY that brought new traditions in the life of believers. The traditions of the Lutherans understanding of salvation began to experience. One of the basic traditions of all the Lutherans in the world including the EECMY is the “four alone” These four alones are Christ alone, grace alone, faith alone and Holy Scripture alone. These elements work for the salvations of human beings according to the Lutheran theology and traditions.⁴³ Further, these missions came together and established a Lutheran Mission Committee in Addis Ababa at the eve of 1951 by the initiation of the Lutheran world Federation. The committee’s main goals were:

1.To serve the common aims and interests of the Lutheran missions in Ethiopia without interfering with the function of the already existing Christian Council of Ethiopia, 2.To make the Gospel as rediscovered in the Reformation and transmitted through the teaching of the Lutheran Church available to the people of Ethiopia. 3. To encourage the assumption of responsibility leading to autonomy for the churches in which they worked.⁴⁴

This mission’s committee aim became successful in 1958 and then in 1959 registered at national level with a name The Ethiopian Evangelical Church MekaneYesus. The name of the church to be called as an Ethiopian church brought a new insight in the minds of the society those who regarded the MekaneYesus church as foreign church.⁴⁵

The EECMY started its evangelism work with enthusiasm and great effort on the base of the Lutheran doctrine and liturgy. These are the Holy Scripture, Apostles Creed, Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed, the unaltered Augsburg confessions, Luther’s Large and Small Catechisms. Further, the four pillars of Lutheranism: faith alone, grace alone, Scripture alone, and Christ alone.⁴⁶ These key elements and some other practices like ways of worship, hymns, prayers and church calendar, focus on preaching are all expressions of what might be described as the Lutheran identity.

⁴³Larry Christenson (edit), *Welcome Holy Spirit: A study of Charismatic renewal in the Church*, (Minneapolis:Augsburg Publishing House, 1987) 106-108.

⁴⁴ Andersen,A *Brief History of the MekaneYesus Church*(1980) 30-31.

⁴⁵Andersen, A *Brief History of the MekaneYesus Church* (1980) 35.

⁴⁶Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert,*The Book of Concord: the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000) 32.

In order to serve his people effectively and put into action the Lutheran traditions, the Mekane Yesus Church engaged in the construction of pastoral training bible schools in cooperation with the missionaries. These constructions of the bible schools and seminaries played an important role in the life of the Mekane Yesus Church to serve his people in line with the Lutheran customs. One training areas was the Mekane Yesus Seminary in Addis Ababa which was established by the cooperation of the Americans, Germans and Swedish in 1960. The second training area was Onesimos Nesib Bible School at Aira, founded by Germans and Swedish, and the third one was, Dila Bible School by the help of Norwegians in 1952.⁴⁷ Today all of them have grown to seminary level including those established later like, Nekemte Christian College in Wollega, Hossana Seminary and Tabor Seminary in the southern part of Ethiopia. The doctrinal basis of these seminaries is based on the Lutheran tradition.⁴⁸ Its aim is to train pastors to serve the existing congregation with the gospel and also reach the unreached area and build up a new congregation.

In order to keep well its Lutheran tradition the EECMY gave strong emphasis on trained evangelists and pastors with well-structured organization from grass root congregation level to central office to follow up its mission. New converts became the full members of the church after they were taught at least one and half years from Luther's small catechism and other additional books. Until the charismatic movement enters into the church and made some changes, every worship practice is exactly the direct translation of missions hymn books. These translations were from "Germans and Swedish hymn books together with their melodies. Prayers in the church were done mainly from the liturgy books, in the written forms."⁴⁹

Gradually after they heard the gospel from the missionaries, the ministers of the EECMY committed to serve the society in a way that changes the social life, spiritual life, and economical life of the believers. As Rev. Mulatu the former president of the BDS said, "Their preaching, teaching and prayer is filled by the power of Holy Spirit and they were charismatics," of the many ministers like, Mr. Ashena Negade, Rev. Olana Wajjira, and Rev. Dafa Jammo. Etc. was by

⁴⁷ Andersen, *A Brief history of the Mekane Yesus Church* (1980) 52.

⁴⁸ Bachmann, *The Lutheran Churches in the World, a handbook* (1989) 58

⁴⁹ Dawit Olika Terfassa, *Prophesy: A blessing or a problem? A Critical study of the practice and understanding of prophesy in Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus* (Oslo, Menightsfuktultet : M.Th. Thesis, 2007) 17.

the power of the Holy Spirit.” Rev. Mulatu further stated about them that these preachers were charismatics.⁵⁰

2.2 Theological Profile of the EECMY

2.2.1 Emphases on the Office of Preaching

According to the teaching of Luther, what makes a church is the proper teaching of the word of God and the administering of the sacrament.⁵¹ In this case, who is capable to give the proper teaching of the Word of God? From its tradition, the EECMY gives more emphasis on the trained pastors and evangelists than lay people to preach the word of God. This does not mean that the lay people do not preach but they have first to take preachers course given by trained pastors at parish and district level and sometimes a short period bible course at regional bible course.

Those who were trained at theological schools, both for pastoral and evangelism work were prepared for church service of preaching and teachings in accordance to the doctrinal base of the Church.⁵² The prayer and sermon were in a written form. But the kind of preaching or teaching that ministers prepared was gradually criticized by Charismatics and Pentecostals of the country. They called it a ministry more based on human knowledge than on the Holy Spirit.

However, in order to keep the identity of the church with proper church services, the EECMY made a constitution in 1981 that had two sections. This constitution was distributed to all synods and district, to Mekane Yesus Seminary and the regional Bible Schools to clarify who had the right to preach and teach in the congregations. This was to make the preachers abide to the doctrinal bases of the EECMY.⁵³ The 1981 EECMY letter, has put certain criteria for those who to preach in the congregations. These are: 1. The Pastors, the Evangelists, and the preachers of the church who acquired education in spiritual subjects, are chosen and rightly called by the congregations. 2. The prescribed order of the Bible texts for each Sunday and festivals according to the lectionary of the Church should be followed. A sermon message based on these texts

⁵⁰ Rev. Mulatu Gadisa O. The former President of BDS, interviewed at his residence, on 19,07,2011.

⁵¹ Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, *The Book of Concord* (2000) 32.

⁵² Alemu Negari, a man of 78 years old interviewed on 14,07,2011 at 2 PM in his residence who has a long experience in preaching and also being a congregation elder and complains on today's preaching system

⁵³ Eskil Forslund, *The Word of God in Ethiopian Tongues: Rhetorical features in the preaching of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus*, (Uppsala: International Tryck AB, 1993) 73.

should be given to the congregations. 3. The established order for worship service on Sundays and festivals should be followed.⁵⁴ This letter clearly shows that outside the above mentioned criteria no body is permitted to preach in the congregation.

The main objectiv was that there were people who started to preach within the EECMY against the doctrinal bases of the EECMY and they later named themselves Pentecostals, MuluWongel, which means, Full Gospel Church. Up to the first fifty years of its establishment, the EECMY strictly followed the office of preaching by focusing on trained pastors and evangelists. As Rev. AberaIfa a pensioned pastor of 66 years old explained during my field study, “the EECMY had followed the office of preaching and teaching and all the pastoral activities in line with those missionaries who brought the gospel. That means that the task of the Christ centered preaching and teaching”. He further said that “if a believer or an evangelist does not live or as in accordance with the word of God, he will be disciplined. This was continued more or less in up to 1991.”⁵⁵

According to Rev. Investigation, today, to discipline a person as years before 1991 is very hard unless in secret for there are a lot of chances to join other evangelicals as well as sects. After 1991 the trained ministers were misunderstood by many young charismatic groups in the church. Sometimes the ministers are there in the church only for the sake of benediction. In fact this time said Abera, “Today’s EECMY preaching and teaching is shifted to the work of Holy Spirit and its spiritual gifts like prophesy, that I influenced by it very much.”⁵⁶ This is becoming a challenge for EECMY to keep the office of preaching as before for many congregations of EECMY runs after prophesy, healing, and exorcism etc.

2.2.2 *EECMY’s Doctrinal Bases*

The Lutherans believe and confess that only Christ alone, faith alone, grace alone, and scripture alone. These elements were unique identities of the Lutheran church where the EECMY is one. The years from 1974-1991 was a revolution periods in Ethiopia especially 1974-1985⁵⁷ where all

⁵⁴Forslund, *The Word of God in Ethiopian Tongues*(1993)74.

⁵⁵Rev. AberaIfa, A pensioned Pastor from LaalooBuuyye Parish of BDS synod (oral Interview 10AM, at ONS campus 15June 2011.

⁵⁶Rev. AberaIfa,oral interview 15June 2011.

⁵⁷Eide, *Revolution and Religion in Ethiopia* (2000) 95.

the Ethiopian Evangelicals were suffered a lot under the Ethiopian government by an atheist view of Marxist philosophy. The revolution period was a tension to the church. It was the time that her members suffered and also lost her properties.

The EECMY made a constitution in 1981 Article II has two sections. This article II gives EECMY's main emphases on the Holy Scriptures and Creeds. These were: Section I: "The Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus believers and professes that the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testaments and the New Testaments are the holy word of God and the only source and infallible norm of all church doctrine and practice." Section II: The EECMY adheres to the Apostles Creed, the Nicene Creed and the Athanasian Creed, which were formulated by the early fathers and accepted by the ancient Church."⁵⁸ On the base of this constitution the EECMY congregations believe and profess their faith in Christ without any external influence. But this confessional emphasis were changed to the Pentecostals experience of baptism I the Holy Spirit. For instance, according to Teka a woman from the member of the EECMY said that "I confess in the Fullness and Joy of the Holy Spirit."⁵⁹ This indicates a kind of demographic changes.

2.2.3 *The Liturgical Emphasis of the EECMY*

At the beginning of its foundation, the EECMY liturgy is directly developed from the missionaries, especially the GHM and SLM. The EECMY accepted from them giving more emphasis to the liturgy. Basically the Liturgy of the EECMY has a link with the traditions of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewaido Church.⁶⁰ Liturgy shows the identity of that church in God. Dr. Timothy C. J. Quill is claims that, "The Lutheran Church is a liturgical church. The Old Testament Church was a liturgical church. The New Testament Church since the days of the apostles has been a liturgical church. And so it was with Martin Luther and the Lutheran fathers."⁶¹ That means Liturgy is a living tradition among the Lutheran churches. This is why the EECMY continued the Liturgy in its church services adopting it from the missionaries

⁵⁸Forslund, *The Word of God in Ethiopian Tongues* (1993) 73.

⁵⁹TekaObsaFogi, *The Charismatic Movement in the EECMY some Doctrinal and practical issues: The Case of the EECMY congregations, in Nekemte*(Addis Ababa, MTh. Thesis, 2000) 18.

⁶⁰Forslund, *The Word of God in Ethiopian Tongues* (1993)62, (see the details of the link explained from pages 62-64).

⁶¹Dr. Timothy C. J. Quill, "Why the Liturgy is Important Mekane Yesus Theological Seminary" (Addis Ababa, MYS, February 4-8, 2008 Compiled reader)3.

understanding its historical and biblical bases. Even the hymns and its tunes were from the missionaries.

The hymns and its tunes were from these missions. Songs of a choir is also taken from the missionaries. This indicates how the EECMY deeply linked with the missionaries' liturgical emphases of the Lutheran tradition.⁶² Liturgy plays an important role in the life of the Mekane Yesus Church and also be taught both in the church and at theological seminary. For instance, Professor Timothy presented the importance of liturgy in the Mekane Yesus Seminary as follows on the base of Apology XV: it is profoundly Biblical; it fosters reverence; it has repetition; it has been tested by generations; it serves the common confession and fosters unity; it protects the congregation from the pastor and the pastor from the congregation; it is built on the Church Year and Lectionary; it instructs the laity; it provides good order and form; it is shaped by Christ's presence; liturgical music and hymnody confesses Christ and the Gospel; Liturgy serves and shapes the missionary task of the church; the Liturgy serves as the basis of pastoral care.⁶³

According to the Lutheran Understanding, a Church who has true liturgy that based on the word of God is a real church. It communicates with God in a proper way. Missionaries as they came to Ethiopia and served in the EECMY they wanted to continue exactly similar to the liturgy they have in their country. Every church service including its organization attached to the church they came from like GHM. For instance, it was the aim of Luis Harms from the Lutheran churches of Germany to make the African churches the member of the Hanover Lutheran church in Germany with the same liturgy and order. This was practically exercised in the EECMY congregations for instance, in the Western Wollega, Aira the place where for the first time Liturgy was implemented in Afan Oromo in 1932, under the GHM order.⁶⁴

During worship, it is the ordained pastor who plays an important role in guiding and leading the liturgy. Everything is in order. There is a liturgy book that guides both the ordained and non-ordained volunteer ministers to lead the worship service. The service is started by a song from

⁶²Englesviken *Molo Wongel* (1975) 92.

⁶³ J. Quill, "Why the Liturgy is Important" (2008) 4-5.

⁶⁴Amansisa Ulfata, *The current Challenges of Organizational leadership facing the EECMY*, (Addis Ababa: MYS, B.Th. Thesis, 2003) 9.

hymn book, then repentance prayer from liturgy book, reading the scripture, singing by a choir, announcement, a song from hymn book, reading from the Scripture, Confessions of faith, a song from hymn book, sermon, short prayer by the preacher, singing by a choir, prayer from liturgy book, benediction, and finally a song from hymn book.⁶⁵ All the members of the church know in order the process of the liturgy. It keeps the unity of the church very strong and there was a strong love among believers.

However, the Liturgy plays a leading role in the services of Church and has much importance; its value among the charismatic movement is less. Rather, the Pentecostals experience of free worship was experienced by many of the BDS congregations. The changes happened in the BDS due to Pentecostals influence is discussed in chapter four.

2.2.4 *EECMY's Church year\ Liturgical year*

The Church year or Liturgical year of a church plays an important role in the life and ministry of the EECMY. The EECMY started to use this church year since 1949, consisting three cycles: Christmas Cycle, Easter cycle and the trinity cycles.⁶⁶ This Calendar is primarily adopted from the Ethiopian Orthodox church without accepting the saints or angels day.⁶⁷ The preaching and teaching of the EECMY is according to this church calendar, that begins with the birth of Christ, his baptism (Epiphany), passion weeks, Crucifixion, death and resurrection, his ascension, the Holy Trinity, coming of the Holy Spirit, and the final days, or days of judgment, Eschatology. This could be preached mainly from the four gospels. It begins with the gospel of Matthew and continues until it reaches the period of the Gospel John on the fourth year. This helps the church from confusions. This could be done by helping the pastor or the preacher from preaching the same or similar text again and again every Sunday, and also from preaching his own selective text or his own agenda and also to give similar message for all EECMY members on the day.

The center of the church's service focus on what Christ has done on the cross in order to save the human beings. This does not mean other parts of the scripture cannot be preached, the church calendar provides three alternative texts of the bible, one from the OT and two from the NT (from the gospels and letters). The believers know texts of the day and come to the church

⁶⁵ EECMY Liturgy book printed in 1996, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

⁶⁶ Forslund, *The word of God in Ethiopian Tongues* (1993)126.

⁶⁷ Forslund, *The word of God in Ethiopian tongues* (1993) 62-64.

reading the part. When the preacher of the day preaches the believers can easily understand the texts of the day and follow up with attention. The EECMY preachers both the trained evangelists and pastors and non-trained volunteer ones take a course on the given text every month at parish level. During the course they discuss the key points of the sermon of the following four weeks and each develops his or her sermon in the context of each congregation.⁶⁸

However, the benefit of both liturgy and liturgical calendar is many as we discussed above, many young charismatic believers of the church left it behind. They argued that free worship traditions are not important. The tradition of the church is to be forgotten. This is similar to what was happened during the 19th and 20th centuries by “the movements of Pietism and Rationalism popularized the false notion that the early church was non-liturgical and preferred simple, informal, spontaneous styles of worship. Twentieth century scholarship has demonstrated that this is simply false and historically inaccurate.”⁶⁹ Some of the trained pastors are there in the church in some congregations just mainly to give the final benedictions. Mr. Alemu said that “today we go the church but go home with no understanding, for the teaching of the day is selected from the Bible filled with halleluiahs and Amen.”⁷⁰

2.2.5 *EECMY Theological Understanding on the Work and Personality of Holy Spirit*

As one of the Lutherans in the world, the EECMY also accepted the faith of the Council of Nicea that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity that precedes the Father and the Son.⁷¹ According to EECMY the Holy Spirit is equal with God the Father and the Son to be worshipped. There were few scholars who want to describe the Holy Spirit as a force or power than that he is his personality. Rev. Tesso quotes, J. Mackenzie said that ““The Spirit is not obviously and explicitly conceived as a distinctive divine personal being in Paul. The occasional personifications which he employs do not go beyond the personifications found in the OT and Judaism.””⁷² This is mainly due to the fact that the Holy Spirit is not explicitly indicated in the

⁶⁸ Personal experience, I participated in taking the course at Leka Suchi Parish, from 1993-1996 before my theological study at OnesimosNesib Seminary in 2000.

⁶⁹ J. Quill, “Why the Liturgy is Important” (2008) 2.

⁷⁰ Alemu Negari O.I a man of 78 years old interviewed in his residence who has a long experience in preaching and also being a congregation elder, (on 14,07,2011 at 2 PM.).

⁷¹ Theodore G. Tapert (ed.)*The book of Concordia: The confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran church*, Philadelphia :Muhlenberg Press, 1959)18, 20,22.

⁷²TessoDjaleta, *A Critical Survey of the Development of Charismatic Influences in the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus*, (University of Liverpool, MTh. Dissertation, 1994)10.

Scripture until the Jesus' clear teaching about the Holy Spirit. However, still many scholars affirm that the Holy Spirit is a person providing biblical evidence.

The personality of the Holy Spirit is separately understood mainly after the Pentecost. "...he is called Paraclete (John 15:26)."⁷³The EECMY believes and confesses that the Holy Spirit is one of the Godhead who calls people to faith in Christ Jesus and God the Father in order that they may have eternal life. In agreement with Luther's Small catechism, the EECMY confesses that, "I believe that by my own understanding or strength I cannot believe in Jesus my LORD or come to him, but instead he has called me with his gifts, made me holy and kept me in the true faith..."⁷⁴ Here the work of the Holy Spirit is many. He calls, makes holy, and keeps people in true faith. It is not human strength to do all these activities. The Holy Spirit does these by his gifts. This also indicates the existence of different gifts of the Holy Spirit to build the church of Christ.

Therefore, the EECMY ministers, pastors, evangelists, elders of the church, soon they received a call from God through the Holy Spirit that worked with the missionaries and indigenous people, continued evangelism work in a way the Holy Spirit inspired them. These pastors committed themselves to serve their society in a way that changes the social life, spiritual life, and economical life of believers. As Rev. Mulatu the former president of the BDS said, "Their preaching, teaching and prayer is filled by the power of Holy Spirit and they were charismatics,"⁷⁵ of such ministers, Mr. AshenaNegade, Rev. OlanaWajjira, and Rev. DafaJammo are among the many to indicate. Even though they did not speak in tongues, speak prophesy they are charismatics. Their ministry transforms the life of a people. That means EECMY beliefs and teaches that the Holy Spirit is a person that gives his power to his church to build up. The building of this church could be done through God's Chosen ministers by the help of the power of the Holy Spirit. This power of the Holy Spirit could take place during water baptism and are manifested throughout the ministry of the church in the sacraments and

⁷³Djaleta, *A Critical Survey of the Development of the Charismatic Influence in the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus*, (1994)11.

⁷⁴Grosshans, Hans-Peter, (ed.) "The work of the Holy Spirit in Christian Life and in the Church: Lutheran Theological Reflections," *Lutherans respond to Pentecostalism* Vol.4 (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Lutheran University Press, 2009)117.

⁷⁵ Rev. MulatuGadisaO.I The former President of BDS, interviewed at his residence, on 19,07,2011.

preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. That means that there is no “second Stage” in the Christian life.⁷⁶

The EECMY give value to the theology of water baptism. Due to this she baptizes all non-Christians regardless of age, gender, and colors those whom God calls to his kingdom. According to her understanding, when a person undergoes water baptism he receives the Holy Spirits that converts him. That means conversion and receiving of the Holy Spirit is a one-time event. James Dunn argues that it is during water baptism that a person who undergoes both conversion and receiving of the Holy Spirit. In addition to this Dunn argues from the perspectives of Acts 2:38 that “there are three parties acting: the initiative repents, the Church baptizes and God gives the gifts of the Spirits.”⁷⁷ This activity indicates that a person who involved in this three element is participating from Christ’s work of salvation. But according to the Pentecostals understanding water baptism has not great importance as Baptism in the Holy Spirit. They see water baptism as” a sign or symbol of salvation.”⁷⁸

⁷⁶ Larry Christensen, *The Charismatic renewal among Lutherans: A pastoral and Theological Perspective*, (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Lutheran Charismatic Services 1976) 39.

⁷⁷ According to Fogi, *The Charismatic Movement in the EECMY with some Doctrinal ad Practical issues* (2000) 48

⁷⁸ According Fogi, *The Charismatic Movement in the EECMY with some Doctrinal ad Practical issues* (2000) 47.

CHAPTER THREE

BRIEF HISTORY AND THEOLOGICAL PROFILE OF THE ETHIOPIAN PENTECOSTALS

In this Chapter I discuss the brief history of the Ethiopian Pentecostals. This includes how the Pentecostals emerged as a new movement and spread in the country reaching the stages of influencing the main line church, EECMY. It was through the charismatics within the EECMY that the Pentecostals influenced the theology and practices of the EECMY⁷⁹. The ways that the Pentecostals influenced the EECMY in their experience is through the charismatics within the EECMY. In this chapter I limit myself on the following theology and practices of Pentecostals which is the basic traditions of the Pentecostals. This tradition focuses on the Holy Spirit and its manifestations. These are: Baptism of the Holy Spirit, Prophecy, speaking in tongues, healing both from physical and spiritual illness. The emphasis on exorcism and ways of worship styles like dancing, preaching outside the church calendar, preaching and teaching outside the Pulpit are among the many of their main focus. Many people were attracted looking these activities among the Pentecostals.

3.1 The Emerging of Pentecostalism in Ethiopia

3.1.1 The Arrival of the Scandinavian Pentecostal Missions

Pentecostalism is a form of Christianity where the experiential evidence of what is believed is at the heart of the total conception of Christianity.⁸⁰ Before discussing about the coming of the Pentecostals by missionaries to Ethiopia, let me say a little about its origin. One of the revival movements in the history of the church is Montanism. The movement is founded in 156 AD by a person called Montanus in Pyrgia of Asia Minor. His teaching is similar to the present day Pentecostals. From many of his teaching, he said that prophecy had not stopped with apostles and

⁷⁹For the definitions of the charismatics see Chapter 4, point, 4.2.2.

⁸⁰Tormod Engelsviken, *The Gift of the Spirit: An analysis and evaluation of the charismatic movement from a Lutheran theological perspective, part I and II*, (PHD Dissertation. Dubuque, Iowa, 1981) 93.

first Christians but continues (John 16:12-13), he himself received speaking in tongues during his baptism and the gift of prophesy. Two other women, Maximilla and Prisca, followed him and he regarded them as the channels of the Holy Spirit. In his teaching, he said that the second coming of Christ is at hand, encouraged celibacy for preparation for the day of the Lord Jesus. Even though he his teaching spread in Asia Minor and also in Carthage the church condemned his teaching.⁸¹

Again, with similar experience the Pentecostal movement started in America in 1900. Rev. Charles F. Parham who had founded his own Bible-school in Topeka, Kansas, convinced 135 of his students and made them accept the teaching about baptism in the Holy Spirit. One of his students, Miss Agnes Ozman, asked the other students to lay their hands so that she might be filled with the Holy Spirit. As the other student laid on praying she began to speak in tongues. Later Parham and his students closed the bible school and began to preach.⁸²

In 1905 Parham met the black Baptist holiness preacher, William J. Seymour in Los Angeles, who had also experienced baptism in the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues but was expelled from the church because of his new doctrine. From time to time their number increased and built their own church. Later, started to preach even on roads to every people they get. Then a name was given them; Azusa Street-Revival. Some of them scattered to different parts of the world as a Pentecostal missionary. Some years later, B.T. Barratt a Methodist Pastor from Norway/Oslo, visited a revival meeting at New York and began to speak in tongues after baptized in the Holy Spirit. After he returned to Norway shared his new experience .Then LewiPethrus a man from Sweden came and shared the experience and began to spread the movement in Sweden⁸³

Today, Pentecostalism is a fast growing movement and has become “a global religious movement”. This attracted the attentions of many scholars. But few studies are dealing with the influence on the main line churches, like Orthodox, Protestants and Catholics. Therefore it is better to make a critical and very advanced study to investigate their influence all over the world. I also agree with TibebeEshetewhen he says that “the Pentecostal movement is one of the least understood and most understudied phenomena in modern Ethiopian history, which partly, stems

⁸¹Domianus, *The Charismatic Movement within the EECMY*(2000) 89.

⁸²Domianus, *The Charismatic Movement within the EECMY* (2000) 11-12 See also EsheteTibebe, *The Evangelical movement in Ethiopia* (2010)145.

⁸³Domianus, *The Charismatic Movement within the EECMY*(2000) 11-12.

from the fact that both expatriate and Ethiopian scholars have paid little attention to the new religious movements which are appearing in bewildering varieties.”⁸⁴

The origin of the Ethiopian Pentecostalism is both internal and external. The internal one is by the indigenous people from the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, those who have “long traditions of the monastic life and deep prophetic assertions of the bahetawi (a variant of the monastic holy men) and localized prophetic movements.”⁸⁵ The external source of Pentecostals origin is missionaries from Scandinavian countries. These missions were “The Swedish Philadelphia church missions and the Finish Pentecostal mission.”⁸⁶ That means “it did not originate in a religious vacuum but in the prayer and sacrifices of a people called to mission, in the dedication and faithfulness of missionaries who were willing to follow the call of Christ”.⁸⁷ When these Pentecostal missionaries came to Ethiopia in the middle of 20th century, there were many different churches already established in the country. Some of them were: Baptist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, and Mennonite missions.

The two Pentecostal missions have worked in the different parts of the country. The Finish Pentecostal missions started their mission in the Southwestern part of Ethiopia, particularly in Kaffa in 1951. Eight years later, in 1959 the Swedish Philadelphia mission began to work in the south part of Ethiopia in Awasa.⁸⁸ The young people in Ethiopia were influenced by the teaching and preaching of these missionaries. In addition to their preaching and teaching, these missionaries distributed pamphlets, magazines and some literatures that teach about the Holy Spirit and its gifts, like speaking in tongues. In doing this they acquired many acceptances by college and university students. The missionaries were positive to the young people in their ministry at beginning. Many college and university students committed themselves to bible reading, prayer, and witnessing to convert the Christians from other churches. These were mainly students from the Orthodox Church and also from evangelical churches. Within five years they expanded their branch and came to the main city, Addis Ababa in 1955.⁸⁹ and began their mission

⁸⁴Eshete, *The Evangelical Movement in Ethiopia* (2010) 145.

⁸⁵Eshete, *The Evangelical Movement in Ethiopia*(2010) 148.

⁸⁶Engelsviken, *MoloWongel* (1975)17.

⁸⁷Engelsviken, *MoloWongel* (1975)17.

⁸⁸Fogi, *The Charismatic Movement in the EECMY* (2000) 70.

⁸⁹Fogi, *The Charismatic Movement in the EECMY* (2000) 70; TayeAbdisa, *The Pentecostal Development and the Rise of the Charismatic movement in Ethiopia*, (Addis Ababa, MYS, B.Th. Thesis,1977) 16.

at Markato,⁹⁰ a well-known market place until today. At that point of time, this new movement was regarded as something that had no value and, a kind of a youth movement, and more assumed as sects. To label them as a sect was a system to protect people from joining them. During the revolution, the American weekly magazine, “Newsweek”, regarding the reports on the imprisoned Ethiopian Pentecostals during the revolution of 1973, reported as ““Persecuting the Sects.””⁹¹ But passing through many problems, the movement has shown growth very fast getting acceptance by many young Ethiopians.

3.1.2 *The Break of the Ethiopian Pentecostals from the Missionaries*

As I discussed above, the origin of the Ethiopian Pentecostals is missions oriented. After they worked with the foreign missions for some years, they separated from the missionaries’ and became an independent Pentecostal church in 1966⁹². Becoming an independent church is not only in case of self-governing and self-propagation of the gospel but also in self-financing in contrast to the other evangelical who used to get grants from abroad, like EECMY.

The problems that led the Ethiopian Pentecostals to separate from the Finnish missionaries were that the Finnish missionaries gave positions for Finnish women to serve as priests. That means she was given the services of preaching, teaching the word of God and also administering the sacrament in the Addis Ababa congregations. Female priest is not the tradition of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church⁹³(EOC). Due to this the young Ethiopian Christians protested this new tradition as they also did not get direct biblical support for women ordination.

As some Ethiopian Christians suggest there was another cause for the division. This was, “They (some Finnish Missions)⁹⁴wanted to control the movement under their own organization, but this was not in line with the viewpoints of the Ethiopians and therefore a conflict arose between some of the Finnish missionaries and some Ethiopians.”⁹⁵The missionaries took control over the churches leadership and preaching every Sunday without involving the young people. This offended the young people and led them to take action for the division. But the missionaries did

⁹⁰Fogi, *The Charismatic Movement in the EECMY* (2000) 70.

⁹¹Engelsviken, *MoloWongel* (1975) 187.

⁹²Eshete, *The Evangelical movement in Ethiopia*(2000)160.

⁹³Engelsviken, *MoloWongel*(1975) 29.

⁹⁴ The words with inverted in the parenthesis, is my personal addition for explanations.

⁹⁵Engelsviken, *MoloWongel*(1975) 29.

not believe that this Pentecostal movement would continue for a long periods of time without the help from the missions, but it survived growing over time. This does not mean that the relationship between the Ethiopian Pentecostals with Finnish mission, completely disconnected. For some years this missions continued to support the Pentecostals.

After the division, in 1963 the Kenyan evangelist, OmacheChacha who was a Pentecostal in his background, was invited by the Swedish Philadelphia Mission. They invited him to speak at the Summer Bible Conference in Awasa. During the conference OmacheChacha ignited the Pentecostal fire in Ethiopia. By his ministry, many young people were filled by the power of the Holy Spirit and experienced a new theology in their faith. That is “Baptism of the Holy Spirit” that accompanied by speaking in tongues. They also received encouragement and confidence through the teaching of this Kenyan preacher and participated in preaching, teaching, and casting out the evil spirit in the name of Jesus. Many people who participated in the conference spread God’s saving activities to many parts of the country where they came from. The Pentecostal movement that started among the students at Arat Kilo became an independent church in October 1965,⁹⁶ but not in an official way for their application for registration was refused by the government.

In 1966 three Pentecostal university students from Nazareth and Awaasa rented a house in Addis Ababa between Amist Kilo and Arat Kilo. This rented house called the “First Chapel” of an Independent Ethiopian Pentecostal Movement. In the same year they made a conference at national level where many college and university students participated. By the following year, 1967, the numbers of the chapels were grown to nine.⁹⁷ As they got many followers, they applied “to the Ministry of the Interior Public Security Head Office”⁹⁸ for registration. During the period the name they gave for registration, is “the Old time Full Gospel believers Association,”⁹⁹ points to the EOC which is the oldest church in the country. The permission was blocked. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church is a state church and has great impact in decision making in the country to

⁹⁶DuressaMebeshaTeka, *Charismatic movement and its effects in the Aira District of the EECMY*, (Addis Ababa, MYTS,2002)8.

⁹⁷Domianus, *The Charismatic Movement in the EECMY*(2005) 16.

⁹⁸Fogi, *The Charismatic Movement in the EECMY*(2000) 79.

⁹⁹Engelsviken, *MoloWongel*(1975) 51.

allow or block the Pentecostals. For the fact that the Pentecostals are so harsh towards the practices of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church related to the intercession to St. Mary and angels.

From its start the Pentecostals in Ethiopia were not only rejected by the mainline churches, like Ethiopian Orthodox, but also by the governments. They were persecuted both by the church and by the government. Even though many of the orthodox believers were influenced by the Charismatic movement, still leaders of the Ethiopian Orthodox church are very critical to the Pentecostals. Even during the revolution, spite of the opposition from many churches in Ethiopia, Taye says, "... there is not any church that has not been touched by the revival. Even the established and well organized churches which have a fixed liturgy and doctrine have many revivalists among them and the revival is also spreading and growing in their churches. e.g. Orthodox and Mekane Yesus"¹⁰⁰

It was after 24 years, in 1991 that the Pentecostals in Ethiopia registered by a name Full Gospel church or MuluWongel. Pentecostal church is the general name of those who do only accept adult baptism, and give more emphasis on the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in their service. With the fall of the Dergue Regime in 1991, more than fifteen Pentecostal churches began to register at national level under the name Ethiopian Pentecostal Churches Fellowship.¹⁰¹

3.2

The Spread of

Pentecostals in Ethiopia

The Pentecostals in Ethiopia were spread to different parts of the country in many ways. One of the most outstanding means that enabled them for the spread is the college and university students. These students after they participated in the Pentecostal conferences and personal contacts with the members of the Pentecostals, they spread in their respective churches.

The first great wave in the country that attracted many people is the conference that was held at national level in Addis Ababa in 1966¹⁰². By this first Pentecostals' national conference, the very influential members of the EECMY were influenced. That means certainly college and university

¹⁰⁰ According to Jörg Hausteil, *Writing Religious History: The Historiography of the Ethiopian Pentecostalism*, (Wiesbaden: HarrassowitzVerlag, 2011) 239,240.

¹⁰¹ Launhardt, *Evangelicals in Addis Ababa (1919-1991)* (2004)160.

¹⁰² Fogi, *The Charismatic Movement in the EECMY some Doctrinal and practical issues*, 78

students. This conference encouraged the Pentecostals to organize themselves as Independent church in the country.

The second wave that helped as a means for the spread of the Pentecostals is the manifestation of the Holy Spirit among the members of the Pentecostals that attracted many young people. Some of the manifested gifts of the Holy Spirit are; speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues, distinguishing between spirit, prophecy, healing, and exorcism. The students started to act like them within the main line church without any careful attention for the theology and practices of EECMY. In the year 1970, that means after three years of their application for official registration, the former EECMY president Rev. Itefa, Gobana started to experience the Pentecostal theology and practice. This is happened through TibebuKumal who is a Pentecostal in his denomination prayed for him.¹⁰³ This was a kind of demographic change. It opened a door for the young people in the EECMY to practice in line with the Pentecostal churches.

In Ethiopia there are over 250 religious denominations those who are officially registered at national level which many of them are the members of the Pentecostal churches. Out of these, more than 18 denominations officially registered under the name Pentecostals fellowship. Here are few of them:: ““the MuluWongel church, Genet Church, Heywet Brian church, Hawariayat Church, Ethiopian Church of Christ, Assembles of God,...etc.””¹⁰⁴

3.3 The Ethiopian Pentecostals Theological Emphasis and Practices

3.3.1 The Emphases of Baptism in the Holy Spirit

Every church has its own doctrinal basis on which each gives more emphasis for the betterments of the life of their church. As I discussed some of the areas on which the EECMY gives more emphasis as her basic tradition and of Lutheran identity, the Ethiopian Pentecostals also have their own theology and practices that reflect their identity. In their theology, they give more emphasis on Baptism in the Holy Spirit that opens away for the manifestations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. They teach and preach that each member have to experience some preconditions that enable them to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. They take more time in prayer and over repeated singing than preaching the word of God. During their worship the Pentecostals apply the

¹⁰³Fogi, *The Charismatic Movement in the EECMY some Doctrinal and practical issues*: 92

¹⁰⁴Fogi, *The Charismatic Movement in the EECM some Doctrinal and practical issues Y*, 73

following activities: “dreams, visions, weeping, shaking hands, public confessions, departing from the traditional way worship, waving or lifting of hands, embraces, singing accompanied by swaying of the body and beating of time.”¹⁰⁵ They regarded these phenomena as their unique identity. This is true also for the charismatic movements.¹⁰⁶ In their prayer they take much time of the worship in commanding the evil spirit. The worship leader prays and commands the demons and evil spirit he order all the members to command the evil spirit around them in order to hear the word of God in freedom.

The other practice that the Pentecostals perform for baptism in the Holy Spirit is that members have to stay before God through fasting and Prayer. This Pentecostals relate the waiting time before God with the waiting periods that the disciples of Jesus stayed in Jerusalem until the day of Pentecost.¹⁰⁷ As the disciples of Jesus were baptized by the Holy Spirit, the Pentecostals also expect baptism with the Holy Spirit that leads them experience the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in their life.

3.3.2 *The Worship Systems of the Pentecostals*

The Pentecostals have different characters and experiences from the other Evangelical churches in the world, example from the Lutherans. Poewe, describes them as “a movement for rehabilitation of lay experience, it focuses on individuals. Healing, prophesy dreams, and visions, expressions of the physical experience of wholeness actor-centered bodily expressions.”¹⁰⁸ This indicates that the Pentecostals emphasize a kind of separation from the society or existing church as their main interest was in free worship. This does not mean they do not bother about society they have a feeling of responsibility in reaching people for transformation by the power of the Holy Spirit. One of their basic identities was that they claim that they follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Prayer, the singing, preaching, teaching every activities in their church is according to the guidance of the Holy Spirit inspired them. They rejected the liturgy of the

¹⁰⁵Namanya Naomi, *Charismatic Movement in western Uganda: A Study of its nature, teaching and its practice with Particular, Emphasis on social Responsibility*. (Stavanger: School of Mission and Theology, MTh.2007) 33.

¹⁰⁶ In this case the Charismatics are the members of EECMY those who serve with the gifts of the Holy Spirit within the EECMY (the detail difference between Charismatics and Pentecostal are discussed in chapter 4).

¹⁰⁷ The details of the disciples of Jesus’ waiting history we will find in Acts 1:4-8.

¹⁰⁸ Karla Poewe, (ed.) *Charismatic Christianity as a Global Culture*(Columbia: University of South Carolina Press,1997) 46.

EECMY performed in written form as the Lutherans. This Pentecostals said that the early church did not have a liturgy and therefore we do not need too.

The Pentecostals have developed a worship leader who guides the believers in their worship in addition to the leader of the programs of the day. This worship leader is different from the formal choirs in the church. They motivate the church during the worship in guiding through singing a chorus in which all the members of the church participate. Their main emphasis is that all members of their church have to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. That leads them to commit themselves to pray, to read the bible, to serve God and God's people.

3.3.3 *The Emphasis on Speaking in Tongues, Prophecy and Healing*

The Pentecostal churches as other churches in the world, like Lutherans, have their own doctrinal bases on which they give more emphasis in their teaching. We have seen in the previous chapters some of the areas where the EECMY give more emphasis as their basic traditions and its identity. Likewise, the Ethiopian Pentecostals also give more emphasis on some of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. However, as Engelsviken notes the Pentecostals teach the existence of existence 'nine gifts which is operated on the base of Baptism in the Holy Spirit'¹⁰⁹. But I discuss on the following three gifts on which they give more emphasis: Speaking in tongues, prophecy, and healing. Let me describe them in brief.

A. Speaking in Tongues: While most Protestants agree that baptism in the Holy Spirit is integral to being a Christian, others believe that it is not separable from conversion and no longer marked by glossolalia, the Pentecostals teach contrary to this. They claim that every Christian should expect to be baptized in the Holy Spirit, the distinctive mark of which is speaking in tongues.¹¹⁰ According to some Pentecostals like the Classical Pentecostals teach that speaking in tongue is the mark of being a Christian. That means "one cannot be a Christian without speaking in tongues."¹¹¹ McDonnell says that "the Pentecostals look upon speaking in tongues as the initial

¹⁰⁹Engelsviken,*The Gift of the Spirit*, (1981)125.

¹¹⁰ Wikipedia,*Baptism with the Holy Spirit*, accessed on line, on, 7.2.2012.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/baptism_with_the_Holy_Spirit

¹¹¹ Wolfgang Vondey (ed.) *Pentecostalism and Christian unity: Ecumenical Documents and Critical assessments*. (Oregon: Eugene, PICKWICK publications, 2010) 115.

evidence of the gift of the Holy Spirit.”¹¹² Due to this every Pentecostal Christian has to be baptized with Holy Spirit. But the idea that every Christian has to speak in tongues is not the right teaching. “1Corinthians 14:30 Do all speaking in tongues?”¹¹³ The answer says no. According to the understanding of the Pentecostals, baptism in the Holy Spirit consists of two-stages of initiations. That is “conversion to Christianity as stage one, and a subsequent overpowering experience of the Holy Spirit that is accompanied by speaking in tongues as stage two.”¹¹⁴

But there is a disagreement among the Pentecostals about the existence of two stages of baptism in the Holy Spirit. Some say that spirit baptism is taken place at the time of conversion and each individual Christian experiences growth in his gifts from time to time. In response to those who say that the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is not a separate experience from conversion, others claim referring a bible text that seems two stages of initiations. They appeal to cases of the Samaritans (Acts 8) and the Ephesians (Acts 19) of their receiving the Holy Spirit. These two texts suggest that after the Apostles prayed and lay on their hands on them, these people were baptized by the Holy Spirit. Likewise, as TekaObsa, quotes James Dunn’s idea that the “Pentecostals argue that... as the disciples are baptized in the Spirit at Pentecost so may and should all Christians be baptized in the spirit after conversion.”¹¹⁵ That means conversion alone is not enough. There should be additional elements that approve the person’s conversion which is the manifestation of the Spiritual gifts, like speaking in tongues.

Among the Pentecostals speaking in tongue is kinds of confession by all those who are baptized by the Spirit speak with the gift they received. Though few of did not accept the idea all to speak in tongues basing on the teaching of the Bible. The bible recommended if there is no interpretation, the person has to “speak to himself and to God” 1 Corinthians 14:28; cp. 14.2).¹¹⁶There is also a kind of third stages of initiations, which is prosperity. We will discuss this under the subtopic, 3.3.2 about health and wealth gospel. These kind of stages in the baptism

¹¹² Ki McDonnell (ed.) *Presence, power, praise: Documents on the Charismatic renewal*, Volume 1 (Minnesota: Collegeville, The liturgical press, (1980) 155.

¹¹³ Domianus, *The Charismatic Movement in the EECMY* (2000) 125.

¹¹⁴ Fogi, *The Charismatic Movement in the EECMY* (2000) 28.

¹¹⁵ Fogi *The Charismatic Movement in the EECMY* (2000) 32.

¹¹⁶ Engelsviken, *The Gift of the Spirit* (1981) 138.

with the Holy Spirit experience is becoming a challenge to all evangelical churches in Ethiopia and also the Ethiopian Orthodox church being spread all over the country.

Pentecostals view of baptism in the Holy Spirit divides Christians as a kind of ordinary Christians and devoted Christians where it is necessarily not always true. Rev Herman A missionary to Ethiopia writes, the true mark of a true Christian depends on “Whether there is fruit of the Spirit in the life of that person or not....Spiritual gifts like prophesy, casting out of evil spirits and performing miracles are not at all proofs that one belongs to him (Jesus).”¹¹⁷ This shows that the understanding of the EECMY is that renewal of the Spirit is manifested in the daily life where the fruits of the Spirit are seen.

B. Prophecy: Prophecy is also one of the manifestations of Baptism in the Holy Spirit which is more emphasized by the Pentecostals than other church denominations. They always follow events on the day of Pentecost and the teachings of the apostles. Due to this they quote 1Corinthians 14:5, “I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy...” Speaking in tongues as well as prophesy belongs to the gifts of inspiration. Based on these passage, each members of the Pentecostals teach that all might receive the gift of prophesy.

In order to be a prophet or get a message from prophets many people run after those who have the gifts of prophesy in order that they may pray for them and tell about their futurity. Many people also longing to get this gift.

Currently, many EECMY and other evangelicals speak that a church is having the problem of differentiating which prophesy is really from God. There are three types of prophets that are in work in the Ethiopian Evangelical churches. First those who speak false prophets, second, those who speak prophesy to people from their own heart and the third group is those who are from God and speak the truth. He says, the first two groups are known from their character of greedy for food and confusing people in speaking what is not from God. Therefore the solution is that to pray to God to differentiate the right from the false prophets in order to keep the church in God’s

¹¹⁷Domianus, *The Charismatic Movement in the EECMY* (2000)21.

word.¹¹⁸ Of course, in addition to prayer, the strategies that the EECMY followed in training and making charismatic forum could minimize the problem.

C. Healing:The performances of healing specially from demonic powers is a challenge for some Ethiopian people and missionaries from Europa and America because of the little experience they have about the existence of this demonic powers. Pentecostals in Ethiopia give however much attention on casting out the demons and healing the sick people from all their physical problems. I agree with Herman Domianus when says that “there is a big need to exercise that gifts (exorcism) Mt. 1,7-8; Mk. 16,17”.¹¹⁹The healing ministry among the charismatics and Pentecostals attracted the attentions of many young and young adult Ethiopians. This is due to the fact that the healing ministry is regarded as a continuation of what the apostles experienced in the Acts during the Pentecost. But the matured elderly people relate the practices of the Charismatic Movement with the African traditional beliefs. For instance, the Qallus (a wise person) among the Oromo people play an important model in speaking in tongues, exorcism, and healing the sick.¹²⁰ They prophesy, and also give healing ministry to their society.

The Qallus give the people a signs and symbols as an evidence for the reality of the problem so that people could believe and follow them. If the people did not become healed the reason is said to be that family or the sick person did not fulfill what he is or she was ordered to do. This Qallus are much respected among the society and people do not speak any negative things against them. People fear the Qallus that if the Qallus spoke against them they might be sick or die.¹²¹ The same is true for the charismatic and Pentecostals prophets. They do not allow people to test their gifts of the Spirits. Due to this the theology of the Pentecostals were resisted from getting acceptance in the church but gradually their experience entered into the church. According to the teaching of the Pentecostals each healing on the faith of the sic person. This kind of faith based teaching of health and wealth is adopted from Faith Movement. See below about the movement.

¹¹⁸ Discipleship: the church is on Danger, Message for the church, The Journey of 5th year Press, Mathetes, (vol.17, November 2010) 30. (translated from local language, Amharic)

¹¹⁹ Domianus, *The Charismatic Movement* in the EECMY(2000) 177.

¹²⁰ Domianus, *The Charismatic movement* (2000)126.

¹²¹ DawitOlika, *Parallelisms between Charismatic prophesy in the EECMY and Qallu Institution of Oromo traditional religion*, (Addis Ababa, MYTS, BTh. Thesis, 2002) 32.

3.3.4 *The Emphases of Health and Wealth Gospel in the BDS*

The teaching of prosperity Gospel was first introduced by a Faith Movement in the 19th century in America, its name in Ethiopia is 'Faith Army church.'¹²² This movement is a movement that is based on one's own faith and not on God. It is a new system of theology that emphasizes prosperity doctrine. Prosperity theology is also strongly associated with the Divine Healing movement. In their teaching they use four principles to get whatever they expect to have from God. These are: "Say it, do it, receive it and tell it"¹²³ and then you will get it. They say if you say one thing in faith it will happen. Have the faith of God. Therefore, have the faith of God. God had faith in his words, he spoke words of faith and it happened. (See Gen. 1).¹²⁴ This kind of teaching is different from the teachings of Lutherans. According to the teaching of Lutherans they say that we do not force God to give us all what we need but we pray that God's will be done. God will answer according to its importance to our life in his own time. (See the request of John and James to sit beside Jesus. Matthew 20:20-28).

The charismatic movement in the BDS was also influenced by the teaching of faith movement and the Pentecostals understanding of health and wealth gospel. I discussed the detail of this health and wealth gospel in the following chapter.

¹²²Domianus, *The Charismatic Movement in Ethiopia* (2000)121.

¹²³Bruce Barron, *The Health and Wealth Gospel: What is going on today in a movement that has shaped the faith of millions?*(Downers: Grov, Illinois, Intervarsity press 1989)105 .

¹²⁴Domianus, *The Charismatic Movement in Ethiopia* (2000) 22.

CHAPTER FOUR

IMPACTS OF PENTECOSTALS IN BIRBIR DILLA SYNOD OF EECMY

In this chapter I explore how the Pentecostals experience entered the EECMY by means of the charismatic movement or neo-Pentecostals and influenced its Lutheran traditions. I give particular emphasis on some areas where the Neo-Pentecostals or the Charismatics experience has made heavy impact on the traditions of the EECMY, particularly the BirbirDilla Synod (BDS). In this study I would also discuss the differences and similarities of Charismatics and Pentecostals in order to analyze the type of the Pentecostals that is influencing the EECMY.

In this exploration I discuss to which extent and how the Pentecostals experiences of speaking in tongues, prophesy, healing and exorcism, theology of health and wealth or prosperity influenced BDS. In addition, I discuss the emerging of new worship leaders different from the priest who leads from the pulpit and also the choir of the day. Here I to some extent discuss on it.

4.1 The Entrance and Spread of Pentecostals Theology and Practices into the EECMY

The Lutherans have had their own theology and practices that makes them different from other churches since the time of Reformation. As I discussed in Chapter two, EECMY used to keep the Lutheran traditions of “the three ancient creeds, the Unaltered Augsburg confessions, and Luther’s Catechisms as her theological base.”¹²⁵ From its establishment in 1959 up to 1980s pastors and leaders of the EECMY were more concerned with guarding the Lutheran tradition by refusing the renewing revelations of the Holy Spirit.¹²⁶ These EECMY ministers guarded their tradition, by teaching and preparing a reflection paper that forbid their believers from following the theology and practices of the Charismatic movement.¹²⁷ This does not mean that the EECMY opposed church renewal as such. The church was open for the work of the Holy Spirit. Rev.

¹²⁵Fogi, *The Charismatic Movement in the EECMY some Doctrinal and Practical issues*(2000) 115.

¹²⁶TomiKarttunen, “A community of Faith and Love: A Lutheran Perspective on the Catholicity of the Church,” (LWF/Dep. for Theology and Studies &Ev. Theol. faculty Münster, theol. conf. 5th June 2010) 4.
<http://sakasti.evl.fi/sakasti.nsf/0/2EEE800EEBBBEEA41C225773400279C85/SFILE/THE%20Catholicity>
accessed on 15,02,2012.

¹²⁷Karttunen, Tomi, “A community of Faith and Love” (2010) 4.

Mulatu says, “Even though the church, in principle, has not been against the renewal aspects of the movements it has had a firm stands to maintain its identity as a confessional Lutheran church.”¹²⁸The renewal of the church is part of the life of the church. According to the EECMY understanding that she is the fruits of renewal of the church during the 16th century Luther’s reformation. This does not mean the church does not need renewal. The church is always in the life of renewal through the word of God and sacraments.

When I see the renewal that entered into the EECMY due to the Pentecostal influence was taken place in two ways. These were directly and indirectly. Directly, it entered the mainline church during the Ethiopian revolution, “1974-1991.”¹²⁹ During the revolution the Pentecostals did not have their own churches and were persecuted severely. The MekaneYesus church gave them a place to worship together with the members of the EECMY. This helped the Pentecostals spread their theology to the members of the church. They actively participated in teaching, preaching, organizing Bible study and prayer groups.

The second one is the indirect way. This was what happened by the college and university students who the EECMY who attended the Pentecostal conferences at “(Awasa 1963 and 1965) and again “the annual conferences in 1966 in Addis Ababa.”¹³⁰This fact is reflected in Engelsviken,statement that “The Pentecostals have been instruments of spiritual renewal among the MekaneYesus Church.”¹³¹

The Pentecostals influence in the EECMY congregations in the form of the Charismatic movement took place at Amist Kilo Addis Ababa MekaneYesus congregation. Then, it spread to the Entoto congregation and the Mekanisa congregations. Further, it spread to outside Addis Ababa to south west Ethiopia, Metu, East and West Wollega by different people at different times. To mention some of the people who were instruments of spreading the Charismatic

¹²⁸MulatuGadisa, *Effects of the Charismatic experiences within the evangelical church MekaneYesus\Ethiopia: A historical and Theological survey* (, Stavanger:School of Mission and Theology, MTh. Thesis, 1998)113.

¹²⁹AmansisaUlfata, *The current challenges of Organizational leadership facing the EECMY: Is EECMY Episcopalian, presbyterian or congregational?* (Addis Ababa: MekaneYesus Seminary, B.Th.2003)18.

¹³⁰Fogi, *The Charismatic Movement in the EECMY some Doctrinal and Practical issues* (2000) 79.

¹³¹Engelsviken,*MoloWongel* (1975) 66.

movement in the EECMY: Qes James Gobana and Rev. BalinaSarka early 1969-1970.¹³² These two people by their teaching about the Spiritual gifts and renewal in the church has worked in many of the EECMY congregations that enabled the Charismatics to start service with their Spiritual gifts in the Church. It was through Rev. Balina's service on conference arranged on Aira and Chaliya District in 1996 that the Charismatic in the area started to influence the congregations in BDS.¹³³

The Charismatic movement in the EECMY that came to Gore; Illubabor, in 1970 reached the stage of influencing the leaders of the EECMY. It designated a kind of dramatic shift from the lay young students to the top central EECMY office. The later EECMY President IteffaGobena(2001-2009) became involved in the 1970 Charismatic revival in Ilubabor, Gore. He experienced the charismatic renewal after he received the Holy Spirit baptism through a person who had Pentecostal background. This person was a Full Gospel Church evangelist who worked with the EECMY in Illubabor during this time and was involved in spreading the revival to the nearby town of Metu and performing rebaptism of some of the EECMY members.¹³⁴

The Charismatic movement reached Western wollega; LaloQille in 1980's, then it reached Bodji through kumeraOfga'a, in 1985. Then further spread to Aira and its surroundings by Mr. TeferiAngose, LiyaBacha; TolassaDeresu, Buye by EliyasDufera as a form of home fellowship. Then it expanded to Chaliya, Guliso, and other parishes of BDS. The movement was undertaken in secret in individuals home until 1992. But after this year, they started to worship every Wednesday in the house of Nurse LiyaBacha freely without hiding themselves from the leaders of the Church. This was the consequence of the big conference held in 1992 in Gimbi District (today Gimbi-Jorgo Synod). On this conference, selected groups of youngsters, officially employed pastors and evangelists, and volunteer ministers participated from all Districts of the Western Synod. These districts are: Mendi, Nedjo, Bodji, Gimbi, Tschaliya, Aira, and Guliso Parish.¹³⁵ Among all these districts, the Tschalia, Aira and Guliso parish are parts of the BDS.

¹³²DuresaMebeshaTeka. *Charismatic Movement and its effects in the Aira District of the EECMY* (Addis Ababa, MYTS, B.Th. Thesis, 2002)8 (See also, Fogi,*The Charismatic movement in Ethiopia*(2000) 85.

¹³³ Personal experience and attending the two conferences arranged on Aira and Chaliya.

¹³⁴Jörg Haustein, *Writing Religious History: The Historiography of the Ethiopian Pentecostalism* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag2011)236.

¹³⁵Teka, *Charismatic Movement and its effects in the Aira District of the EECMY*(2002)7.

In 1994, when the charismatic movement started to be practiced in most of the BDS congregations, elders and leaders of the church opposed it strongly. In an attempt to control the movement through teaching, the leaders of the church sent some of the leaders of the movement, like EliyasDufera to OnesimosNesib Bible School. But what happened was that the movement influenced all the Bible school students and further spread into the church by the graduates of this Bible school. Until 1996, the charismatic groups did not give service in the morning church services. That means the church is still struggling to keep the identity of the church according the decision who to preach that I discussed under 2.2.1. They service only in the village prayer group they have and the Sunday afternoon arranged for the young people, where also some adult people attend the worship.¹³⁶

In 1996, one of the leading Charismatic preachers of the EECMY, Rev. BalinaSarka, came to Aira. A big conference was prepared in Tschalia,¹³⁷ and Aira. In these two conferences almost all people participated and many changes happened in the life of the participants. They experienced speaking in tongues, prophesy, deliverance from evil spirits and other physical sickness. But still few pastors were critical to Rev. Balina's ministry, saying that he came to affect the traditions of the EECMY.¹³⁸ But the coming of Rev. Balinato Aira and Chaliya benefited the charismatic movement in his teaching affirmed that there is prophesy and speaking in tongues to be used in the church. This became an answer for some elders and leaders of the church who refused the charismatics to speak prophesy in the church.

Before Rev. Balina's came to Aira, the charismatics were regarded as false prophets and false teachers by some pastors and believers because their worship style was very ecstatic and full of emotion. Many BDS congregations started to allow the members of the church to pray with loud voice, shouting, dancing like the Pentecostals, words of joy (ilille), hallelujah, speaking in tongues, prophesy, exorcism and other spiritual gifts. But this gradually affected the ministry of pastors and trained evangelists. Some of the members and elders of the church started to follow the charismatics than the trained pastors who concerns for the traditions of the church.

¹³⁶TaresaDawitOlika, *Prophesy: A Blessing or a problem? A Critical study of the practice and understanding of prophesy in the Ethiopian Evangelical Church MekaneYesus*, (Oslo:Menighetsfukultet, 2007) 27.

¹³⁷In this thesis the name of a place used as Tschalia and Chaliya are the same.

¹³⁸ Rev Yonas Biratu. Interviewed on July 15, 2011 at his office of OnesimosNesib seminary.

4.2 The Spread of Pentecostals in Ethiopia

The Pentecostals in Ethiopia were spread to different parts of the country in many ways. One of the most outstanding means that enabled them for the spread is the college and university students. These students after they participated in the Pentecostal conferences and personal contacts with the members of the Pentecostals spread the messages of the Pentecostals in their respective churches.

The first great wave in the country that attracted many people was the conference that was held at national level in Addis Ababa in 1966¹³⁹. By this first Pentecostals' national conference, the very influential members of the EECMY were influenced. That means certainly college and university students. This conference encouraged the Pentecostals to organize themselves as Independent church in the country.

The second wave that helped as a means for the spread of the Pentecostals is the manifestation of the Holy Spirit among the members of the Pentecostals that attracted many young people. Some of the manifestations were: speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues, distinguishing between spirit, prophecy, healing, and exorcism. The students started to act like them within the main line church without any careful attention of the theology and practices of EECMY. In the year 1970, three years after their application for official registration, the former EECMY president Rev. Itefa, Gobana started to experience the Pentecostal theology and practice. This happened through TibebuKuma, who was a Pentecostal when he prayed for him.¹⁴⁰ This was a kind of demographic change. It opened a door for the young people in the EECMY to practice in line with the Pentecostals.

In Ethiopia, today there are over 250 religious denominations that are officially registered at national level; many of them are Pentecostal churches. Out of these, more than 18 denominations officially registered under the name Pentecostals fellowship. To mention some of them: “the MuluWongel church, genet Church, Heywet Brian church, Hawariayat church, Ethiopian Church of Christ, Assemblies of God,...etc.”¹⁴¹

¹³⁹Fogi, *The Charismatic Movement in the EECMY some Doctrinal and practical issues* (2000)78.

¹⁴⁰Fogi, *The Charismatic Movement in the EECMY some Doctrinal and practical issues* (2000) 92.

¹⁴¹Fogi, *The Charismatic Movement in the EECM some Doctrinal and practical issues* (2000)73.

4.3 Similarities and Differences between the Pentecostals and the Charismatic movement

When I discuss briefly about the similarities and differences between the Charismatic movement and Pentecostals, particularly the modern or neo Pentecostals, I deal with their teaching and practices.

4.3.1 The Pentecostal Movement

As I discussed in chapter three, the historical origin of Pentecostals is the revival that began in USA in 1900. Pentecostals emphasize in their teaching that all the gifts of the Holy Spirit mentioned in the New Testament is intended for us today. The baptism in the Holy Spirit is an empowering experience subsequent to conversion and should be thought by Christians today. In their teaching baptism in “the Holy Spirit is the ‘root’ and ‘stem’ from which all the other gifts flow.”¹⁴² In addition, they teach that speaking in tongues is a sign for experiencing baptism in the Holy Spirit. Prophecy, healing and exorcism is their major exercise in their worship.

According to Pentecostals teaching, there is a doctrine of second or third-steps of Christianity. The first step is conversion. The second step is baptism in the Holy Spirit that accompanied with speaking in tongues. They sometimes call this blessings or anointment. This baptism in the Holy Spirit is taken place during water baptism or later. Due to this understandings many non-Pentecostals churches are attracted for second baptism in order to experience baptism in the Holy Spirit. The third step is the entire sanctification.¹⁴³ This means if a person reached stages of sanctification he or she do not need repentance, because repentance is for sinners those who are on the first and second steps who need them to repent.

Further, most Pentecostals do not accept child baptism. They re-baptize Christians who were baptized in their childhood in other churches when they join their church. The members of the Pentecostals were mainly people who have left the main line churches, Catholics, Orthodox, and protestant Churches like Lutherans.

¹⁴² Vinson Synan, *The Holiness Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movement in the twentieth Century*, (Grand Rapids & Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997) 87.

¹⁴³ Domianus, *The Charismatic Movement within the EECMY*, 2000)13, (See also Synan, *The Holiness Pentecostal tradition* (1997) 37.

4.3.2 *The Charismatic Movement (CM)*

It is impossible to put the definitions of the charismatic movement in short. But when we consider it from a historical point of view, it is the movement that rose after the Pentecostal movement as second and third wave charismatic movement. According to Johnstone's definition, Charismatic movement is;

a movement of people in the Christian church who share a common concern for the spiritual renewal of the church, a common understanding of the reception and indwelling of the Holy Spirit as an experiential reality, who claim a common experience of presence, power, and gifts of the Spirit, and a common emphasis on prayer, praise and holistic evangelism as results of this experience.¹⁴⁴

Currently, there are two groups of Charismatic movements. These movements are regarded as a second wave and a third wave charismatic movement. The Pentecostal Movement is taken as the first wave. The CM that began in 1960s is considered as second wave or the Neo-Pentecostal Movement. It is expanded to all protestant churches, the Roman Catholic Church, and Eastern Orthodox Churches. The other category of charismatic movement is the third wave or the Neo-Charismatic movement.¹⁴⁵ This current charismatic movement was started by Peter Wagner in the 1980s. This third wave of charismatic movement mixes the features of both the Pentecostals and Faith movements. It is highly spread all over the world, and also in Ethiopia.¹⁴⁶

The starting of this third wave CM is about fifty years after the Pentecostals movements began in USA. From 1960s the members and leaders of the Episcopal Church, like Rev. Dennis Bennett, Larry Christensen of the Lutheran as well as the Catholic churches began to experience the manifestations of the Holy Spirit. They claim like the Pentecostals that all the spiritual gifts mentioned in the New Testament should be practiced. But they approved the importance of all gifts of the Holy Spirit equally, instead of over emphasizing the speaking in tongues and Prophecy, like the Pentecostals. The Third wave CM began to expand in the EECMY in 1970s. This Charismatic current movement did not want to establish a new and independent church as

¹⁴⁴According to Gudina Tumsa Foundation (ed.)*Church and Society: Lectures and Responses Second Missiological Seminar 2003, on the Life and Ministry of Gudina Tumsa*(Germany: Hamburg, WDL-Publishers, 2010) 171.

¹⁴⁵ Young-hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea: Its Historical and Theological Development*, (Oxford: Regnum Books, 2009) 3-4.

¹⁴⁶Domianus, *The Charismatic movement within the EECMY* (2000) 20.

the Pentecostals did. Their aim was to renew the EECMY traditions. They rejected the Pentecostals practice of second baptism by accepting the child baptism of the EECMY traditions. Rev. Balina's and TesfayeDinagde's group belong to this current charismatic.¹⁴⁷

The Charismatics view of baptism in the Holy Spirit differs from the Pentecostals understanding. They regarded it as "renewal in the spirit" or "new release of the Spirit" instead of calling it baptism in the Holy Spirit. One of the Episcopal leaders, Rev Dennis Bennett was filled with the Holy Spirit during the worship service and began to speak in tongues and with him many other people. This experience of filling with the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues spread to Van Nuys, California, USA as a revival. This revival movement marked the beginning of the Charismatic movement.¹⁴⁸ Christensen says that "In 1963, the activity of this Charismatic Movement is spread among many Lutheran groups in Germany, in Scandinavia, Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia, and South America."¹⁴⁹

In their teaching the Charismatics give emphasizes the Charismata or gifts of the grace. The Pentecostals give emphases on the experiences of the Pentecost, from the Geek term Petecostos, which means fifty, fifty days after Easter, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the disciples. The Pentecostals derives their name from the word Pentecost. That means they relate their experience of the Holy Spirit as a continuation of Acts 2. The Pentecostals in most cases do not want stay in the main line churches, rather they establish new church under the name Pentecostals churches. But the members of the charismatic movement do not want to establish a separate church.

Further, the Charismatic movement does not follow the Pentecostals understanding of second step or third step Christianity. Rather they teach growth in the Holy Spirit. According to the understanding of the EECMY all Spiritual gifts are equal. They see speaking in tongues as one among the many gifts of the Holy Spirit. From the above observation we can understand that there is a similarity and difference between the currentcharismatic movements and Pentecostals. The charismatics are almost the same with that of the Pentecostals in practice. They mix with the

¹⁴⁷GTF, (edit), *Church and Society* (2010)193-194.

¹⁴⁸Domianus, *The Charismatic Movement within the EECMY* (2000) 13.

¹⁴⁹ Larry Christensen, *The Charismatic Renewal Among Lutherans: A pastoral and Theological Perspective*, (Minneapolis: Minnesota,Lutheran Charismatic Renewal Services 1976) 13.

theology and practices of the Pentecostals. They belong to the third wave charismatic movement group.

4.4 The History of Charismatic Movement (CM) in the BDS

4.4.1 The CM without the Manifestation of Prophecy and Speaking in Tongues

Before I discuss how the Pentecostals experience integrated into the ministry of the BDS of EECMY, it is fruitful to explore briefly the history of the Charismatic movement in the EECMY. CM has brought both growth of the church and also Crisis to the traditions of the EECMY. Rev. Dr. Berhanu, General Secretary of EECMY has pointed out that there were five points that helped the fast growth of the EECMY. Charismatic experience is one among the five activities within EECMY that helped to growth fast. These five activities were “respect for the authority of the Scriptures; addressing human needs with a holistic approach; Charismatic experience; and the role of the laity in mission.”¹⁵⁰ In this case the laity mission and the CM are much related to each other. Many of the laity ministers are among the charismatic movement. Another German Scholar, Jörg Haustein, also says, “... Protestant growth coincides with an unprecedented spread of Pentecostal spirituality and theology to the mainline Protestant churches.”¹⁵¹

The History of charismatic experience that existed in the EECMY has two stages. Both of them worked a lot for church growth. These are charismatics with and without the manifestations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit (mainly speaking in tongues, prophesy, visions, miracles healing etc.). In this case the periods of the charismatics without the manifestations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit indicates the time from the inception of the EECMY up to 1983. The understanding of the EECMY in those periods was that the Holy Spirit is at work through the trained theologians and officially ordained pastors and volunteer ministers though they do not speak in tongues, interpretations of this tongue, and prophesies, revelation, etc. like today. “The ministry of the church is also governed by them within the traditions and existing structures of the church of the EECMY.”¹⁵² According to EECMY understanding the existence of the Holy Spirit in their

¹⁵⁰Rev. Dr. Berhanu Ofgaa, Calling Lutherans back to the evangelism task <http://www.lutherancore.org/pdf/connection-august-Sep-11.pdf>, accessed on 5th March 2012.

¹⁵¹ Jörg Haustein, “Charismatic Renewal, Denominational Tradition and The Transformation of Ethiopian Society’ (2009)5. http://www.eed.de//fix/files/doc/110624_Dokumentation_Afrikatagung.pdf (accessed January 6,2012).

¹⁵²Terfassa, *Prophecy: a blessing or a problem?*(2007)31.

ministry was regarded from the perspectives of the fruits of the Holy Spirit; that is the conversion of to Christianity through their preaching and teaching. There was healing ministry and exorcism through the prayers of trained pastors and evangelists. There was growth both in number and in quality. Rev Yonas Yigazu as EECMY-DMT director described the periods of the charismatic movement without the manifestation of the Holy Spirit like this: “The silent Charismatic movement but a burning and transforming issue. Today’s charismatic is with full of shouting, a disturbance by music and a lot of prophesy, it lacks substance.”¹⁵³

To mention some of the ministers of the time who served in the charismatic way are: Rev. Dafa Jamo and Mr. AshenaNegade.¹⁵⁴ In addition to their preaching by the power of the Holy Spirit, they casted out demons, by their prayer many sick people were healed. That means they were charismatics. Tesso also considered them as Charismatics in their dynamic ministry.¹⁵⁵ What made them different from the modern charismatics and Pentecostals view of charismatics is that they did not practice speaking in tongues and prophesy.

4.4.2 *CM with the Manifestation of Prophesy, Speaking in Tongues, and Healing*

The emphasis of the word Charismatics is emerged with the rising of the Charismatic movement and the Pentecostals. As Tesso says, “the charismatic movement is emerged on the Ethiopian prospect in the early 1960s”.¹⁵⁶ This is with the coming of the missionaries from Finland and Swedes. With the coming of these Pentecostal missionaries, the theology and practices of baptism in the Holy Spirit is emphasized. Like the Pentecostals, the charismatics in the EECMY also give more emphases on baptism in the Holy Spirit that is manifested with different spiritual gifts. With the emerging of the Pentecostals, the discussion about the spiritual gifts in the Church started. Michael Green says, “For many centuries these chapters (Spirit’s gifts) have been passed over in comparative silence by the Churches, but since the rise of the Pentecostal movement in

¹⁵³ EECMY DMT director, interviewed at his office Addis Ababa, on 28.07.2011.

¹⁵⁴ Rev. Yonas Biratu, former Western Synod Youth secretary, and currently teacher at ONS, O.I on June, 2011.

¹⁵⁵ Djaleta, *A Critical Survey of the Development of the Charismatic Influence in the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus* (1994) 44.

¹⁵⁶ Fogi, *The Charismatic movement in Ethiopia* (2010) 42.

the twentieth century and its spread into the main denominations, the subject has come into great prominence wherever the Holy Spirit is discussed.”¹⁵⁷

During the 1970s, the charismatic movement became an important issue to be discussed both in the ministry of the church and in theological seminary. This is the challenges that the charismatic movement brought on pastoral ministry and theological training. Some EECMY congregations started to allow the charismatics to serve in the church and even sending them to theological seminary. But others refused totally to accept both the charismatics and their ministry.¹⁵⁸ This was due to the misunderstanding between them. The Charismatics regarded the trained ministers as nonspiritual and some of the trained theologians regarded the charismatics as false teachers and false prophets.

Later, the EECMY has done many theological consultations in order to solve the crises that came with Charismatic movement in dividing the church. The EECMY has had many theological consultations to discuss the challenges of the Charismatic Movement in his churches. Some of these theological consultations were: EECMY theological consultations were held in 1972, 1973, 1976, 1980, 1993, etc. I discuss only a few of the consultations here because I discuss some of them in detail in the following chapter. In 1976 (a consultations of forty persons, Ethiopians and expatriate missionaries, has issued a report which has served as official guidelines, These forty people after having studied the work of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament and the New Testament concluded in their report that, “the church must welcome the charismatic renewal; the source of misunderstanding between the young old is the lack of teaching especially the want of teaching based on the Scriptures.”¹⁵⁹ But this misunderstanding continued until the awareness is created in the life of the church through teaching.

The years 1974 to 1991 was a periods of revolution in the country. Most of the churches in the country were persecuted. The consequence of the persecution was that the Pentecostals worshipped in the EECMY congregations. They got the chance to influence the members of the

¹⁵⁷ Michael Green, *I believe in the Holy Spirit*, revised edition, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing company, 2004) 209.

¹⁵⁸ Gudina Tumsa Foundation, *Church and Society* (2010)75.

¹⁵⁹ Kilian McDonnell, *Presence, Power, Praise: Documents on the Charismatic Renewal* Volume II, (Minnesota:Collegeville, The Liturgical Press, 1980) 151-153.

EECMY. But from 1991, the challenges of the charismatic movement became great throughout the Ethiopian churches. These again led the EECMY to make another theological consultation in 1993 to discuss the challenges of the charismatic movement. This theological consultation, reached the final decision to give more place for the charismatics to serve in the church with the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the proper way. On basis of this, EECMY recognizes charismatic experience in her congregations as a blessing to the church if handled in the right way according to the Scripture.¹⁶⁰

But until today the challenges of CM in the EECMY is an important issue as indicated in the book of Gudina Tumsa, with subtitle, “the charismatic movement-[is] Still an Issue.” in the EECMY. There are confusions and difficulties in the Church. Pulpits are taken over by the persons who deliver sermons low on sound biblical content and doctrines, but high on vocal and digital sound.¹⁶¹ This does not mean the EECMY has stopped challenging the Pentecostals movement. I discuss in chapter five some of strategies that the EECMY used towards the challenges. The challenges and confusions in the EECMY were resulted because of the different interpretations of the manifestation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. This manifestation of the Holy Spirit is grouped into three. These are: the gifts to say (prophesy, tongues and interpretation), the gifts to do (healing, miracles, faith) and the gifts to know (discerning of spirits, knowledge and wisdom).¹⁶² Among these gifts, let me discuss on how prophesy, speaking in tongues and the act of divine healing made played a leading role in the BDS contrary to its former Lutheran traditions.

These manifested gifts of the Holy Spirit are revealed in the MekaneYesus Church in two ways. As Rev. Yonas Biratu, claims, it first took place by the members of the EECMY and the Pentecostals and publicly started in Aira by Rev BalinaSarka in 1994. However, these gifts of the Holy Spirit were not all in all accepted by the leaders of the church as they were not the traditions of the church.¹⁶³ The Members of the EECMY experienced speaking in tongues during the Revolution of the Dergue Regime. During the Revolution both the member of the EECMY

¹⁶⁰ EECMY theological consultation on Charismatic movement held at the MYS in Addis Ababa August 23-28, 1993 to the 89th Executive committee meeting

¹⁶¹ Gudina Tumsa Foundation, *Church and Society* (2010)78.

¹⁶² Green, *I believe in the Holy Spirit*. (2009) 209.

¹⁶³ Yonas Biratu, oral interview in the OnesimosNesib Seminary campus, July 10,201.

and the Pentecostals were together worshiping in villages in secret place because of the persecution. It is during that time that the members of the EECMY shared Pentecostals experiences.

4.5 Causes for the Rise of the (CM) in the Congregations of the BDS

4.5.1 Internal Causes of the CM in the BDS

In history, the church is always in the process of reformation. God revives his Church when the church enters in the spiritual darkness. For example, during the 16th century God raised the reformers like Martin Luther. That means Martin Luther was a reformer to bring renewal in the life of the Christians of his time that spread all over the world by the missionaries those who inspired by his theology. After some years again the church entered into spiritual darkness. The church started to experience the philosophy of rationalism that spread in European, British and American countries. To mention some of the rationalist philosophies from 16th century to the beginning of 19th century:

Rene Descartes (1596-1650), Gottfried Leibnitz (1646-1716), Benedict de Spinoza (1632-1677) and Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) were major influences in the universities and among the highly educated and ruling classes of Europe, Britain and the United States. Each of these philosophers believed in God but their primary emphasis was on human reason. Spinoza taught that: a) supernatural events do not occur. b) our only knowledge comes from human reason and not from revelation from God. ...Etc.¹⁶⁴

That means the philosophy and theology of these people caused the church to find a renewal in the church to rely on God's revelation instead of relying on human knowledge. Rev. Tedesse Disassa, the director of the OnesimosNesib Seminary, in Aira, has said that "God raised the Pentecostals to bring renewal in the church. During the periods the life of the church was connected with politics and Christianity became like a tradition. Christians did not see change in their life. They were unable to be a light for the world. Therefore, he said, I believe it is God who raised the Pentecostals and charismatics to bring a spiritual renewal in the life of the Ethiopian

¹⁶⁴ The Age of Reason, The Enlightenment, and Deism (it is from internet see footnote on page 54).
<http://internetbiblecollege.net/lessons/The%20Age%20Of%20Reason.pdf-windows> (Accessed on March 16, 2012)1.

churches.”¹⁶⁵ Pentecostalism reached Ethiopia in 1960 and influenced all the above mentioned Ethiopian Churches. In 1976, the EECMY admitted the Charismatic movement in to its theology and practices.¹⁶⁶ The charismatic movement is a student centered movement. It is through the college and University students that spread into all the EECMY Synods, districts, Parishes and to all congregations of the EECMY.

According to the information that I got during the field study, and some literatures I read there were certain causes for the CM to be raised in the church. One of the major causes for the charismatic movement was the home fellowship in the house of individuals. The cause of the home fellowship was that the charismatic renewal was not much taught in the church. Specially, speaking in tongues and prophesy was strongly opposed by the Church leaders of Aira District and Chaliya districts. In order to worship freely the home fellowship started in secret but later became at public openly.

Let me mention some of the home fellowship that worked for the rise of the CM within the EECMY particularly, in BDS. This home fellowship was in the homes of individual Christians of the BDS.¹⁶⁷ These are; the youth fellowship in the house of EliyasDufera at Buye. It was in the house of EliyasDufera that many young and adult experienced the charismatic renewal in their life. The second home fellowship was house of LiyaBacha, in Aira, Later, because of the opposition on this fellowship from the leaders of the Aira Parish; the fellowship was transferred to OnesimosNesib Seminary (ONS). When the leaders of the church transferred the fellowship from LiyaBacha to ONS, was to control the Charismatic movement by teachers of the Seminary by teaching a sound doctrine in the context of the EECMY traditions.

Thirdly, Rev Itefa Galata’s home, the Super intendant of the Dapho Gacho District currently the BDS president house was rented by a health worker in Aira Hospital, her name Marta Igazu. Fourthly, the house of Obbo TesfayeDeresu in Aira town, helped greatly for the growth and

¹⁶⁵ Rev. Tedesse Disassa, Oral interview, 18July, 2011. At his office, ONS.

¹⁶⁶Teka, *Charismatc Movement and its effects in the Aira District of the EECMY*(2002) 6.

¹⁶⁷ Note: The home fellowship here I discussed was both before and after the establishment of the BDS as a Synod in 1991. The individual Christians mentioned are in the districts of Aira and Chaliya. BDS synod is the established from these two Districts having over 200 congregations.

spread of the Charismatic movement in Aira. This was due to Obbo Tesfaye accepted the charismatics in his home and spoke for them for the criticisms on the movement.¹⁶⁸

The other home fellowship was in the house of Amanu Surana in Chaliya Galawo Parish. Today the Chaliya Galawo parish is grown to two parishes, Chaliya and Galawo parish. After the fall of the Dergue regime of 1991 the home fellowship in Amanu Surana, became popular where over 16 congregations participated on the fellowship extending a tent. This fellowship became a great challenge by attracting not only the young people but elderly people as well those who want to experience the infilling of the Holy Spirit and also want to be healed from their physical illness. They separated themselves from BDS Congregations especially from Chaliya and Galawo parish and stopping attending the church. But later, leaders of the church and Rev. Herman Domianus a German Missionary, who at that time the youth secretary of the Chaliya district, made those who worship in the individuals home.¹⁶⁹

According to one of my informants Rev. Kajela Taressa, there was a third cause for the Charismatics to be emerged and influence the EECMY. That was the shortage of the ministers that the EECMY experienced. This Shortage of trained theologians forced the EECMY to call and ordain some evangelists and pastors training with short periods at Bible Schools. Then, with limited theological training served the church in teaching, preaching and also as parish leaders.”¹⁷⁰ Even until today this shortages of the ministers in the BDS is evident from the report of BDS-DMT director Rev. Alemu Berhanu to the 4th BDS council meeting 16.5.2001\2009: “for some of our parishes though they have enough evangelists they do not have enough pastors. For example, according the report of the BDS-DMT director, many of the BDS parishes have more than ten congregations each but only one pastor serves.”¹⁷¹ This shortage of pastors in the church widened the door for lay ministers to serve in the church that much helped the CM to be raised in the church. We can see chapter five the strategies that the EECMY used to overcome the challenges of CM.

¹⁶⁸Teka, *Charismatic Movement and its effects in the Aira District of the EECMY* (2002) 5-6.

¹⁶⁹ Personal experience for I was one of the Participants of the fellowship in Amanu Surana Every month

¹⁷⁰ Rev. Kajela Teresa, Gujii Getere Parish leader, O.I. on 24 July, 2011.

¹⁷¹ Report from BDS-DMT director, Rev. Alemu Berhanu, to the 4th Council Meeting, Resolution number16.5 (October 24,2002\2010) 5.

4.5.2 *External Causes of the Charismatics in the BDS*

There are two major external causes for the rise of the charismatic movement within the EECMY. The first one is persecution during the Ethiopian revolution. Haustein, a German historian states that the persecution during the Dergue regime has contribution for the spread of charismatic movement. One of the members of the Pentecostals church whom Haustein interviewed describes the how charismatic movement spread during the persecution in this way:

...the persecution during the Derg regime has contributed a lot to make the churches Charismatic. Because they came together, the persecution brought the underground, they all get together. They came — the MekaneYesus, the Kale Heywet, and the rest— all of them came together. So they shared their experiences, they used to pray together, they studied the Bible together. And all Ethiopian Churches became charismatic. The MekaneYesus became Charismatic and the Kale Heywet church became Charismatic.¹⁷²

Here I want pay attention to two things regarding the issues of the effects of this Revolution on the young people and EECMY traditions that encouraged the charismatic movement. From 1975-1991, for about 16years, the Dergue regime ruled the country and the teen agers and some young people did not have much experience about the traditions of the EECMY. Therefore they started with new system of worship, which was the free worship that developed from the Pentecostals. The other issue is that during the revolution many of the EECMY documents, liturgy books and books were destroyed. As the church reopened there was a shortage of liturgy books and hymn books. These forced the young people to experience the free worship styles of the Charismatics and Pentecostals. This was mainly because they did not have much experience about the worship traditions of the EECMY. This indicates the shortages of documents and previous history of the church may lead the new generation to follow a new tradition.

Another external cause for the rise of the charismatic movement in the congregations of the BDS is the conference that was held in Gimbi-District in 1992 (see the detail 4.1 above).¹⁷³ It was a Spiritual conference held in Gimbi District that brought a great change in the life of the congregations in the BDS. It was after the conference that many believers started to give service

¹⁷²Haustein, *Writing Religious History*(2011) 232.

¹⁷³ See the details of the conference I discussed under subtopic 4.1 the Entrance and spread of the Pentecostals theology and practices into the EECMY.

in the church by the gifts of the Spirit, like Prophecy, speaking in tongues, and vision overcoming the opposition from some of the elders and pastors of the Districts and parishes.

4.5.3 The Socio-cultural Situation of the Young people

According to the culture in Ethiopia, leadership of the church belongs to the matured, older people. In the year 1960 as some researches like Rev. Domianus investigated it, leadership of the church was entirely kept in the hands of the older people. Most young people were excluded from church services and totally from leadership¹⁷⁴. This is due to the traditions that the country had from before. In addition to this there is a fear that this young people if they interfere in church services and church leadership without formal training or courses, may lead the church opposite to the traditions they have. The traditions of the EECMY church services that they developed from the missionaries seems legalistic in character that does not attract the young people and also that does not encourage them to serve the church with the gifts of the Holy Spirit that God has given them. For instance, singing in the church with their tune in the contexts of the country not of the Europeans.

When the young people sent to Addis Ababa where the Pentecostals, these young people were welcomed by them to service including leadership. As Rev Domianus states, “everybody could share in the services actively with his or her special gifts.”¹⁷⁵ In addition to these the Pentecostals encouraged the young people to write their own song and made them public by printing them. When they returned to the region where they come during the summer, these young people, made a kind of revolution in the church both with respect to give service and take part in the church leadership.

4.6 The Challenges of Pentecostals Experience in the BDS

4.6.1 The Challenges of the Pentecostals on the Liturgy in the BDS

The liturgy of the EECMY has many components, but in short it deals with the practice and styles of worship. During the worship we find Scripture reading, confessions of faith, creeds, sermon, singing, prayer from liturgy books and hymn books. The style of worship that the EECMY uses is different from other evangelical churches like Pentecostals. That means

¹⁷⁴Domianus, *The Charismatic movement in the EECMY* (2000) 17.

¹⁷⁵Domianus, *The Charismatic movement in the EECMY* (2000) 18.

Liturgical confessions are one of the basic elements that show the identity of the EECMY. According to the understanding of the EECMY, the Holy Spirit works through the liturgy. This liturgy deals with Sacrament, Apostles Creed, Nicene Creed, Athanasian Creed and Luther's Small Catechism. The Holy Spirit plays an important role in all these activities. For instance, the Holy Sacrament is instituted by God to be celebrated by Christians; (See Matthew 28:18-19, 26:26-30). Through the administration of the Sacrament and preaching of the gospel, Christ's death and resurrection is proclaimed which is the work of the Holy Spirit. Rev. Gudina Tumsa's says, "The Holy Spirit makes Jesus present through the visible public and outer means of words, and water and wine and bread."¹⁷⁶ Likewise, Timothy Maschke a professor of Theology at Concordia University says,

God instituted the office of the reaching, giving the gospel and the sacraments. Through these means, he gives the Holy Spirit who produces faith, where and when he wills, in those who hear the gospel. This activity of applying the words of God to our personal lives is the chief activity of the Holy Spirit. He takes what are the Father's and the Son's and makes them ours (John 16:15).¹⁷⁷

The idea of applying the words of God to our personal lives is what the Pentecostals say the experience of the Holy Spirit. The initiative of experiencing the Holy Spirit is still the work of the Holy Spirit but what is expected from the individual Christians is to respond to serve others for his glory.

There are laws and by laws in the constitution of the EECMY to improve liturgy and worship services. "Article VI-Organization, section 3 reads: each synod has been self-governing body which, within the framework of the constitution, shall be entitled to develop a life, order and work of its own..."¹⁷⁸ Here the freedom that each synod has to develop its way of worship is in the context of the EECMY traditions when needed by the decisions of the Church. But the Charismatics within the BDS did not know the traditions of the EECMY to practice. The

¹⁷⁶GTF, (edit), *Church and Society* (2010) 201.

¹⁷⁷Timothy Maschke, "The Holy Trinity and Our Lutheran Liturgy": *Concordia Theological quarterly Volume 67:3/4* (July/October 2003) 24.

<http://www.ctfw.net/media/pdfs/maschkeliturgy/pdf>, accessed in 29.02.2012 at 2:30 AM.

¹⁷⁸Forslund, *The word of God in Ethiopian Tongues* (199) 69.

charismatics, those who are influenced by the experience of the Pentecostals, targeted to change the customs and traditions that the EECMY have been using. They started to question infant baptism, confession of faith, god-mother and god-father during infant baptism. This result was that the Pentecostals experience of Baptism in the Holy Spirit progress and many BDS congregations left the traditions of their respective congregations and follow Pentecostals new tradition. This new traditions is the free worship. Liturgy book and hymn book is rejected by many of the BDS congregations.¹⁷⁹ They are forgetting the traditions the EECMY has been using so far. Herman Domianus a German Missionary to Ethiopia says, these “Charismatics follow, doctrines of the Pentecostal churches, as well as ideas, “principles”, of the so called, “Faith-movement, health and wealth-Gospel” which they call themselves to be revival movements.”¹⁸⁰

The tradition of the EECMY particularly in the BDS, of using the liturgy is integrated with the ideas and doctrines of the Pentecostals. It is only the pastor who keeps the traditions in the congregation where he she gives service or celebration of Holy Communion. The other Sunday services in most of the BDS congregations are conducted by lay ministers. For example, according to the statistics of the BDS of 2009, for 209 congregations, there are 73 pastors, 33 evangelists and 1195 volunteer preachers¹⁸¹ without formal training. This big number of volunteer ministers in the BDS was one of the causes for the growth of the Charismatics. This was due to some congregations the BDS preferred the non-trained CM instead of paying a salary for officially employed pastors and evangelists. In the absence of the pastor the lay preachers or volunteer ministers prefer free worship of the Pentecostals experience that pushed out the EECMY tradition.¹⁸² From his investigation, Jog Hasten, says, “The EECMY is part of a large protestant network, in which Pentecostals ideas and practices spread without much respect for confessional boundaries.”¹⁸³

In this days the use of liturgy book, hymn book, Church calendar, sermon from the pulpit, and confession of creeds were disvalued. Rejecting the structure of the EECMY, some parishes and

¹⁷⁹ The second meeting of Board of theology commission, Resolution Number B2.10.2002,1-5, 12.08.2002E,C. or 2010.

¹⁸⁰ Domianus, *The Charismatic Movement in Ethiopia* (2000) 166.

¹⁸¹ Report from BDS-DMT director, Rev. Alemu Berhanu, to the 4th Council Meeting, 16.5, (October 24, 2002\2010) 1.

¹⁸² Fikru Merdasa, Awate Dilla Parish leader interviewed on July 10, 2011.

¹⁸³ Hasten, *Writing Religious History* (2009) 8.

congregations organized them and developed the view of congregationalism like the Pentecostals. Some congregations did not want have connection with parish or Synod by experiencing the view of congregationalism the Pentecostals instead of having organized structure. Each congregation tries to have his own pastor or evangelist if they could not afford to have their own pastors they were led by untrained volunteers. Some of these volunteer ministers especially the charismatics do not have the interest of paying for evangelism work. Instead, they involved in buying musical instruments building a church from bricks, Choir uniform, preparing a big spiritual conference with much expense. On top of this, they invited a charismatic preachers, prophets, and solo singers from a distant place, mainly from Addis Ababa. These people did not have theological training and background from the EECMY. I agree with Rev. Dr. Waqsyium Idosa, the current EECMY president saying this:

There is also one crucial factor regarding the lay evangelizing movement in EECMY that deserve attention. The factor in mind is the recent development where the itinerant evangelism effort by members and evangelists is being replaced by professionalism particularly in cities. The professionalism in this connection is with regard to charismatic gifting. Few individuals, “the anointed ones” (who have supernatural charismatic gifts) monopolize the ministry of the church to the extent that it cripples the motivation of other members.”¹⁸⁴

In order to overcome the teaching contrary to the Bible and also that opposes the traditions of the EECMY, the BDS has responded to it in many ways. Some of them, teaching the communicant members, giving refreshment course for pastors and evangelists etc.¹⁸⁵. I will discuss the actions of the BDS towards the challenges from the Pentecostals and charismatic experiences. This reaction towards the challenges from the Pentecostals is both before and after its establishment of the BirbirDilla as a Synod.

4.6.2 The Impacts of the Pentecostals Experience on the Church Calendar

As I discussed in Chapter two, the Church calendar is a manual that the EECMY prepares every year in order that all his members preach and teach their Sunday sermon based on this calendar.

¹⁸⁴According to TemesgenShibruGalla, *The mission thinking of the Ethiopian Evangelical church MekaneYesus (EECMY)*, MF Norway:Norwegian School of TheologyMTh., 2011) 40-41.

¹⁸⁵ Rev. Itefa Gelato, The Current BDS president, Oral Interview, on 16,07,2011 at BDSOffice

This Church calendar consist of three texts both from Old Testament and the New Testament to be read each Sunday and one of them will be preached as I noted in chapter two. The text for the sermon is mainly taken from the Gospels. This Calendar has texts for everyday so that all may read in private, as a family, as a group in village worship or at Bible study. The congregations of the BDS benefited from it.¹⁸⁶ During the morning village prayer, leaders of the group always use the text from the calendar. The passage is very short and easy to understand and also helps to remember and experience in their lives.

Currently, some of the congregations in the BDS prefer free worship as the Charismatics and Pentecostal churches. The use of hymn book and liturgy book and confessions of creeds is neglected. The Sunday worship is started by singing a chorus and finished by singing a chorus. The preacher of the day chooses any text he prefers as he is she inspired to preach to the believers. The prayer is for at least half an hour or some times an hour with a loud voice. Many participated in speaking in tongues some with interpretations and some without. There was also a message of prophesy during the sermon. The tradition of using the church calendar in the BDS was weakened as it adopted the Pentecostal practices.

4.6.3 The Emphases of Prophesy and Speaking in Tongues in the BDS

When the Charismatic movement started in the EECMY, many of them engaged with prayer and Bible study. They were mainly college and university student who did not have theological understanding of the Bible. Their main desire was how to get gifts of the Holy Spirit that follows: speaking in tongues and prophesy. Prophesy and speaking in tongues are among the gifts of the Holy Spirit that were highly respected in the BDS. Most of the congregations in the BDS have more than ten prophets in their church. No congregation that does not have a single prophets. If a congregation, has no prophets that congregation is assumed as poor or dead in spirit. In order to have gifts of the Holy Spirit, some of the young people attend any spiritual conferences prepared until they get these gifts.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁶Alemu Negari, a man of 78 years old, whom his oldest son is one of the founders of the Pentecostal church in Aira, Oral interview at his residence, Airatown.,on July 11, 2011.

¹⁸⁷ Personal experience, there were 16 different congregations used to attend the Eellagaa Congregation which is a Charismatic in order to be anointed by the power of the Holy Spirit Among them, five young people refused to go back to their congregation and kept as a member of Eellagaa Congregation for five years (1995-2000) .

The church has faced problems with people who spoke in tongues and prophesy and saw vision. Place where these charismatic preachers serve, most of the time division and conflict follows in the church. When they exercise casting out demons, they give a name to that evil spirit. They call this evil spirit as Buda spirit (evil eye-a man who eats a man). It created tension in the life of believers. Many of them hid their children without understanding the reality of the event. They did this from the experience they have during their traditional religion. Still some of them see themselves as the set apart and sanctified people.¹⁸⁸

The Charismatics were given more responsibilities than those keep the EECMY traditions. The charismatic are the one to pray in church, to preach, to sing, to heal the sick, to prophesy and lead most of the church programs. He is invited here and there to give a message of prophesy. Whatever he speaks people believe to be a message from God. They do not test the message delivered by the prophet/prophetess, if it is from God or not. They do not like to accept criticism from pastors or fellow Christians. If a pastor tries to counsel them, they do not come back from their mistakes. They say this is human we obey only the Holy Spirit. When the church disciplines them they leave the church and join the Pentecostal churches. Rev. Fikru one of my informants says, “according to our parish, this time who join the Pentecostal church leaving EECMY are false prophets who do not like to be disciplined; they are the disobedient charismatics.”¹⁸⁹

The challenges of the charismatics, those who claim they have the gifts of the Holy Spirit, are not simple issues. They became a challenge to trained and officially employed evangelists and pastors of the BDS. There was a gap between those who over emphasize the gifts of the Holy Spirit and conservative pastors, evangelists, and believers. These trained ministers and some Christians want to worship in orderly way without losing the traditions of the Church. But the Charismatic did not want to limit themselves to the traditions of the church. Some of them call untrained preachers from other place, those who speak in tongues and message of prophesy, leaving out the pastors and the trained evangelists they have. They did not benefit from the rich biblical knowledge of the trained people. Some of the pastors and evangelists suffered a lot lacking their salary but when one of the charismatics come and serve, he or she gets almost the three month salary of a pastor.

¹⁸⁸ Tariku Negari BDS youth secretary, Oral interview, on July 1,2011.

¹⁸⁹ Rev. Fikru Merdasa Awate Dilla Parish leader, interviewed on July 10,2011.

All the BDS pastors and evangelists have discussed many times to solve the problem but still exists being a challenge. In 10, 1, 2007; 66 pastors and evangelists discussed as a main agenda on the annual spiritual discussions of all the BDS officially employed ministers. Rev. Herman has also shared a lot in resolving the charismatic challenges in the Synod for he is the Youth Secretary in Tschaliya District. Later, he served as a Manager of the Theological education by extension (TEE) in Aira¹⁹⁰ before he left the country. He worked very hard in his teaching and advice the charismatics those who started to have a fellowship separating themselves from the structures of the BDS, in 2006 which is still a challenge.

In the Awate Dilla Parish, Rev. Fikru, when he speaks the challenge he encountered, he says, “One of the charismatics in his Parish raising the Holy Bible asked a question his respective congregation saying, “What is this Bible for we believers? The answer, he said, say “it is living bread” for Pastors? Say, it is “earthly bread.” The aim of the person is to motivate the believers not to pay a budget for evangelism work and a salary for ministers. After many years the person who preached like this got a call to be a pastor and trained at one of the EECMY Seminary in 2000, and became a pastor in Awate Dilla congregations in 2007. He again faced the same problem. Because when he was young he taught the believers not to pay a budget.

4.6.4 The Emphases on Health and Wealth Gospel in the BDS

The teaching and preaching in the BDS is mainly Charismatics. If the preacher himself is not a charismatic preacher, believers do not listen to his sermon. They do not care about the theological training. They say the Holy Spirit help to teach and preach.¹⁹¹ They prefer hearing the untrained preacher than the trained theologian. This is due to the fact that the trained preacher wants to keep the balance of the EECMY theology of holistic ministry, which means serving the whole person. Second the trained theologians of the EECMY are not preaching if so emotional as the charismatics. For instance, one of the pastors of the BDS in Leka Kara Parish said that, “during my sermon, the believers kept silent almost sleeping when I say halleluiah with loud voice, believers waked up and followed him.”¹⁹² This is the thirst of spiritual prosperity. Another thing, that some of the EECMY preachers especially the charismatics give emphasis is prosperity

¹⁹⁰Personal experience during his ministry in both districts, Aira and Chaliya from 1996-2002.

¹⁹¹Forslund, *The word of God in Ethiopian Tongues* (1993) 162.

¹⁹²DinbashaOlika, DalleWabera Parish leader, O interview, July 19,2011.

gospel like the Pentecostals. The thirst of the believers next to gifts of the Holy Spirit is earthly prosperity. That means if a person is anointed with Spirit of God he or she will also be blessed by earthly materials. The teaching and preaching is focused on earthly blessings. The saying of J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu approves this in his saying,

...services of the new Pentecostal churches in sub-Saharan Africa or in the African Diaspora for a year without hearing a single message on the Second Coming of Christ or the destruction of the world at the end of the age. Their programs and books — made up invariably of sermons preached — are usually on themes relating to finance, landed property, cars, personal jets, exotic holidays, international travel, and other such material acquisitions that have become indicators of the blessing of God for faithful Christianity.¹⁹³

This understanding is also for the Ethiopian Pentecostals. Their teaching is with full of promise that he or she will prosper. Rev. Tefera, Falasa, a pensioned pastor of the BDS says, “These charismatics preach about prosperity from the contexts of our society for they are poor. They preach to our poor society walking from place to place passing a word of promise for nothing as they themselves do not like to work.”¹⁹⁴ Of course the word of God does not encourage that his people to be poor (see John 10:10). The matter is that when God calls people, according to the traditional Lutheran theology, his primary objective is not earthly but that his people might inherit eternal life. This also became a big challenge to the EECMY theology: that gives priority to eternal salvation instead earthly prosperity.

4.7 The Emerging of New Worship Leaders in the BDS

According to the traditions of the EECMY, it is either an evangelist or a pastor who leads the Sunday worship service. The leader of the day either chooses a song from hymn book or calls one person from the choir to lead the song. Currently, another, group among the choir is elected by the leaders of youth and sometimes by elders of the church. This group of worship leader

¹⁹³J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, “Encounter beyond routine, African Reformation: Your life shall never be the same: Mission, Development and Contemporary, Pentecostalism in Sub-Saharan Africa,” *Cultural roots, cultural transition, understanding of faith and cooperation in development International Consultation, Academy of Mission* (Hamburg, 17th-23rd January 2011)26 http://www.eed.de//fix/files/doc/110624_Dokumentation_Afrikatagung. Pdf

¹⁹⁴ Rev. Tefera Falasa, a retired pastor of BDS, interviewed in his residence, June 30, 2011.

leads the church every Sunday by singing, praying for at least half an hour each at the beginning of the church service and at the end of the church services. Their name is “waqeffachiftu” in Afan Oromo or “Asmelaki” in Amharic. Literally, it means the one who make people worship. My informants responded that this new worship leader was not the EECMY tradition but our church took it from Pentecostals, where the style of the worship was originally from the Meseret Kiristos Church (Christ’s foundation Church).¹⁹⁵ This indicates there are two worship leaders with the pastor at a time. The service of the church seems orderlies.

4.8 Impacts of Pentecostals on the EECMY Tradition of Prayer

Prayer is one of the most important tools and plays an important role in life and ministry of a church. The EECMY has a prayer item on the liturgy book that surfaces all areas of the life of believers and church ministry. Some of these prayer items are: prayer for the baptized, the conformant, the sick, for the country, environment, healthy family, etc.¹⁹⁶ It is conducted from the liturgy book in accordance with time and conditions of the church in short with a very soft sound. But with the rise of the Pentecostals, the substance of the prayer is much changed. Prayer with a loud voice is taking long time, at least an hour. The prayer is filled by speaking in tongues and commanding of the evil spirit, and mixed with text reading with short explanations and also singing a chorus in between the prayer¹⁹⁷. In most cases all stand during the prayer, if some sits it may be regarded as if that person has a demon and he might be called to the front to pray for him or her. With the styles of the Charismatics ways of prayer during the worship, many people complain, if it is really the teaching of the bible or not. Rev. Bulti Fayisa presents on the 50th Anniversary of MYTS like this;

Worship style is another area of challenge (in the EECMY). Contextualization is the main issue in today’s worship service. Worship should be done according to the culture of our audiences. But we are not supposed to forget our Lutheran tradition because of

¹⁹⁵ Rev. Yonas Biratu, Oral Interview (O.I) on 15.07.2011, and Rev. Tedesse Disassa O.I. on 18, 07.2011 at Onesimos Nesib Seminary in their office.

¹⁹⁶ EECMY Liturgy book printed in Addis Ababa 1996.

¹⁹⁷ Forslund, *The Word of God in Ethiopian Tongues* (1993) 162.

contextualization. It is possible to do both. It is possible to do contextualization while we continue to keep our Liturgical services.¹⁹⁸

This indicates that the liturgy of the EECMY is left behind due to contextualization with the modern ways of worship of CM. According to Rev, Tariku the Youth secretary of the BDS today there are four groups of Christians in the BDS congregations. These are; those who follow strict Lutheran traditions, Pentecostals (those who took re-baptism in secret, and those returned to BDS after they took all the Pentecostal experience). The third group is the EECMY Charismatics. This third group is a group that keeps the traditions of the EECMY and serves the church by the Spiritual gifts given them. The fourth group is the mixed group. These are those who do not bother about the traditions of the EECMY but come to the church for worship.¹⁹⁹

From the investigation of GTF, this time the “MuluWongel, the Ethiopian Full Gospel Believers’ Church, and other Pentecostal Churches have apparently brought the excesses under control, whereas in many EECMY and other Lutheran congregations we observe a more confused situation.”²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁸ Rev. Bulti Fayisa, Presentation on 50th Golden Anniversary of the Mekane Yesus Seminar (Addis Ababa Feb. 2011) 3.

¹⁹⁹ Rev. Tariku Negari, BDS youth secretary, Oral Interview on July 1, 2011.

²⁰⁰ Johnny Bakke, (ed.) “Issues of Ministry and Theological Education in the 1970’s and Today,” *Church and Society: Lectures and Responses Second Missiological Seminar 2003*, Germany: Hamburg, WDL publisher, 2010) 78.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESPONSES OF BDS TOWARDS THE IMPACTS OF PENTECOSTALS

In this chapter, I give a brief exploration of the strategies that the BirbirDilla Synod used to overcome the challenges of the Charismatic Movement or Pentecostals experience. Some of the strategies that the BDS used, in attempting to keep its theology and practices a response to the challenges of the Pentecostals which was related to the responses the main church, EECMY were as follows: training more theologians, table- discussion with ministers of the synod, discussion with the Pentecostal leaders, and teaching its members of the grass root level. In addition I discuss the charismatic preacher's forum that first established at national level by the EECMY.

5.1 The Theological Response to Pentecostals Theology of Baptism in the Holy Spirit

In chapter four I discovered the influences of the Pentecostals on BDS to the extent that the traditions of the church have been replacing by the Charismatic movement. Of course the challenges of the Pentecostal are a worldwide phenomenon in the mainline churches. Different churches responded to the challenges of the Pentecostals. For instance, the Lutherans all over the world responded with “thanks and praise the Triune God for all the spiritual gifts and fruits of the Spirit which God has blessed the whole Church, including faith itself.”²⁰¹ As one of the Lutheran church in the world, the Ethiopian Evangelical Church MekaneYesus (EECMY) has also involved in responding to the challenges of the Pentecostals to keep her Lutheran theology.

In line with the understanding and teaching of EECMY Rev. Yonas Yigazu the EECMY-DMT Director says,

Starting from the day of Pentecost there was no time where a Church existed without the Spirit of God. All churches are built on the Triune God and perform her evangelism work by the Spirit of God. The Missionaries who introduced the Gospel to Ethiopia were also by the guidance of the Holy Spirit and they were Charismatics and therefore, we are

²⁰¹ Karen L. Bloomquist, (ed.) *Lutherans Respond to Pentecostalism: The Lutheran World Federation-A Communion of Churches, Theology in the life of the Church* Vol. 4 (Minnesota: Minneapolis, Lutheran University Press 2009)149.

Lutheran charismatics but our aim is to use gifts of the Holy Spirit in accordance the word of God. Further he says, “it is not only the Pentecostals or Charismatic movement who has the gifts of the Holy Spirit but also all churches built on Triune God and teach the word of God properly and administer the Sacrament.”²⁰²

According to the sayings of Rev. Yonas, I examine that the EECMY gives high value of both baptism and the Lord’s Supper. Actually both baptism and Lord’s Supper were instituted by Christ (see Matthew 28:18-19; Luke 22:17-20). Rev. Domianus when describes the importance of baptism says, “We receive the most wonderful promises of God for our future life through baptism.... Baptism unites us with Christ, brings forgiveness of sins, incorporates us with the body of Christ, and also we receive the Holy Spirit.”²⁰³

The first Christians started to bring their children for baptism (See Acts 16:15; 16:33 and 1Corinthians 1:16). Adult baptism in the New Testament reflects a mission situation whereas child baptism reflects a circumstance of an established church with Christian parents. According to Domianus, the Lutheran teaching of child baptism has historical and biblical evidences. Historically that the people of Israel used to enter into the covenants of God through circumcision (Genesis 17:9-14) where in the New Testament was replaced by Christian Baptism (Colossians 2:11-12).²⁰⁴ The Early Christians has also continued in making people the disciple of Christ through baptism (Acts 16:33). In this text we read that the Jailor was baptized with his entire family (NRSV translation). The people of Israel Practiced male circumcision for instance Abraham on the 99th year and Isaac on 8th day as a sign of belongingness to the People of God. Therefore, the children are parts of God’s people in sharing God’s promise through baptism.

Rev. Fikru Merdasa an informant, when he explains the disagreement to the activities of the Pentecostals he explained like this: “When the Pentecostals re-baptize our members, we make them deny their second baptism when they come back to our church. After they confessed that that their second baptism wrong, admit them into the church. Then, we give them a confirmation

²⁰² Rev. Yonas Yigazu, the EECMY-DMT director interviewed in his office on July 28, 2011.

²⁰³ Domianus, *The Charismatic Movement within the EECMY* (2000)156.

²⁰⁴ Domianus, *The Charismatic Movement within the EECMY* (200)156.

class as a refreshment course to make him or her stand firm in their faith and also understand Lutheran theology²⁰⁵

Next to baptism the point that the EECMY responded to was the Pentecostals criticizing of god-parents and confirmation class. The Pentecostals criticize both the Ethiopian Tewahedo Orthodox Church and the EECMY of using god-parents during baptism and also the confirmation class to make them understand about their baptism and grow in the Christian faith. But the Pentecostals say that it is not in the Bible. It was what the Lutherans invented themselves. Domianus, presents from the perspective of god-parents importance with biblical evidence. Even though the word god-parent was not mentioned in the Bible, the idea of the four people in the Gospel of Mark (Mark 2:1-5) those who brought a sick person before Christ was could be an example. Similarly, god-parents assist the parent to bring the child before God to receive God's grace. Together or may be in the absence of parents of the child, god-parents help the baptized child by praying for him regularly, telling God's love by inviting or visiting the child, helping the child in times of his problems both materially and spiritually, guiding the child by being a good example of a Christian life, it is a system of inviting children to grow into the Christian faith.²⁰⁶

The other way that the church, EECMY follows to lead children to Christ is a confirmation-class. In this case it was not only the baptized children who take the confirmation class but also adults who did not yet confirmed. It was through Baptism and confirmation class that a person is included into the full member of the EECMY. It is through confirmation class that a person comes to the real understanding of his baptism and also a Lutheran tradition. The person who reached age of fifteen takes a course for at least six month until he or she understands Luther's small catechism and related books. After he or she finished the study, if they passed the question they were asked by pastor, their confirmation affirmed and accepted as full member of the church. But the charismatics criticize the teaching from small catechism for it teaches Lutheran understanding of sacraments in detail.

²⁰⁵Djaleta, *A Critical survey of the Development of the Charismatic influence in the EECMY* (1994)74.

²⁰⁶Domianus, *The Charismatic Movement within the EECMY* (2000)157-158.

BDS has also responded theologically to the Pentecostals challenges to keep the sound biblical doctrine of church and its Lutheran identity. Even though, all the EECMY Synods have their own laws and byelaws to guide themselves, the EECMY central office is the key agent in helping his Synods in their difficulties. It takes the initiatives in responding to external problems that the Church faces. For the internal problems among the believers is mainly the responsibility of each Synod to respond. The BDS of EECMY responded theologically by educating the volunteer preachers including the charismatic preachers starting from confirmation class, communicants course every month on Saturday one day before the Holy communion celebration, training them through Theological Education by Extension (TEE). TEE is a kind of distance education where the students take their study material and study in their home. Then, every second week they meet each other for discussion in the presence of their tutor. I was also one of the TEE students in Leka Suchi Parish in 1998 for one year. Then by the Leka Suchi parish recommendation, the Chaliya District sent me to ONS to study theology for two years 1999-2000.²⁰⁷

One of the materials that the TEE students used was the book written by Rev. Domianus, a German Missionary who worked in the EECMY holding different positions. For example he worked as Youth secretary in Chaliya District of BDS, a teacher at ONS, Aira, ONS-TEE coordinator, and finally moved to Germany being the representatives of the Eastern African missionaries. Rev. Herman Domianus had helped the BDS and other synods of EECMY in responding to the challenges from the Pentecostals. Pastors and evangelists of the BDS used Domianus's book for teaching at different stages. To mention some of them, it was used for TEE, on workshops, conferences, and during Sunday services especially on Sunday afternoon youth program. The content of the teaching was in short:

The primary theological response towards the challenges of the Charismatic and Pentecostals Movement was teaching the personality, the role and gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is God and one with God the Father and Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is the one who gives his gifts to the church in order to build it up. According to Rev. Herman, the Holy Spirit illuminates Scripture and inspires prayers, brings reconciliation,

²⁰⁷ Today the structure of the EECMY is modified and the district is omitted and each Parish directly joins their respective Synod that means, EECMY-Synod-parish-congregations.

creates fellowship, creates unity in contrast to the behaviors of the Pentecostals that cause division.²⁰⁸

In this theological response, the BDS accepted that the renewal of the Spirit or filling in the Spirit is theological to be practiced to build the church of Christ for the glory of God. Therefore the gifts of the Spirit like, speaking in tongues, prophesy, healing, vision etc. could be exercised in accordance with the teaching of the Bible without dividing Christians into different groups or classes as the Pentecostals do. In addition those who were anointed by gifts of the Spirit could use the gifts given to them for church growth for it was not given for personal advantages. Therefore these charismatics within the BDS were allowed to serve the church in the context of the Lutheran theology of Christ alone, grace alone, faith alone, and Scripture alone, Creeds and Sacraments.

In this theological response the BDS did not oppose the Charismatic movement's experience of the Holy Spirit. There is gifts of Holy Spirit in the church, like speaking in tongues, prophesy and all other spiritual gifts. But What the BDS rejected was that the Pentecostals experience of re-baptism by denying the Lutheran traditions of child baptism, god-parents, EECMY liturgical calendars, Creeds. The other point that the BDS did oppose was experiencing speaking in tongues as necessary mark of Christianity. Further, according to the understanding of the EECMY serving the whole person is biblical and also it's her motto but she refused accepting the Pentecostals emphasis on prosperity and wealth gospel, as I discussed in 3.3.4.

5.2 EECMY Table Discussion with the Pentecostals

The aim of the EECMY towards the Pentecostals was not to oppose to their experience of the Holy Spirit. It was rather to keep her members in the theology and understandings that she has in the word of God. Both the EECMY and the Ethiopian Pentecostals are of the same country, sharing the same culture and language, and sharing each other's problem even in times of during the revolution worshipping with the EECMY. The EECMY response towards the Pentecostals is on the challenges of the Pentecostals experience or attitude to the theology and practices. Actually it is not only the EECMY that the Pentecostals influenced in their theology of Baptism in the Holy Spirit. According to Teka, other Evangelical churches and non-evangelical churches

²⁰⁸Domianus, *The Charismatic Movement in the EECMY* (2000)79, 90, 93.

like Kale Heywet and Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church were also influenced by the Pentecostals movement. But to solve the challenges rising from the Pentecostals, in the history of the Ethiopian churches, Teka says that, “the Mekane Yesus church in Addis Ababa was the first and only church in Ethiopia to engage in open, official, theological dialogue with Pentecostals”²⁰⁹

According to Hege, “Leaders of the EECMY and the Pentecostal church, MuluWongel leaders came together in a friendly manner discussed the problem between them in 1967.”²¹⁰ The problem between them was teaching against each other’s doctrine and practices. Therefore in their discussion they made a principle that each may teach his own doctrine and practices rather than teaching against each other. In their discussion they adopted a policy to avoid discussing doctrinal differences and not to try to change the doctrines and practices of other churches.”²¹¹ The Policy that was made between the two churches became difficult on implementations as the challenge is still exists. This was may be due to the fact that the Ethiopian Pentecostals joined the EECMY during the revolution as a result of the Persecution. After they added to the EECMY the Pentecostals did not call themselves Pentecostals any more until the fall of the Derge Regime 1991. From 1991, as the religious freedom is declared in the country, the members of the Pentecostals started to witness the word of God any person they come across regardless of religion. That means that they converted Christians from the existing church like, EECMY.

5.3 Pastors Empowerment as Indirect Response to the Challenges of Pentecostals

The EECMY has given refreshment course for her pastors and evangelists to empower them. This pastors’ empowerment course have double functions in the life of the church. The first one was through the education they got during the seminar; the pastors and evangelists could commit themselves to serve the church effectively from the perspectives of contemporary situation and make the contextualized liturgy. The second functions of the pastors empowerment course was that those who took the course could teach effectively the charismatics in the church in confidence so that the charismatics may learn how to serve church in the context of the Lutheran theology. Further, this pastors’ empowerment was to shape the pastors to a contemporary

²⁰⁹Fogi, *The Charismatic Movement in the EECMY some doctrinal and practical issues* (2000) 82.

²¹⁰Hege, *Beyond Our Prayers* (1998) 64

²¹¹Fogi, *The Charismatic Movement in the EECMY some doctrinal and practical issues* (2000) 80.

teaching and preaching that centers the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Rev. Yonas Igazu, the EECMY-DMT director when he explains the aim of the pastors empowerment course, said, “We have to learn to do ministry efficiently in the currently prevailing local and global realities. We have already seen that the preaching in the 21st century can no longer follow the way we did it in the time before.”²¹²

These refreshment courses are given for the EECMY Synods, mainly for the five Synods those who were emerged from the former Western Synod.²¹³ These are: Western Synod, Ghimbi-Jorgo Synod, Begi-Gidami Synod, Abaya-Dabus Synod, and the BirbirDilla Synod. This pastors empowering workshop is done with the cooperation of the Norwegian Missionary Society. The issues of the conference is based on pastoral leadership and marriage issues, on the second point the course deals on counseling, teaching, and preaching of the word. Further, in order to make contemporary and the course also deals how to use the liturgy book.²¹⁴ Some trained young adults and pastors who are inspired by the Holy Spirit participated in the conference to get awareness in order to minimize the challenges. Rev. Domianus, has played a leading role in reconciling the challenges between those who want to keep the traditions of the church and the Charismatics who said that they follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit.²¹⁵

One of the major theological responses was the paper that Rev. Herman Domianus prepared for the Theological education by Extension (TEE) material. The EECMY TEE is mainly produced in OnesimosNesib seminary in Aira and the MekaneYesus Seminary TEE department in Addis Ababa. The Title of the book is “*The Charismatic Movement within the Ethiopian Evangelical Church MekaneYesus*” A Theological Foundation for an African Lutheran Church between Tradition and Revival.”

5.4 Charismatic preachers’ Forum as a Response to the Challenges of Pentecostals

²¹²Director’s Briefing www.eecmy.org/document.php?name=DMT_Report_2009.pdf Accessed on 15, 25,01,2012.

²¹³Director’s Briefing, Accessed on 16March 2012.

²¹⁴.Director’s Briefing, Accessed on 16March 2012.

²¹⁵Domianus, *The Charismatic Movement in Ethiopia* (2000)181-183-to get full information from these pages .you can refer all the teachings that Rev. Herman prepared and taught.

The Charismatic preachers' forum was established by the EECMY at national level in May 2009. As this subtopic indicates the forum was meant to meet the challenges of charismatic movement. The aim of this charismatic preacher's forum was due to the growth of the Charismatics in the EECMY and the emerging of new charismatics in the church from time to time as well as the crises developed with them. Rev Yonas appreciating the contribution of the EECMY charismatic ministers in the church, he spoke the need to follow-up about their ministry. In his investigation, Rev. Yonas said that, "it has been noticed recently that the charismatic preachers require particular attention and teaching as well as special follow-up;...Particularly in a Church like Mekane Yesus who is serious about true and authentic preaching of the Word."²¹⁶ Therefore the objective of the forum was to train the charismatic preachers in order that they may serve the church in the context of the Lutheran tradition instead of emphasizing speaking in tongues and prophesy, to give priority to the proper teaching of the word. One of the discussion areas during the forum was "The emergence of the charismatic movement, its contribution to Church growth, and the crisis it has sometimes brought to ministry and Church life and what does it mean to be a Lutheran"²¹⁷ were some of the topics discussed.

The BDS did not only limit himself to teach the charismatics within the BDS but also has organized Evangelical churches fellowship to give them awareness about Lutheran understanding of Baptism in the Holy Spirit. Rev. Tariku Negari, the Youth Secretary of the BDS said that in September 15, 2011, we organized an Evangelical fellowship with two other churches (MuluWongel) and the MeseretKiristos (A Mennonite church background) to build friendship by minimizing the misunderstanding due to the doctrinal differences. During the workshop Tariku said that both we as BDS and the two other evangelical churches agreed not to criticize doctrinal and theological bases of one another and to stop converting each other's believers. But this agreement was stopped within a year. Rev ItfaGaleta, BDS president said that, "However originally the Ethiopian Evangelical churches fellowship was established by the EECMY during the Ethiopian revolution, we never continue the fellowship, for certain periods

²¹⁶*Director's Briefing*, accessed on March 16, 2012.

²¹⁷*Director's Briefing*, accessed on March 16, 2012.

due to the misunderstanding happened between the EECMY Main office and the Ethiopian Evangelical churches fellowship.²¹⁸

As I discussed in 5.1, that in 1967 the EECMY was the first in making dialogue with the Pentecostals those who have their own churches and also the charismatics within the EECMY. She did this both by her trained theologians and expatriate. In 1974 the EECMY has involved in modifying and challenging the Charismatics within the Church by teaching and offering missionaries Mildred Young, a Korean-American to give training for the young Christians to handle the challenge. Miss Young helped the young Christians in training in the context of the Lutheran theology how to effectively read the Bible, interpret and use the Bible for their Christian living.²¹⁹ As the number and also the crises from the Pentecostals increased, the EECMY has established a Charismatic preacher's forum on February 15-17, 2011 at national level. The name of the forum is International Theological and Mission Conference which was attended by over 2500 pastors, theologians and lay preachers drawn from the synods of the Church, North America and Europe including Ethiopian pastors, theologians and lay ministers in Diasporas. The conference discussed and reflected on issues challenging the authority of the scripture and identity of the Church of God.²²⁰ This EECMY Charismatic Preachers forum was arranged to respond to the challenges from the charismatic movements to shape them serve in the context of the EECMY tradition.

BDS has also done a charismatic preacher's workshop at Synod level. This was taken place after the charismatic Preachers forum was done at EECMY central office in April, 2011. Rev. Tariku says, charismatic preacher's forum that we did at Synod level was not because it was established at main office in Addis Ababa, but it was the question of our synod member to make the forum for charismatic preachers. According to Tariku, the number of the attendants on charismatic preachers' forum was 120 Charismatic Preachers. Then the forum was continued to be given at parish level. Some of the BDS parishes where the Charismatic preachers' forum was taking place were: Gujii Getere, Jarso Baddesso, and Gallawo parish.²²¹ Concerning the fruits of the

²¹⁸ Rev ItfaGaleta, oral interview on July16, 2011.

²¹⁹ Eshete, *The Evangelical movement in Ethiopia Resistance and Resilience* (2010)234.

²²⁰ Report from BDS-DMT director 4th council meeting 2009 point 11 page 3.

²²¹ Tariku Negari, interviewed on April 23, 2012 on Telephone call 9:30-9:45 in BDS Office.

charismatic preachers' forum in the BDS, Rev. Tariku said that "many of the charismatics understood about Lutheran theology and traditions of the church."²²²

5.5 Training Pastors to Serve the Church Effectively

One of the causes for the spread of the charismatic movement within the EECMY was the shortages of the trained theologians in the church. About two thirds of the EECMY ministers were lay ministers. Some of them were informally trained through TEE. According to the 2011 EECMY membership statistics, in 2010 the BDS has 209 congregations and 9 preaching places, 79 pastors and 75 evangelists, 21256 volunteer lay preachers to serve 221715 members. In 2011 the numbers of congregation and preaching place is the same. But there were 83 pastors, 51 evangelists, 956 volunteer preachers to serve 243425 believers. This shows by training more theologians reduced the numbers of lay ministers that also leads to keep her traditions.²²³

According the reports of the BDS-DMT 4th council meeting, by the support they got from the Evangelical Lutheran church in America, the BDS has trained 11 people sharing for 11 parishes those who have great shortages of pastors from 2006-2008.²²⁴ Some of these minister those who were trained both at MYS and ONS to overcome the shortages of the ministers and also to respond to the challenges from the Pentecostals: Melaku Duguma from Leka Suchi Parish, Kajela Taressa from Guji Getere Parish, Tariku Negari Leka Karra Parish Fikru Merdasa from Awate Dilla Parish and Gudeta Mosisa from Chaliya parish. These trained pastors and evangelists worked to reconcile the gap between the Charismatics and the conservatives by stopping to discipline them.

The BirbirDilla Synod has also used the strategy of training pastors to deal with the challenges that came from the Pentecostals theology of Baptism in the Holy Spirit. The BDS has trained both the volunteer ministers through the Theological education by extension (TEE) and formally those who are called by the Synod to study at theological seminary. The BDS has not only engaged in training theologians but also ordained them for full church services. This is to shape them with sound bible teaching. That means, moving them from with little substance charismatic

²²² Tariku Negari Oral Interview on April 23, 2012 on Telephone call 9:30-9:45 in BDS Office.

²²³EECMY Membership statistics of 2011, taken from EECMY public relations office-SGH.

²²⁴ Report from BDS-DMT director 4th council meeting 2009 point 11 page3.

to alive and Charismatic with a substance. In order to produce a charismatic touch pastors and evangelists, the BDS trained the charismatics from within the Synod. The BDS has trained the charismatics and many of the volunteer preachers through the Theological Education by Extension (TEE). Second the Charismatics were made to take a preachers course given at parish level by pastors of each parish. In doing this the charismatics developed awareness of the Lutheran theology.²²⁵

5.6 Constitutional Responses of the BDS to the Challenges of the Pentecostals

From time to time the numbers of those who claim that they have the gifts of the Holy Spirit have been increasing. With the increase of the charismatics in the church in numbers, when the Pentecostal churches were closed by the order of the general of the security, Solomon Kadir, The EECMY decided to receive the Pentecostals to worship with the EECMY members with the conditions of following the EECMY traditions of the worship.

The Pentecostals, who joined the EECMY because of the persecution, were participated in the giving service in the church. But the church elders, pastors and leaders of the church were ordered, to follow up their teaching and ways of worship. When misusing of the gifts of the Holy Spirit increased in the church, leaders of the church continued discussion to minimize the challenges. In 1972 Professor Englesvieken was asked to present a paper on the Pentecostal movement. Then in 1973, he presented the paper on 8th General Assembly of the EECMY. But the paper was accepted with less attention to study more about the charismatics.²²⁶

In August 1976 a consultation of forty peoples both Ethiopians and expatriate missionaries, had proposed guidelines on how to be benefit from the Charismatic renewal by minimizing the misunderstanding between the EECMY and the Charismatic Movement.²²⁷ Again from August 1993 there was a theological consultation on charismatic movement at Mekane Yesus Seminary from August 22-28, 1993. On this consultation, Dr. Tormod Englesvieken, Dr. A Norlander and Kes Itefa Gobena presented lectures that sharpened the understanding of the EECMY church. These three people assured that the Holy Spirit is one of the three persons of the Godhead that could be seen as equal a God as the Father and the Son. Therefore the charismatic experience is a

²²⁵ Rev. Itefa Galeta, Current BDS President, Interviewed in his residence on 16,07,2011 from 2PM-13PM

²²⁶ Launhardt, *Evangelicals in Addis Ababa (1919-1991)* (2004) 159-160.

²²⁷ McDonnell, *Presence, Power, Praise: Documents on the Charismatic Renewal*, VoL. II(1980) 151-153.

blessing if handled according to the scripture. They also assured existence of a place for the Charismatic experience in the Lutheran doctrine. This means signs and wonders, and healing are biblical rightly to be performed according to the scripture. The consultation approved the importance of the lectures presented by the three people and recommended that all respective Synods, Presbyteries, and Area work to use as a teaching material through the Gospel Ministry Department. In addition to this they decided concerning worship styles it should not be a dogma and it should be according to the needs of the congregations, “It is not necessary that human traditions or rites or ceremonies instituted by man should everywhere be the same” (Augsburg Conf. Article 7).²²⁸

On the base of the recommendation passed in 1993EECMY theological consultation, the BirbirDilla Synod, started making participate the charismatics to give service in the church. Rev, ItefaGaleta, the current BDS president, said that, “we gave the charismatics to give service in the church. But most of our charismatics do not give service in the contexts of our Lutheran tradition. Therefore, we need more theologians who could teach our charismatic preachers and the church to keep traditions we have.”²²⁹

²²⁸ EECMY Theological Consultation on Charismatic Movement at MekaneYesus Seminary Addis Ababa August 22-28, 1993.

²²⁹ Rev. ItefaGaleta, Oral interview, on 16, 07, 2011, at his residence.

CHAPTER SIX

GENERAL CONCLUSION AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

6.1 General Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis is twofold. First it is to investigate and convey to what extent the Pentecostals experience has made an impact on the traditions of the Ethiopian Evangelical church mekane Yesus. The investigation was geographically limited to the Birbir Dilla Synod of the EECMY, which is in the western part of Ethiopia. The Second purpose of the thesis is to examine how the church responded to theologically and practically to the influence of the Pentecostals theology and practice.

In order to reach the aim of this research, the thesis, the study began with a brief introduction of the study, providing its context, purpose and methodology. The study is examined from historical descriptive approach based on primary and secondary literatures. In this introductory chapter, I have also explored in brief that EECMY is the product of both foreign and indigenous missionaries.

Chapter two briefly surveyed the historical background and theological profile of the EECMY before the influence of the Charismatic Movement or Pentecostals. It was noted that the EECMY had a traditional Lutheran profile emphasizing salvation by Christ alone in the preaching and teaching. The worship texts were from liturgical calendar, and ministers of the day prepare their sermon in a written form. Though the EECMY gave emphasis on the need of theological education for her ministers, lay ministers also involved in giving service, but were in line with the Lutheran tradition. This shows that EECMY accepts the priesthood of all believers. Before the entering of the Pentecostals experience into the EECMY the Ministry of the Church was Pulpit centered but not pew centered. It was trained theologians centered not lay ministers centered. The teaching has centered on the salvation in Christ through word and sacrament and it is not on the experience. It confirms the statement of Samuel, quoting Father Kilian, “the Roman Catholics are Altar centered, the Lutherans are Pulpit centered, and

Pentecostals of all varieties are pew centered.”²³⁰ Further, this chapter noted that before the influence from the Pentecostals the liturgy and with all her entire worship and doctrine was shaped by Lutheran missionaries.

Chapter three explored the starting of the Pentecostals movement in Ethiopia by the Missionaries from Finland and Swedes. Later, the separations of the Ethiopian Pentecostals from these Missionaries were observed. The Ethiopian Pentecostal separated from the missionaries to worship in the context of the culture of their society, they did not want continues with foreign culture. One of the causes for the separation was that they refused ordination of women and women leadership.

Although the Pentecostals refused the ordination ministry of women, they give much on the emphasis on the priest of all believers. Every believer in the member of the Pentecostal church is a minister. Each serves according to the gifts of the Holy Spirit he or she was given. As surveyed in this chapter, the practice of free worship, serving with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, where and when they wished, and participation in church leadership, attracted many young people of other mainline churches and evangelical churches, like the EECMY.

Chapter four surveyed how that the Pentecostals experience entered into the EECMY. It was through the college and university students. This chapter paid also attention to the fact that even though the modern ways of charismatic experience were not in the EECMY, she was a charismatic Lutheran church. For example, ministries of the pastors and evangelists like Mr. AshenaNegade, Rev. DafaJammo were by the power of the Holy Spirit. Through their ministry many people were converted, healed from their illness and also delivered from evil spirit. But the Charismatic of this time, did not reveal speaking in tongues and delivering prophesy. This was the first stage of the charismatic experience in the church.

The second type of Charismatic experience that this chapter focused on was charismatic practices that included speaking in tongues and prophesy. This second type of charismatic experience was existed in the EECMY through her members those who were influenced by the

²³⁰Wilfred J. Samuel, *Charismatic Folk Christianity, A Storm in the Flower: Reflection on Post Charismatic Trends*. Sabah: Malaysia, Sabah Theological Seminary, 2003) 85.

Pentecostals experiences. This second type of Charismatic experience which was originally from classical Pentecostals has attracted many people from all main line churches. It caused missionaries and leaders of the church started to study the charismatic movement.

There were several factors that led leaders of the church to study the new Pentecostals experience. The first reason was that personal experience of the Holy Spirit plays an important role for the growth of a Christian church. The second reason was that many young Christians, later elderly people as well attracted by the Pentecostal experiences and some of them joined the Pentecostal churches. Thirdly, most of the young people, especially college and university students started Pentecostal practice in the mainline church in the form of home fellowship. The home fellowship played a leading role in the rise and growth of the charismatic movement in the EECMY church, especially in the congregations of BirbirDilla synod. But this movement was rejected by the parish and district leaders who were critical to the new theology to withstand the Lutheran theology and practice.

The rejection of the young charismatics created a division within the church. But gradually the charismatic experience was accepted and got popularity in the church. This happened mainly after the EECMY leaders and foreign missionaries, like professor Engelsviken have studied the charismatic movement and the Holy Spirit and the church started to give training how to use the gifts of the Holy Spirit in a proper way, that is according to the teaching of the Bible in the context of the Lutheran tradition.

The nature of the EECMY traditional worship patterns, especially in the BDS was changed to the charismatic movement or the new-Pentecostals ways of worship. The BDS congregations have experienced all the charismatic gifts such as prophecy, revelation, discerning spirits, healing, miracle working and speaking in tongues. These elements of charismatic experience were new in the ministry of the BDS although her ministry was basically a charismatic in changing the life of the Christians.

Currently, as scrutinized in chapter four, most members of the EECMY experienced gifts of the Holy Spirit and the issues of speaking in tongues and prophesy became normal in the church. Believers gave attentions on personal experience than the word of God which was not the

traditions of the EECMY. The trained theologians who were responsible for the life church seems not played enough to bring the charismatics into the word of God. This fact was investigated from the saying of the Rev. Dr. Waqsyum, current EECMY president, as I pointed in 4.5.1, “this time, EECMY is in a situation where “few individuals, “the anointed ones” (who have supernatural charismatic gifts) monopolize the ministry of the church to the extent that it cripples the motivation of other members”. This investigation shows that there has been a heavy impact of the Pentecostals on the EECMY traditions as I showed in the first part of the thesis.

In the second part of the thesis, I investigated the strategies that the EECMY used to overcome the challenges of the Pentecostal experiences. Theologically the EECMY has approved that personal experience of the Holy Spirit is biblical, when it is according to the teaching of the Bible without denying the Lutheran understanding of the Holy Spirit. According to the EECMY, the main manifestation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is not baptism in the Holy Spirit, but renewal or infilling of the Holy Spirit. It is not the charismatic manifestations of Holy Spirit that affirms the marks of Christianity but the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

In addition, this thesis has showed that the EECMY and the BDS practically responded to the challenges of the Pentecostals. The EECMY made a dialogue with the Pentecostals to create mutual understanding. She has done a refreshment course for pastors, trained pastors and established a charismatic preacher’s forum at national level in 2010.

6.2 A Few Recommendations to the Church

This study has noted that the EECMY is a church having theological and practical experiences that made her to be called a Lutheran church. As explored in the paper the EECMY, including the BDS, has worked hard in many perspectives in order to keep her members to experience the works of the Holy Spirit without losing her traditions. But we have seen that the charismatic movement or new-Pentecostals are making a great impact in the church to the extent that the service of the church is influenced by the charismatic experience of prophesy and speak in tongues without contextualizing with the word of God. According to my opinion, this issues needs to be addressed theologically.

Therefore, in this conclusion, I give few remarks that may foster the EECMY so that she keeps her living Lutheran traditions. I recommend that the BDS to train more experienced theologian, those who understand both traditions of the EECMY and also serve her church by the charismatic gifts. Second, I recommend the trained theologian to worship during the young peoples church program. Worshipping with the Charismatics helps for many things but to point some: The theologian those worship with the charismatics minimizes misunderstanding between the charismatics and the church by developing mutual friendship. He is the one to get more chances to teach and guide these charismatics with word of God than those who do not worship with the Charismatics. In addition, I recommend the church to strengthen further the charismatic preacher's forum which was established at national level and encourage establishing at parish and congregation level so that all members of the church could understand how to serve with gifts of the spirit in line with the word of word of God.

By doing this the crisis related to the charismatic movement may be minimized. The misunderstanding between the trained theologian and lay charismatic preachers could be minimized. Further I recommend developing openness, dialogue, unity and tolerance between the EECMY and the Charismatics so that the tension between the two could be minimized.

CHAPTER SEVEN

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