

# Pentecostal theology's problem (Pt 1 2:2): *Maši ke phepa ke le nosi, selabe se tla le motsaya kgamelo* – a Setswana proverb

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Decolonisation of theology can be undertaken by engaging African proverbs and idioms. Pentecostalism, although the African Christian phenomenon is exploding, also needs to be decolonised in order to break itself of the western shackles of stereotyping Christianity as a western civilisation. The historical development of Pentecostalism, highlighting the heresies that invaded it, is examined, expanded and explained to support the notion that, indeed, the Setswana proverb: *Maši ke phepa ke le nosi, selabe se tla le motsaya kgamelo*, is a powerful tool to show that Pentecostal faith in its original form was unadulterated, but that the misunderstandings were brought along by certain Pentecostal teachers. The hermeneutical principle of inculturation is referred to as a way of justifying the usage of African proverbs in order to express and simplify theological concepts. Exegesis of 1 Peter 2:2 is undertaken to make an appeal that Pentecostal theology cannot be thrown out as it is a *pure milk* to be desired for spiritual maturity. This Petrine text is referred to as a basis that doctrinal purity within Pentecostalism should be a goal to be desired. The original Pentecostal initiative has been historically invaded and tinted by dissenting voices promoting some questionable beliefs and practices; however, its originality remains evangelically and fundamentally oriented.

**Contribution:** This article contributes towards the journal's vision of multidisciplinary theological perspective using hermeneutical studies and the literature to express the truth experienced in a context but embedded within a text. The article also contributes to the ongoing discourse on decolonisation of theology, especially within the Pentecostal Christianity.

**Keywords:** Pentecostal; theology; *maši* (milk); doctrine; heresy; decolonisation; proverb.

## Introduction

The Pentecostal emergence and intention were never the formulation of dogma or creed. It is the movement that mostly evolved out the Holiness Movement (Kärkkäinen 2002:56), and therefore, embraced the fundamentals of Christian confessions. Originally, the focus of Pentecostalism is the return of exuberance and liveliness of experiencing faith. In its metanarrative substance, it embraces a theology that is orthodox in nature; however, as it evolved, strange ideologies and practices emerged to tarnish its doctrinal purity and claims.

This study uses the Petrine text (Pt 1 2:2) to argue that Pentecostalism is doctrinally correct. From the time of its context, the Christian church, just like today, was invaded by heresies. Apart from the Gnostics of the time of the writing of this epistle, the prevalent heresies of the time included those who were concerned about the delay of Parousia (Filson 1964:336–338). Their sufferings for faith led to the concerns for the lessening of eschatological expectancy. The metaphor of the Setswana proverb: *Maši ke phepa ke le nosi, selabe se tla le motsaya kgamelo*, is applied to enhance the argument that Pentecostalism has been invaded by heretics. This proverb literally means that milk in the original form from the source is pure, and any contamination or infection comes with the one who carries the vessel used for milking. The doctrine as the pure milk is contaminated or infected by the transmitter. Milk is theology, a theologian or a preacher is both a vessel and a transmitter. Some Pentecostal theologians are the infected (misguided) channels promoting heresy that displaces Pentecostal theology from its orthodoxy, meaning that theology is pure; however, a theologian is a heretic.

South Africa, and Africa at large, has recently been overwhelmed with Pentecostal preachers whose *modus operandi* had been under some theological scrutiny. Resane (in Kgatle, Nel & Banda 2022:168–169) recently highlighted the examples of Omotoso, Bushiri, Motsoeneng, Daniel,

Mnguni, etc. These *batsaya-kgamelo* (transmitters and milkmen) are tarnishing the Pentecostal integrity or purity by relaying the infected gospel that is not in essence Pentecostal in its originality.

## Decolonisation through African proverbs and idioms

Decolonialising theology is a process of delving into African worldviews as expressed by their proverbs and idioms. These are the expressions of philosophy and wisdom within African mental capturing of realities. They reveal the mindset, thinking patterns, belief systems and philosophies of life endearing success, survival, and interpretation of life here and later. Lawton (2016) captures it well on the back cover of her famous *South African Proverbs* book:

In order to gain understanding of the mindset of a people you need to look only to their cultural proverbs. How we think, what we believe, we tell of in our stories and sayings.

African philosophy and wisdom express itself idiomatically and proverbially through nature and human composition. These expressions are generally found in vegetation (trees and grass), creatures (wild and domestic animals, reptiles, insects), topographical features (mountains, rocks, roads, etc.), deity or deities (God, spirits), and human behaviours (character, manners, inter-relations, etc). It is true that 'some of them involve God and wisdom. Others are concerned with many other aspects of man's existence' (Mickelsen 1977:334). This is wisely expressed by Orobator (2008) that:

The African's respect for life also extends to and encompasses nature. Life is not the isolated quality of an individual existence, it is solidarity with nature (animal, plant, and geo-ecological life) and the rest of the universe. Nature guarantees the sustenance of the people (land, rain and crops). (p. 145)

African idioms and proverbs like in all languages are 'short, sagacious sayings taken from everyday life' (Mickelsen 1977:334), and are loaded with wisdom that comes out of intense observation and learning of motional ecosystems. Lawton (2016:5) drives the point home that 'proverbs are important to understand and discern cultural values and worldviews of both other communities and ours'. Analogy and metaphors are integral part of human thought systems; and for Africans, they are the object lessons for life and its meaning. The plethora of images and objects used to clarify, teach or express a life value are not simply thought-metaphors to entertain life, but to explain it. These metaphors represent worlds of human experiences, and in our Christian context, simplify or clarify our understanding of Christian theology. This is explained by Clowney (Carson 1993) that:

The words of human experience reflect man's own nature, for he is made in the image of God. The principle of analogy, so fruitful in the operation of our thought, is not an alien mode stamped upon a meaningless universe. Rather, analogy is fruitful because God has established a universe with analogical structure. (p. 76)

Rikhof (1981:205) points out that the task of theology is to 'paraphrase metaphorical language in theoretical statements

that unpack the cognitive content of the metaphorical descriptions'. Employing African thought patterns contributes towards understanding that shapes 'a new future that is different from the colonial past and the neo-colonial present' (Bujo & Muya 2006:270). In all cultures, when this is properly done, theological understanding will be grasped even by ordinary members of the church. There are undoubtedly some heightened interests in theological analysis through historical events, ideologies, experiences and cultural expressions. Mundua (Bujo 2013:70) highlights that 'theologising should be sparked off by the life experience of the persons and communities involved; their total life with its many facets, aspects and dimensions'.

The attempt made through this study is broadly known within African hermeneutics as inculturation, whereby cultural contexts become crucial for definitions, explanations and interpretation of theology within and through biblical texts. According to Pobee (1992:34-44), it is a dynamic process involving translation, assimilation and transformation to confront new norms and forms of life. 'It is one of the themes of ecclesiology that will continue to be an on-going process because of the changes that always unfold in society at all times' (Nkadimeng 2020:97). African epistemologies are powerful tools in the process of inculturation, and the intended aim is to simplify theology in order to be relevant. It will be ideal to look at inculturation from the perspective of Nyamiti (Wabanhu & Moerschbacher 2017):

Inculturation is commonly defined as the insertion or introduction of the Christian message into a particular culture, in such a way that the Christian message finds expression through the elements proper to the culture into which it is inserted, and that message becomes the principal which animates, directs and transforms that culture. (p. 31)

Inculturation is basically discovering Christ within the African worldview because Christ lies hidden within African epistemologies, and Christian theology becomes alive when expressed through these African proverbs and idioms. Kiaziku (2009:117) makes us to understand this that 'the cultural reality is a religious reality in which the relationship with the invisible is omnipresent'. From this perspective, decoloniality of theology is and can be enhanced by and through the application of African proverbs and idioms to express the theological meaning. We do understand that African cultures had metamorphosed over the ages. However, these changes that came through technologically, educationally, economically and politically (Gehman 2005:9) still leave African worldviews intact. Hence, whenever anything scientifically or theologically fails, African turns towards the original traditions to try to seek meaning or fulfilment of life.

## Pentecostalism in its original form

Pentecostalism has been in existence for over a century. Since the beginning of the previous century, the movement is now accepted as a universal phenomenon within the Protestant Christianity. Scholars and researchers attribute its growth and success to many sociological, psychological and historical

factors. Its impact and influence cannot be ignored as its membership reaches millions all over the world. In some countries, such as Mauritius and Burkina Faso, the classical Pentecostal denomination, Assemblies of God, has become the largest Protestant denomination in the nations. Pentecostalism has become a numerical centre for the spread of Christianity, especially in the global south. Historically, the movement was 'on the margins of society, but today the expansion of the movement has impacted all parts of world Christianity' (Kham 2000:4). In its original format, Pentecostalism was never a dogmatic or liturgical off-shoot out of any controversy. It was just an addition to the already established confessions and liturgies; and that addition is sensibilities to faith. In other words, as Briem (1924:157) claimed, it was 'one of the most radical attempts ever made to restore the New Testament church model'.

Zimmerman (McClung 1986:58) points out that the church or Christianity prior to the emergence of Pentecostalism was in a deplorable state. The forces of liberalism in theological seminaries with their higher criticism scholarship, urbanisation, financial turmoil, population explosion, and social ills such as crime, corruption, gambling, prostitution and alcoholism were rampant. Like in all revivals mentioned in both biblical and church history, the remnants were there, yearning and pleading for the revival. Pentecostalism historically evolved as a result of this spiritual yearning. This led to the birth and explosion of Pentecostal movement in its various doctrinal and political expressions. Anderson (2013:2) is correct that:

All these churches show a variety of theological positions, many are fundamentalist, but some are liberal; and there are churches that combine several of these types and positions. (p. 2)

The concern and the focus of this article are that 'some Pentecostal teachings stand in rather sharp contrast to orthodox Christian formulations and are considered heretical by many Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal groups' (Vondey 2014:8).

## Experiential faith

Pentecostal theology emerged and evolved out of and through experience. The experience, labelled the baptism with the Holy Spirit with evidence of *glossolalia*, was and still is used as a validation of *apostolicity* and *pentecostality* of Christianity of the book of Acts. The narrative nature of Acts becomes didactic for Pentecostals, which still links faith to the historical experience of the early church. Dayton (1987:23) writes of the tension between the historical narrative (Luke and Acts) and didactic narrative (epistles) that Pentecostals try to reconcile. They insist that:

[T]he general pattern of the early church's reception of the Spirit, especially as it is in some sense separated in time from the church's experience of Jesus, must be replicated in the life of each individual believer. (Dayton 1987:23)

This does not mean that Paul's didactic narrative is not pneumatological. In fact, Pauline epistles are very trinitarian in nature that one cannot see a special capture on any of the

members of the trinitarian God. Stanley (2003:141) is emphatic on the fact that '[a]s in Luke-Acts, the Holy Spirit is central in Paul's letters. Paul discusses the work and gifts of the Spirit' in all texts related to the *charismata* (Rm 5:5; 8:1-27, 1 Cor 12:4-14:19, Eph 4:11-13, Pt 1 4:10-11) etc. This notion is strong within the Holiness and Pentecostal exegetes that one of them could exclaim: 'I believe the Spirit to lie near the center of things for Paul, as part of the fundamental understanding of the gospel' (Fee 1994:8).

This experience is interpreted as a recovery of the Spirit to 'deliver the church from the decay of mere confessionalism' (Macchia 2012:5). They 'claim that their experiences are the result of encounters with God' (Anderson 2013:9). According to McPherson (1919:392), the God of Pentecost is not merely to be 'confessed' or 'professed'; God is also to be 'possessed'. It was never the intention of the movement to start something new but to bring the lost love of faith. As Macchia (2012) asserts:

Pentecostalism shared with the larger Protestant Movement the passion to restore to the churches something valuable that was lost in the history of the church. (p. 4)

The Christian faith of the 19th century was absorbed into liberalism, and therefore, rationalistic to such an extent that it lost moral influence in personal life. The experience continues to validate Pentecostalism, and this has become a measuring line for just over a century. This aligns with Forsyth's (1998:45) allusion that 'an authority absolute in our experienced religion will marshal to its place by an inevitable moral psychology, our theology, philosophy, and politics alike'. Furthering this notion is Vondey (2014) who asserts that:

In trying to articulate their experiences, song, poetry, testimony, prophecy, and prayer seem the more appropriate media to Pentecostals than creedal formulations and doctrinal propositions. (p. 82)

## Historical rootedness in Holiness Movement

The experience was also enhanced by historical roots of the Pentecostal movement in the Holiness Movement, which was emphatic on the second experience followed by conversion. This was popularly known as sanctification. Holiness preachers 'tightened the connection between baptism in the Holy Spirit and sanctification' (Yong 2014:87). In its American rootedness, the Holiness Movement associated Spirit's baptism with the sanctifying purity and empowerment for the Christian life and service for the Lord.

## Hermeneutical approaches

This overflowed into hermeneutical premise of *eisegesis* as opposed to *exegesis*. Pentecostals are generally known for interpreting the text through experience. Experience is the hermeneutical lens through which the Bible is read by Pentecostals. Their textual interpretative method combines the literal, ahistorical and pietistic hermeneutics (Archer 2009:89). The same notion is confirmed by one of the South African Pentecostal scholars, Nel (2019), that:

Pentecostals emphasise an immediate and experiential meaning for Scripture that does not necessarily exactly equate with a historical-critical or grammatical-historical analysis of the text .... (p. 517)

Hermeneutical analysis and discoveries are directly interpreted through the experience of God in daily life (Dela Cruz 2010:105). Consequently, this raises a question of authority's origin: experience or Word? The tendency here is the preference of experience and extra-biblical revelation above the Bible (Enyinnaya 2008:146). This inevitably exposes Pentecostals to 'heretical teachings as well as abuse by emotionally unstable persons' (Nel 2017:290), who always go beyond and above the Scripture. Classically, 'Pentecostals do not believe it is right to go beyond the written Word of God in establishing doctrines' (Kärkkäinen 2002:35). Theologians' concern is a cardinal sin of misguided Pentecostal preachers that 'abuse (*kapēleuō*), to be hucksters, or adulterate the word of God' (Ramm 1977:5).

For over a century now, Pentecostal distinctiveness still revolves around its understanding of 'Spirit baptism as an empowerment for ministry distinct from regeneration or initiation into Christ' (Macchia 2006:20). The Pentecostal hermeneutical narrative is dramatic and characterised by supernatural manifestations within the worshipping community (Archer 2009:175). The accompanying experience is closely associated with *glossolalia* and divine healing. Bartleman (1980) highlights that:

The 'tongues' were the 'sign', the 'burning bush', that God used to attract the attention of the people to the Pentecostal outpouring, as He had used 'healing', etc. in previous outpourings. (p. 182)

The operation of the gifts of the Spirit individually and corporately is closely associated with this experience. This sets apart the Pentecostal Christianity from the mainstream evangelical Christianity. As asserted by Yong (2014:81), '[t]his is one of the chief, if not sole, elements historically setting apart classical Pentecostalism from charismatic and other renewal expressions of Christianity'.

## Theological rootedness in evangelicalism

It is, indeed, true that '[l]ocating the Pentecostal Movement within the larger Protestant landscape is no easy' task, as the Movement is vast and diverse (Macchia 2012:12). Fundamentally, Pentecostals define themselves with the exuberance and lively experience of the Christian faith. Dogma and creeds are viewed as divisive and dry confessions that make faith a dead orthodoxy. This does not mean that Pentecostals disregard doctrines. As Kärkkäinen (2002:8) points out, 'the basis for the doctrinal process is the experience of the community of faith'. Rather than concentrating on the dissection of doctrinal minutiae, Pentecostalism disseminates the message of alternative lifestyle coming through empowerment of the Holy Spirit, which is of course consequent to conversion. The scripture 'still remains the ultimate norm of faith and practice'

(Kärkkäinen 2002:8). Theological crust is alluded to by Yong (2005:81–120) that in reality Pentecostal theology is born out of the need for narrating the experiences of the salvific work of God in Christ and the Holy Spirit and to do so in terms that do justice to their experiences rather than to official formulations of doctrine.

Historically, Pentecostals engaged dogma reservedly and opted to remain within the broader evangelical metanarratives. This is confirmed by Archer (2004:41) that 'the Pentecostal story or narrative finds its specific place in the larger Christian metanarrative'. Pentecostalism still remains fundamentalistic, literalistic and evangelically conservative, especially when coming to biblical hermeneutics and theological ethics. For them orthodoxy remains untouchable, only the experience to reawaken it as a way of validation of its canonicity. In consort with their evangelical rootedness, 'God is present in Scripture as the omnipotent Lord of history', and therefore could not allow any external force to thwart his redemptive plan by any defective transmission (Boice 1979:86). Hence, the Pentecostal hermeneutics insists 'upon the experiential immediacy of the Holy Spirit' (Kärkkäinen 2002:11). Thus, experienced *pneuma* becomes a Pentecostal distinctive that overarches Pentecostal theology in its entirety. 'The Spirit is not only one feature of Pentecostal ecclesiology, but *the* overarching feature that informs the others' (Williams 2016:11). It is therefore theologically legitimate to assert that experience of the Holy Spirit, especially that of *glossolalia*, fails to define the Pentecostal movement adequately to distinguish it from other movements within Protestantism.

## The textual understanding of 1 Peter 2:2

This study points out that Pentecostalism in its original form is doctrinally orthodox. The latest practices and nuances are introduced by modern Pentecostal preachers who divert from the movement's fundamental historical ideology. The Petrine text (Pt 1 2:2) referring to pure milk is used to validate this notion, which is also backed up by the Setswana proverb of *Maši ke phepa ke le nosi, selabe se tla le motsaya kgamelo*. Pentecostal theology is theologically orthodox, heresy comes through the modern preacher. The heretic elements are not in theology but in the transmitters, who happen to be preachers.

The two Petrine epistles come to the reader as a word of encouragement to the suffering believers in diaspora, and chiefly concerned with the prevailing heresies of that region in Asia Minor. These heresies were a threat to the pilgrims in flight. The character and the activities of the heretics are highlighted in the first verse of this text. These are malice (*kakia*), that is, evil and wickedness; deceit (*dolos*): that is, to be two-faced, tricky, impure motives; hypocrisy, that is, parading of outward conduct intended to impress others; envy, that is, self-seeking (greed); slander (*katalalia*), that is, gossiping disparagement or evil speaking. Milk is used as a symbol, and its significance is 'based upon the literal nature

and characteristics of that which is being used as a symbol' (Conner & Malmin 1983:126). It is from this perspective that this text in corroboration with the Setswana proverbs is interpreted.

The newborn babies (*artigennēta*) are invited to yearn (*epipothēsate*) for *logikon adolon gala*, that is, milk without guile. Taken into epistemological analysis, these recipients of the epistle were new converts encouraged to desire for unadulterated dogma – milk without any contamination or infection. This desire should be voracious, carrying some sense of cultivating a healthy appetite for (teaching). Reference to *logikon* implies 'the sincere milk of the word' or 'milk belonging to the word' either the milk 'which is the word or the milk contained in the word, that is, Christ' (Robertson 1931:95). *Logikon* further carries the sense of rational or spiritual connotation. This is a lesson for Pentecostals who emphasise spiritual (experience) at the expense of rationality. In this passage, the emphasis is the balance between the two. The bottom line is that since conversion came through the *logos* and *rēma*, the desire should continue for the pure, spiritual-rational milk, as a way towards spiritual maturity. 'The metaphorical milk is pure... the uncontaminated and undiluted truth' (Cleave 1999:53). Doctrine in its essence not only imparts life and sanity to humanity but also it nurtures and sustains it. Without proper doctrine, new believers shrivel and die like a starving child whose mother's breasts have dried up and who has no other source of food.

Bringing the textual meaning to the Pentecostal context, the Petrine teaching is that the word is pure, literally, not deceitful. It is 'properly rational, pertaining to reason, or mind' (Barnes 1979:134). It is the same word found in verse 1, which means unadulterated (Earle 1986:439), or not watered down. Barclays informs us that dishonest merchants in that day would add water to their milk to make more profit. This was 'deceitful' milk. Peter teaches Christians to long for the pure, not-deceitful milk. Barnes (1979) highlighted that:

Religion reproduces the traits of character of children in those whom it influences, and they ought to regard themselves as newborn babies, and seek that kind of spiritual nutriment which is adapted to their condition as such. (p. 133)

Through this unadulterated doctrine, Christians become rational, as well as spiritual, at the same time. Believers become the right handlers of the doctrine because they are well nourished by the pure doctrine (milk). Acknowledgement should be rendered to two other New Testament texts of 1 Corinthians 3:1–2 where, according to *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Bromiley 1985:111), milk 'signifies the basic gospel' and Hebrews 5:12 where milk signifies 'the rudiments of Christian teaching' further explored in the following chapter 6:1–2. As the *Africa Bible Commentary* (2006:1519) points out, '[r]ather than craving status or possessions, Christians should crave pure spiritual milk'. The mother's milk is the best nutrition for the baby (Harrell 2004:43), creating an opportunity and possibility to grow. Like infants in their longing for uninfected milk from the mother's breast, with no container between the breast and the mouth,

Pentecostal preachers should long for the pure doctrine that is not contaminated with any heresy. So, (Word) is a necessity for growing towards maturity in all spheres of life.

### ***Ke phepa ke le nosi, selabe se tla le motsaa-kgamelo (originally unadulterated, infection came through the milk person)***

This study continues to demonstrate that inculturation involves the process of exegesis and exposition. Any exegesis or exposition requires two steps: the discovery of the 'meaning of the expression or statement in the past' and extracting the meaning for the current context 'with the same impact it had when originally written' or formulated (Mickelsen 1977:56). The purpose here is to communicate the meaning of 'an earlier statement to those living at the same time as the interpreter' (Mickelsen 1977:57). The proverb under review has three characters and two actions. The characters are milk (*maši*), infection or contamination (*selabe*), and *motsaya kgamelo* (milker). Actions involved are cleanliness (*phepa*), coming or transmission (*se tla*). Conservatively speaking, first milk, known as colostrum, contains antibodies that builds the new baby's fragile immune system. Scientifically, the milk cannot be guaranteed non-infection, as mothers of both humans and animals may have been infected through some medical interventions or health interruptions – another door of *motsaya-kgamelo* in this context.

The intended meaning is to convey the theological idea about Pentecostalism and the Pentecostal preacher. The image of milk in 1 Peter 2:2 and that of the Setswana proverb correlate to authenticate Pentecostal intentions for theological purity and authenticity. The historical unfolding, Holiness Movement rootedness, experience of the baptism with the Holy Spirit evidenced by *glossolalia* and evangelical rootedness of the Pentecostal Movement had proven the Pentecostal doctrine's test of the time.

### ***Motsaya kgamelo (milk person, transmitter or the preacher)***

Like all the Christian movements of the past ages, the Pentecostal movement has been tainted by some characters with some questionable doctrinal propositions or ethical traits. Bartleman (1980:182) is correct that 'sects generally begin with an honest effort to preserve and restore some long-lost truth. They end in division'. The heresies and the heretics (theology and preachers and *motsaya kgamelo*) are the historical marks that always disqualify or authenticates the ideology promoted. For instance, in the early days of Pentecostal history, there was the Latter Rain Movement associated with the two brothers Ern and George Hawtin. The controversy about the movement was its 'nature of sensationalism and ecstatic emphasis on miracles' (Resane 2008:49). The movement was made popular by William Marrion Branham (1909–1965) whose ministry was characterised by miracles and the supernatural. The other notable figure was Frank Hall. 'His contribution was the body-felt salvation theory, which he espoused to be 700 per

cent greater than ordinary healing power' (Moriarty 1992:56). The last notable person associated with this movement was George Warnock whose emphasis was 'accentuation on prophecy and eschatological aspirations...' (Resane 2008:50). Assemblies of God General Council in 1949 resolved to disapprove the Latter Rain Movement (Resane 2008:51) as it was regarded as a *motsaya kgamelo* with *selabe* (heresy).

Another *motsaya kgamelo* within Pentecostalism was the Shepherding Movement of the 1970s and 1980s. The notable personalities were five teachers who all settled in Fort Lauderdale. They are dubbed as the 'Fort Lauderdale Five' (Resane 2008:52). These teachers are Don Bashan whose ministry focused on deliverance from demonic powers; and the Spirit's baptism (Resane 2008:52). Then there was Ern Baxter – a reformed preachers holding to Pentecostal persuasions. Bob Mumford was David du Plessis' disciple and a spokesman for this movement. Derek Prince was a convert out of the chaotic world of World War II, whose ministry focussed on 'deliverance from demonic powers, intercessory prayer, and glossolalia as the initial evidence of Spirit baptism' (Resane 2008:54). Charles Simpson was a gifted pastoral leader who embraced charismatic teachings and shaped the Shepherding Movement more than any of the four. The Movement ceased to exist because of their realisation of *selabe* (heretic tendencies) in their teachings such as submission, pyramidal discipleship system.

There is another *motsaya kgamelo* to be observed in this discussion., which is the Positive Confession Movement. Resane (2008:56) mentions their variances such as 'word of faith', 'name it and claim it', 'health and wealth', 'happiness movement' and 'faith-formula theology'. Their (doctrine) is basically prosperity gospel promoted by the likes of Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland, etc. This (doctrine) is prevalent on the South African Christian landscape in diverse Pentecostal Christian communities, especially among the Neo-Pentecostals. Their dominance with their message of prosperity, health, success and breakthroughs is exerted only in the affluent societies. One hardly hears of their echoes in the poorer communities, such as rural villages, informal settlements, farm dwellings, etc. Their missional expression is deaf to the marginalised masses even in the urban settlements (poor street dwellers, prostitutes, etc.).

The final *motsaya kgamelo* to be considered as the transmitter of *selabe* (heresy) is the so-called Third Wave Churches. This *motsaya kgamelo* (movement) is making some indelible marks within the Pentecostal ranks. Their emphases on the apostolic government of the church, especially the so-called *fivefold ministry*, has caused some stirs within Pentecostal discourses. Their reservation to theological education opens up loopholes where strange practices are promoted or exercised at the expense of the seekers whose dignity is always compromised. Their practices always include the extra-biblical prophecies, healings, demand for submission, strange practices such as spraying people with insecticides, making devotees to eat grass, drink petrol, stripping naked in front of the congregations, etc. The worst scenario is that the *motsaya*

*kgamelo* is always elevated to titles, such as apostle, prophet, Papa, and Man of God, who knows everything about everybody, such as their underwears, identity documents, romantic affairs, etc. All these are displayed to the devotees at the cost, and the bottom line is the commercialisation of the gospel. All these oracles stand in juxtaposition that Pentecostal theology is in essence and ethically orthodox, and these heretical tendencies come along with the Pentecostal preacher, who is not aligned to original Pentecostal message.

For all these *batsaya-kgamelo* (plural of *motsaya kgamelo*), within the Pentecostal Movement, like all heretics down the history, 'they thought that they were revealing or emphasising some truth that had been ignored, misinterpreted, repressed, etc.' (Colson in Chesterton 2009:11).

## Conclusion

In order to decolonise theology, including Pentecostalism, African proverbs and idioms should be engaged or interrogated to make theological concepts simple and understandable. The Setswana proverb, *maši ke phepa ke le nose, selabe se tla le motsaya-kgamelo*, had been used in this article to demonstrate that Pentecostal faith in its original form is clear and without heretic nuances to orthodox theology. The problem is the heretics who emerged within the Pentecostal Movement over the ages. The proverb has been used to bring exegetical understanding of 1 Peter 2:2 as an example of appealing to African proverbs to explain and simplify theological concepts.

Research shows that:

Pentecostal revival was not solely a divine phenomenon but a revival that stood on the shoulders of revivals in the past, both historically and theologically. (Davidson 2012:48)

It is the movement that started as genuinely rooted in orthodox Christianity, with no intention of becoming a secession or heretic. Its bumpy road of struggling for dogmatic authenticity had been marred with heretics that marked the movement as a deviation from the truth. Its essence had been contaminated by heretics, and this is still a normalcy today. As a movement, it has evolved through decades but remains classically evangelical with emphasis on ethical and doctrinal purity, regardless of some punitive and judgmental nuances directed to it. Hunter (1998) told the 18th Pentecostal World Conference in 1998 that '[m]any judged Pentecostals to be emotionally disturbed, mentally limited, sociologically deprived and concluded that the pneumatic unction claimed by Pentecostals was not genuine'. The appeal continues that Pentecostal distinctiveness continues to be enhanced with orthodox theological rootedness.

The *batsaya-kgamelo* within Pentecostalism prove Vondey (2013) right that:

Today's Pentecostalism is a global phenomenon, an ecumenical melting pot, a theological puzzle consisting of a multiplicity of voices and positions, and a major factor in the shaping of late modern Christianity. (p. 12)

The original Pentecostal initiative has been historically invaded and tinted by dissenting voices promoting some questionable beliefs and practices; however, its originality remains evangelically and fundamentally oriented. Pentecostals still hold on to the orthodox doctrines of Christianity as expressed in the Nicene Creed and other confessions. The latest practices in Pentecostalism taint the movement's originality and substantiality.

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