

EDITOR'S NOTE

I warmly welcome all readers to the volume 8 of the *Ghana Journal of Religion and Theology*. The collection of articles in this issue focuses on three main areas: hermeneutics and interpretation of ancient texts, education, religion and development, and mission and spirituality.

Werner Kahl in the first article draws on recent research on the interweaves of the Qur'ān with Jewish and Christian interpretations of biblical traditions in late antiquity to argue that the three involved religions have much more in common than what might separate them. Therefore, their distinct differences should be appreciated against the background of their broad commonalities as faith relatives.

Justice Anquandah Arthur examines the hermeneutics of biblical interpretation and preaching in Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Ghana. He focuses on metaphors that arise out of bodily expressions pervasive in the process of sermon delivery and reception. His investigation reveals that Charismatic preaching is inundated with intriguing bodily movements that are metaphorical and informed by the preacher's interpretation of Scripture as well as being culture specific.

In the third article, **Ebenezer Adu Ampong** discusses the phenomenon of hand-clapping predominant at prayer meetings across denominational groupings and congregations in contemporary times. He critiques the commonly held view among practitioners that it is a theologically appropriate gesture that has a catalytic power to ensure that expected results are obtained. He concludes that the contemporary practice and its interpretation lack biblical and theological basis. It can, therefore, at best, be described as experiential and not normative.

Victor Zizer investigates the Colonial Government policies for Liberated Africans in 19th century Sierra Leone and how they served to define the place of females in the Liberated African villages. Specifically, he discusses on the educational approach of Hannah Kilham, a 19th century English Quaker, who was committed to the cause of the Liberated Africans. He concluded by noting how Kilham's emphasis on girl-child education and the stress on learning in the mother tongue yielded fruits and were adopted by other agencies.

In his paper, *Confidence Worlanyo Bansah* discusses religion as a moral force in national development. He observes that religion as a phenomenon does not hamper development. It is its misuse that projects it as a tool of aggression, violence and destruction. The author argues for religion as the most powerful actor in civil society within the Ghanaian context.

The sixth and seventh articles discuss mission and spirituality respectively. **Paul Kang-Ewala Diboro** studies the spread of Christianity in Northern Ghana, particularly among the Dagaaba, through the *White Fathers*, a Catholic Missionary Society. He draws attention to important missionary strategies that were employed, some crucial missiological issues that emerged from his analysis of data, and the implications for contemporary churches in Ghana.

Doris E. Yalley, in her article examines Ghanaian Methodist spirituality in the context of contemporary praxis. According to her, empirical data on the Methodist Church Ghana's (MCG) prayer centres reveals a blend of the historical Wesleyan Tradition patterns of worship, the Pentecostal and Neo-Charismatic patterns, with a tinge of Ghanaian Indigenous cultural practices.

Finally, I wish to dedicate this issue to two deceased colleagues: Rev. Prof. Elom Dovlo, Dept for the Study of Religions, University of Ghana, Legon and Rev. Dr. Joseph Quayesi-Amakye, Faculty of Theology and Mission, Pentecost University College, Sowutuom, who published articles in GJRT Vol 7 (1) 2017.

May their souls rest in perfect peace! Amen.

George Ossom-Batsa