AN INSTRUMENT OF REVIVAL: The Story of Joseph Ayo BABALOLA, the first Apostle and General Evangelist of the Christ Apostolic Church

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DEDICATION

To my own Hero, Lord, Friend and Master, The Lord Jesus Christ, the Beginning and the Beginningless, the Lord and Creator of creation; the Source of my imagination and the Fountain which inspires my creativity.

ABSTRACT

Joseph Ayo Babalola was the first Apostle and General Evangelist of CAC and he's believed by the generality of Nigerians to be the founder of CAC. Born in 1904 at Odo-Owa in Kwara State he was the instrument of the Great Revival of 1930 which gave birth to CAC and The Apostolic Church. This study will unearth the real personality of this unusual prophet- his mysterious birth, unusual childhood, backgrounds, chequered educational career, call to ministry, his stormy marriage, the process of his spiritual empowerment, his miracles and wonderful ministry and his death in July 1959. This study will also examine his character, compassion, humility, love, theology and even his personal records including his written works consisting his prayers, prophecies, warnings etc.

This study promises to bring to light many hidden details about Babalola that are still largely beyond the public domain using written and oral sources based on several interviews spanning fifteen years with most of the closest persons to him in his lifetime including children, younger sisters, personal assistants, pastors etc.

Introduction/ Justification of Study

There has been great interest in recent times in religious biographies arising naturally from the interest fostered by psychology of religion and mysticism. The fields of mysticism and spiritual phenomena are beginning to attract the attention and loving interest of the modern age.

The Aladura Movement, a strand of African Prophetic Movement, first appeared on the religious landscape of Africa (specifically in Western Nigeria) around the second decade of the twentieth century, a movement which, with its vigorous prayer/ prophetic revivalism and healings, foreran and laid the foundation for the Pentecostal-evangelical movement of the present day in Nigeria. Although the Aladura Movement, and the churches which resulted from it, has been the subject of much scholarly study, research and publications (e.g., Turner, 1967; Peel, 1968; Ayandele, 1970; Mitchel, 1970; Omoyajowo 1970, 1971,1982; Olayiwola, 1980; Oshun 1981,1988; Agbaje, 1985; Akinwumi, 1985, Ademowo, 2000; Fatokun, 2005)[2] the same cannot be said of the founding figures, the pioneers or generals, of that Movement.[3] Except in the last couple of years when with the release of certain publications to public domain which have brought out information about some of the prophetic figures of this Movement. Even now little or nothing is still known about J. A. Shadare, Sophia Ajayi (nee Odunlami) John Babatope, D.O. Odubanjo, Omotunde, Peter Olatunji etc

In order to understand a religious movement it is essential to know ''the mode of their founding and the character of the founding personalities.''(Ayandele 1970) Professor William James in his immortal classic on psychology of religion *The Varieties of Religious Experience* has noted that ''religion must be studied in those individuals in whom it is manifested to an extra-normal degree.''(1958:49) In other words to understand a particular facet of religious expression and phenomenon it is essential to also visit the lives of those men and women with a

genius for religion, men who are religion's most successful exponents. It is my considered belief that to fully understand the Aladura Christianity and even the modern-day Pentecostalism in Nigeria - in its derailment from the original core and essentials of Apostolic Christianity- we need to look carefully at the lives of those prophet figures and founding fathers of the Aladura Movement. It is against this backdrop that in this study we shall look at the life of one of the notable figures of the Aladura Movement, Joseph Ayo Babalola a man that has been acclaimed by Professor Turner as ''the central and the most famous figure in the whole Aladura Moement.''(Turner 1970:16)

The Babalola Factor in Nigerian Evangelism

'' Joseph Babalola has been able to accomplish more in six weeks than the Anglican Church has been able to do in sixty years.''[4]

That was Christina Matthews, a CMS missionary in Africa and a native of New Jersey who witnessed Babalola's work at Ikare, one of the four major revival centres of 1930. Matthews' comment made at the peak of the Revival of 1930 and published in *The Morning Post* which was also reprinted in *The Christian Herald* of October 1932 underscores the enormity of the Revival, its considerable historical significance, the results and impact of that revival on the religious, political, educational and social planes and its role in ushering Nigerians to a new awareness of God and laying the foundation for Pentecostalism in Nigeria. Much more, it situates the paramount place of Joseph Ayo Babalola in the growth and development of Nigerian evangelism.

The Great Revival of 1930 shook Nigeria's social, economic, cultural and religious structures to its foundations. Close to 2million people[5] witnessed the Revival in Ilesha both from within and without the country for the 7 weeks in which the Revival was ongoing aside from other major centres at Efon, Ikare and even Ibadan. Two main Apostolic Churches- Christ Apostolic Church and The Apostolic Church- sprang from that Revival each of which presently controls millions of members. From these two main churches sprang the Gospel Apostolic Church, African Apostolic Church, Christ Gospel Apostolic Church, Aladura Apostolic Church, Saviours Apostolic Church and most of the modern pentecostalist and neo-pentecostalist groups and formations that presently dot the Nigeria's religious landscape. If the Great Revival was the earthquake that shook Nigeria then, under God, Babalola was the epicentre of that earthquake.

Under God, Babalola might have done more for the cause of Nigerian evangelism than any other person living or dead. On many churches, billboards and posters today in the Southwest you would see Babalola's portrait hanging side by side with that of the pastor or even alone; on the lips of most Yoruba Nigerians today you may hear the expression ''Olorun Ayo Babalola'' *God of Ayo Babalola* in prayer... All these restate the Babalola phenomenon or factor in Nigeria as being beyond his place and beyond his time, a model that most people aspire to be, a saint whose intercessory mediation a supplicant so badly needs. It is thus a fitting tribute to the memory of Babalola not only as an academic exercise but also as a spiritual exercise to examine the life and times of this unusual man and bring him to the front burner of popular religious discourse and reckoning.

Origins

About 60 km to Ilorin the capital of Kwara State and the then Ilorin Province lies a small farming Ekiti settlement in the present Ekiti Local Government of Kwara State. The name of this town is called Odo- Owa and almost adjoining it is another town called Iloffa both of which share the same cultural and linguistic affinities. Most people in these villages were into agriculture from the earliest times. Around the turn of the 19th century and the beginning of the early 20th century when the story in this narrative occurred, most of these people- more than 80 percent at least- were farmers.

Among these farming folks of the town a couple stood out from the rest. Among the common run of the men of this small town was an elderly man from Ikotun Quarters, whose integrity, honesty and humility were beyond denials and whose religiosity and God-fearing characteristics placed him in a class by himself. He was the patron of the only church in the town, the St. Peter's Anglican Church at Ilofa and he would be the instrument of the establishment of the church in Odo- Owa his hometown and 16 other villages and towns[6](which incidentally, include the author's hometown) in the area namely- Omu-Aran, Otun, Oke-Opin, Obo, Oke-Onigbin, Isanlu-Isin, Aran Orin, Ekan, Aye- Ekan, Osi, Isapa, Oko, Oro-Ago, Edidi, Oro and Ora. The name of this Godly man is Pa David Lawani Rotimi and the name of his wife is Madam Martha Talabi Rotimi. Both of them were wedded in the Christian way in the Anglican Church. These were the parents of Joseph Babalola, the object of our investigation.

Mysterious Birth and Childhood

According to parental testimony the birth of Babalola was preceded by unusual and unexplainable incidents the same trail that would heavily characterize his entire life. Few months to his birth Madam Martha Rotimi contracted a small pox epidemic ravaging the countryside then. She was then relocated to the farm for treatment. The name of this forest is *Igbo Niyun.*(Pleasant Forest) While in this farm one day something happened which would have been difficult to believe but for the fact that it was given by the woman herself.[7] It was in the dry season and someone set fire on the bush leading to a big conflagration which began to consume the bush surrounding the hut where the woman was staying. Luckily her husband David Rotimi was also present when this was happening. There was no way of escape and the end seemed imminent. This made the husband to lament: *We are in trouble. We did not die of small pox epidemic in the town but we will now perish through this strange fire.*[8] Meanwhile animals of different shape and kind began moving towards them ostensibly to escape the fire but they stopped just before reaching them. ''All the animals stopped within fifty feet radius of where we were; and we were looking at them from a distance.''[9]

While they waited for the end something dramatic happened. Without any external effort or push the fire started going down and ultimately quenched. It then made a rainbow-like patch round about them. As soon as the fire totally quenched the beasts began to go one after the other without harming any of them.

Three months later on 25th April 1904 she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. His birth was, according to the mother, accompanied by a portentous elemental vibrations,[10] as they heard the sound of mighty thunder from above which reverberated from the East to the West and shaking of the firmament.[11] Seven days later he was named Joseph Ayo Babalola, a name that would go with him and distinguish him from every member of the family as the only child who would not bear the Rotimi family name. At the naming ceremony which followed

there was, it is said, an abundant provision of bush meat to hunters who marvelled at the way it was easy to catch the games.[12]

The signs of God's call were already on him from childhood and the parents observed these. He was unusual. His younger sister remembers in an interview:

He would say certain things that were clearly above the wisdom and imagination of anyone of his age. Even when playing with other children, he would sometimes behave unusually and his parents observed all these things and kept them in their hearts.[13]

When little Ayo was 3years something strange again happened which the father spoke about. He was found one day looking intently at the sky with concentration and loving admiration. Concerned and surprised the mother asked him what he was looking at so intently.

''Can't you see what I'm seeing?''

''I can't see anything.''

''I'm looking at the King of Glory.''[14]

Also at the age of 7 years he was offered a piece of meat that had been sacrificed to idol by the grandmother, an item which she had brought from an idolatrous ceremony. But Babalola rejected it with a resounding rebuke to the old woman: ''Mama ye jebo yeye'' (Grandma, stop eating sacrifices)[15] That resulted in the old woman becoming a Christian before her death. All these were the first evidences of an apostle in the making, a carrier of God's supernatural power.

He was a different breed. Even when with other children he was distinct. As another family member remembers, ''He was not an ordinary child. He was unusual, Godly and meek.''[16]

Educational and Vocational Training [17]

On January 18th 1918, the very year of the terrible Influenza epidemic Babalola left Odo-Owa for Lagos with his uncle Mr. Moses Rotimi a catechist of the Anglican Church then working at Oto near Badagry. He was already 14years old and yet without any education whatsoever. This was the main reason for his leaving home. For reasons that are situated in history virtually all the education programme and schools were under the mission and voluntary agency until the first decade of the twentieth century. Since the school was part of the mission's tool for evangelization the mission schools were widespread while the government schools were few and concentrated in the urban centres and far in between when they started. It is not surprising then that he attended mission school.

He first began his education in Aworiland where his brother was stationed for a period before, on the transfer of his uncle, he moved to Lagos. He was again enrolled at Methodist School Ago-Ajaye at Ebutte- Metta in1921 where he would complete two sessions before withdrawing again in 1924. They moved to Oshogbo that same year and after a period he was again enrolled at M.C.S. School in the town. It was here he stayed to read up to Standard Five (Nigeria Reader Five) before he finally dropped out to learn a trade. His first trial was to learn blacksmithing which he had mastered after a short time. But on the completion of his apprenticeship he had no money to buy the equipment; hence he began to work in a Hospital trying to raise the money.

It was around this period he landed one of the biggest breakthroughs in life when he secured a job with Public Works Department as a roller driver. As a hardworking man this job perfectly suited his personal characteristics. And the pay of £4 per month was not bad for someone who did not complete a Standard Six. As a matter of fact that was a lot of money that time even by his own

admission. The Public Works was the Colonial creation assigned with the construction and maintenance of public facilities especially roads. At the time Babalola joined them they were working on Akure- Ilesha Road. Having known something about fabrication it was not difficult for him to master the roller and within a short time he had his own gang and began to handle job to the satisfaction of his European supervisor, one Mr. Ferguson. This was 1928.

The Encounter and the Call

In September 1928 they were on this road construction proceeding from Owena, Igbara-Oke moving towards Arakeji. Around this time he received an order from his supervisor to be prepared to proceed to Ilesha for the repairs of township roads. But as he was about to move a heavy rain began forcing him to suspend the journey that day. On his way just around Arakeji the roller he was working with stopped suddenly and refused to function. He examined the roller but found no fault whatsoever with it.

''This roller was examined by both the blacks and whites who knew about the operation and repairs of the roller and no one could find any fault or problem with the roller. And truly there was nothing wrong with the roller but it refused to work and neither would it move.''[18]

Before this time something had been happening in his personal life which was rather unusual. Two weeks before the incident recounted above he had been experiencing a state of rapture, ecstasy and even animation. For about two weeks he could not sleep except to read the Bible especially the Psalms. This was not all. He also became unusually joyous and in rapture for no visible reason. In view of the deep mystical significance of this incident to the events that would soon follow and even the events preceding it I will present it in his own words.

'' On the 25 of September (1928) it so happened that I could not sleep for a whole week both night and day. My spirit was rejoicing and joyous and I read from night till morning. The book I was reading was the Bible and the portion that engaged my attention was the Psalms (Chapters 1- 150) which I read every night. I did not feel sleepy neither did I feel sick.''[19]

This was the priming of the pump. It was the very reason why his roller refused to work without any mechanical fault. He was being disconnected from the earthly realm to another realm. Like the Moses' Burning Bush which was burning but not consumed to arrest the attention of a wandering shepherd, Babalola's focus and attention were being shifted to another realm. Christian theology teaches prevenient grace, according to Scleimarcher, which holds that before a person can seek God, God must have first sought the person. By reading 150 chapters of Psalms continuously every night shows that his soul was already being worked upon by the Almighty and his days of inwardness had begun.

Two weeks later, specifically on the 9th of October of that same year history changed. As he was about to retire that very day around 12noon just about 50metres to where we now gather, the Heavens opened and a voice spoke like it did to Moses at the Burning Bush and Saul on the way to Damascus. In view of the considerable historical significance of this event to Nigeria's Pentecostal/evangelical historiography I will also allow him to tell this aspect of the story in his own words:

''On the 9th October I was still at the site of the roller that had refused to work. At about 12 noon I heard a voice, a mighty voice whose sound was like that of

10, 000 thunders and calling my name saying, 'Joseph! Joseph!! Joseph!!!leave this work you are doing, if you don't leave this work this year, this year, I mean this very year you shall be cut off from the land of the living.' This happened three times consecutively but I did not bother I was only concerned with getting the roller to function.''[20]

Not recognizing what was happening he went on as before. But things would never again be the same. Two days later on the 11th October 1928 the same event repeated itself. The voice added this time that if he did not leave the work, the roller would never move again forever. Surprised and concerned with that statement he shouted back,''*Who are you calling me and which work do you have for me to do.''* [21]

Strange as it may seem there were many people there that day but they didn't hear the voice that Babalola claimed to have heard. He had about 50 people, workers under him and they all denied knowledge of hearing the voice when he confronted them. In fact they asked him who he was speaking with. Finally he left the job and went home to Ipetu- Ijesha where he was putting up.

As soon as he entered the house the voice asked him whether he was willing to know who was speaking with him at the site. He was told to proceed on a 4-day fast without food. On the fourth day the voice directed him to add another 3-day to the fast before eating and he did so. Then the secret was made plain to him and he knew that it was the Lord that was speaking to him.

''...In the mid-night of the seventh day ending the fast the Lord appeared to me physically and it was then I knew it was the Lord that had been speaking with me.

''The first thing he asked me was whether I want to eat to which I replied in the affirmative. I had been asleep but he woke me and asked me to stand and I stood with great fear and trepidation to such an extent that I was naked. The lamp had been put off when I wanted to sleep notwithstanding the whole room was lighted with such intensity of illumination and brightness as of that supplied by ten suns in its strength.

''Jesus Christ stood before me in sparkling white garment touching the ground but He did not say a thing. But there was another being standing who was so tall that his head reached the sky who was talking to me. He told me that Jesus Christ standing here was the One who gave him the mandate to come and call me and to talk to me.'' [22]

He was given some signs. Thereafter the other being gave him half a tuber of yam to eat which he ate without delay. The angel told him that with that ration he fed the world in a given year. This was probably the key to his super human energy, capacity and resilience that made him to go on 40-day fast without food, work for days at a stretch without any sign of fatigue or stress, pray continuously for days without ceasing and without strain, as we shall see later in this story.

The Apostolic Commission

After he was shown some secrets and many other things which he has also recounted in his autobiography the stage was set for the real thing- the apostolic commission. The Lord gave him a sign of a lamp with three wicks. Thereafter he was given three symbolic gifts: a handbell, an iron staff and a bottle of water. This again reminds us of Moses OrimoladeTunolase who was also, at his call, given three symbolic gifts namely- the crown, the tatsel and the staff.[23]

The three gifts were explained to Babalola. The bell is to call people to prayer, to bring the angels of God down to his meetings and to drive evil forces away.

The iron staff represents the apostolic authority to subdue evil forces- the malevolent powers that were holding the people in bondage, the very people he was being sent for their liberation based on Psalm 2. This staff would come into display two years later when at the Great Revival at Oke- Ooye, Ilesha Babalola took on the powers and principalities, the heathen gods that had received years of unchallenged superstitious veneration, obeisance and worship of the people; for divine judgement. (By the way, where is the staff of Babalola, the one he used at Oke-Ooye which eyewitnesses and even journalists spoke and wrote about? The C& S still keeps custody of Orimolade's staff; can CAC please tell us where Babalola's staff is?) The third gift was the most symbolic. A bottle of water was given him by the Lord for the healing of all sicknesses and all diseases.

The Lord made it clear to him that He does not want His people to use medicine both good and bad be it orthodox or unorthodox but to rely and trust His atonement on the Cross. This was the root of Divine healing in Apostolic Churches. The Lord also reminded the young apostle to warn the people not to be like Saul who obeyed the Lord deceitfully concerning Amalek by destroying the vile and the refuse and sparing the good and the precious for himself. Believers were to renounce all medicines be it good or bad, whether orthodox or unorthodox, foreign or local. This commission to heal is the origin of the Doctrine of Divine healing in Babalola's ministry and the resulting Christ Apostolic Church. This is why Babalola has been called the apostle of divine healing and why this doctrine has been so crucial and decisive in the religious and salvation history of the Apostolic Communion in general and, until lately, CAC in particular. It is significant to note that Babalola came to the understanding of the doctrine of divine healing by a revelation of God and not through foreign mediation or by American gospel literature like Odubanjo, Shadare and other leaders of the Faith Tabernacle. C. R. Myers an early missionary and an eyewitness of this early events was right on target when he said about Babalola :

It Is remarkable to see that God revealed to this man the ministry of healing without ever having heard of it from anyone before. In fact if he had been taught anything no doubt he had been taught that God has given us the doctors and medicines. We should note how true to God's Word are his revelations along this line. [24]

The Three Palm Fronds

While they were repairing the roller he had cut three palm fronds from the palm tree to use as shield from the sun. These fronds were cut the same time and on the same day. He was directed to go to the same spot after the visitation- more than a week later- to see the palm fronds. When Babalola got there it was a shock to discover that the first had totally dried off, the second was partially dried and the third was still as fresh as the ones on the palm tree. This was a sign and a message to him and to the world: *Those who refuse to heed the message of God with which he has been sent would dry like the first frond, those who receive the message with deceitfulness or partially shall be as the second frond that was partially dried. But those who accept the message, the apostolic commission that he had come to herald would be as evergreen and fresh as the third frond.*[25]

All these were still like mysteries to him and he still did not understand everything. The Anglican Church where he had been brought up had never

taught anything as profound and dramatic as these like a person having a direct encounter with Jesus Christ and hearing an audible voice. The whole things still look like a dream to him. In a letter he wrote to his father in Odo-Owa at this time he chronicled all these events and how a voice had been speaking to him; asked for his father's prayers.[26]

The Quest for Spiritual Power

The 7- day fast had only fetched him the visitation and the assignment but not the power to back up the work, just like the Lord telling his disciples to wait in Jerusalem till they be endued with power from on high. Babalola therefore continued seeking the face of God for the power of the Holy Ghost to prosecute his apostolic commission.

He was still resident in Ipetu at this time putting up with a friend called Paul Fatoyinbo whom he had met while schooling at Ifo. The parents of Paul had become worried when Babalola refused to eat for days in obedience to the voice. Not knowing his relations or even his hometown they were afraid of the law should anything happened to their guest. However, there was a prophet a native of this town, the first major prophet in Ijeshaland, whose name is Joseph Fapohunda who was a cocoa produce buyer before he heard the call of God in 1926. This man operated a fellowship in his house for farmers and the Hand of the Lord was upon him. It was to him Babalola was referred when he too began with his visionary elements. Babalola joined them fully and continued his prayers and fasting on the Ileshi forest. On every meeting and fellowship days prayers would be offered for him. During this time he would not eat anything cooked by a woman or even by anyone for that matter. He ate only fruits and water which farmers readily brought for him from the farm.[27] He continually frequented the mountain for prayer asking for the empowerment of the spirit, the very dimension that made the early apostles to be successful in a world that was openly hostile to their message.

On a certain day however Babalola received what he had been requesting: the baptism of the Holy Spirit. His experience that day was similar to what the apostles had at the Upper Room. I will allow a woman, the daughter of this prophet- who witnessed this incident to tell this aspect of the story:

''Usually Babalola was not the talking type, he was the quiet type. He was there as a stranger and nobody knew him or where he came from. He was a naturally quiet person. But on that day something came upon him in prayer and he shouted. As he prayed his voice grew louder and he roared like a lion and people far and near outside the house could hear his voice. The whole house shook as he prayed. We knew then that a power, the Holy Spirit had come upon him.

''He began to prophesy. He told my father that he was going to have a male child (which came to pass shortly thereafter). He also said God had sent him to his hometown to go and warn the people. We knew then that the Holy Ghost had come upon him.''[28]

The next thing Babalola did was to give this fellowship hi s entire savings of 14pounds, which he had been able to gather as a roller driver, for them to put up a structure. This reminds us of Evan Roberts, the leader of the Welsh Revival who also gave his entire savings to Moriah Chapel towards the commencement of the revival. The lives of Babalola and Evan Roberts share so many similarities.[29]

From this moment onward, a dimension entered his life and ministry. Wherever he was going the Voice would tell him what to do and where to go and when.

In all the towns where I was sent the Voice would teach me to tell the people to desist from the use of herbs and all native medicines but to trust in the Lord for their healing. and the Voice would instruct me to tell the sick to go home because the Lord has healed him/her; and after one or two days the sick person would return to tell me that he has recovered.[30]

The Patron's Son Has Gone Mad

The first of Babalola's early ministry was to his hometown in Iloffa and Odo-Owa where he was directed to warn the people from idolatry and fetish. The Lord also warned that if they didn't repent He would have to send evil beasts into their midst to devour them within 45 days of his proclamation. He was also to go to the town under special direction. He was to go naked covering only his private parts, rub ashes on his face and body and covered with palm fronds. He was to go with a handbell which he would ring the moment he entered the town.

By a string of coincidence Babalola entered the town on the market day when the whole town was full of people. The moment he entered he began ringing the bell and proclaiming the judgement that would come within 45days if they didn't repent. The moment they set eyes on him they fled everywhere.

The entire town was moved and there was great stir and consternation as people fled when they saw me. The moment they set eyes on me they fled. The Voice told me to ring the bell in my hand round the town and I obeyed...[31]

As the people fled some of the natives who knew him shouted, ''Ha! Omo Baba Egbe tiya were''[32](I,e *the Patron's son has run mad*, since his father was the patron of CMS church in the town)

But the people rebelled against the message of the young prophet. Rather than to repent they mounted persecution against the messenger and his immediate family resident in the town. They armed themselves with their bow, arrows and firearms awaiting the evil beasts that were coming to their town. For this reason Babalola told them that beasts would no longer come to them again but a plague which would render their arms irrelevant and this plague would begin within few days from then. Truly at the expiration of the 45 days a small pox epidemic broke out in the town and within three weeks about three hundred people had died. An eyewitness of these events who was residing in the town at this time told me:

''The effect was disastrous in the town. Some people lost three children. Many people died due to the plague because they refused to repent and turn away from fetish. The heir to the throne also died that year due to the plague. So disastrous was the effect of the plague.'' [33]

In the meantime a company of people began to come to him for prayers. Others who were afflicted by the plague also came to ask for prayers for healing. Babalola began to sanctify water for them for their healing with tremendous result. His ministry began to take shape as a group began to crystallize around him as they worshipped together in the Anglican Church. Soon a revival began in the Anglican Church and Babalola began to go out for early morning preaching and open-air crusade in the centre of the town although a wave of persecution also began against the revivalist and the supporters of the new movement. Soon they were forced out of the Anglican Church and they had to move to the house of a member. It is here, it is said, that the people first began to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit on a large scale with the initial evidence of speaking in tongues.

At this time he began to go to places and other towns to preach deliverance to the captives and to heal the sick. The voice would tell him which town to go and what to do there. And the voice would tell him to heal all the sick in the town and to warn the people to desist from all fetish and works of darkness.[34]

Meeting With the Nigerian Faith Tabernacle

In 1918 the world was plagued with the terrible Influenza epidemic which killed millions of people all over the world. Nigeria was particularly affected by this epidemic and the Southwest, due to his proximity to the coast, was most affected which led to the death of 250,000 people in the region of the southwest alone. A newspaper captured the enormity of this disaster:

Lagos has passed through terrible times these last two or three weeks. It is like a veritable city of the dead. [35]

Another paper noted that on virtually every house in Ogere there could be heard the groan and lamentations of grieving families.[36] In the midst of this calamity a nineteen year-old educated girl named Sophia Odunlami (later Ajayi) from Isonyin, 4 miles from Ijebu-Ode who had also been smitten slightly by the epidemic and was recuperating in her room where she began to hear voices of inspiration from the Holy Spirit, as she claimed. She ''began to proclaim that anyone who contracted the plague would die if they trusted in the power of medicines, and would be healed if they relied only upon water from the rain that she prophesied would fall.''(Turner 1971: 9)

Joseph B. Shadare was a leader of the St. Saviour's Anglican Church in Ijebu- Ode at the time of the epidemic and had, prior to that time, established a group within the church for prayers based on a dream shown them. This group called the Precious Stone Society had its prayer meetings on both Sunday after service and on Monday evenings. At the time of the epidemic when government had to shut all public places to control the epidemic, it became the only bulwark of resistance and spiritual fortification for members as the vicar, Rev. Gansallo had returned to his hometown. Joined with Sophia this group began to offer prayers and preach healing without medical aids or other means. With time they got in touch with another native based in Lagos named David Ogunleye Odubanjo who, had come in contact with the American Faith Tabernacle based in Philadelphia through its magazine *The Sword of the Spirit* which he had been receiving. This became the only source of literature other than the Bible by this group who had affiliated with Philadelphia by 1921 and was submitting to its leader, one Pastor Ambrose Clark. The Nigerian Faith Tabernacle had its first meeting on January 22, 1922 having been expelled from the Anglican Church. Soon other chapters of this fellowship sprang up in other parts of Nigeria. By July 1930 there were a total of about 15 chapters scattered throughout Nigeria, in Jos, Zaria, Kaduna, Kano, Oyan, Ibadan, Abeokuta, Ilesa, ife, Benin, Makurdi, Offa, Ijebu-Ode and Lagos.[36]

What kind of fellowship or sect was the Faith Tabernacle in its early days? Professor Peel, a sociologist who interviewed most of the early figures in their lifetime, noted in his work on the character of this movement:

Faith Tabernacle in its outlook to the world was a classic sect. personal sanctity was the goal of the sect, and a very sharp contrast was drawn between the wickedness of the world, and the godly community of the sect. (Peel 1968: 64)

And Professor Chris Oshun, a church historian who had also interviewed most of the surviving members noted on the spiritual outlook of the church:

The Faith Tabernacle as a church was given to effective prayer, prophetic ministry, biblical faith, ethical rigorism, adult baptism, divine healing and Christian fellowship, but was uncompromising over the issue of infant baptism. (Oshun 2000:6)

The Faith Tabernacle indeed was a classic sect and a puritanical group. Its rules and prohibitions clearly show that.

About half their rules covered behaviour and attitudes which would be considered as prohibited for Christians in any part of the world: adultery, envy, polygyny, bribery, hatred, and so forth. Eight more involved traditional practices, some of which were already proscribed by the mission churches- such as sacrifices and going to babalawos for divination. Others involved prohibitions peculiar to the Diamond Society, such as the rule against participating in so called '' contributions societies.'' Twelve of the rules were puritanical, defining as immoral dancing and drumming, debt, drinking, cigarettes, cards, gambling,'' interest in money,'' not keeping the Sabbath, too much ornament,'' and chewing kola nuts. Finally there were rules against the use of medicine and getting into company with non-Christians.'' (Mitchell 1970: 446)

This was the movement that Babalola, the object of our investigation, would join in 1929 since he was not interested in founding a movement. About 800 members belonged to the Faith Tabernacle in 1930. One of these was Daniel Ajibola, a native of Iloffa based in Ibadan who had intimated the leadership of the FT in Ibadan and Lagos about Babalola's activities and exploits. This report caused the leadership of the FT to invite Babalola for a visit in Lagos since they had been praying for revival for some time. This was in 1929.

The Visit to Lagos

In 1929 Babalola made a trip to Lagos, the first of what would turn out to be several in his lifetime, to honour an invitation of the Faith Tabernacle and to explore the spiritual terrain of Lagos to see which church he could join having then been excommunicated from the Anglican Church by Bishop Smith of the Northern Diocese. The two chapters of FT in Lagos and Ebutte-meta hosted him at their headquarters in Lagos. He began his address to this fellowship and, it is said, spoke continuously for six hours[37] without a pause or interruption, of the experiences he'd had in ministry and the good Hands of God upon him. Various works of healings were brought to him with compelling results following.

An early account by an eyewitness of this meeting noted the impact of that visit on the religious behaviour of this group:

The news of Prophet Joseph Babalola got to Lagos and we sent to him to visit us. The whole of Lagos and Ebutte-meta shook when he came. He preached a wonderful sermon that thrilled the heart to us. Several works of healing were brought to him when he was here and the Lord stretched forth His hands to heal many people from various churches. Since the days of the apostles, we have not seen such a manifestation full of great wonders of the power of God like this in any land. (Idowu 2007:56, 57)

Before leaving Lagos he felt led to join the fellowship as a member and was baptised by immersion by Pastor Shadare the leader of the church, and not by Odubanjo as wrongly asserted by some writers. J. A. Medaiyese who would become one of the closest persons to him in his lifetime, was mandated to go with him to Iloffa to assess his works and report back to the leadership.

The Delegates Conference

In the meantime the FT itself was going through some crises internally- the most serious being doctrinal crisis. Because all its pastors were appointed by proxy independent of each other from Philadelphia and there was no uniform rule of belief for all, except for divine healing which seems to be the attracting and unifying or cementing element for all, there was room for each leader to use his own discretion especially in those areas where African culture come into play. Is polygamy wrong? Should polygamists be denied the sacrament of baptism or the Lord's Supper? What kind of church government is acceptable? Should other chapters of FT in Nigeria take orders from the Lagos or Ijebu-Ode or from their own local pastors? These were some of the questions that bothered some of the chapters and which would soon boiled over in Ilesha Area where the presiding pastor, John Babatope was already at loggerheads with the chapter at Oyan. The Oyan chapter of FT had already petitioned the leadership at Ijebu-Ode and Lagos against Babatope. It was this crisis the leadership came to settle when they decided to have a Delegates Meeting in Ilesha involving all the leaders of FT in Nigeria which was slated for the second week of July, 1930.

It was this Conference that brought the leaders of this movement to Ilesha from their different localities. Babalola on the first week of July had gone to Ibadan on his way to Lagos again where he tried to inquire about the doctrines of the new church to brief his members at Iloffa. Since the Conference was slated for the following week, the Lagos leaders urged him to wait for them at Ibadan to accompany them to Ilesha on their way. Thus on the 11th July Babalola in company with Akinyele and the Ibadan delegates arrived in Ilesha to the warm reception of the host, Pastor Babatope.

The next day the meeting commenced and Babalola was reported to have first addressed the delegates for 3hours.(Oshun 1981) There were up to 24 items on the agenda slated for discussion at the Conference, the first having to do with the propriety of baptizing polygamists and the second deals with divine healing, whether we can use means or not.

Babalola had visited Osogbo that day to respond to the call to minister to one Mr. Williams an employee of McIver's shop who had been sick based on Abraham Omotosho's eyewitness account.[38] He returned to Ilesha the following day (July 12) where he also ministered to one Mr. Dick Taiwo who had been suffering constant nocturnal torturing from witches and who received complete deliverance after Babalola had prayed for him. (Oshun1981: 111)

The Great Wave Erupts

The high water mark of Aladura Apostolic Christianity in the early days was the great revival of 1930, the definitive beginning of modern apostolic Pentecostalism in Nigeria. The crown of Babalola's lifework and career was the revival at Oke-Ooye in July 1930. The real trigger which sparked the revival of 1930 however was the resuscitation of a 10-year old boy named John Obi Ogundipe who had died a day before his corpse was brought to Oke-Ooye to Babalola who had began to gain reputation as a healing prophet residing at Oke-Ooye. Seven herbalists had been called when he died to try to resuscitate him to no avail.[39] Babalola prayed on this corpse and poured water from his handbell on the boy and called his name. Obi then came to life, a thing that shocked many eyewitnesses who saw it. People erupted into spontaneous singing:[40]

Omi lofi se' wosan (2x
Oku ale anad'alaye
Omi lofi se wosan

He uses water to heal (2x
The corpse of yesternight he's made alive
He uses water to heal

Seventy years later in 2000A.D Obi Ogundipe would recount the account of his resuscitation from death in a Church service at his 80th birthday anniversary which was recorded on tape, a copy of which is in the possession of the author. This man would later die in 2002 at the age of 82.

This news travelled far and wide and before the week was over crowds began to troop to Ilesha to meet the prophet. This was the beginning of what has been called the Great Oke- Ooye Revival- the origin of both the Christ Apostolic Church and The Apostolic Church in Nigeria. This was also the beginning and origin of modern Pentecostalism in Nigeria as many people received the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the usual evidence of speaking in tongues for the very first time. Some received the gift of prophecy and a call to ministry. In the course of this research I've met a number of old pastors[41] who traced their Pentecostal experience to Oke-Ooye and to the Great Revival. [42]

There were healings and deliverances of the scale that would shock. Diseases and afflictions of long time were cured during the revival sessions which were held both morning and evening. Some of these were detailed in the newspapers. Virtually all the newspapers featured stories on the revival showing that at a point it became a national event. There were confessions too by witches of the terrible things they'd done. Some of them repented thereafter and were delivered. Others died.

The Colonial reports in the archive from 1930 to 1945 featured this revival; and have something to say about Joseph Babalola, the instrument of the revival. As a proof that the revival attained national prominence and Joseph Babalola, a national fame, the Acting Governor of Nigeria, George Hemmant Esq. C.M.G. made mention of his work in his address to the Legislative Council in 1930:

During October, the Aladura (a prophet from Ilesha) came to Efon in the Ekiti Division where he was believed to have raised people from the dead and cured many of blindness and lameness. He appears to be a religious revivalist who preaches the advent and has done nothing so far to disturb the people of the countryside. Joseph Babalola (an ex-PWD steam roller driver) a faith healer announced his arrival at Ife in July since when he has visited Ilesha, Awe (near Oyo) and Oshogbo. He is reputed to effect wonderful cures and the people, especially women have flocked to him. He accepts no money and appears perfectly sincere in his intentions... [43]

Also *The Daily Times* the most prestigious paper of the period in its August 26th 1930 edition noted on this revival with a sensational caption, *A Messiah in Ilesha:*

A 'Prophet is said to have put up appearance at Ilesha, whose power of healing by prayer has been testified 'by many who have been healed.. Two well-known figures at Ibadan who have nearly lost their sights have completely recovered, pilgrims mostly consisting of lames, blinds, deaf, and other kinds of invalids are crossing to Ilesha every day by motors (sic) *to receive this wonderful healing.*

This testimonial by the head of government himself and the most prestigious newspaper of the era are proofs of the importance of Babalola as a public benefactor, a foremost revivalist and evangelical pioneer.

By the end of August, 1930 Babalola left Ilesha to spread the revival to other parts of the nation beginning from his hometown in Iloffa. A month later another mighty revival would erupt in Efon-Alaaye the town he would make his personal

home and permanent base for the rest of his life. Another major revival would erupt in Ikare in November that year which would touch the farther regions of the North. The scale and scope of this revival, its mode and methods, the characteristics of the revival and the factors which aided and hindered the revival as well as the impact of the revival on the social, political and economic realms of Nigeria are the subject of another paper and have been well documented in a publication now within public domain; as such it is outside the scope of this paper.

The Rise of Persecution and Babalola's Imprisonment

As the revival entered its second phase in March 1931 a new attitude emerged from the colonial government. The Resident of Oyo Province who had ''set his face against new conception of religion... not under the control of responsible authorities had sent circulars to all his D.O. to take steps to stamp out the Movement.''[44] Thus the Colonial officers, the traditional institution and the mission church which had been sympathetic to the revival in its early days began to openly work against the revival. The moment it became clear to the mission church that the Aladuras too were planning of establishing a separate church they ceased to cooperate with the revival and began to openly magnify some of the critical shortcomings of the revival and to urge the colonial officials to proscribe the movement. This became the beginning of troubles for the Aladura and especially the revivalists who were summoned several times before District Officers, tried in the open court, detained and harassed by the government.

This persecution also took the form of denial as Aladuras were denied land grants to erect places of worship and where properties were granted they were usually in remote places or rejected territory and forbidden forests where, spirits and corpses of wicked people were usually buried. Their children were denied admissions into mission schools and those already there were expelled. The worst however was the attack on the Aladura leaders which followed. Thus in April 1932 Babalola was arrested and tried in Benin for, supposedly, ''participating in witch-testing ordeals''[45] and sentenced to six month imprisonment in Benin prison. In another work[46] I have shown with detailed archival sources and considerable textual attestations that the charge against Babalola, his trial and conviction were pre-planned, stage-managed, false and fraudulent; and a manipulation by the colonial government to strike at the ''big man of the movement'' and, probably, to prepare the Aladura Movement for a foreign take over.

In the meantime Babalola continued the revival in the prison which led to the conversion of some who, on their release, would take the Apostolic vision to Calabar and Creek town and lay the foundation of Apostolic work in the Midwest and the East. It was this persecution which forced the movement to enter into a partnership or collaboration with the Apostolic Church of Pennygroes in September of 1931 which prompted the church to send two resident missionaries later while Babalola was still in prison in June 1932. Idris Vaughan one of the two missionaries later admitted in his book based on the confession of the Resident officer to him that Babalola really did not commit any crime but he had to be removed from the scene ''as a tactical measure of bringing the whole unrest to an end.'' (Vaughan 1991: 33)

The cooperation between the Revival Movement and the Apostolic Church of Pennygroes did not, however, hold for long and within a decade there was a split leading to the separation which has resulted in the formation of two apostolic churches- Christ Apostolic Church and The Apostolic Church. Babalola, Akinyele and Odubanjo, with most of the original leaders of the revival, would form the

nucleus of what would later become CAC as General Evangelist, President and General Superintendent respectively.

Marriage and Family Life

In 1935 Babalola took the major step towards holy matrimony. He was only 31. The lucky lady was no other person than Dorcas Adetoun, a native of Ilesha the town where Babalola first made his nationwide fame and renown. The wedding was solemnized at Efon- Alaaye by the European missionary of the Apostolic Church, Pastor George Perfect, according to S.A.Sadela who witnessed it.[47] He was assisted by Pastors Odubanjo, Odusona and Medaiyese.

This marriage was blessed with five children namely Abiye, Wura, Tunji, Apeke. However the male children did not survive as they both died in their infancy. Only three children outlived Babalola from this marriage: Abiye (Mrs.Babalola) Wura (Mrs.Oginni) and Apeke (Mrs.Adeniyi) Of these three only the last two are still living as at this writing.

This marriage was stormy, based on the accounts of several witnesses[48] who knew and /or lived with the couple and who were interviewed by this author, including Babalola's younger sister Mrs. Olanrewaju. This was however due to the enormous pressure brought on the home as a result of the challenge of the work on Babalola's time which forced him to be away from home most of the time and not due to the character of the woman as has been falsely chronicled through side talks, tales and comment over the years. Obviously, even the best and the most saintly of women would not endure certain things. He himself admitted in a written document that he had a good wife.[49] And he should know.

His extended family however presents a very interesting study. Babalola was the only son of his mother but he had five younger sisters who all married ministers of God except one. Mrs Ajibola was married to Pastor Ajibola, Mrs. Orogun was married to Pastor Orogun who became CAC fourth president. Mrs.Adedipe was the wife of Pastor Adedipe once the principal of CAC Seminary. The remaining two sisters were twins- Mrs.Taiwo Olowolagba, was the wife of Pastor Olujobi-Olowolagba of Efon- Alaaye and Mrs.Kehinde Olanrewaju was the wife of Elder Olanrewaju of Gospel Apostolic Church, the only one who did not marry a pastor and whose husband was not from CAC.

Pa. David Rotimi himself lived to old age. He lived with his wife Mama Rotimi at Erio-Ekiti very near to the son who was based at Efon. This great man, a pioneer of faith died with a solid Christian testimony in 1939 on a glorious note. On the day of his death a crowd of ministers had gathered around him including his son Joseph Babalola and his son-in-law Orogun.[49] Orogun had asked him whether he had accepted Jesus as his Lord and Saviour and he responded that Jesus had been with him that day and they'd conversed together. That Jesus told him He was going to the East and he (Rotimi) should get ready because on his return journey he would be coming by 12 noon that day to take him to his eternal rest. At 11.55 he signalled to the crowd around his bed that he could see Jesus coming and everyone began to pray to make request from Him. At exactly 12noon this noble man, this patriarch of faith slept quietly in a glorious way. He was buried at Efon-Alaaye owing to some scheming. Twenty years later in 1959, Babalola too would ascend in pursuit of the same Jesus that took his father away. Indeed, as Solomon noted more than three thousand years ago,'' the righteous is an everlasting foundation.''[50]

Hitherto we have considered the life of Babalola, especially his roots and calling. We have seen that he was a human being born of a woman with a father and sisters. He was a real personality with human dimensions. But as with most special vessels of the Almighty he also had a superhuman dimension, a mystical

element that we must not ignore. To do so would mean losing a vital part of his story. And here let me sound a note of warning because there are certain aspects of Babalola story that are difficult to believe even in spite of several attestations by men of honest intentions and report.

The great author and writer, Gordon Lindsay writing on William Marionn Branham, the prophet and leader of American Healing Revival (1947-58) noted about the unusual figure:

The story of William Branham is so extraordinary and out of this world that were there not available a host of infallible proofs and incontrovertible evidence which clearly document and readily attest to its authenticity, one would be excused for considering it far-fetched and absolutely incredible.(Lindsay 1950 : 11)

Notice he said one would be excused for considering it far-fetched and incredible but for the infallible proofs- video and audio tapes, photographs, nomographs, depositions, newspaper clippings, recordings etc. That was for Branham. The story of Babalola is not any less unusual and incredible but, unfortunately, we have no infallible proofs- video and audio recordings, photographs. Today we have no single audio or video recordings of his sermons or miracle service. Not a single one, even though both of them lived within the same time epoch- Babalola (1904-59) Branham (1909-65)! And this is not so much because he lived in what Balandier calls a ‘’colonial situation’’[51] or because of the low level of intellectual development but, and much more so, due to the fact that Africans in general and Nigerians in particular have not yet come to appreciate the social and ideological purposes and dimensions of literature, and even history. As a result of this certain aspect or dimension of the Babalola story may have been lost to this generation- things that should have been captured on tape, video or properly documented for generations.

It should be noted however that not all is lost. Babalola was even lucky compared to others of his contemporaries whose stories have now been lost to Nigerians.[52] Much of what has been preserved on Babalola came directly from his closest associates- things that they heard from his mouth and which they saw with their eyes and in the absence of other contrary evidence these accounts, incomprehensible and unbelievable as they may sound to our modern understanding, constitute the ‘’infallible proofs’’ of his ministry. As we go into this aspect of his story we shall consider two aspects- the human and the superhuman dimensions of Babalola.

The Essential Joseph Babalola

Who was Joseph Ayo Babalola? This question is important because any attempt at understanding a man’s work or movement must begin first with the accurate interpretation of the man himself. Any attempt to construct (or reconstruct his story) must first begin with an accurate interpretation of the man himself. As E.M. Bounds has noted the messenger must come before the message and the messenger must be greater than the message.[53] So who was Joseph Babalola? We shall attempt to see the man from the natural, social and spiritual dimensions, as remembered by some of those closest to him- children, sisters, associates, neighbours etc.

Joseph Babalola was a dark-skinned, tall and muscular man with a heavily built human frame and tribal marks. A slow-speaking introvert with a gentle but cheerful countenance and tender eyes, his common outfit consisted of a cassock (usually white or brown) an iron staff, the Bible and a hand bell. Later in life he did not carry the iron staff again because its purpose- dominion over forces of evil- had been achieved. He had a powerful carriage and a compelling presence

and when he appeared on the stage you knew he was there. ‘’When you meet him,’’ said the younger sister, ‘’you have to honour him whether you be Muslim or Christian or heathen. He had a personality that commanded respect.’’ A British missionary who met him in 1932 for the first time described his impression in these words: ‘’My first impression of Joseph as we met with him at Benin was that of a sturdy young man of about 5’10’’, of open countenance and of easy, gentle disposition.’’ (Vaughan 1991:)

On the social plane he was a simple man very easy to live with. Everyone who has volunteered to speak has noted his humility and simplicity. Everyone was important in his scheme and he valued and gave honour to everybody. He would not answer anyone hastily and he would not give more attention to the rich than the poor.[54] In fact a journalist observed during the Oke-Ooye Revival that when both the poor and the rich needed him he answered the poor first.[55] Money or materialism meant nothing to him unlike the modern-day pastors. He had very few material things. His clothings were few because, according to the daughter, he believed in giving away rather than keeping for himself.’’[56] A woman who went to Efon to teach in 1943 told me she was shocked when she entered Babalola’s house and could not find any of the evidence that usually meets you on entering a rich or great man’s house. ‘’Only the bare necessities, he had no luxury whatsoever. There was no evidence that this was a great man’s house despite his popularity. It was completely out of proportion with his status.’’[57] This ascetic lifestyle was the reason for his rigorous self- denial and renunciation. He saw this world as temporary, fading and unstable hence, like most great saints of Christian history; he shunned the world and materialism with a firm but cheerful disregard.

He was also very generous to a fault. He financed the wedding of many people including pastors and sponsored many children who had no father. At his death in 1959 there were fifty of such children and another arrangement had to be made for them. He loved children in particular and several children lived in his own house with his children whose responsibility he took up. He bought sewing machines for several women whose husbands were too poor to do so. He was too compassionate to turn away from human needs and social deprivations.

Prophet D.O. Babajide who took over from Babalola after his death said that Babalola was a true lamb of Jesus Christ. He was gentle and patient with everybody. He would not hurry anyone out of his presence. He would not turn anyone away. Said the daughter, Mrs Adeniyi: ‘’Our house was the house of everybody no privacy even when Baba was eating people would kneel and ask for his prayers which he willingly did.’’[58] Even when he was in the bathroom bathing, another pastor who lived with him told me, people would kneel outside asking for counsels or prayers and he would oblige them.[59] It was that bad. But for Babalola the true lamb of Jesus it was okay by him. He had no privacy and people both old and young readily impinged on his personal space. Sometimes his breakfast would be ready on the table but he would not be chanced to eat it, even for the few days when he was not fasting. His whole life was one complete profile in self-denial for the good of others. This was why he spent considerable time on the mountains where he could have personal time with his Maker.

He also entered the social world and dimension of the people by showing interest in their work and social affairs. He taught farmers to tithe and give to God the firstfruits of their harvests and to remember the poor, widows and the fatherless in accordance with the Mosaic Order so that God could bless them with good harvest and rainfall at the right season. He taught the people the principles of hygiene and instructed them how to institute sanitary principles around their domain and how to dispose wastes long before any activism on the Environment.[60] He told his people to build goodly houses made of blocks and

burnt bricks instead of mud so as to endure for generations. He taught Efon people to pay their taxes faithfully and promptly thereby insuring better social relations between the government and the governed. In his days Efon had the highest tax compliance in the whole of Ekiti division, according to Colonial government records.[61] He discouraged going in to debt especially for the sake of marriage and he simplified wedding procedures and purged it of its heavy financial concomitants and other later money-guzzling accretions so that all you needed to be wedded was only a new Bible for the charge.[62] He wedded people who had reached marriageable age for free thereby releasing a generation of men and women from financial yoke that God did not put on their necks- a yoke that has now returned seven times worse in the modern church of the present day. He also discouraged litigation but taught people to leave their grievances in the hands of God the righteous Judge and to forgive their fellowmen.

On the spiritual plane he was an able minister of the New Testament. He read the Bible and devoured it like a hungry man. He was familiar with Scriptures and taught his ministers the need for spending time with the Word. He knew and could quote the whole Psalms off-hand because he had read it more than fifty times over. He was a powerful preacher and he could preach up a storm. He usually dwelt on specifics rather than generalities in his preaching. He would fearlessly denounced the common evils of his day such as secret societies, use of charms, medicines, witchcraft and sorcery while also emphasizing the virtues of honesty, hardwork, holiness and righteousness. For this reason he encouraged the Christians of his day to use the period of Lent every year as seasons of spiritual renewal, restitution and reconciliation with the Almighty. He spent so much time in prayer and when he prayed it was like a powerful generator working. [63]

Superhuman Dimensions

Stephen at his trial told the Jews a vital truth that the God of Heaven does not dwell in a house made with hands but inside human beings.[64] Humans are the temples God seeks to dwell. The Quakers believed this and sought to realize it in the personal world of their members with a religious devotion rarely found since the days of the Apostles. The world is a better place today because of the Quakers. If God were to dwell indeed in a person we may expect some unusual things from that person. The my*sterium tremendom est fascina* clearly developed by Rudolf Otto in the *Idea of the Holy* holds true here. If man is a temple of God and God indeed dwells in him then we must expect some awe, some unusual or supernatural dimensions from that man. This is in fact the best reason for the supernatural element. It was said of Moses that, on one occasion, ''his face shone'' so that the children of Israel could not look at his face or move near him.[65] And on another occasion it was said of Jesus that, after prayer, the ''fashion of his countenance was altered.''[66] And Luke the Physician who has been acclaimed by scholars as one of the finest historians of all time,[67] tells us that the shadow of Peter cured people and handkerchiefs or aprons from the body of Paul healed many of their sicknesses and diseases.[68]

The lives of the saints and preachers in history clearly reveal the supernatural element. William James has documented a lot of these in his classic T*he Varieties of Religious Experience.* Why could Charles Finney look at a person and the gaze of his eyes would bring conviction and tears as if the person had seen the face of God?[69] How could William Branham called out persons in his miracle services, persons he had evidently never met, and tell them their names, hometowns, the colour of their houses, the sicknesses troubling them and other personal characteristics which no one knew or could have known except the persons involved?[70]

This foregoing is important as a foundation of what we are about to discuss because the life of Babalola presents some supernatural and superhuman dimensions that cannot be explained away. To ignore the supernatural element in his life is to miss the real and authentic story of his existence. It is to foist another Babalola on the reading public different from the person and figure who originally lived and worked under the banner of that name. It is instructive that three of the closest persons to him have used a particular word to describe him during my interrogation: *abami*- the Yoruba word for someone who is believed to be strange, extraordinary and out of this world.

First, in his special make-up and bodily configuration he was special. An informant who had lived with him as one of his children since 1936 told me that even when you look at the hairs on his head they were different. His hairs were straight and upstanding and not the wooly or curly type on most blacks.[71] His voice was another marvel. He never used microphone in his crusades but his voice could be heard far and near within 2km radius of wherever he was preaching. Old farmers in Efon- Alaaye told me during my field work there that they could hear Babalola in the farm, almost 2km away, whenever he was holding revival at Oke-Adura. Informants in Ilesha confirmed that whenever he was at Okesha holding meetings they could hear it at Imo about 1km away.[72]

Another marvel about Babalola was his physical body- a body over which hunger and thirst had no power and which was not subject to strain or stress, fatigue or sickness regardless of the limits of physical exertion to which it was subjected. Elijah Babade who stayed longer with Babalola than any disciple and who is still strong and fit at 102 told me in 1997 in an interview that *he knew at least 3 times other than Lent, in the life of Babalola when he was on 40- day fast without food.*[73] A. Adelusi another disciple told me of a case in Akure when they had to go on 7-day fast without food. A pot of water was boiled for them to take a cup in the morning and evening. ‘’Throughout this time I never saw him take food or water yet his physical strength was not abated or reduced.’’[74] He could work round the clock without any sign of fatigue or tiredness as his daughters and associates all testify. This, his resilience was the factor that confounded the people close to him and why they could not imitate him. Z.A. Aboge a native of Ikeji-Ile who had been one of his earliest disciples since 1930 told me that Babalola possessed an unusual capacity.

‘’I knew he was a strange (unusual) one because if you were walking or travelling with him for five days at a stretch; you never would hear him saying he was hungry or tired. Then there were not many vehicles so that the major portion of the trip we trekked.
‘’And even when we got to our destination he would start praying for everybody of all races with different problems. And you never would hear from his mouth to say to those people, ’please let me rest, leave me alone.’ ’’[75]

Still one more witness, Omotayo Adegoroye who also worked with him noted to me in an interview: ‘’*We’ve never seen him tired or weak. You never could see any sign of tiredness or fatigue around him throughout all the time I was with him. He was an abami (i.e. a strange one or wonderful one) he was difficult to imitate because he was not an ordinary person.’’*[76]

His eyes could see far and picked details that are clearly invisible to the human eye and which had not yet become realities in the physical realm. On the basis of this he predicted accurately impending visits, happenings and discerned historical realities in the life of persons, towns and even races.

Then Babalola had a keen mind or a super mind if you like. He could penetrate minds of people around him and knew things in the heart of people before they

told him. A pastor who had been with him since 1936 told me: ‘’*if you come to him with a particular issue burning in your heart to discuss with him, before you speak he already knew.*’’[77] The CAC has officially acknowledged this supernatural element in the life of its greatest human benefactor. The CAC Annual of 1943 noted on the character and mannerism of Babalola:

‘’*Called by different names such as Oga, Prophet, Apostle, Evangelist etc. He is devoted to prayer and preaching of divine healing. Given to fasting and prayer at all times like the apostles of old. Full of divine inspiration, patience, wisdom and simplicity.* ***He would usually know things without anyone showing or telling him***...’’[78](My emphasis)

Babalola also had one unnatural characteristic and gift- *quick understanding and mastery of different languages.* The Church Annual also confirmed this:
‘’...all his words, counsels are like prophesies. He never argues nor shows himself to be anyone or knows anything. He loved everybody... He **had the gift of quick understanding and mastering of different languages,** and given to songs of praise and dancing at all times.’’[79] (My emphasis)
He preached in different parts of the country and there never was a record of anyone interpreting for him.
There have been other dimensions in Babalola’s life that were confirmed to me by eyewitnesses but which will be difficult to believe even by believers in the absence of what Lindsay calls ‘’infallible proofs.’’ For that reason we shall omit them altogether.
All these establish the fact that Babalola was indeed a gifted man, a prophet, a kind of superman but not of the Nietschean category but on a glorious level.

Mystical Element
There is a lot of truth to William James assertion that ‘’personal religious experience has its root and centre in mystical states of consciousness.’’(William James 1958: 292) The mystical states constitute another plane which is a reality in the lives of many saints and is a critical factor and element which must be noted in order to understand religious behaviour. ‘’They are states of insight into depths of truth unplumbed by the discursive intellect. They are illuminations, revelations, full of significance and importance, all inarticulate though they remain; and as a rule they carry with them a curious sense of authority for after-time.’’ (James 1958:293) There are degrees of knowledge, understanding and recognition. There is knowledge of the intellect and there is knowledge of revelation. There is knowledge of the head and there is knowledge of the heart that you feel, which you cannot impart to another. This is where the mystical state comes in. Listen to Job as he illustrates these two kinds of knowledge during his encounter with the Almighty:

I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee.
Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.[80]

Mystical knowledge deals more especially with the second category: *my eye seeth thee i.e revelation knowledge.* A study of the lives of saints’ shows that a sizable number of them throughout time have experienced this mystical knowledge. Let us begin with Saint Theresa. ‘’One day, being in orison it was granted me to perceive in one instant how all things are seen and contained in God...’’[81] On another day while she was reciting the Athanasian Creed she relates : ‘’ Our Lord made me comprehend in what way it is that one God can be in three

Persons. He made me see it so clearly that I remained as extremely surprised as I was comforted,... and now, when I think of the holy Trinity, or hear it spoken of, I understand how the three adorable Persons form only one God and I experience an unspeakable happiness.'' [82]

Jacob Boehme has also written: ''*In one quarter of an hour I saw and knew more than if I had been many years together at an university. For I saw and knew the being of all things, the Byss and the Abyss, and the eternal generation of the holy Trinity, the descent and original of the world and of all creatures through the divine wisdom. I knew and saw in myself all the three worlds, the external and visible world being of a procreation or eastern birth from both the internal and spiritual worlds: and I saw and knew the whole working essence, in the evil and in the good, and the mutual original and existence; and likewise how the fruitful bearing womb of eternity brought forth...* ''[83]

Also George Fox in his famous autobiography noted the mystical dimension in his own religious experience and journey: ''I was come up to the state of Adam in which he was before he fell. The creation was opened to me; and it was showed me how all things had their names given to them, according to their nature and virtue. I was at a stand in my mind whether I should practice physic for the good of mankind, seeing the nature and virtues of the creatures were so opened to me by the Lord.''[84]

One thing is definitely clear in all these experiences of these men stated above and in several ones that cannot be stated here. They became possessor of a body of knowledge and sources of information but not through the official or traditional route of knowledge acquisition. This is what marks the mystics from the rest of religionists. To the average Christian today God is a mere inference. He is not any more real than He is to the non- Christian. To the mystics however God is real in conscious awareness, much more real than reality itself. The abiding consciousness of the Presence of God is the principal characteristic which defines the lives of mystics and separates them from others. A life in immediate contact with Divine Life, a soul afire with the Burning Flame of His Presence, these are the stuffs of which mystics are made. To the mystic, God is a Person Who can talk, feel, loves and be loved in real and conscious awareness. He has found God and God has found him, he has met the Almighty and the Almighty has met him. This is what marks the mystics and the mystical experience.

A study of Babalola's life and journey shows the mystical element. To the point that the facts and realities of his life are as presented and true to that very point we may place him among the mystics. The facts and experiences of his life, his several revelations and out-of -body experiences are the proofs which establish his claim to be mystic. In this state he was given to know about mysteries regarding the Creation of the world, why children stay 9 months in the womb, what takes place during conception, marriage, choice of a partner etc. Going through his records we see several instances of deep communication with spiritual forces and invisible agents and a source of knowledge other than the physical but rooted in the visionary elements. An example of his revelation on marriage is stated:

As I was praying in my house very early one day at 5.30a.m in the morning, the Lord sent a messenger to answer my prayer. I was told to be quiet and patient to see a vision from God and to understand the matter thoroughly. This was how the messenger took me in a vision to a big farm where there were many calabashes. The Lord then asked me, ''What are these?'' ''Calabashes,'' I replied. The Lord then began to explain to me that this world is a farm and human beings are like the seeds planted therein. And that when He, God created man, it was like the calabash sown in the farm which is never different with its cover, but one

and the same thing. Before a calabash can be useful it must be processed into two, consisting the cover and the main calabash and a calabash has only one cover and not two. And likewise a cover has only one calabash not two and another cover will not fit into any main calabash even if they are processed from the same root. (Idowu 2009:97,98)

He was given the meaning of this which is that the man is the main calabash and the woman is the cover. A man cannot be satisfied without a woman and likewise a woman cannot be satisfied without a man. And just as one calabash cannot have more than one cover so also God has ordained one man for one woman.

In another time he was given to know why there were more women than men.

The Lord revealed it to me to see this. I was taken to a big house where there were many calabash covers without the main calabashes. I was then asked the meaning of this. ''I do not know'' I answered. The Lord then told me that these are the women that have had no husbands and many whose husbands have died, because when Satan saw that he failed and wanted to trap humanity at all costs he did this by causing nations to engage in war and be killing themselves. Then the women would be spared, some virgins, some widows. Therefore women are not really more than men...

Secondly, the Lord also explained it to me like this: Fifteen children can be born in a single house, 5 females and 10 males. However, the male children can all die before they know or join the Lord through the activities of the wicked people and Satan but the females will all survive. Then in the future these will also be left without husbands... (Idowu 2009: 98, 99)

Going through his records, diaries and materials reveals several of such communications with the other world. Apart from this there were on at least three occasions when he underwent striking bodily changes and unconsciousness so that he seemed for days at a time like one dead and during these periods was more conscious of the other world than the present world.

Doctrinal Beliefs

Babalola held certain dominant beliefs which characterized his whole life and behaviour. In addition to the 13 tenets of the CAC he also held to the following based on leading from God.

1. **Prayer**
   He believes prayer can do whatever God would do. He was a great exponent of prayer and
   a master of extempore prayer. In his days prayers were held morning and evening in the church. Prayer then was seen as the only vocation of the church.

2. **Fasting**
   He believes that fasting is one of the cardinal tenets of the Christian faith and attaches so much substance to fasting that he believes it is one of the pillars of the faith. One of his best written documents in the public domain still extant is on the subject of fasting. With him self-denial is not an option it is a must for a Christian.

3. Litigation

He was against litigation for whatsoever reason just like the founding fathers of the Faith Tabernacle in Nigeria and according to the first Constitution of CAC. He believes that vengeance belongs to God and all judgement must be left to him. This is in consonance with the Book of *Guidelines and Teachings of Christ Apostolic Church* revised in 1961 which notes on litigation as follows:

It is not right to go to law with anyone as a church or as individuals regarding any matter before the earthly judges. Only the holy people have the right to judge or reconcile between the people of God.[85]

Babalola would be shocked today if he were to come back to the earth and see the number of cases and suits with which CAC is presently involved in. [86]

4. Sabbath Observance

Like most of the early Christians he believed in observance of Sunday as a day of rest. He considers it a great sin to dishonour the Lord's Day. Two things, he said dishonours the Lord's Day:

(i) Buying and selling
(ii) Beating of drums on the Lord's Day.[87]

As a rule he would not eat anything bought on Sunday when on a journey and when out of his station.

5. Lent

Babalola was a firm believer in Lent. Every Lenten season he was on the mountain with his associates for prayer and fasting. A prayer program would also be drawn and distributed for the whole church to participate. He sees this period as a call for spiritual renewal and repentance for all the failings in the previous year; and an opportunity to follow in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus.

6. Millennialism

He was more of a millenialist who believed, laboured and longed for the coming of Christ and His Kingdom. He saw and understood the triumph of Christ over the world and he looked forward to the consummation of that victory when the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of Christ. Among some of his prayer points for Lent are these which conclusively establish his Messianic focus and the spirit of apocalyptic expectation:

- *That we servants of Jesus Christ will not forfeit the millennial reign of Christ. (20/5/1959)*
- *That the revival promised by the Lord to begin and endure till 1000years may begin this year.(21/7/1959)*
- *For the Lord Jesus to count us worthy in the coming millennial reign. (25/2/1959)*

In some of his sermons described and recorded in writing we have exhortations to people to be prepared to reign with Christ in His Coming Kingdom.[88] He enjoined people not to worry about this present animal age in which we live but to be ready to be part of the next age where righteousness will reign and where Christ alone will be king. He preached a kingdom message with Christ-centred and Christ- dominated worldview unlike the self-centred, easy believism, a this-worldly paradigm, under which modern Christianity, especially in its Pentecostal-

evangelical variety, is now trapped. He encouraged people to build goodly houses made up of blocks and bricks that can last because when Christ comes to set up his kingdom He would destroy all ramshackle houses.[89] Even in his last Easter sermon he pleaded and exhorted the people at CAC Alabukun, Efon to do their best to be counted worthy to be part of the coming kingdom.[90] In some of his revelations and mystical dimensions he described that kingdom and how life would be and he longed to see it.[91] He expected Christ to come in his lifetime to set up his kingdom, just like most other saints before him. In this he was wrong, but he was only wrong about timing not about the victory of Christ or his expectation.

7. **Election**
   The doctrine of election is one that has divided the church from the earliest times especially in its extreme form. Has God ordained some to be saved and some to be damned? This is one of the greatest theological controversies in Church history. One thing is certain. Babalola believes in election. An examination of all his works confirms this. Among some of his prayer points published for the Lenten season are these

   * *Prayer that the Lord will gather together and complete the number of His elect in the world.* (13/2/1957)
   - *Prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on we the elect.* (16/3/1958)
   - *Thanks to God for the food being provided for the elects.* (21/1/1953)
   - *That the journeys of the elects everywhere shall be hitch free.* (35/3/1958)

   But it will not be right to call him a Calvinist. I'm not even sure whether he would have recognized what Calvinism is or who John Calvin was.

Miracles

Joseph Babalola moved in the realm of the miraculous and the supernatural. He himself, in spite of his humility and modesty, admitted series of miraculous claims in his life and ministry. Several outstanding feats happened at Oke- Ooye during the Revival many of which were even recorded in the newspapers of the period. During his itinerant ministry before his work gained national prominence (1928-30) he himself admitted miraculous feats in his ministry. In addition to this there have been several cases of miracle healings, deliverances from pangs of the wicked, etc. There have been up to 15 persons resuscitated from death through his hand that we have been able to trace to actual figures, houses and addresses. And there could have been many more that were not recorded or witnessed by someone in a position to record.

To document all the miracles of Babalola, his healings and deliverances as testified by eyewitnesses will require a medium-size book of its own. They cannot be captured in this single piece.

Music

Joseph Babalola was a lover of music and gospel songs as most prophets are. He enjoyed singing praises and worship songs to God. His daughter has also confirmed this when she noted:

''The joy of the Lord was his strength. He loved praising God with hymns and songs.''[92]

He was a great composer and singer. We are in possession of about 90 songs which he sang during the revival of 1930 at Efon and which has been compiled in a pamphlet. Some of his favourite songs are:

1. Edumare gbohun mo wi o 2ce
   Emo soni ba o rin ko ju iti etc

   Meaning: Almighty hear my voice
   No one walks with you and is ashamed.
2. Ase o Oba Olugbala 2ce
   Mimo mimo tire la se etc

   Meaning : Authority to the King and Saviour
   Holy, holy, thy counsel shall stand.

One of his favourite hymns is also Gospel Hymn book no 70- '' The God of Abram Praise''[93]

Babalola's Claim to the Apostolic Calling

Joseph Babalola claimed to be an apostle and to be called as an apostle. He claims that the work committed to his hands was an apostolic work. The entire CAC vision and organisation rests on this claim and vision for there cannot be an apostolic church without an apostolic foundation; and an apostolic foundation cannot exist without a foundation layer or apostle. ''***And are built upon the foundation of apostles and prophets Jesus Christ Himself being the cornerstone.''***[94]

The point then is this: Can this claim stand up to Scriptural and even critical examination? Can Babalola's claim to the apostolic calling and CAC'S claim to apostolicity stand to scrutiny and historical and even empirical validation?

* First Babalola's claim to the apostolic calling is valid because he had an apostolic calling. What happened to him on 11 October 1928 would pass the test of a genuine apostolic call. He heard the Voice of God conveyed by an angel before several witnesses including about 50 of his gang members on the road construction project. He repeated this account several times to different people at different periods in his lifetime showing that he was sure of the call and not just a product of mere hallucination.

He claimed to see the Lord Jesus Christ and received direct instructions from Him. Subsequent events especially the Great Revival which erupted two years later are a proof of the genuineness of his vision. What Babalola had on 11th October 1928 at Arakeji is not in any way inferior to what Paul had on his way to Damascus. This is his first valid claim to apostleship and apostolic call. He was not in ministry because it was the fashion or because an uncle propelled him or because it was an avenue for sudden wealth, but because God willed it. As a matter of fact, in 1928 there was no vicar or catechist in Nigeria earning 4pounds a month. Thus if he were to choose naturally he would have preferred to remain at PWD. He did not learn the ministry or the work from a seminary or theological institution but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. This is another evidence of a genuine apostolic calling. Unlike Odubanjo and Akinyele who discovered the truths of Divine Healing through Faith Tabernacle literature from America Babalola got this revelation directly from God. This is another proof.

*** Apostolic spirit and consecration**

Babalola's claim to apostleship is also validated by the exhibition of a true apostolic spirit, an unparallel self-denial and unimpeachable consecration. The spirit of apostle is the spirit of suffering, self-denial, self-giving and self-sacrifice; and even martyrdom. All the 12 Apostles of the Lamb ended on a bloody note just like Christ. To the man with an apostolic calling cross-carrying and self-denial

are not exceptions, they are musts. The kind of materialism and primitive, selfish accumulation that are fast becoming a feature of modern Christianity especially in its Pentecostal-evangelical brand in our nation is alien to the lifestyle of a true apostle.

We have several cases furnished by eyewitnesses of him emptying his resources to support widows, set up an orphan in business, arrange weddings for the helpless, pay school fees for fatherless children- almost to the neglect of his own life and family. He was a friend and father of all. He loved all, served all. At his death there were still about 50 children under his care and sponsorship, aside from widows.

*** Apostolic signs, wonders and mighty deeds**

Joseph Babalola's claim to apostleship is also supported by the demonstration of apostolic signs, unusual wonders and mighty deeds. His evangelistic outreach, across the length and breadth of Nigeria was characterized by miracle-healings, deliverances for both individuals and even whole communities. He sacked heathen temples, disgraced principalities and gods of the land, razed forbidden forests and ancient territories to stamp apostolic power in the land and in many places where Christ had never been named. He made clear to the land, sea and air that Jehovah reigns and Jesus Christ is the only Lord. Cultic objects and paraphernalia surrendered in his revivals have never been witnessed in the history of this nation either before him or after him. There are at least more than 15 persons resuscitated from death confirmed by eyewitnesses through him which we have been able to establish to actual figures. This is apostolic power which shows the presence of an apostolic calling.

*** Self- denial or Cross- carrying**

The true apostle and disciple of Christ is also marked by self-denial and cross-carrying. When Christ said, ''If any man will follow after me let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.''[95] He meant specifically that all His followers will take to His example and do as He has done. Joseph Babalola's claim to true apostleship is further validated or established by his unparallel self-denial and cross-carrying. It was said of Gerald Majella that ''he loved everybody except Gerald Majella.''[96] That was also true of Joseph Babalola.

Strange as it may sound he never built a house, never owned a bank account and owned very little material comforts. The car he used was actually purchased with contributions from the church for his evangelistic outreaches since he travelled a lot. He preferred others to himself; put other people's needs and desires ahead of his own. He put himself last not first concurring with Saint Paul- ''that Christ has put we apostles last.''[97]

*** Love and Compassion**

The Christ of the Bible and of Early Christianity is a Christ full of compassion and love, but not the Christ of modern Christianity. Compassion and love are fast dying out of Christianity. Babalola's life and ministry reveal that he possesses the heart and mind of Christ especially regarding the poor, destitute and the needy. He was irresistibly compelled and driven by compassion as a result of the needs of people around him-the poor, orphans, unemployed, widows etc much of which fell on him.

On one occasion he took his daughter's school fees to pay for that of a Hausa boy and asked his own daughter to stay at home until he got money.[98] This again established his credentials as an apostle of Christ. In showing the love of God to people of all races, kindred and nations he was in fact being faithful to Christ. He loved all, served all and gave all.

***Prayer and Fasting**
''But we will give ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word...''[99]

That was the resolution of the Twelve in the Acts of Apostles when the number of disciples had increased and multiplied. Prayer was the first task of the apostles and the lives of the Twelve show this. Paul restated this in Thessalonians when he said, ''Pray without ceasing.''[100] It was written of James the Just that at his death his knees had become calloused as a result of staying too long on his knees in prayer.[101]

Babalola's credentials as a true apostle of God is further validated by his inimitable prayer life and fasting. With him prayer was not just an exercise or engagement, it was a lifestyle. He was a lion in the place of prayer and when he prayed it's like a generator working. By his life of fervent prayer he touched many places and nations that he could not physically reach and made the future generations much safer. Among his prayer items for the church in 1952 is this point: ''Pray against the spread of Communism.''[102] Also in the Lenten Prayer programme for 1959 which he conducted before he died was this prayer item: ''Pray for the land of Russia that the gospel will have a place.''[103] Today, communism has been defeated as an ideological force and the largest church in Ukraine today- one of USSR's former republics- is, incidentally, pastored by a Nigerian. Thus Babalola by his prayer has made life more secure, future generations safer and the world a better place than he met it.

Also his claim to apostleship is established by among other things:

1. Walking in the Footsteps of Christ
2. Founding of many churches
3. In his Christ-likeness, simplicity and gentleness.

It's Time To Go

From 1955 upwards the tone and ministry of Babalola began to change. Even his concerns and approach to things began to take a different turn. He began to relieve himself of certain responsibilities which he had graciously taken and began to prepare his close associates for the coming eventuality. In the early part of that year he took his close associates- a coterie of pastors and prophets very close to him- to Ijumu in the present Yagba Local Government of Kogi State. There, after their prayer and fasting retreat he told them that they should learn to take full responsibilities for the church because very soon he would be going on a journey and would not be there to give them directives again. Or he might go and settle in a place for rest and when he returns he might not relate with the church (CAC) again.[104] Because this were his beloved he shared deep secrets with them. He told them that the church has already sown a garment of shame and getting ready to don the garment but that it would not happen in his lifetime. Present at this meeting were Andrew Olu Young, J.A. Medaiyese, D.O. Babajide etc At the General Convention of the Church that year he also enjoined both elders and pastors to be prepared to assert their calling which Christ had given them.

Beginning from 1957 however revelations and warnings began to come from everywhere to CAC to pray so that a big tree that has branches reaching towards the east, west, south and north and whose influence is worldwide would not fall. But the leadership and even the common run of the church membership did not discern. Thus by 1958 the messages became more direct, specific and frontal as to the identity of the big tree that was about to fall. In the early morning of July,

1958 a young prophet came from Ilesha to Efon- Alaaye with a direct and specific word from God to the leadership of the CAC Alabukun. The message, according to Olujobi Olowolagba went like this: ‘’**Thus saith the Lord, *from henceforth don't entangle My servant Joseph Babalola with the affairs of your church. Learn to go on with the administration without him because the time has come for Me to take My servant from your midst.’’***[105]

The prophet was a young man and obviously he did not weigh the consequences of his message before delivering it. At any rate the leaders- pastors and elders – that he gave the message to were stunned and visibly troubled. They were so discomfited that none of them remembered to give the young man transport money- as was the convention in those days- back to his station and he was nearly stranded but for the intervention of Pastor Olujobi-Olowolagba. Immediately, prayers and fasting were declared to stop the evil. But would prayer or fasting change God's design, counsel and ordination?

In the Cross over service of 1958/59 there was another sign, this time at Odo-Owa, Babalola's hometown. As the prayer for the New Year progressed a young girl- so small that everyone has to keep quiet to even hear her- told of a vision that she saw and warning CAC to pray fervently and vigorously so that a tree whose branches extend to the south, north, east and west and whose shade provides comforts to the people of the whole world would not fall.[106] Again people began to pray with tears. But as the singer sang- *what will be, will definitely be.* Why? Because it was time to go.

In this same year Babalola held a powerful crusade in Ilesha- the town where his ministry began and took his worldwide acceleration 28 years earlier. He called it *Isoji Alasepe* (The Revival of Completion or Perfection) It was his own way of bidding farewell to the people and especially to the earth, a witness to the earth and the cosmos that he has *completed* what he came to the earth to accomplish.

The Last Days

It was under this shadow of ominous warnings and prophecies that CAC entered 1959. Warnings and dreams were now coming frequently and sporadically as to the effect that a big fish would soon leave the waters. Another little girl from the country side in a prayer meeting told the leaders of a vision she saw in prayer where he saw ‘’our father Apostle Babalola bidding the world goodbye.’’[107] Yet in spite of all these the leadership did not take note of all these omens and signs.

Babalola himself gave a clue to the effect that it was time for all those who were perceptive and discerning enough to know. Usually during the Lent period he would produce a pamphlet for the prayer and fasting program. He had been doing this since 1945. In the pamphlet of 1959 was this cautionary note: **keep this document for use of several years to come.** This was Babalola's warning to the generality of the church of the imminence of his transition.

At his Easter Sermon that year he touched on death and the power of death and the triumph of Christ over death. There he told the people that if he should die they should not begin to think that it was one witch or wizard who did it because all witches and wizards put together with Satan their father could not do it. He encouraged his people to be firm because he had been to the mountain and has seen the other side. From April he began to undertake some crucial journeys and travel to different places to strengthen the church. It was that April, 1959 David Ogunleye Odubanjo the General Superintendent of the church died in Lagos. He was there to preach his funeral and encourage the church to be firm and steadfast. Unknown to the majority of his listeners that he too was preparing and 3 months later would also leave the scene.

From June through July he was virtually on the road from one town to another on account of church affairs. Three of the places he visited last are however worthy of consideration here. In the month of June on the 16th day, he made an unusual trip to Erio-Ekiti where his mother Madam Martha Talabi lived.[108] Knowing that his time was up and he would leave this world before her, he asked his mother very boldly and pointedly, ''If I Joseph Babalola your son should die today will you desert Jesus?'' The answer Babalola got must have pleasantly surprised him from the old woman:'' ''Since my lord''- that was how Mama referred to Apostle Babalola, she never called him directly by name- ''has shown me the way of life there is no cause for alarm. I know Jesus will take care of me if He takes you away.'' Then Babalola added this word disguised in parable so that the old woman would not get what he was saying, ''When Jesus called me in 1928 He did not tell me that He would stay this long before coming back for me. It's now thirty years ago and He has not come. If I did not see him in the next 40years I will have to go to Heaven to go and call Him.'' The old woman did not discern. But forty years became forty days, for exactly 40 days to the letter after those conversations were exchanged Babalola made good his threat to go and meet Jesus. It was after the news of his death reached the mother at Erio that she cast back her mind and remembered that her son had already forewarned her.

He went to Warri in the Delta area around the first week of July. He had to go because the people needed him to confess their sins and ask for his forgiveness. They had been rude to Babalola during the crisis over the separation between The Apostolic Church and Christ Apostolic Church in the late 30's and had chosen to go with the former even though it was Babalola who founded the church. But problem had started thereafter and finally God told them that until they reconcile with His servant and got him to pray they would move from one tragedy to another.[108] This was what brought him to Warri to pray.

From there he went to Iloffa and Odo-Owa his home place where the church convention was to hold in September that year, to assess their preparations. He was however not impressed. In fact he was greatly saddened by the total unpreparedness of the people, his own people and his next -of-kin. He had written to them three years earlier to tell them to begin to plant cassava and in 1958 he had written them to tell them to plant yams because they would be hosting the whole church.[109] But few weeks to the Convention there was very little or nothing on ground. To change the venue was no longer possible because of the imminence. Other towns had hosted the church successfully in the past, how should it be heard that the leader's own town was the place where the thing flopped. This was what pained Babalola and he spoke to his people that day in the bitterness of his soul. He even told them that they didn't know him because he was from their town but on the day of Reckoning, on that Glorious Day they will know who Babalola is and how great he is. At this statement the whole church began to weep. It finally dawned on them that they had sinned against God and His servant and they all began to confess their sins and to plead with him not to leave the town in anger. He forgave them and prayed for God to forgive his people.

It was on 24th of July 1959. That day they left Iloffa for Efon- Alaaye arriving by 7.00p.m.[110] Two hours later at 9.00p.m they left for Ibadan for the Leadership Meeting of CAC at Olugbode which was held on Saturday 25th July. As soon as they finished he made some personal visit to some persons to pray for them and to deliver God's message to them at home. One of these was S.A. Adeshina who contested for the Alaaye stool and had lost.

Towards the evening of the 25th July he left Ibadan with his entourage towards Ede for the inauguration of the Good Women Maternity Home which was to take place the next day, Sunday 26th July. On the way they stopped at a village called

Sekona where they held Evening Prayer with the people. Usually Babalola was never in a hurry when travelling. At every stop prayers must be offered before proceeding. Thus it was in the evening of Saturday by 7.00p.m when they reached CAC Talafia, Ede where the host, Prophet Samson Akande was eagerly awaiting them. Elaborate preparations have been made to receive him and his entourage which included Medaiyese, Babajide, Odutola etc. Supper was served immediately for these fathers but Babalola did not taste of it. He was ushered into a room specifically prepared for him and was allowed to sleep, the only sleep he'd had in 12 days. [111]

Going to Call Jesus

Early in the morning of Sunday 26th July the apostle got up as early as 5a.m and requested for hot water. A coffee was prepared for him but he insisted it must not have sugar or milk.[112] That was how he drank it raw, the last thing he ever took before leaving the earth. It was a life of self-denial from beginning to end.

After preparing for the service he called for his deputy, the Assistant General Evangelist, Prophet David Babajide and his host, Prophet S.O Akande. He asked two of them to kneel and began to talk to them rehearsing his experiences in ministry from the beginning when he received the call to the present day and all the hassles he'd met in ministry. He reminded the duo that within the limit of human possibility he had done his best. He now asked each of them to pray for him that if there had been any sin he Babalola had committed in the course of his ministry from the beginning to that day that God should forgive him. Thereafter he himself prayed the last prayer and made the benediction. He told the duo, ''Now I thank God the way is clear.''[113] But they didn't understand. He encouraged them to be faithful and thereafter he dismissed them.

They went for the morning service and he made the opening prayer. J.A. Medaiyese the Superintendent gave the sermon at the service. Throughout the service Babalola never stood up for once not even when the congregation rose to sing hymns. He remained on his seat, until at the end when he gave the benediction.[114] After the service the congregation moved straight to the dedication of the Faith Home but Babalola went straight to his chambers to rest. After the dedication delegates began to depart to their various destinations. Some of these also came to Babalola to bade him goodbye and to ask for his blessings and prayers and he willingly obliged them. One of these was Pastor Odusona, the General Superintendent of the Church. As he was going Babalola called him back and reminded him of the young man he had met at Ibadan few days before who he promised to help with his wedding. This man had reached the age of marriage but had no father or any helper to see him through. Babalola then took it upon himself to give him the support he needed and reminded the General Superintendent of the church to expedite action on the matter. This was his last act of mercy before he left for eternity.

He was left to rest. At 3p.m his associates came for prayers with him. Medaiyese was the first to pray followed by Odutola. Then just before Babajide could pick up the prayer, Babalola himself took it and began to pray the very last prayer he made on the earth. And what was he praying about? According to Babajide he was praying for all people of the earth that their salvation may be sure and not once did he make mention of his immediate family.[115] He was allowed to rest while Medaiyese went for the evening service. One Michael Isajimi, one of the assistants with Babalola stood at the entrance of his door.

Around 4p.m the walls of the room where Babalola was began to shake as if experiencing a tremor or vibrations. But the cause of the movement could not be located. At 4.30p.m on the dot Babalola breathed heavily three times: Hi, Hi, Hi-

as if to say God the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit- and like lightning the man was no more. It was exactly forty days to the time he told his mother he would be going to call Jesus. The entire room shook and yet the window panes did not brake. Michael cried with a loud voice to summon the elderly men to come. As they opened Babalola's room a wave of power hit them and they all fell to the ground. By the time they rose up and moved near they found he was lifeless.

They began to pray while Babajide sent for Medaiyese who was preaching at the evening service to stop his sermon and close the service immediately and come. They all surrounded Babalola each one holding a part of his body and they began to pray from 5p.m till 7p.m. Medaiyese began to plead in prayer, ''Lord what is our sin? What have we done wrong? Where have we missed it? ''[116] It was then a vision was shown to someone where he saw Babalola before the mighty gates of heaven and entering through the gate he laid his sword at the feet of the Lord Jesus. The Lord then revealed to this servant that Babalola could not return to them again as they desired because the heavens have already received him.[117] At 7p.m Medaiyese declared plaintively,'' The Great Apostle is Gone.'' He was 55, still fit and agile and without a single grey hair on his head.

Thus marks the end of an era in Nigeria's religious and evangelical history. Arrangements were made and the body was taken to Efon that night. Even in death his eyes were not closed and there was a smile on his face.[118] Eight days later he was committed to mother earth amidst a flood of tears, wailings and lamentations. All the schools in Ijesha and Ekiti were shut for the week as a mark of respect to the great apostle. Thus marks the end of an era.

LEGACIES

How do we measure the greatness of this man? What place do we accord to Joseph Babalola in the pantheon of the greats among the founding fathers of the African Instituted Church? Any attempt to measure the size of Babalola's influence and greatness must take into account his worthy legacies to the Aladura/Apostolic Christianity, the effective forerunners and harbinger of the modern-day Pentecostalism in Nigeria; and even to Nigeria at large. These are his real contributions.

One of the weaknesses and critique of the Aladura Movement was the lack of a framework of theology, philosophy and ethics or church history. To a large extent this critique is valid, at least for certain sections of the Aladura Movement. Joseph Babalola was not a great theologian, to be sure. Some aspects of his theology would appear weak by modern standards and some, especially on demonology, would appear not up to date. I'm not sure whether he ever read any of the great theological works of Christianity like those of Thomas Aquina, Calvin, Arminian, Luther etc. if he did I find no trace in his writings. Yet, to be fair, if his theology was not so deep or broad it was sound embracing the main themes of Apostle's Creeds and all the major Creeds of history and even the teachings of the Early Apostles of the Church.

The real contributions of Babalola are in two categories: his life themes and ethical principles and his legacies to the nation. His life's themes and principles are: **salvation and new birth, total consecration to God, separation from the world, its spirit and systems, renunciation of works of darkness, secret societies, cults and fraternities; faith in God to supply all needs and cure every defects without any earthly means, total opposition to medicine of both orthodox or African varieties, peace and reconciliation with all, avoidance of vengeance or litigation, fervent prayer without ceasing, fasting, observance of Lent, contentment with one's portion or state in life, against ostentation and materialism, striving daily for Christ's holiness and perfection, compassion for the poor, widows,**

fatherless and the fallen to be restored, doing goods, humility, self – denial, against self-importance and the sanctity of marriage based on monogamy.

What then are his legacies to the Pentecostal-evangelical movement in particular and Nigeria and Africa in general? When all is said and done, when the history of this era is written and when the life and work are examined, what specific legacies can be attributed to Joseph Babalola?

1. Firstly, by accepting the call and offering himself as a vessel in God's Hands he released vital spiritual forces into the church and society of his days. The Great Revival of which he was the principal instrument leaped denominational boundaries and frontiers and gave new impetus to Christian religion. Several mission records in the archives affirm that Babalola was a benefactor of even the Mission churches and by his style of prophetic revivalism impacted the churches and brought a new spirit in the Church. Both the Anglican, Methodist and even Baptist churches awakened anew to evangelism as a challenge in the wake of Babalola's revival.[119] This singular action of arousing the church from the stupor of dead formalism to practical evangelism of the heathen is one of his greatest legacies and shows the Aladura as following in the footsteps of Early Methodism.
2. By rejecting Western interpretation of Christianity he, in alliance with others, gave birth to a more practical, more result-oriented Christianity that is more culture- friendly and satisfying; yet without compromising any of the ethical bearings or spiritual principles of historic Christianity. By his prescription of Divine Healing and reliance on God alone for problems without any human means, he drew on the finest sources of Apostolic Christianity, sources as old as Christianity itself, thereby ensuring the enthronement of true Christianity.
3. By his consecration and total submission to God he released spiritual power to the church and the world thereby inaugurating a new era in the realm of evangelism. In effect, Christian witness moves from the traditional literary-catechumen activities to power-evangelism, power-healing and spiritual warfare. (See Oshun 2000: 3 and other sources cited therein)
4. By instituting sanitary laws and hygiene standards for masses of people, by consecrating and sanctifying the sources and springs of water for whole towns and poor African communities against pollutions and other health hazards; by establishing many schools for the education of poor children; by personally taking up the responsibilities of widows, poor, fatherless and setting up training institution for many; by teaching farmers to give to God their firstfruits in order to ensure regular rainfall and bountiful harvests in accordance with Mosaic Covenant; by teaching villagers to build goodly and durable houses with moulded blocks and burnt bricks instead of mud; by encouraging villagers to pay their taxes regularly and promptly thereby inducing better social relations between the government and the governed[120] Babalola established himself both then, and for all time, as not

only a revivalist but also a social reformer and crusader, public benefactor and intellectual, patriot and Christian revolutionary.

5. By introducing the use of indigenous language, idioms and songs; by employing other harmless African styles such as drumming, clapping, singing and dancing; by using native dress in his ministration as against costly vestments and robes, he took Christianity from the realm of the classical Western-trained professionals to the realm of the generality and the layman. The Christianity introduced by the western missionaries and practised in Nigeria before the Revival was incomplete religion. It failed to emphasize enough spirituality in a spiritually-alive culture. (Kalu 1978: 34) it seems to be something which begins and ends in church buildings, made up of hymns, read or recited prayers, lessons... It does not seem to be something that is efficacious for them in every area of their lives and under all circumstances. There were certain emotional depths in Nigerians which the prefabricated, imported liturgies did not reach; there were spiritual undernourishment and spiritual hunger because the hungry sheep of God looked up to the Church for food, and were being fed, to a great extent on stuffs which were alien to their constitution. (Bolaji Idowu 1970: 43,44)

   But the Great Revival of Babalola, and other prophet movements before it, freed Nigerians from this aberration.

For once it occurred to many Nigerians that Christianity was not really a white man's religion ''and that you can be Africans and Christians at the same time; to call the name of God in an atmosphere of spontaneous joy and cheerfulness; and to pray as Africans naturally would pray.'' (Bolaji Idowu 1970:44)

The real contribution of Joseph Babalola then, is in the practical demonstration of the essence of Christianity. His contribution was not in theology. He really did not discover any great truth. Virtually all the truths he taught or preached had existed before he appeared on the horizon. Even Divine Healing had been preached as far back as 1918, 10 years before his call by the Faith Tabernacle. What was new however was that Babalola revolutionized these truths by his practical commitment. He made God real to masses of people coming out of heathenism (''heathenism in all its ugliness and in all its horrors'') and took Christianity from the realm of select classical few to the realm of the mainstream; from the realm of Westernized religion to the point of African understanding. A woman who went to teach in St. Stephen's School in Efon in 1943 told me:

''We know of Christianity, the Anglican type of Christianity. We have heard of Jesus Christ too before Babalola came. But it was Babalola who made Jesus real to us. He was the type of Jesus that we saw and which drew us to Jesus Christ.'' [121]

To make Christianity real and dynamic to old farmers, juju priests, borderline nominal Christians of Catholic and Protestant varieties was one of the major contributions of Babalola. Christ became so real in the imagination and consciousness of people that they threw away their idols, graven images and

potent cultic objects. Having found the real substance they threw away their vanities for the shadows no longer held any appeal.

His originality lies not so much in the discovery or rediscovery of Divine Healing and of other truths but in the fearless and public proclamation and application of these truths. By telling whole communities and towns to surrender their, idols, charms and fetishes to rely on God alone, by asking masses of people and entire town to do away with all medicine, herbs and roots both local and foreign to take Christ as their healer- something which the mission church and even C&S had not been able to do- he shows his originality as a prophet, a distinct voice from God for restoration rather than an echo and drew on sources as old as Christianity itself. In this respect he belongs to the greats, in the same list with Francis of Assisi, Savonarola, Martin Luther, George Fox, John Wesley and others who also in their time sought to bring religion from heaven to earth.

NOTES

1. The research for this material on Babalola began effectively from 1996-2006 conducted under the auspices of Artillery Foundation. For more on Babalola the reader is directed to other publications by the author viz:
- *J.A.Babalola : Foundation of an Apostle*, Lagos : Artillery Publications, 2001.
- *J.A.Babalola : Collected Works of an Apostle,* Lagos : Artillery Publications, 200
- *J.A.Babalola : Mantle of an Apostle,* Lagos : Artillery Publications, 2007
- *The Great Revival of 1930: The Origin of Modern Pentecostalism in Nigeria,* Lagos : Artillery Publications, 2007
- *The Acts of Power: the Spread of the Great Revival and the Birth of Apostolic Christianity in Nigeria,* Lagos: Artillery Publications, 2011

2. These studies were largely on the religious organizations but not on the founding figures.

3. Except of course H.W. Turner's 2 Vols., which devoted detailed studies on J. O. Oshitelu of Church of the Lord, Aladura.

4. Christina Matthews in the *Morning Post* which was also reprinted in *The Christian Missionary Herald* of October 1932 at page 5.

5. According to J. A. Medaiyese and D.O. Odubanjo.

6. Private interview with Mrs. M. K. Olanrewaju the apostle's younger sister at Ikotun, Lagos, 1997.

7. This was the testimony she gave to S.O. Akande, Baba Abiye when the latter paid a condolence visit to her at Erio- Ekiti after the death of the apostle. Interview with Pastor Adeyinka who led Akande to Erio and was an eyewitness.

8. *Ibid*

9. *Ibid*

10. See C.O. Oshun, *Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria. A Suggested Pentecostal Consideration of its Historical Organizational and Theological Developments, 1981–1978,* PhD Dissertation University of Exeter; 1981.

11. See also J.A. Medaiyese, *Itan Igbedide Woli J.A.Babalola Fun Ise Ihinrere.* (The Rise of Prophet Babalola for the Work of the Gospel) Ilesa: Olusegun Press n. d.)
12. E.H.L. Olusheye, *A Short History of The Christ Apostolic Church*, Lagos: Ibukunlola Printers n. d.
13. Interview with Mrs M. K. Olanrewaju 75, in Lagos 1997.
14. Interview with Pastor A. Aboge 81, at Mushin Lagos; who once lived with Pa David Rotimi at Erio- Ekiti.
15. J.A. Medaiyese *Op.cit.*
16. Interview with Mrs. Elizabeth Osoba 88 at Abeokuta Street, Oshogbo in 1997.
17. J.A. Medaiyese, *The Autobiography of Babalola*, Okene: Alafia-Tayo Printing Press, 1950 see pp.2-4
18. *Ibid*
19. *Ibid*
20. *Ibid*
21. *Ibid*
22. *Ibid*
23. For more on Moses Orimolade, see M.O. Idowu, *More Than a Prophet : The Adventures of Moses Orimolade Tunolase, Founder of the First Indigenous Church in Nigeria.* Lagos: Artillery Publications, 2009
24. See *African Gospel Messenger* of August 30, 1930.
25. J.A. Medaiyese, *Autobiography…* p.3
26. Interview with Madam Elizabeth Osoba at Oshogbo in 1997.
27. Interview with Mrs. Deborah Odeniran 80, at Ipetu- Ijesha in 1998.
28. *Ibid*
29. Both were great revivalists, they also began at 24. Both were men of prayer who moved closer to the Holy Spirit.
30. See J.A. Medaiyese, *Autobiography…* Also M.O. Idowu, *Babalola:Thoughts of an Apostle,* Lagos: Artillery Publications, 2002.
31. *Ibid*
32. J. B. Orogun, *Itan Bi Ijo Christ Apostolic Church Ti Bere Ni Nigeria,* Lagos: Mas Productions Service.p.4
33. Interview with Madam Elizabeth Osoba, Abeokuta Street, Oshogbo, 1997.
34. See M.O. Idowu, *J.A. Babalola: Collected Works of an Apostle,* Lagos*:* Artillery Publications, 2009
35. *See Lagos Standard* of 9, 23 October 1918 quoted in J.D.Y Peel *Op.cit* p.60.
36. *See* J. Ademakinwa, *Iwe Itan Ijo Aposteli ti Kristi* (History of the Christ Apostolic Church) Lagos: Christ Apostolic Publication, 1971.
37. *Ibid*
38. According to C.O. Oshun, *Christ Apostolic…*
39. Private interview with the son Niran Ogundipe at University of Lagos, 2009.
40. Based on the video tape recording of the testimony at the 80th Anniversary…
41. Examples like Pastors Aboge, Adedeji, Babade, Omojuwa, etc
42. For a detailed study of this revival see M.O. Idowu*, The Great Revival of 1930: The Origin of Modern Pentecostalism in Nigeria.* Lagos: Artillery Publications, 2007
43. See *AKEDE EKO* of May 30th 1931 at page 13.

44. See A.D.O Ilesha to Resident, Oyo, 25 March 1931 Oyo Province File 662, National Archive, Ibadan.
45. This is Professor Peel's opinion.
46. See M.O. Idowu, *Acts of Power: The Spread of the Great Revival of 1930 and the Birth of Apostolic Christianity in Nigeria,* Lagos: Artillery Publications,2011
47. S.A. Sadela at the 80th Anniversary of Babalola's call in 2008 celebrated by Gospel Apostolic Church, Oke-owo Street, Gbagada, Lagos.
48. Pastors Aboge, Adegororye, Adelusi, Adedeji, Ogunleye, Babade etc.
49. According to S. A..Sadela. See his testimony at the 80th Memorial Anniversary of Babalola's call.
50. Proverbs 10:25
51. See Georges Balandier, *Sociologie Actuelle de l'Afrique Noire* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1955) passage quoted from text translation from the French by Benjamin Ray.
52. Like Peter Olatunji, Emmanuel Omotunde, Abiodun Emmanuel, Akintobi Ajayi, Aaron Olola, Michael Obisesan, Bayo, Omotuntun etc.
53. E.M. Bounds, *On Prayer,* Tulsa: Harrison House,1988.
54. E.O. Oginni, *My Father As I See Him,* a speech delivered at the 40th Anniversary Celebration of Babalola in 1999.
55. See ''Irohin Ilesa'' in *AKEDE EKO* of 23rd August 1930 pp. 6-7
56. E.O.Oginni, *My Father...*
57. Interview with Mrs R. Adedeji, wife of Pastor Adedeji at Efon- Alaaye in 1997.
58. E.O.Oginni, *My Father...*
59. Interview with Pastor Olu Adebayo 65, Ilesha 1997.
60. See the document written by Babalola himself- Iwe Iwa *Mimo ati Imototo* (The Book of Hygiene and Holy Living) translated into English by the author.
61. See J.D.Y. Peel, *ALADURA: A Religious Movement Among the Yoruba,* London: OUP,1968; Alokan, *The Christ Apostolic Church 1928-88,* Lagos: Ibukunola Printers, 1991.
62. See his written accounts on this in the Book of Hygiene cited above.
63. See interview with Pastor Akande in *Essence Restored,* 2009.
64. Read his complete address in the Acts 7.
65. Exodus 34: 29
66. Luke 9:29
67. According to William Ramsay, one of the greatest archaeologists ever to have lived and Merril Unger. See Josh McDowell, E*vidence That Demands a Verdict*, California: CCI,1972 pp.71-73
68. See Acts 5:15; 19

69.. Read his powerful memoirs For details of Finney's revivals see Garth M. Rosell & Richard A.G. Dupuis (eds), *The Memoirs of Charles G. Finney, the Complete Restored Text,* (Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1989)
69.
70. Gordon Lindsay, *A Man Sent from God,* Jefferson: Indiana, 1950
71. Interview with Pastor Adebayo at Ilesha in 1997.

72. There were large crowds in those days according to eyewitnesses yet they heard him even without sound system. This powerful equipment was God-given and part of his personality.
73. Interview with Pastor Elijah Babade (rtd) 89 at Ipaja in 1997.
74. Interview with Pastor Adelusi 70 at Ebute-metta in 1997.
75. Interview with Pastor Aboge at Mushin, Lagos in 1997.
76. Interview with Pastor Adegoroye 75 at Akure in 1997.
77. Interview with Pastor Olu Adebayo Ilesha, 1997
78. Christ Apostolic Church Annual of 1943 at page 14
79. *Ibid*
80. Job 42: 5,6
81. For material on Saint Thereza I'm depending on William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, New York: Mentor Books, 1958 p.127, 315, especially the chapters on Saintliness and Mysticism.
82. *Ibid*
83. Edward Taylor, *Jacob Boheme : Theosophic Philosophy,* London 1691 pp.425,427, quoted in William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience* and also available on the internet via *www.ccel.org*
84. George Fox*, Autobiography,* available also on www.ccel.org
85. See *Iwe Ilana Ati Eko Ti Ijo Aposteli Kristi Nibi Gbogbo* (*Book of Guidelines and Teaching for Christ Apostolic Church Everywhere)* Revised in 1961.
86. Especially since the beginning of internal conflicts and crisis in 1990 and ever since.
87. Private interview with Pastor Elijah Babade. See also J.A. Medaiyese, *Itan Igbedide Woli J.A.Babalola Fun Ise Ihinrere.*(The Rise of Prophet Babalola for the Work of the Gospel) Ilesa: Olusegun Press nd. Also J.O.Esho, *Iyanu Ni Oro Apostle J.A. Babalola,* Unknown publisher, n.d.

88. D.O. Olowolagba, *Awon Asotele Ijinle ati Eko Iyebiye Woli Joseph Ayo Babalola Vol 1 & 2* (The Profound Prophecies and Teachings of Prophet Joseph Ayo Babalola) Unknown Publishers, 1995.
89. J. O. Young, *Awon Oro Isotele Lati Enu Iranse Olorun Woli Joseph Ayo Babalola* (Selected Words of Prophecy by Pastor Ayo Babalola) Osogbo: Owonifari Printing Works, July 1975.
90. Olujobi- Olowolagba, *Op.cit*
91. See J.O. Esho, *Iyanu Ni Oro Apostle J.A. Babalola,* Ikare: Ebenezer Printing Works, n.d pp.5&6
92. E.O. Oginni, *My Father As I See Him.....*
93. *Ibid*

94. Ephesians 2 :20

95. Matthew 16 : 24
96. See Oswald, Chambers, *Spiritual Leadership,* Chicago: Moody Press, 1967
97. 1 Corinthian 4: 9
98. Private interview with Pastor Olusheye, CAC Secretariat, 1997 an eyewitness of this incident.
99. Acts 6: 4
100. 1 Thessalonians 5: 17
101. Charles Finney, *The Spirit of Prayer,* Minnesota: Bethany House Publishers,1988

102. See Joseph Ayo Babalola, *Eto Adura Lenti Ododun (* Order of Prayer for Lent *)* 1958 p.14
103. *Ibid*
104. See Andrew Olu Young, *Awon Oro Isotele Lati Enu Iranse Olorun Woli Joseph Ayo Babalola* (Selected Words of Prophecy by Pastor Ayo Babalola) Osogbo: Owonifari Printing Works, July 1975.
105. D. Olujobi- Olowolagba, *Op. cit*
106. *Ibid*
107. *Ibid*
108. See G. Adeyinka, *The Last Night of Joseph Babalola in Ede*, p. 4. Also, from private interview with the pastor at Ode-Omu, 2009.
109. J.A. Medaiyese, *Autobiography...*
110. E.O. Oginni, *My Father As I See Him...*
11 1. S.O. Akande, *Itan Igbesi BABA ABIYE Woli Ati Ajihinrere Naa*, Ikeja: Gospel Promotion Services, 1989
112. G. Adeyinka, *Op.cit*
113. *Ibid*
114. *Ibid*
115. D.O. Babajide, *Eni Iyanu Gba Ona Iyanu Lo,* Ilesa: 1958
116. Adeyinka, *Op.cit*
117. S. O. Akande, *Op.cit*
118. Private interview with Pastor Ogunleye at Owo in 1997. He drove the corpse to Efon-Alaaye that night.
119. M.O. Idowu, *The Great Revival of 1930...*
120. See Alokan, *Op.cit*
121. Interview with Mrs Adedeji, wife of Pastor Adedeji at Efon- Alaaye 1997

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(i) Oral Interviews

The under-listed persons provided the oral sources of information for this work through personal interviews with the author. Their relationship with Joseph Ayo Babalola has also been indicated. The interviews conducted mainly in the period between 1995-2000 have provided a ready source of information which could not have been obtained elsewhere, and has thus enriched the book.

(i) Family Members
Mrs Olanrewaju, *younger sister of the apostle.*
Mrs Eunice Oginni, *eldest surviving daughter of the apostle*
Mrs Elizabeth Osoba, *sister of the apostle who also grew up together with him*
Pastor J. Olu Adebayo. *He came with the apostle from Ghana in 1936 as a teenager and was trained by the apostle as a member of his immediate family*
Pastor Olujobi Olowolagba, *a CAC pastor and in-law of the apostle*

(II) First Generation Pastors of CAC
Prophet D.O. Babajide, *who was second in command to the apostle.*
Pastor Z.A. Aboge
Pastor & Mrs J.A. Adedeji
Pastor E.A. Babade
Pastor Apata Adewuyi

Evangelist S.A. Omojuwa.

All the above mentioned were among some of the earliest disciples of the apostle and were eyewitnesses of the Oke-Ooye Revival at Ilesa.

(iii) Other Pastors
Pastor (Dr) E.H.L. Olusheye, *current president of CAC and who was also with the apostle during the last five years of his life.*
Pastor Joseph Adegoroye, *president of CAC supreme council*
Pastor J. Ogunleye
Pastor Adelusi
Pastor Agbabiaka
Pastor Aderemi Olomowewe
Pastor Ogunleye (Owo)
Pastor Adeware Alokan
Pastor Oyeniyi
All the above – mentioned, except the last two, also worked with the apostle to varying number of years.

Iv. Others
The under listed also had indirect access to the apostle by virtue of their position AND they knew him well.
Mrs Deborah Odeniran (Nee Fapohunda). *She was the daughter of the prophet to whom Babalola first came.*
Mrs Medaiyese: *(whose husband, Pastor J.A. Medaiyese and father Pastor Oluwaluyi, were among the closest persons to Babalola in his lifetime).*
Mrs Folorunsho: *whose husband Pastor Folorunsho was with Babalola for 14 years.*
Pastor Adeyinka *who was with BABA ABIYE*
Elder Olaore: *who was with BABA ABIYE*

V. In addition to these there were several men and women, natives of Efon-Alaaye and Ilesha, who knew the apostle and who were called for me to interview during my field work there, whose names cannot all be stated here.

(ii) Church Publications

a. The Apostolic Church

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