

## THESIS ABSTRACT

Master of Arts in Missiology

Adventist University of Africa

Theological Seminary

Title: EXPLORING THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF ADVENTISTS WITH MUSLIM BACKGROUNDS IN CONAKRY DISTRICT, GUINEA: A MISSIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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The Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church in Conakry district, Guinea, is sparingly winning Muslims into the Adventist Church despite Muslims forming the majority of the Country's population. Therefore, this study used a phenomenological qualitative research design to investigate the lived experiences of Adventist Muslim Background Believers (AMBBs) in Conakry district, to develop a contextualized mission strategy to reach Muslims. The study conducted semi-structured interviews on six AMBBs within the Conakry district of SDA. The study used the collected data to develop a eight-step mission strategy to reach Muslims in the Conakry district.

The lived experience of Muslim converts to Adventism in the Conakry district showed that they face challenges during and after their conversion, and their worldview is transformed after becoming Adventists. It is recommended that all the pastors, elders, and members in all church departments in the Conakry district

collaborate, after thorough training, on missions to Muslims to lead many of them to a saving knowledge of Jesus.

Keywords: Contextualization, Conversion, Mission, Worldview, Experience, Muslims

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A MISSIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

A thesis

presented in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree  
Master of Arts in Missiology

by

Arthur Moni Koikoi

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## DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to Almighty God for His guidance, strength, and blessings throughout this journey.

I also dedicate this work to my late wife, Mrs. Alice Gbadié Koikoi, who began this educational journey with me but did not live to see its completion. To my children, who endured hardships while I was away pursuing my studies, and to my present wife, who faithfully served as my prayer partner throughout my studies, I extend my deepest love and appreciation.

Finally, I dedicate this work to all those who labor in the service of God and for the advancement of God's mission throughout the world. May this work bring glory and honor to His holy name.

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## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

### **Background of the Study**

The study of the lived experiences of Muslim converts from Islam involves exploring the perspectives and challenges of individuals who have transitioned from Islam to other belief systems, especially the Christian faith and, in particular, the Adventist faith.<sup>1</sup> Scholars such as Stefanos Katsikas, Sakis Dimitriadis, Kerl Szabolcs, and Christina Sleiman have investigated the lived experiences of Muslim converts to Christianity, seeking to understand the phenomenon of conversion from Islam to Christianity, including the factors that led to their conversion and the challenges they face during and after it.<sup>2</sup>

Katsikas and Dimitriadis investigated the conversion of Muslims to Orthodox Christianity in South-Eastern Europe.<sup>3</sup> This study is based on the Greek War of Independence, which took place between 1821 and 1832 AD. Katsikas and Dimitriadis, who conducted this research, asserted that although there have always been religious differences among people in southeastern Europe, individuals did not

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<sup>1</sup>Patrick Sookhdeo, *Lausanne 2004 Forum for World Evangelization*. [http://community.gospelcom.net/lcwe/assets/LOP32\\_IG3.pdf](http://community.gospelcom.net/lcwe/assets/LOP32_IG3.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>Stefanos Katsikas and Sakis Dimitriadis. "Muslim Converts to Orthodox Christianity during the Greek War of Independence, 1821–1832," *European History Quarterly* 51, no. 3 (July 2021): 299–323; Kerl Szabolcs and Christina Sleiman. "Religious Conversion to Christianity in Muslim Refugees in Europe," *Archive for the Psychology of Religion* 39, no. 3 (December 2017): 283–294.

<sup>3</sup>Katsikas and Dimitriadis. "Muslim Converts to Orthodox Christianity."

define their fellow human beings solely by their religious affiliations between 1821 and 1832.

Szabolcs and Sleiman also investigated the conversion of Muslim refugees to Christianity in Europe.<sup>4</sup> Besides, a study on the challenges Muslim background believers face after conversion in South Asia found that they had problems of separation from family and relatives, language problems, financial constraints, and the occurrence of divorce among married couples.<sup>5</sup>

David Teeter also conducted a similar study on the conversion of Muslims to Christianity in the Middle East.<sup>6</sup> Others have also researched Muslim conversion to Christianity in Algeria,<sup>7</sup> Malaysia,<sup>8</sup> and Canada.<sup>9</sup> Abu Atallah and Kent A. Van Till wrote the testimony of a Muslim who became a Christian in Egypt and eventually led many other Muslims to Christ.<sup>10</sup> The factor that led this Muslim to Christ was friendship, which in turn led to interfaith dialogue. This Muslim faced challenges

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<sup>4</sup>Szabolcs and Sleiman. "Religious Conversion to Christianity in Muslim Refugees in Europe."

<sup>5</sup>Ahamed Sarjoon Razick, Mohamed Anifa Mohamed Fowsar, and Ameer Rushana, "Problems Faced by Muslim Converts in Sri Lanka: A Study Based on Anuradhapura District," *Journal of Politics and Law* 13, no. 3 (August 17, 2020): 10.

<sup>6</sup>David Teeter, "Dynamic Equivalent Conversion for Tentative Muslim Believers," *Missiology: An International Review* 18, no. 3 (July 1990): 305–13.

<sup>7</sup>Nadia Marzouki, "Conversion as Statelessness: A Study of Contemporary Algerian Conversions to Evangelical Christianity," *Middle East Law and Governance* 4, no. 1 (2012): 69–105.

<sup>8</sup>Tuck Yee Loo, Nadiyah Elias, and Mariny Abdul Ghani, "The Religious Conversion Process as an Unusual Life Experience to the Malaysian Chinese Muslim Converts in the Context of Adulthood Self-differentiation Development," *International Journal of Education, Psychology and Counseling* 4, no. 32 (September 15, 2019): 164–73.

<sup>9</sup>Linda Darwish, "When your Heart is Touched, it's not a Decision," *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 47, no. 1 (December 1, 2017): 45–77.

<sup>10</sup>Abu Atallah and Kent A. Van Till, *From Cairo to Christ: How One Muslim's Faith Journey Shows the Way for Others* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2017).

during and after his conversion to Christianity, such as family rejection and discrimination.<sup>11</sup>

There is inadequate literature on the lived experiences of Muslim converts to Christianity, particularly within the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Guinea. The Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church is a worldwide church with a mission to preach the everlasting gospel to those who dwell on the earth (Rev. 14:6). Before His departure, Jesus commissioned His disciples in Matthew 28:18-20 to make disciples of all the nations. This implies that every soul must be reached with the gospel, including the Sunni Muslims in Conakry. For that reason, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the West Africa Union-Mission in Guinea-Conakry is embarking on reaching all people in Guinea with the gospel, including Muslims.

While the Conakry district of SDA has tried its best to reach the population of 4500,000 Plus, in Conakry with the gospel of Jesus, there are 19 AMBBs in the SDA Church among 2,842 Adventists (Guinea Region Secretary's Report). The insignificance of the number of conversions from Islam to the SDA church makes it seem that the church's effort is in vain. However, there appears to be an inadequate exploration of the lived experiences of Adventist Muslim Background Believers (AMBBs).

This study explores the lived experiences of Adventist Muslim Background Believers (AMBBs) in the Conakry district of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Guinea Region of the West Africa Union-Mission of West Africa (WAUM) to investigate their worldview transformation during conversion and the challenges they

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<sup>11</sup>Abu Atallah and Kent A. Van Till, *From Cairo to Christ: How One Muslim's Faith Journey Shows the Way for Others* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2017).

faced before and after it. The study used this information to develop a contextualized strategy for reaching Muslims in the Conakry district of SDA.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The Conakry District of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Guinea, under the West Africa Union Mission (WAUM), is mandated to proclaim the gospel to all people in fulfillment of the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19–20). However, despite the predominantly Muslim population in Conakry, relatively few Muslims are reached, and even fewer convert to the Adventist faith.<sup>12</sup> What is worse is that some of the few Adventist Muslim Background Believers (AMBBs) who join the church later backslide and go back to their former Islamic faith.

The backsliding of AMBBs back to Islam is due to the lack of a clear strategy for retaining them in Conakry. This study, therefore, investigates the lived experience of AMBBs in relation to their worldview evolution after conversion, the challenges they face during and after conversion to the Adventist faith, and proposes a strategy for AMBBs retention in Conakry.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experiences of Adventist Muslim Background Believers (AMBBs) in the Conakry District to ascertain their worldview evolution and the challenges they face during and after their conversion. The study used this knowledge to develop a ~~proposed~~ strategy to retain them within the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Conakry district.

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<sup>12</sup>Mohammad Hassan Khalil and Mucahit Bilici, “Conversion Out of Islam: A Study of Conversion Narratives of Former Muslims,” *The Muslim World* 97, no. 3 (2007): 487–508.

## **Significance of the Study**

This missiological research is crucial, as it may assist the Seventh-day Adventist Church in effectively carrying out mission work among AMBBs in the Conakry district, leading to their effective retention in the Church. The study will guide Adventist Muslim Relations directors, personal ministry leaders, pastors, and church members in the Conakry district toward a clear path for retaining AMBBs in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

## **Research Questions**

The following questions guided this missiological research:

1. What is the worldview of the AMBBs in the Conakry district?
2. What is the biblical-theological foundation of conversion?
3. What challenges do AMBBs face in the Conakry district during and after conversion?
4. What contextualized strategy can be developed for effective AMBBs retention in the Conakry district?

## **Limitations**

Financial constraints limited my access to the areas, and I would have liked to cover the entire district. Furthermore, I anticipate incurring expenses for the transcription and translation of the audio that I recorded. Time is also a significant factor that caused me to shorten the duration of my research. These foreseen challenges were mitigated by ensuring that maximum data was collected from AMBBs within the shortest possible time, which was sufficient to obtain accurate findings after analysis.

## **Delimitation**

This study was delimited to the AMBBs within the Conakry district of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The Conakry District is the first of the two districts in the Guinea Region of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This district carries about 95 percent Muslims. The district houses the capital city of the Republic of Guinea (Conakry) and, additionally, the headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It covers the following prefectures: Conakry, Coyah, Dubreka, Kindia, Boke, Kankan, and Siguiri. Six AMBBs was interviewed to represent the lived experiences of all AMBBs within the Conakry district of SDA.

## **Reflexivity**

I developed a strong commitment to mission work when I embraced the Adventist faith on April 25, 1992. Before my baptism into the Adventist Faith, I had established a Christian group in Koyamah, Guinea, specifically in the village of Sekata. This group, known as the Young Christian Fellowship, consisted of 15 members. During this time, an evangelist from the Seventh-day Adventist Church's Sabbath School branch learned about our activities and invited our group to perform at their final 13th Sabbath celebration in 1991. Most importantly, I was never baptized in any other denomination, but I affiliated with other Christian groups.

Intrigued by the concept of the Sabbath and the historical transition to Sunday worship, I conversed with the evangelist. He shared the same narrative that I had encountered from Adventists in 1986 and 1989, leading me to express my intention to join the Adventist denomination from our Christian fellowship. Upon accepting the invitation, we were graciously welcomed and actively participated in the celebrations, which culminated in a communal meal.

Following the event, Evangelist Tanawonie K. Florma provided a baptismal manual, which I used to instruct my group members and to extend outreach to neighboring villages. Over time, the Young Christian Fellowship assimilated into the Adventist Church, resulting in ten (10) individuals committing their lives to Jesus through our missionary efforts.

I first became a Christian on September 22, 1985, in the Baptist Church located in Unification Town, Margibi County, Liberia, but did not receive baptism. My first exposure to the Adventist message in 1986 led to significant confusion regarding the appropriate day of worship. Despite being eligible for baptism, I chose to investigate the Sabbath further. This inquiry continued until the outbreak of the civil crisis in Liberia in 1989, after which I fled to Guinea. There, I formed a prayer group that subsequently evolved into a Sabbath School class. Although I prepared many for baptism, only nine individuals, including my late wife and myself, were baptized on April 25, 1992.

My passion for mission outreach predates my involvement with the Adventist faith. More interestingly, I was first elected as the Lay Activities Director, a role now recognized as Personal Ministries. Subsequently, I served as the company leader in Koyamah, Macenta Prefecture, and became the first elder of the Nzerekore Central Seventh-day Church, located in Nzerekore, Guinea's third-largest city. In these roles, I engaged in various community outreach initiatives. Additionally, I was among the pioneers of Global Mission and served as an evangelist for Gospel Outreach Canada from 2002 to 2012.

Between 1995 and 2002, while working as a classroom teacher, I was privileged to lead many individuals to Christ, including Pastor James Kolubah Kesselly, who is currently pursuing studies in missiology. I also have a son, Sabbato

Peace Koikoi, who has dedicated himself to pastoral ministry and is now serving as a district pastor.

Throughout my tenure in the Guinea Region of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, I have held several key positions, including Personal Ministries and Sabbath School Director, Publishing Ministries Director, and Ministerial Secretary. My contributions have included training elders, evangelists, pastors, and church members, as well as organizing and preaching at various evangelistic campaigns. I have also officiated communion services, blessed weddings, and conducted child dedications.

Despite these accomplishments, I feel a sense of fulfillment that remains incomplete. The overarching mission of the church is to reach all individuals around the globe with the everlasting gospel, which, importantly, includes our Muslim counterparts. My passion for Muslim mission stems from my interactions with Muslims in high school and from my service as a Global Mission and Gospel Outreach pioneer. Most importantly, my mission field is in the 10/40 window.

I often had Bible studies with them. In addition, the Adventist Church in Guinea is actively involved in evangelizing Muslims to restore their spiritual connection with God and guide them toward true salvation (Revelation 14:6–12). My main motivating text for Muslim’s mission is Revelation 14:6, which states that the everlasting gospel be preached to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people. However, many Adventist believers from Muslim backgrounds face challenges in remaining within the church following their baptism.

This concern has motivated me to undertake a thesis entitled “The Evaluation of Lived Experiences of Adventist Muslim Background Believers in the Conakry District of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.” The objective of this research is to

identify the challenges and problems these believers face, their underlying causes, and to propose viable solutions. Good.

### **Methodology**

This section provided an overview of the study's methodology. It is a qualitative research approach that is a Phenomenological case study research design.<sup>13</sup> It covers the population and sampling methods, the data collection process, the analysis techniques, and the ethical considerations.

#### Research Approach and Design

This study employed a qualitative research approach, specifically a phenomenological design. Phenomenology is chosen because it focuses on understanding and interpreting the lived experiences of Adventists with Muslim Backgrounds (AMBBs), particularly their conversion journey from Islam to the Adventist Church and the challenges they encounter throughout this transition.<sup>14</sup> This approach allows for an in-depth exploration of their personal narratives, perceptions, and the meanings they attach to their spiritual transformation.

#### Population and Sampling

In research, a population refers to the entire group to which the findings will be applicable. At the same time, a sample is a subset of that population, carefully selected to represent its diverse characteristics.<sup>15</sup> For this study, the population

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<sup>13</sup>Leroy R. Thacker II., "What Is the Big Deal About Populations in Research?" *Progress in Transplantation* 30, no. 1 (2020): 3-3; Shahid N Khan, "Qualitative Research Method - Phenomenology," *Asian Social Science* 10, no. 21 (October 30, 2014): 298.

<sup>14</sup>Caleb C. S. Kim, *Cultural Anthropology from A Christian Perspective* (Eldoret: Utafiti Foundation, 2019), 202.

<sup>15</sup>Leroy R. Thacker II., "What Is the Big Deal About Populations in Research?":3-3; Shahid N Khan, "Qualitative Research Method - Phenomenology," 298.

consists of nineteen (19) Adventists with Muslim Backgrounds (AMBBs) in the Conakry district of the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church.

To identify participants, this study employed purposive sampling, a method in which individuals are intentionally selected for their ability to provide rich insights into the research problem and central phenomenon.<sup>16</sup> Specifically, this study will use homogeneous sampling, a type of purposive sampling<sup>17</sup> that involves selecting participants with shared characteristics. This approach allows for a focused exploration of the phenomenon while enabling each participant to express their unique perspective on their conversion journey and the challenges they face.<sup>18</sup>

For this study, a sample of six (6) AMBBs from the Conakry district of the SDA Church was selected. Participants were selected based on predefined criteria, ensuring they met the qualifications to contribute meaningfully to the study's objectives.

#### Sampling Criteria<sup>19</sup>

**Religious Background.** Participants were born and raised in the Islamic faith before converting to the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church.

**Conversion Experience.** Only those who have undergone a formal conversion to Adventism and actively practice the faith will be considered.

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<sup>16</sup>John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2007), 125.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 127.

<sup>18</sup>Shahid N. Khan, "Qualitative Research Method-Phenomenology," *Asian Social Science* 10, no. 21 (2014): 298.

<sup>19</sup>Shahid N. Khan, "Qualitative Research Method-Phenomenology," *Asian Social Science* 10, no. 21 (2014): 298.

Duration Since Conversion. Participants must have been Adventists for at least two (2) years to ensure they have had enough time to reflect on their conversion journey and challenges.

Geographical Location. Participants must reside in the Conakry district of Guinea and be actively involved in the local SDA community.

Willingness to Participate. Individuals must be willing and able to share their personal experiences, challenges, and perspectives in detail and openly.

Age Requirement. Participants should be 18 years or older and demonstrate the maturity to articulate their experiences meaningfully.

No Recent Converts. To ensure depth in responses, those who have converted within the past six months were excluded, as they may not have fully processed their transition.

Language Proficiency – Participants were able to communicate effectively in French or a commonly spoken local language, facilitating clear and comprehensive data collection.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

Data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews with ~~the six~~ (6) AMBBs who participated in the study. Interviews give a researcher the chance to discover valuable information from participants.<sup>20</sup> The study considered the environment and the circumstances in which the interviews was conducted to inform the organization of the interview. The interview was semi-structured.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Robert Y. Cavana, Brian L. Delahaye, and Uma Sekaran, *Applied Business Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Methods* (Brisbane, Australia: John Wiley & Sons, 2001), 138.

<sup>21</sup>Corrine Glesne, *Becoming Qualitative Researchers: An Introduction*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Boston, MA: Pearson, 2011), 102.

A focus group discussion was also conducted to ensure triangulation.<sup>22</sup> This focus group discussion involved six non-randomly selected AMBBs who did not participate in the individual interviews. These interviews with individual AMBBs and the focus group were recorded, translated into English, and transcribed. The transcripts were analyzed and synthesized thematically to identify common patterns in participants' experiences.<sup>23</sup>

### **Ethical Consideration**

The researcher applied for and obtained ethical clearance from the Adventist University of Africa's Institutional Scientific and Ethics Review Committee (AUA\_ ISERC) upon submitting the consent form and data collection instruments to AUA\_ ISERC for review and approval. All participants signed the consent form before they participated in the research work.

### **Definitions of Terms**

*AMBBs* refer to Adventist Muslim Background Believers who are members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and who converted from Islam.<sup>24</sup> For this study, this term was used to refer to Seventh-day Adventist Church members who converted from Islam.

*A challenge* is a situation that requires great mental or physical effort to be completed successfully and therefore tests a person's ability.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>C. Bradbury-Jones, S. Sambrook, and F. Irvine, "The Phenomenological Focus Group: An Oxymoron?" *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 65, no. 3 (2009): 663-71.

<sup>23</sup>Jörg Hecker and Neringa Kalpokas, "Transcripts in Research | Overview, Types and Examples," ATLAS.ti, accessed May 7, 2024, <https://atlasti.com/guides/qualitative-research-guide-part-2/research-transcripts>.

<sup>24</sup><https://firmisrael.org/learn/muslim-background-believers-make-a-change-in-israel/>

<sup>25</sup>Cambridge Dictionary, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org>

*Missiological Response*. It refers to a thoughtful, intentional response to issues, challenges, or contexts from a missional perspective.<sup>26</sup>

*Syncretism* is the combination of different beliefs or practices.<sup>27</sup>

### **Chapter Outline**

Chapter 1 introduces the study. Chapter 2 gives the biblical-theological foundation of conversion. Chapter 3 covers the literature review, and Chapter 4 discusses the Methodology. Chapter 5 analyses the data and provides a missiological response to the factors and challenges in AMBBs' conversion from Islam to the SDA church in the Conakry district. Finally, chapter 6 discussed the summary, conclusion, and recommendations.

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<sup>26</sup>Chammah J. Kaunda, Reconceptualizing Eucharist as Subservient Ritual: A Missiological Response to Public Violence in Africa," *Scriptura*, 2015, 114, 1-12.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid

## CHAPTER 2

### BIBLICAL-THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION OF CONVERSION

Conversion is a very popular term in Christianity. However, it is understood differently within major Christian denominations. This chapter seeks to answer the following questions concerning conversion: 1. What is the biblical definition of conversion? 2. Does conversion happen instantaneously or gradually? 3. What factors contributed to the conversion of people in the Bible? 4. What challenges did converts in the Bible face after their conversion? 5. What do the writings of Ellen G. White say on conversion?

To answer these questions, I have selected the conversion of Abram, Rahab, Ruth, Naaman, Nebuchadnezzar, and the Ninevites in the Old Testament to represent the whole process of conversion as demonstrated in the OT. In the New Testament, the selected conversion narratives are those of Peter, Matthew, the Samaritan woman, the Thessalonians, and the conversion of idol worshipers at Athens.

The chosen conversion stories in the OT are stories of people who were worshipers of different gods before their conversion to the worship of the True God of Israel. The ones in the NT are stories of people who, before accepting Christ, had a distorted knowledge of the True God of Israel since they were already in Judaism. On the other hand, some of the conversion stories in the NT in this study will discuss those who turned from worshipping idols to worshipping God.

## Biblical Definition of Conversion

Conversion is an English word that occurs only once in Traditional English versions of the Bible, namely AV, RSV, NASB, and NKJV.<sup>1</sup> The one-time appearance of the word “conversion” in English Bible versions occurs in Acts 15:3, and it is a translation of the Greek noun *epistrophe*. *Epistrophe* is translated as a change of one’s beliefs or conversion.<sup>2</sup> The context of some of the NT uses of *epistrophe* indicates a meaning of non-Christians becoming Christians (Acts 3:19; 9:3; 2 Cor 3:16; Acts 11:21; 14:15; 15:19; 26:18; 1 Thess. 1:9; in Acts 26:20). Conversion is explicitly indicated as turning from idols or vain things to serve the living and true God in the NT (1 Thess. 1:9; Acts 14:15).

The Hebrew word equivalent in idea to conversion, as translated from the Greek *epistrophe*, is *šûb*, a verb meaning “to turn, to return.”<sup>3</sup> It “refers to turning toward or away from something, often used with the sense of turning away from God (apostasy) (Num. 32:15; Josh 22:21–29; Judg 2:19; 1 Sam 15:11; 1 Kg 9:6; Jer 8:4–5; Psa 126:1) or turning back toward God (repentance) (Jer 8:4–5; Ezek 14:6).”<sup>4</sup> Apart from its 1000 + occurrences in the Hebrew Bible which have no theological interest, it is used 100+ times about human connection with God.

Most often, it is used in the context of Israel’s covenant with God. This special use called individual persons and Israel as a community to “turn away” from evil or

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<sup>1</sup>R. T. France, “Conversion in the Bible,” *Evangelical Quarterly: An International Review of Bible and Theology* 65, no. 4 (September 6, 1993): 291–310, <https://doi.org/10.1163/27725472-06504001>.

<sup>2</sup>James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

<sup>3</sup>Michael R. Jones, “Apostasy,” ed. Douglas Mangum et al., *Lexham Theological Wordbook*, Lexham Bible Reference Series (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014).

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*

other gods and to “return” to God (Hos 6:1; 14:1). Generally, the verb is used intransitively, but sometimes there is an agent either God (Ps. 80:4,7,14,19) or someone else (prophets, Neh. 9:26; priest, Mal 2:6) who must turn Israel back to their true loyalty.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, the biblical definition of conversion is the turning away of a person from idols or evil to return to God in repentance.

## **Conversion in the Bible**

### **Conversion in the Old Testament**

In this section, I will discuss the conversion of some key figures in the Old Testament and glean from them the factors that led to people's conversion to the worship of God, as well as whether conversion occurred instantly in their lives or gradually. The OT figures to be discussed are selected from the divisions of the OT: Pentateuch (Abram); Historical books (Rahab, Ruth, Naaman), and Prophetic books (Nebuchadnezzar, and the Ninevites).

#### **Pentateuch**

Abram

Before the calling of Abram by God, he was an idol worshipper (Josh 24:2, 14).<sup>6</sup> He, together with his family, worshiped other gods in Ur after the flood. However, his conversion from idolatry to the worship of God was initiated by a theophanic encounter he had with God. God called Abram to leave his country, his family, and his father's house to a land He would show him (Gen 12:1-3). God promised Abram that He would make him into a great nation, bless him, and make his

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<sup>5</sup>R. T. France, “Conversion in the Bible.”

<sup>6</sup>William D. Barrick, “Living a New Life: Old Testament Teaching about Conversion,” *TMSJ* 11, no. 1 (Spring, 2000): 27.

name great. Abram responded to God's call and left the land of Ur for the land of Canaan (Heb 11:18).

Abram was seventy-five years old when God called him to leave Ur to make out of him a great nation (Gen 12:4). However, the challenge he had was that he and his wife had no child because Sarai was barren (Gen 11:29). This issue of infertility followed him even after he had converted from idol worship. The same issue eventually tempted him to break the covenant of pieces he had with God (Gen 15; 16).

God allowed Abram to renew his faith in God by a new covenant of circumcision during which time God changed the name of Abram to Abraham, which meant "a father of many nations" (Gen 17:5). Abraham grew in his walk with God till Sarah, his wife, gave birth to the promised son, Isaac. Isaac was born fourteen years after Ishmael (Gen 16:16; 21:5). His ultimate faith in God was demonstrated when he was willing to offer Isaac as a burnt offering on Mount Moriah at God's request to test him (Gen 22:1-12).

The factor that led to Abraham's conversion from idolatry to the worship of God was God's call to him in a theophanic encounter. The Bible does not specify whether the call was a dream or a vision, but it could be either. It should be noted that there was no human agency in the conversion of Abraham. The challenge Abraham had after his conversion was his childlessness in marriage. This challenge haunted him in his walk with God till he had children.

It is clear from the above story of Abraham that his conversion did not take place instantly. It took some time before he was fully converted. Even his movement from Ur to Canaan was over a period of time. This gradual conversion of Abraham steadily strengthened his faith in God.

## Historical Books

### Rahab

Scholars suggest that, apart from Joshua, Rahab is the second most important person in the book of Joshua.<sup>7</sup> Rahab, before her conversion, was a harlot in Jericho. She was a gentile whose country was Jericho. Jericho was a pagan country that worshipped idols. The outstanding mercy she extended to the two spies whom Joshua sent to spy on Jericho led to her eventual incorporation into the covenant people of Israel (Heb 11:31; James 2:2, 26).<sup>8</sup> Her belief in the God of Israel was ignited when she heard about how God led the Israelites from Egypt to the place near Jericho.

According to what she said to the two spies whom Joshua sent, 1. She knew God had given the Israelites the land of Canaan (Josh 2:9). 2. She let them know the terror of them had been upon all the inhabitants of Jericho (Josh 2:9). 3. She had heard about how God parted the Red Sea for the Israelites to pass and what they did to the two Amorite kings (Josh 2:10). 4. She knew that the God of Israel was the God of heaven and earth (Josh 2:11).

Rahab's testimony presupposes that she had already believed in the God of Israel and was waiting for an opportunity to worship Him. Upon requesting the protection of her parents and siblings during the destruction of Jericho, her conversion led to the conversion of her entire family (Josh 2:12). The nature of her conversion led her and her relatives to geographically move from the land of idolatry (Jericho) to live in Israel for the rest of their lives in the worship of the God of Israel (Josh 6:25).

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<sup>7</sup>David Merling, "Rahab: The Woman Who Fulfilled the Word of YHWH," *Andrews University Seminary Studies*, 41, no. 1: 31.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

The factors that led to Rahab's conversion were 1. She believed in what she had heard about the God of Israel. 2. Her willingness to secure the two spies from the camp of Israel to Jericho from being caught. 3. Her covenant with the two spies. 4. The faithfulness of the two spies and the Israelites at large to the covenant they had with Rahab.

The conversion of Rahab did not happen instantaneously; it began in her heart long before the two spies visited her residence. Her faith in God started when she heard about God's miraculous workings in the lives of the Israelites. Then, she demonstrated this faith by hiding the two spies and making a covenant with them to spare her life and that of her family.

## Ruth

Ruth was a Moabite woman who married an Ephrathite man from Benjamin in Judah. Her husband was one of the two sons of Naomi and Elimelech (Ruth 1:2,4). Unfortunately, her husband and his brother, who was also married to another Moabite wife, Orpah, died (Ruth 1:5). Naomi, her mother-in-law, wanted to return to Judah because she had first lost her husband and then her two sons as a stranger in the land of Moab. Therefore, she entreated Ruth and Orpah to return to their mothers' houses (Ruth 1:8). Whereas Orpah returned to her mother's house, Ruth was persistent; she would go with Naomi back to Judah.

Naomi's remark about Orpah's return, in persuading Ruth to do the same, is significant in helping us understand what it meant to return to her mother's house. The Bible says, "And she said, 'Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law'" (Ruth 1:15). This implies that the relationship Ruth and Orpah had with Naomi as in-laws made them cease from worshiping their gods as long as they were under the roof of Naomi. Whereas Orpah

went back to serve her gods, Ruth was convinced that the God of Israel was the true God and would accompany Naomi to her people and her God. These were the exact words of Ruth in declaring her decision to convert from idol worship to the worship of the true God of Israel:

But Ruth said, “Entreat me not to leave you, or to turn back from following after you; for wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also if anything but death parts you and me (Ruth 1:16, 17).

After arriving in Bethlehem with Naomi, Ruth eventually married Boaz and became an ancestor of Christ long after her death (Ruth 4:13).

Ruth converted from idol worship to worshipping God because of the good relationship Naomi had with her as her mother-in-law, as well as the testimonies about God Naomi had shared with her. If the relationship between her and Naomi had not been good, she would not have insisted on returning to Judah, leaving behind her mother and other cherished relatives in Moab. The conversion of Ruth did not happen instantly, but it took some time. She lived with Naomi long enough before decisively choosing to make Naomi’s God her God and Naomi’s people her people.

Naaman

Naaman was a Syrian army commander who was highly esteemed in Syria (2 Kgs 5:1). By being a Syrian at that time, he was not a worshipper of the God of Israel but an idol worshipper. Coupled with this spiritual problem, he had a medical problem of being a leper suffering from leprosy despite his fame in Syria (2 Kgs 5:1). There was a young maid who had been brought to Syria from the land of Israel and was serving the wife of Naaman. This young girl suggested to her madam that she

recommend her husband to visit the prophet Elisha in Samaria, because she believed he would be made well of his leprosy if he accepted (2 Kgs 5:2, 3).

Naaman agreed immediately and, after consulting the king of Syria, arrangements were made, and eventually, he went to visit the prophet Elisha (2 Kgs 5:9). Naaman was initially resistant to the instruction given to him by Elisha. However, upon his servants' encouragement, he agreed and followed the instructions, which led to his healing from leprosy (2 Kgs 5:10-14).

Naaman's conversion to believing in the God of Israel after his healing can be inferred from his statement to Elisha upon returning from the Jordan River.<sup>9</sup> The Bible says, "Then he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and he came and stood before him. and he said, "Behold, I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel; so accept now a present from your servant" (2 Kgs 5:15). Also, his request for a "two mules' load of earth from Samaria to send to Syria and offer a burnt offering to no other god but the Lord was a great demonstration of his faith in the God of Israel.

The main factor that led to Naaman's conversion was the witness of the young maid who served his wife. Her simple suggestion and its eventual fruitfulness led to Naaman's acknowledgment of the one true God. The other servants who encouraged Naaman when he was almost giving up on Elisha's instruction also contributed immensely to his healing, which led to his conversion.

Naaman's conversion also did not happen instantly. It took him time to heed the maid's suggestion to go to Samaria. His healing from leprosy was not instant because he had to follow the instructions from the prophet Elisha to dip himself in the

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<sup>9</sup>Mordechai Cogan and Hayim Tadmor, *II Kings: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 11 in *The Anchor Bible*, ed. William Foxwell Albright and David Noel Freedman (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1988), 67.

river Jordan seven times. It was when Naaman was healed that he acknowledged the God of Israel to be above all gods.

Nebuchadnezzar

Nebuchadnezzar was the king of Babylon who ruled the world at that time. Before his conversion, he and his entire kingdom were steeped in idolatry. His conquest of Judah and his sending some of the children of Israel, including descendants of Israel's kings and nobles, from Judah to Babylon initiated his conversion process (Dan 1:1-3). The constant faithfulness of Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, and God's corresponding blessings, gradually led to Nebuchadnezzar's conversion and his acknowledgment of the God of Israel as the True God.

His first acknowledgement of God as the God of gods was after Daniel had revealed his forgotten dream and interpreted it accurately to him (Dan 2:47). The second time he publicly acknowledged the God of Israel was after God's amazing deliverance of Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah from the fiery furnace in which they were thrown into for not bowing to the graven image Nebuchadnezzar set up on the plain of Dura (Dan 3:28-30).

What broke the camel's back was when, as a result of refusing to heed a warning from Daniel after he had interpreted a dream Nebuchadnezzar had and became proud, he was driven from men and made to dwell among beasts of the field (Dan 4:32, 33). After seven years of dwelling among the beasts and eating grass like an ox, God restored Nebuchadnezzar's sanity, the kingdom was returned to him, and he made his final acknowledgment of the God of Israel (Dan 4:34-37).

From Nebuchadnezzar's conversion narrative, it can be inferred that the factors that led to his conversion were, first, the faithfulness of the four Hebrew men,

which led to God's constant intervention on their behalf. Secondly, Nebuchadnezzar's own experience of God's judgment on his life for pride humbled him and led him to acknowledge and worship the God of Israel.

Nebuchadnezzar's conversion also took a long time. His interaction with the Hebrew men and his encounter with the God of heaven occurred over time before his final and relentless acknowledgment and worship of the God of Israel. His experience among the beasts of the field lasted for seven years, attesting to the fact that his conversion did not occur instantly.

#### The Ninevites

The people of Nineveh, the Ninevites, lived in the capital of the then Assyrian empire. They were much into idol worship and full of wickedness to the extent that Jonah, a prophet of God who was sent by God to warn them, intentionally refused to go there but decided to go in the opposite direction to Tarshish. However, God miraculously redirected Jonah's direction to Nineveh after he had been swallowed by a whale and sent to Nineveh after he was thrown into the sea by the sailors who were on the ship to Tarshish (Jonah 1).

The warning given to the Ninevites by Jonah was not brushed aside; they repented, proclaimed a fast, and turned from their evil ways (Jonah 3:5-9). God heard their prayers and did not send judgment upon them, as He had let Jonah proclaim (Jonah 3:10). The only factor that led to the Ninevites' conversion was the proclamation of God's word to them by Jonah and their quick response of repentance. The conversion of the Ninevites was a bit more instantaneous than other conversion stories. They responded immediately and positively to the prophet Jonah's warning.

## Conversion in the New Testament

This section will discuss the conversions of Peter, Matthew, and the Samaritan woman in the NT gospels. Besides, the conversion of the Thessalonians and the people of Athens who worshiped the unknown God in the Acts of the Apostles will be discussed. I have selected these stories of conversion to represent two ways of conversion that occurred during the New Testament times: the conversion of people from Judaism to Christianity and those from paganism to Christianity. In contrast, the conversions of Peter, Matthew, and the Samaritan woman represent a conversion from Judaism to Christianity. The conversion of people from paganism will be represented by the conversion stories of the Thessalonians and the people of Athens.

### Peter

Peter's conversion to belief in Jesus Christ was not from paganism to Christianity but from Judaism to Christianity. Judaism was supposed to have naturally given rise to Christianity. However, because a majority of the Jews did not accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, the two eventually became different religions.

Jesus met Simon Peter and Andrew, his brother, at the Sea of Galilee. When He met them, they were fishing, but He bade them to follow Him so He could make them fishers of men. Right away, the two of them followed Jesus (Mark 1:16-20). Peter's conversion, which occurred along with the other disciples, was instantaneous, according to Mark 1:16-20.

Nevertheless, Luke's account of the same incident gives a detailed perspective of Peter's conversion. In Luke 5:1-11, Jesus met Peter and his colleagues, the fishermen, at the seashore after they had toiled all night but caught no fish. Upon Peter hesitating but eventually obeying Jesus' command to cast his net into the water, they caught many fish. This miracle caused Peter to acknowledge the Lordship of

Jesus Christ. Then Jesus promised Peter that He would make him a fisher of men. It was then that Peter left all to follow Jesus.

Before Peter's conversion at the Sea of Galilee, he had a prior meeting with Jesus through his brother Andrew's introduction (John 1:35-51). In other words, Peter had a prior relationship with Jesus before accepting to leave everything to follow Jesus at the seashore. The factor that led to Peter's conversion in this narrative was the miracle of a bumper harvest of fish that he witnessed Jesus perform. This convinced Peter that Jesus was Lord, and he decided to leave all that he had to follow Jesus. Peter's conversion was not instantaneous. He had a prior relationship with Jesus before the encounter with Jesus at the Sea of Galilee.

#### Matthew

Matthew is also known as Levi in the Bible. He was a tax collector, and Jesus saw him sitting at a tax booth collecting taxes. Jesus told Matthew to follow Him, and Matthew immediately got up and followed Him. Jesus then went to Matthew's house and dined with him together with many other tax collectors and sinners (Mark 2:13-17; cf. Matt 9:9-13).

Matthew's quick conversion raises the question of whether he had prior knowledge of Jesus. Matthew had probably heard a lot about Jesus. Therefore, when Jesus called him to follow, he immediately responded positively.

The factor that led to Matthew's conversion was a direct call to discipleship by Jesus, which his prior knowledge of Jesus may have preceded. Matthew's conversion, on the surface, appeared instantaneous, but I believe he had prior knowledge of Jesus. Hence, it was not hard for him to leave his office of tax collection to follow Jesus when he was called.

## The Samaritan Woman

The Jews and the Samaritans share a common background that can be traced to Abraham and Jacob. However, throughout history, with the Assyrian invasion of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, which comprised ten tribes of Israel, the Samaritans' bloodline to the patriarchs became corrupted by gentile blood. This brought about a great enmity between the Jews and the Samaritans because the Jews despised the Samaritans for not being real Israelites.

Because of this hostility, the Samaritans were difficult to reach with the gospel of the Messiah who had come to fulfill the prophecy. Jesus' strategy for reaching the Samaritans was excellent. He began a deep conversation with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, probing into her secrets. In the course of the interaction, Jesus made it known to the woman who He was, the Messiah who was to come. When the woman was fully convinced about who Jesus was, she left Jesus and went to the city of Sychar, and through her testimony, she invited all the people of the city to come and see Jesus, the Messiah.

The conversion of the Samaritan woman also went through a process and took some time. Jesus had to interrogate her over a period of time before she was fully convinced that Jesus was the Messiah. Even though her conversion occurred within some hours of her encounter with Jesus, her prior knowledge about the God of Abraham and Jacob and the Messiah helped her understand Jesus.

## The Thessalonians

In 1 Thessalonians 1:9, it is clear that the believers in Thessalonica had converted from idol worship to the worship of the living and true God. However, before their conversion, Paul and Silas did not have it easy when they tried to evangelize in Thessalonica. When Paul explained and demonstrated to them the

relevance of Christ's death and resurrection to humanity, some of them were converted, including a great number of devout Greeks and some leading women.

Even though their ministry at Thessalonica was short-lived, the gospel they preached there led to the establishment of the Christian church there despite the persecution orchestrated by the envious Jews who were in Thessalonica. The conversion of people in Thessalonica did not happen immediately but took some time.

#### Some Idol Worshipers at Athens

Paul's strategy for winning over some of the idol worshipers in Athens began by reasoning with both Jewish and Gentile worshipers in the synagogue. Then, he would do the same discussion with anyone he had access to at the marketplace (Acts 17:17). Through this daily interaction, the gospel Paul preached caught the attention of some Epicurean and Stoic philosophers. After they had summoned Paul to tell them the new doctrine he preaches publicly, Paul took the opportunity to start from what the people knew to what they did not know (Acts 17:18-22).

Paul used the inscription, "To the unknown God," which was written on one of the idols' altars in Athens, to communicate to them that the God they assumed could not be known is a very knowable and personal God (Acts 17:23-31). After a thorough discourse on God and its connection to the resurrection of Jesus, some of the idol worshipers in Athens were converted, among them Dionysius the Areopagite, a woman named Damaris, and others unnamed (Acts 17:34).

These converts were not converted immediately; Paul preached to them until they were convinced of the message's truth and accepted the Resurrected Christ as their Lord.

## Ellen G. White and Conversion

Ellen G. White defines conversion as “a change of heart, a turning from unrighteousness to righteousness.<sup>10</sup> Genuine conversion is when a person hates the sins he once loved and walks in the path of holiness. A converted person relies on the merit of Christ and exercises great faith in Him<sup>11</sup>

She asserts that after the Fall, our natural ability to overcome sin has been perverted. Therefore, we cannot overcome temptations and sin with our strength. She stressed the above point by saying: “His nature became so weakened through transgression that it was impossible for him, in his own strength, to resist the power of evil.”<sup>12</sup> In addition, to buttress the same point, she made this profound statement: “Education, culture, the exercise of the will, human effort... are powerless. They may produce an outward correctness of behavior, but they cannot change the heart.”<sup>13</sup>

However, God, the initiator of our redemption and salvation, through Jesus Christ, has provided an opportunity for us to gain the strength to overcome sin by having a saving faith and relationship with Jesus. Jesus died on the cross to provide forgiveness of sins and empowerment to overcome sin. Jesus, according to Ellen G. White, is the “matchless gift” of God through whom God has made provision for eternal life.<sup>14</sup>

The empowerment of humanity to overcome sin is also made possible through the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit, who is the “transforming agency” through

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<sup>10</sup>Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1892/1977), 19.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid, 20

<sup>12</sup>Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1892/1977), 19.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

whom human beings can experience conversion.<sup>15</sup> Conversion supernaturally transforms a person into having “a new life altogether.”<sup>16</sup> Ellen G. White makes it clear that God does not force anyone to accept this gift of supernatural transformation through conversion, but everyone has the choice to “come to Christ.”<sup>17</sup> Repentance, a key component in conversion, according to E. G. White, is “sorrow for sin and a turning away from it.”<sup>18</sup>

### **Conversion: A Supernatural Process**

According to Ellen G. White, conversion is not a natural occurrence but a supernatural transformation brought about by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. It is a divine process that requires a human response—either to willingly accept or reject God’s offer of transformation. When one accepts, they are empowered by God to turn away from sin and turn to Him. Importantly, White emphasizes that conversion is not an instantaneous event, but a gradual process that unfolds over time.

### **Summary and Conclusion**

The biblical definition of conversion involves turning away from idols and evil and returning to God through repentance. This concept is illustrated throughout both the Old and New Testaments.

In the Old Testament, individuals turned to the God of Israel for various reasons: Obedience to God's call (e.g., Abraham), seeking protection or deliverance (e.g., Rahab and the Ninevites), following a relative’s example (e.g., Ruth), receiving healing (e.g., Naaman), and acknowledging God’s supreme power (e.g.,

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<sup>15</sup>Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1892/1977), 19.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid,

<sup>17</sup>Ibid

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

Nebuchadnezzar), in the New Testament, people were drawn to Jesus Christ for equally diverse reasons: witnessing miracles (e.g., Peter), having their secrets revealed (e.g., the Samaritan woman), and discovering a previously unknown God (e.g., Athenian converts).

Several factors influenced these conversions: Divine revelations, including dreams; reports of God's miraculous deeds; the exemplary lives of believers; the preaching of prophets and apostles; and personal encounters with Jesus Christ. However, new converts also faced significant challenges, such as Delays in divine intervention (e.g., struggles like childlessness), cultural adaptation to the life and practices of the Israelites, and persecution from unbelieving Jews and Gentiles.

In conclusion, conversion is a dynamic, personal, and time-dependent process. It does not happen instantly and varies widely from person to person. Each person's journey toward God is unique, shaped by their experiences, revelations, and the challenges they face along the way.

## CHAPTER 3

### LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review is a collection of surveys, research, critical evaluation, and assessment of the existing literature in a preferred domain. Eminent researcher and academic, Arlene Fink, in her book, *Conducting Research Literature Reviews*, defines literature review as surveying books, scholarly articles, and other resources relevant to a particular issue, area of research, or theory, and by so doing, provides a description, summary, and critical evaluation of these works concerning the research problem being investigated.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, a literature review examines the findings of previous studies that are closely related to the current research. It connects the study to the broader ongoing discussion in the literature and addresses gaps by building upon earlier work.<sup>2</sup> This review provides an overview of the sources consulted while researching a specific topic, demonstrating how the current research fits into a larger field of study.<sup>3</sup> In this study, the literature review draws on various sources, including journal articles and books, that discuss prior research on the lived experiences of Adventist Muslim Background Believers (AMBBs) in the Conakry district.

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<sup>1</sup>Arlene Fink, *Conducting Research Literature Reviews* (Los Angeles 2019).

<sup>2</sup>John W. Creswell, and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2018), 26.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*

## Religious Conversion from Islam to Christianity

This section discusses previous studies on the conversion of Muslims from Islam to Christianity. Conversion is a process through which an individual gains saving faith in Christ.<sup>4</sup> Greenham asserted that when this conversion leads to a saving faith, it results in a profound transformation in the individual's life.<sup>5</sup> Hilbert further elaborated that conversion encompasses multiple transformations.

On a social level, it involves changes in how people relate to their families, friends, and other Christians. On a psychological level, it entails new ways of perceiving and feeling about oneself, as well as integrating new beliefs into one's personal life. Culturally, conversion brings about a new way of living and engaging with the world.<sup>6</sup>

The AMBBs' acceptance of the Adventist faith should shape their relationships with family members, friends, former fellow Muslims, and other Christians, thereby fostering a new way of living and a change in their perceptions of the world around them. During my research, I read that AMBBs in Conakry are not free to exercise their faith as Adventist Christians,<sup>7</sup> which motivated me to investigate the lived experiences of AMBBs in Conakry.

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<sup>4</sup>James Engel, "The Road to Conversion: The Latest Research," *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 26, no. 2: 184-185.

<sup>5</sup>Arnt Bryan Greenham, "Muslim Conversions to Christ: An Investigation of Palestinian Converts Living in the Holy Land," (PhD Dissertation, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, NC, 2004), 34.

<sup>6</sup>Paul G. Hiebert, "Worldview Transformation," in *From the Straight Path to the Narrow Way: Journeys of Faith*, ed. David H. Greenlee (Waynesboro, GA: Authentic Media, 2005), 24.

<sup>7</sup>wwl-2024-guinea-full-country-dossier (1).pdf

A historical study of the conversion of Muslims to Orthodox Christianity was conducted in south-eastern Europe.<sup>8</sup> This study was based on the Greek War of Independence, which took place between 1821 and 1832 AD. The study revealed that the religious divide between Islam and Christianity is not as insurmountable as many people assume. There were connections between Christians and Muslims during the turbulent nineteenth century.

Although religious differences have always existed in southeastern Europe, there was a cordial relationship between Muslims and Christians, with neither group viewing the other as estranged. Several factors contributed to Muslims converting to Christianity during this chaotic period, including a desire for security, social status, and well-being amid the changing political and social landscape influenced by Greek nationalism.<sup>9</sup> This study was limited to a period of crisis in south-eastern Europe, suggesting that the factors driving conversion from Islam to Christianity were temporal.

A study on the challenges Muslim Background Believers face after conversion in South Asia found that they had problems of separation from family and relatives, language problems, financial constraints, and the occurrence of divorce among married couples.<sup>10</sup> David Teeter conducted a study in the Middle East testing Muslim

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<sup>8</sup>Stefanos Katsikas and Sakis Dimitriadis. "Muslim Converts to Orthodox Christianity during the Greek War of Independence, 1821–1832," *European History Quarterly* 51, no. 3 (July 2021): 299–323.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Ahamed Sarjoon Razick, Mohamed Anifa Mohamed Fowsar, and Ameer Rushana, "Problems Faced by Muslim Converts in Sri Lanka: A Study Based on Anuradhapura District," *Journal of Politics and Law* 13, no. 3 (August 17, 2020): 10.

followers of Jesus' model as an alternative to an open declaration of conversion from Islam to Christianity in Bethlehem.<sup>11</sup>

The process of conversion was delineated as a dynamic equivalent to conversion in which Muslims who secretly decide to follow Jesus are referred to as tentative believers.<sup>12</sup> This model was to combat the usual challenge of Muslim converts always being expelled from their families and communities.

Abu Atallah and Kent A. Van Till wrote the testimony of a Muslim who became a Christian in Egypt and eventually led many other Muslims to Christ.<sup>13</sup> The factor that led this Muslim to Christ was a friendship that led to interfaith dialogue. These Muslims faced challenges during and after their conversion to Christianity, such as family rejection and discrimination.<sup>14</sup>

### **Theoretical and Missiological Perspectives of Conversion**

Conversion has long been a central subject in religious studies, particularly within social and missiological research. Early sociologists such as Lofland and Stark highlighted the importance of relationships and community in the process of conversion. They found that individuals are most likely to convert through their social networks and personal connections, stating that “becoming a world-saver” often results from sustained interaction with committed believers rather than solitary

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<sup>11</sup>David Teeter, “Dynamic Equivalent Conversion for Tentative Muslim Believers,” *Missiology: An International Review* 18, no. 3 (July 1990): 305–313.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Abu Atallah and Kent A. Van Till, *From Cairo to Christ: How One Muslim's Faith Journey Shows the Way for Others* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2017).

<sup>14</sup>Abu Atallah and Kent A. Van Till, *From Cairo to Christ: How One Muslim's Faith Journey Shows the Way for Others* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2017).

contemplation (p. 864).<sup>15</sup> Their foundational research demonstrates that conversion is deeply rooted in the fabric of community life.

Lewis R. Rambo expanded the understanding of conversion by outlining it as a process with seven stages: context, crisis, quest, encounter, interaction, commitment, and consequences. He emphasized that conversion is not a single event, but a journey shaped by personal experiences. According to Rambo, periods of confusion or crisis often lead individuals to become more open to new beliefs.<sup>16</sup>

This perspective is especially relevant for Adventists with Muslim backgrounds in Guinea, where conversion frequently involves negotiating cultural identity, reflecting on theology, and adapting to new social environments. Rambo's focus on the interplay between personal crisis and community support offers valuable insights into the experiences of converts in Conakry District.<sup>17</sup>

Kathryn Ann Kraft provides an important regional perspective by examining conversion in the Arab world. She argues that family, community, and cultural identity play significant roles in shaping a convert's path. Kraft notes, "conversion is rarely an individual act but a communal event with repercussions for family and society."<sup>18</sup> This observation resonates with the context in Guinea, where communal bonds and family ties are central to individual identity. In such settings, conversion is not just a private choice, but a public event with meaningful social consequences.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>John Lofland and Rodney Stark, "Becoming a World-Saver: A Theory of Conversion to Deviant Religions," *American Sociological Review* 30, no. 6 (1965): 862–875.

<sup>16</sup>Lewis R. Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 56.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Kathryn Ann Kraft, *Searching for Heaven in the Real World: A Sociological Discussion of Conversion in the Arab World* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2013), 102.

<sup>19</sup>Kraft, *Searching for Heaven in the Real World*, 102.

Missiological scholars have also studied conversion among Muslims. J. Dudley Woodberry found that effective evangelism is grounded in building long-term relationships and showing respect for cultural traditions. He observes, “fruitful practices among Muslims often involve long-term relational engagement and respect for cultural traditions.”<sup>20</sup> Conversion, in this light, should be understood within the broader context of Christian mission strategies.

Philip L. Parshall further emphasizes the importance of adapting the Christian message to local cultures, warning that ignoring cultural differences can alienate potential converts. He asserts, “contextualization is not compromise but communication.”<sup>21</sup> These lessons are vital for Adventist missions in Guinea, where respecting Islamic traditions is essential when sharing the Christian message.

Paul G. Hiebert brings an anthropological outlook, explaining that true conversion involves a fundamental change in one’s worldview, not just the acceptance of new beliefs. He writes, “conversion is ultimately a change in the way people see reality.”<sup>22</sup> This perspective is especially significant in places where Islam shapes every aspect of life, including beliefs, culture, and daily routines. For Adventists who come from Muslim backgrounds, conversion requires both the adoption of new beliefs and a shift in how they see and interpret the world.

Robert L. Montgomery combines sociological and missiological approaches by examining how social and cultural factors influence openness to new religions. He

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<sup>20</sup>J. Dudley Woodberry, ed., *From Seed to Fruit: Global Trends, Fruitful Practices, and Emerging Issues among Muslims* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2008), 212.

<sup>21</sup>Philip L. Parshall, *Muslim Evangelism: Contemporary Approaches to Contextualization* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 158.

<sup>22</sup>Paul G. Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 89.

finds that people are more receptive to a new faith when it aligns with their existing cultural categories. Montgomery states, “receptivity is heightened when the new faith is presented in ways that resonate with existing cultural categories.”<sup>23</sup> This insight is particularly relevant in Guinea, where religious diversity and interfaith encounters are common.

Taken together, these studies provide a solid foundation for exploring the experiences of Adventists with Muslim backgrounds in Conakry District. They show that conversion is shaped by relationships (Lofland & Stark), unfolds as a process (Rambo), depends on social and cultural context (Kraft, Woodberry, Parshall), and involves a transformation of worldview (Hiebert). Montgomery’s work underscores the importance of aligning mission strategies with the openness and culture of the community.<sup>24</sup> In Guinea, conversion is not just a religious act, but a complex process shaped by social ties, cultural identity, mission strategy, and a shift in worldview.

This literature review lays the groundwork for examining conversion among Adventists with Muslim backgrounds in Guinea. By drawing on established theories and regional insights, the study aims to clarify how conversion takes place, what challenges converts encounter, and how mission efforts can support genuine and lasting change.

### **The Islamic Worldview**

This section examines the Islamic worldview. It will start with a definition of worldview and outline the three fundamental principles that shape the Islamic

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<sup>23</sup>Robert L. Montgomery, “Receptivity to an Outside Religion: Light from Interaction between Sociology and Missiology,” *Missiology: An International Review* 14, no. 3 (1986): 287–299.

<sup>24</sup>Philip L. Parshall, *Muslim Evangelism: Contemporary Approaches to Contextualization* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 158.

perspective. Next, it will explore the Islamic concept of the universe. Finally, the discussion will focus on Islam as a religion.

The basic assumptions about reality that underpin a culture's beliefs and behaviors can be understood as its "worldview."<sup>25</sup> This concept emphasizes how an individual within a specific society perceives himself in relation to everything else around him. It involves the characteristics of existence as they are distinguished from and connected to the self. In essence, a worldview represents a person's understanding of the universe.<sup>26</sup> It is the framework of ideas that helps a person answer fundamental questions, such as: "Where am I?" What surrounds me? What is my relationship to these things?<sup>27</sup>

The Islamic worldview is fundamentally monotheistic and ethical. It is theistic because Muslims believe that God created life and existence. This belief in the one and only God is central to the Islamic worldview.<sup>28</sup> This brings challenges to would-be converts of Muslims to Christianity as they navigate the reality shift from a monotheistic God to a triune God. The Muslim worldview is based on two primary sources: the Qur'an and the Sunnah. The literal meaning of the Qur'an is "recitation" or "readings." Muslims believe that the Qur'an is the direct word of God.

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<sup>25</sup>Paul G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1985), 45

<sup>26</sup>Robert Redfield, "The Primitive World View," in *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 96 (1952): 30-36.

<sup>27</sup>Anthony F. C. Wallace, *Culture and Personality* (New York: Random, 1961), 100.

<sup>28</sup>Muhammad Abdullah and Muhammad Junaid Nadvi, "Understanding the Principles of Islamic Worldview," *The Dialogue* vi, no. 3: 270.

The Sunnah refers to the traditions concerning the exemplary life of the Prophet Muhammad, as recorded in the hadith.<sup>29</sup> Hadith are accounts of Muhammad's teachings, deeds, and sayings as noted by his companions. In Islam, the Holy Qur'an is considered the final revelation for humanity, and the Prophet Muhammad is regarded as the seal of all the prophets.<sup>30</sup> In contrast, Christians only have the Bible as their source of revelation and inspiration. Muslim converts might find it strange to rely on a single book when they have the traditions, teachings, and the Qur'an.

### **Principles of the Islamic Worldview**

Three principles guide the Islamic worldview. They are discussed below.

Tawhid (Monotheism).

The Islamic worldview centers on the belief in Allah as the Only God.<sup>31</sup> Allah is the Creator of the Universe and reigns supreme over it.<sup>32</sup> According to this belief, Allah is Omnipotent, Omnipresent, and the sustainer of the world, including all human beings. The concept of Tawhid, or the Oneness of God, permeates every aspect of life in the Islamic worldview.<sup>33</sup> To be a Muslim is fundamentally to believe in God's Oneness (as stated in the Qur'an 112:1-4).

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<sup>29</sup>Michael D. McCullar, *A Christian's Guide to Islam* (Macon, Ga.: Smyth & Helwys Pub., 2008), 23.

<sup>30</sup>Mohamed Aslam Mohamed Haneef, "Islam, the Islamic Worldview and Islamic Economics," *IJUM Journal of Economics & Management*, 1997, 5, no. 1., 42.

<sup>31</sup>Muhammad Abdullah and Muhammad Junaid Nadvi, "Understanding the Principles of Islamic Worldview."

<sup>32</sup>Muhammad Abdullah and Muhammad Junaid Nadvi, "Understanding the Principles of Islamic Worldview," 271.

<sup>33</sup>Muhammad Abdullah and Muhammad Junaid Nadvi, "Understanding the Principles of Islamic Worldview," *The Dialogue* vi, no. 3: 270.

Muslims believe that the One God they worship is the same as the God of Christians and Jews. However, the Qur'an explicitly forbids Muslims from taking any being or thing as an object of worship other than Allah<sup>i</sup>. This presupposes that the AMMBs in Conakry, Guinea, are seen as those who have breached the Qur'an by committing to worship of the divine trinity, especially accepting Jesus Christ as the Son of Allah and Savior.

Khailafah (Vicegerent or Caliphate).

Under this principle, Muslims believe that human beings do not possess sovereignty, as sovereignty is solely the prerogative of Allah. However, humans are considered vicegerents of Allah and are not allowed to exercise any authority that has not been delegated to them, as outlined in the Qur'an or the Sunnah. This privilege of viceregency has been granted by Allah to every believer within the community, rather than to a specific group of individuals. Therefore, every believer acts as Allah's Caliph and is individually responsible to Allah.<sup>34</sup>

As vicegerents of Allah on earth, humans are entrusted with everything in the world. This authority empowers Muslims, particularly Muslim leaders, to make decisions that may lead to discrimination or persecution against Muslims who have converted to other faiths, such as the AMBBs<sup>35</sup>. As a result, these individuals often find themselves in challenging situations with their Muslim friends, family members, and the Muslim communities while carrying out their Christians' Journey.

'Adalat (Justice). Justice "is a concept of moral rightness based on ethics, rationality, law, natural law, religion, or equity, along with the punishment of the

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<sup>34</sup>Jaafar Sheikh Idris, Is Man the Vicegerent of God?" *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 1990, Vol. 1., Issue 1, 99-110. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jis/1.1.99>

<sup>35</sup>Ibid

breach of said ethics.<sup>36</sup> In the Islamic worldview, when things are placed in their rightful order, then justice is achieved. This principle insists on the equal treatment of every human being. It is the harshness of the punishment that might help committed Muslims move to Christianity, where vengeance is left to God (Rom 12:19) and forgiveness pervades the Christian life (Luke 6:37; John 1:9; Eph 4:32; Col 3:13).

Adalat is an important moral virtue in Islam, ranking next in importance to belief in God as the only object of worship and the prophethood of Muhammad.<sup>37</sup> Therefore, anyone who leaves Islam has rejected the faith and will be considered an apostate, which is punishable by law. In conclusion, the AMBBs are condemned under justice.<sup>38</sup>

### **The Islamic Concept of the Universe**

In Islamic understanding, the universe encompasses society, both human and non-human beings, as well as visible and invisible forces.<sup>39</sup> The universe includes the heavens, the earth, and everything in between. In addition to the visible or material world, there exists the world of the gha'ib (the invisible), which Muslims consider equally real.<sup>40</sup> For Muslims, the world is viewed as a living reality rather than a mere machine.

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<sup>36</sup>Jaafar Sheikh Idris, "Is Man the Vicegerent of God?", 274.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid. 275.

<sup>38</sup>Muslim Justice and Apostasy.pdf

<sup>39</sup>El-Sayed El-Asward, *Religion and Folk Cosmology: Scenarios of the Visible and Invisible in Rural Egypt* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002), 2.

<sup>40</sup>Mohamed Aslam Mohamed Haneef, "Islam, the Islamic Worldview and Islamic Economics," 45.

This reality consists of different levels. There is the world of spirits ('alam ar-ruh), the world of angels ('alam al-mala'ika), the world of jinn ('alam al-jinn), the world of human beings ('alam al-ins), and the world of eschatology ('alam al-akhira).<sup>41</sup> Human beings have the choice to decide whether to be Muslims or not; however, the rest of the universe is in submission to Allah, thus aligning with Islamic principles. This Muslim reality at different levels might provide common ground to the Christian doctrine of angels and demons. Muslim converts in transit might better understand the concepts of spirits and the underworld from a Christian perspective.

### **The Islamic Religion**

The Arabic word "Islam" means submission to Allah and highlights the importance of peaceful relationships with others.<sup>42</sup> Founded by the prophet Muhammad in the seventh century, Islam has two main sects: Sunni and Shi'a. Sunni Islam, derived from the Arabic word "Sunnah," which refers to Muhammad's traditions, makes up about ninety percent of Muslims. Shi'a Islam consists of followers who supported 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law, who was murdered in AD 661. The Shi'a sect includes divisions like the Twelvers, Ismailis, and Zaydis.<sup>43</sup>

Muslims practice either formal Islam, which follows strict legal codes, or folk Islam, which involves beliefs in spirits, healing, and protection. Folk Muslims, who constitute about seventy per cent of the Muslim population, often use protective

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<sup>41</sup>El-Sayed el-Aswad, *Muslim Worldviews and Everyday Lives* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012), 26, 27.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., 19.

<sup>43</sup>Patrick Sookhdeo, *A Christian's Pocket Guide to Islam* (Scotland: Christian Focus Publisher, 2001), 9.

objects with Quranic verses to shield themselves from evil.<sup>44</sup> In Guinea Conakry, Islam is predominantly influenced by folk practices, which also offer ‘protection’ from evil sources. Muslim converts will need to find solutions in Christianity that offer safety and protection from evil entities.

Five Pillars of Islam. Muslims follow five basic pillars of their faith.<sup>45</sup> These include Shahada, which means to declare one’s faith in God and belief in Muhammad. Salat: to pray five times a day (at dawn, noon, afternoon, sunset, and evening). Zakat: to give to those in need. Sawm: to fast during Ramadan. Hajj: to make a pilgrimage to Mecca at least once during a person’s lifetime if the person is able.<sup>46</sup>

Abu Dharr, a Bedouin nomad, once had an interaction with the Prophet Muhammad regarding the essential duties of Islam known as the five pillars. He was averse to material possessions and preferred a life of asceticism and self-discipline. One day, this Bedouin visited the Prophet to learn the minimum requirements for attaining Paradise.

The Prophet responded that one must have faith in the One God, pray five times a day, fast during the entire month of Ramadan, perform the pilgrimage to Mecca, and pay zakat (charity) if they had the means to do so. Upon hearing this, the Bedouin embraced Islam and declared, “By God! I shall do nothing more and nothing less.” After he left, the Prophet remarked, “Whoever wishes to see a man of Paradise,

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<sup>44</sup>Richard Deane II Love, “The Theology of the Kingdom of God: A Model for Contextualized and Holistic Evangelism Among the Sundanese, with Special Reference to the Spirit Realm” (A Dissertation for Westminster Theological Seminary, Chestnut Hill, Pennsylvania, 1992), 41.

<sup>45</sup>Jennifer Hitchcock, “The 5 Pillars of Islam,” *Verbum*, May 2005, Vol 2. 2, 4.

<sup>46</sup>Scott Edgar, “The Five Pillars of Islam in the Hadith,” *Studia Antiqua*, Vol. 2.1, June 2002, 3.

let him look at him!”<sup>47</sup> It can be seen that the basic pillars of faith in Islam, associated with the Prophet himself, will be hard for any Muslim considering transitioning from their faith to Christianity. The new religion would have to have new, strong parallel ‘pillars of faith’ upon which the new converts can lean.

Islamic Beliefs. Muslims owe their religious faith to Muhammad, the messenger of God. One day, the Prophet Muhammad himself replied to a question as to what faith is, to which he replied: “Thou shalt believe in the One God, in His angelic messengers, in His revealed books, in His human messengers, in the Last Day (or Resurrection and final judgment) and in the determination of Good and evil by God” (Surah An-Nisa 4:136).

These Islamic Theological teachings are biblical, even though the pedagogy used to administer the above-mentioned beliefs may differ from biblical teachings; they can contribute to Muslims' Background Believers' lived experiences regarding Resurrection and final judgment, including the Christian belief in one God.

Beliefs in Allah Alone. Muslims have nothing in common with atheists, polytheists, or those who associate other gods with the One True God. The Arabic word for One God is Allah, Lord and Creator of the universe. They believe that God is one and nothing should be associated with Him, including the Son of Maryam.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Muhammad Hamidullah, “Introduction to Islam.Pdf,” accessed November 25, 2024, <https://hostnezt.com/cssfiles/islamiat/Introduction%20to%20Islam%20By%20Dr.%20Muhammad%20Hamidullah.pdf>.

<sup>48</sup>Rahimah Embong and Sakinah Salleh, “Islamic Belief and Practices: An Integrative Coping Approach to Life Problems,” *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development* 6, no. 3 (2017).

Belief in Angels. God is beyond physical perception and is invisible to humans.

Angels serve as the channels of communication between God and humanity.<sup>49</sup>

Muslims believe that the human spirit can receive both good and evil inspiration. As a result, good people may sometimes experience evil inspirations, while those with bad intentions may receive good inspirations.<sup>50</sup>

Believe in Prophets. In Islam, an angel brings God's message to a chosen man, a prophet, who then communicates it to the people of God. There are different terms used to describe this human agent, such as nabi, which is designated as a prophet; Rasool, defined as a messenger; musal (envy); bashir, meaning announcer; nadhir (warner), etc.<sup>51</sup> It is believed that God revealed his will to the prophets through His angels. It is the collection and compilation of these revelations that constitute the Revealed Books. The Books referred to are the Torah, the Gospel, and Psalms, which were revealed before the Quran, including the Quran itself (Surah 2/285; 4/164).<sup>52</sup>

The Hadith is a collection of books that record the stories of the Prophet Muhammad, including his narrations, actions, and practices. The Hadith serves as a guide to the Quran. It helps to explain the Qur'an.<sup>53</sup> Without it, the Qur'an will not be understood. "And We have revealed unto thee the Remembrance that thou mayst

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<sup>49</sup>Jusuf Salih, "The Belief in Angels in the Islamic Faith According to Said Nursi's Study in Risale-I," *The Journal of Rotterdam Islamic and Social Sciences* 7, no. 1 (2016): 6.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid.

<sup>51</sup>Abdul Kabir Hussain Solihu, "Revelation and Prophethood in the Islamic Worldview," *Journal of Islam in Asia* 6, no. 1 (July 2009): 3.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid.

<sup>53</sup>Muhammad Hamidullah, *Introduction to Islam*.

explain to mankind that which hath been revealed for them, and that haply they may reflect. (An-Nahl 16:44).”<sup>54</sup>

Therefore, becoming a Christian means Muslims rejecting the word of Allah, which has consequences of discrimination, death threats, denial of property rights, wife and children, including many other challenges. In so doing, it is important to explore the experiences of AMBBs in Conakry, Guinea, to address the many challenges they face in nurturing them.

Belief in Eschatology. The Prophet Muhammad also taught the Muslims to believe in the Day of Judgment, which is also called doomsday. The Quran teaches that there will be a resurrection from the dead, and that God's judgment will be based on deeds performed in this world. People will receive rewards for their good actions and punishment for their evil ones.<sup>55</sup>

Belief in Predestination and Freewill. In Islam, Muslims believe that the determination (Qadr) of good and evil is from God, which signifies that everything is predestined for man. In other terms, nothing is good or evil in itself, but it is so because God has declared it to be so, and man has nothing to do but to adhere to it.<sup>56</sup>

Islamic Concept of Religious Life. In Islam, religion is inseparable from all aspects of life. This contrasts with Western interpretations of religion. Islam embodies a comprehensive way of life that is timeless and not limited by human development. The term *din* used in the Qur'an encompasses more than personal faith. It serves as a

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<sup>54</sup>Muhammad Hamidullah, *Introduction to Islam*.

<sup>55</sup>Rahimah Embong and Sakinah Salleh, “Islamic Belief and Practices: An Integrative Coping Approach to Life Problems.”

<sup>56</sup>Rahimah Embong and Sakinah Salleh, “Islamic Belief and Practices: An Integrative Coping Approach to Life Problems,” *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development* 6, no. 3 (2017).

foundation for knowledge and guidance through scripture. The Islamic worldview integrates seen and unseen realms and challenges Western scientific and philosophical perspectives. It posits an absolute system of values and ethics inherent in the Islamic tradition.<sup>57</sup>

When Muslims become Adventists, they will probably have a challenge adjusting to the Christian concept of religious life, which does not dictate everything that a Christian should do, including how they eat and bathe. In Islam, they followed the Sharia, the Islamic way of life.<sup>58</sup> Becoming Christians, they will be looking for the Christian Sharia, which is not as defined as found in Islam.

Muslim View of Christianity. One factor that promotes debate between Christians and Muslims is their differing religious views. However, in this section, I will focus on Muslims' perceptions of Christianity. Christianity and Islam have many things in common. For example, they are monotheistic and have their roots in the Abrahamic tradition. Muslims recognize Christianity as being based upon Divine Revelation. Jesus is the common link between the two religions.

However, it is often a surprising experience for Christians to learn that Muslims hold a deep love and respect for Jesus and Mary. A Muslim is not considered a true believer if he or she does not believe in Jesus as a prophet of Allah (Qur'an 2:136). One of the Qur'an's chapters is named Mary (Surat Maryam). In Islam, Jesus

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<sup>57</sup>Kathleen Tracy, *Islamic Culture in Perspective* (Hockessin, Delaware: Mitchell Lane Publishers, 2015), 6.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid.

is considered one of the five greatest prophets among hundreds of thousands of others.<sup>59</sup>

In an authentic tradition, the prophet Muhammad says, “I am the nearest of all the people to Jesus, son of Mary in this life and the hereafter “(3:45). The Muslims recognize the miraculous birth of Jesus Christ, the miracles performed by Jesus (Ssurat 19:18-24;5:110), and praises His sincere followers not at this time but also at the time of the Prophet Muhammad.

Muslims view Jesus as a prophet who was sent by God and created without an earthly father, but this does not make Him a son of God (4:171). According to the above verse, Muslims view the concept of the Trinity as the worship of three gods, whereas Christianity emphasizes belief in one God. In contrast, the crucifixion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ represent the heartbeat of Christianity.<sup>60</sup>

Everything a Christian believes in and hopes for is based on Jesus’ death on the cross for unworthy sinners. His resurrection is the divine vindication of the fact that Jesus did not die for any crime he had committed, but died in the place of sinners needing redemption and justification before an infinite and just God<sup>61</sup> (1 Corinthians 15:12-19; Romans 4:25; 5:8-11). Islam rejects this teaching because the Qur’an gives very clear information about what happened to Jesus, but they believe Jesus was not sacrificed, but Allah raised Him to Himself (4:157-158).

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<sup>59</sup>Mahmoud Ayoub, *A Muslim View of Christianity: Essays on Dialogue* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2020).

<sup>60</sup>Ibid.

<sup>61</sup>Mahmoud Ayoub, *A Muslim View of Christianity: Essays on Dialogue* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2020).

In summary, Muslims view Christianity as a religion that worships three gods. They denied the divinity of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. In other words, they do not consider Christianity to be a monotheistic religion, as Christians claim.

### **Missiological Implications of the Islamic Worldview**

To effectively evaluate the lived experiences of Adventist Muslim Background Believers (AMBBs), it is essential to understand how the Islamic worldview evolves during conversion to the Adventist faith. This transformation involves a complex interplay of beliefs, values, and cultural influences that shape an individual's spiritual journey. The worldviews of Muslims and Christians share several common elements, such as a belief in one God and the importance of prayer and community. However, they diverge significantly on various theological and doctrinal points, including the nature of Jesus Christ, salvation, and the role of scripture.

Recognizing and exploring these similarities and differences can be crucial in building effective communication and relationships with Muslim individuals. By emphasizing shared values and beliefs, we can create a foundation for dialogue and understanding that may lead to meaningful connections and outreach opportunities with the Muslim community. The aim is to foster an environment where both faiths can engage in constructive discussions, ultimately bridging the gap between the two worldviews.

Lastly, it is important to recognize that most Muslims in Guinea Conakry practice folk Islam. Therefore, when exploring the lived experiences of AMBBs, we must consider how individuals who strongly believe in spirits and fear them were drawn to the Adventist faith. In examining the context of Guinea Conakry, it is essential to acknowledge that the predominant belief system among Muslims in the

region is folk Islam, which often incorporates a deep-seated belief in spirits and other supernatural elements.

This cultural backdrop suggests that, when assessing the lived experiences of Adventist Muslims (AMBBs), we must take into account their unique challenges and perspectives. Specifically, it is crucial to explore how their strong beliefs in spirits—along with the accompanying fears—may have influenced their journey towards embracing the Adventist faith. Understanding this dynamic can provide valuable insights into the conversion process and the spiritual transformations that occur within this community.

Having looked at the Islamic worldview and its missiological implications, it is prudent to consider the general challenges Muslims face during and after their conversion to Christianity. This is important because the data collection in this study will investigate the specific challenges AMBBs face during and after their conversion to the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Guinea-Conakry.

### **Challenges of Muslim Conversion to Christianity**

**Family and Community Reactions.** In many Muslim communities, individuals who choose to convert to Christianity frequently experience abandonment by family and friends. This reaction significantly influences their social identity, particularly given the strong social-religious connections inherent in these cultures, both Christian and Muslim.<sup>62</sup>

**Cultural Identity Loss.** For numerous Muslims, their faith is deeply intertwined with their cultural identity. Converting to Christianity can lead to conflicts

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<sup>62</sup>Oscar Osindo, “Discipling Muslim Insiders: A Working Framework” *Journal of Adventist Mission Studies* 12, no. 2. (2016): 221.

between established cultural practices and Christian teachings, resulting in feelings of dislocation.

**Doctrinal Conflicts.** Those from a Muslim background may find it difficult to reconcile the teachings of the Quran with Christian doctrine. This transition often generates complex questions about foundational concepts such as the nature of God, the Trinity, and the path to salvation, highlighting significant differences between the two faiths.<sup>63</sup>

**New Religious Practices.** Adopting Christian rituals, such as baptism and communion, can be challenging for converts, who previously adhered to Islamic practices like Ramadan, daily prayers, and fasting. The process of conversion can trigger an ideological crisis, leading individuals to navigate their new religious affiliations alongside their previous beliefs. This internal struggle may adversely affect mental well-being.<sup>64</sup>

**Feelings of Isolation and Loneliness.** Converts often experience social isolation, especially if their conversion is kept secret. This can lead to profound loneliness due to a lack of acceptance from their community.<sup>65</sup>

### **Missiological Challenges and Implications of AMBBs**

**Social Isolation and Rejection.** Some Muslim Background Believers (MBBs) endure social rejection and disconnection from family and friends, which can cause emotional distress. These challenges are further compounded by difficulties in

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<sup>63</sup>Pnina Werbner, *Veiled Interventions in Pure Space: Honour, Shame and Embodied Struggles among Muslims in Britain and France* (USA: Sage Publication, 2007), 165.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid

<sup>65</sup>Pnina Werbner, *Veiled Interventions in Pure Space: Honour, Shame and Embodied Struggles among Muslims in Britain and France* (USA: Sage Publication, 2007), 165.

integrating into Christian communities due to differing cultural backgrounds and belief systems.<sup>66</sup> AMBBs in Guinea are of no exception to this phenomenon.

**Economic Hardships.** Converts may face reduced financial support from family and decreased job opportunities, often encountering discrimination in the workplace as a result of their faith transition. This can lead to situations where MBBs feel confined within church communities and limited in their ability to secure employment.<sup>67</sup>

**Religious Discrimination and Persecution.** In Iraq and Syria, apostasy is legally punishable, putting MBBs at risk of legal repercussions. Apostasy here means leaving the Islamic faith and adopting another religion, especially Christianity. They may also face the threat of physical violence from families, communities, or authorities who view leaving Islam as a serious offense.<sup>68</sup>

**Doctrinal Adjustments:** MBBs often grapple with significant doctrinal differences between Christianity and Islam. Concepts like the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, and salvation through grace can be difficult to comprehend, complicating their transition into new belief systems and practices.<sup>69</sup>

**Mental and Emotional Struggles.** The shift in belief systems can instigate feelings of guilt, fear, and confusion. Many MBBs may worry about spiritual repercussions, feel like they are betraying their previous beliefs, or struggle with

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<sup>66</sup> Pnina Werbner, *Veiled Interventions in Pure Space: Honour, Shame and Embodied Struggles among Muslims in Britain and France* (USA: Sage Publication, 2007), 165.

<sup>67</sup>[http://community.gospelcom.net/lcwe/assets/LOP32\\_IG3.pdf](http://community.gospelcom.net/lcwe/assets/LOP32_IG3.pdf)<sup>67</sup>.

<sup>68</sup><https://www.al-islam.org/invitation-islam-survival-guide-thomas-mcelwain/theological-differences-between-christianity-and>

<sup>69</sup><https://www.al-islam.org/invitation-islam-survival-guide-thomas-mcelwain/theological-differences-between-christianity-and>

psychological challenges stemming from family rejection. Some may experience a spiritual crisis as they attempt to reconcile their new faith with past experiences.<sup>70</sup>

Language and Theological Differences. Access to resources in local languages can be limited, making it difficult for MBBs to engage fully with Christian teachings and interpret scriptures. The divergence in religious terminology and theological concepts can also pose challenges to understanding the distinctions between Islam and Christianity.<sup>71</sup> The above-mentioned phenomenon led me to carry out this research. This is to explore the lived experiences of Adventist Muslim Background Believers in the Conakry District of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church and to ascertain the challenges they face during their pre- and post-conversion periods for missiological perspectives.

### **Summary**

Conversion is a process through which an individual develops a saving faith in Jesus Christ, leading to the eventual transformation of their life. In contrast, the Islamic worldview is articulated through the Five Pillars and the Six Articles of Faith. The Five Pillars consist of shahadah (declaration of faith), hajj (pilgrimage), sawm (fasting), salat (prayer), and zakat (charity). The Six Articles of Faith include belief in Allah alone, angels and Satan, Holy Books such as the Qur'an, Sunnah, and Hadiths, the Day of Reckoning, prophets, as well as predestination and free will.

At the core of the Islamic worldview is the belief in the oneness of Allah, with human beings serving as His vicegerents. While there are some similarities between

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<sup>70</sup><https://www.al-islam.org/invitation-islam-survival-guide-thomas-mcelwain/theological-differences-between-christianity-and>

<sup>71</sup><https://www.al-islam.org/invitation-islam-survival-guide-thomas-mcelwain/theological-differences-between-christianity-and>

the Islamic and Christian worldviews, significant differences exist. This study will explore how Muslims' worldview is transformed before their conversion to the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church and how it should gradually shift toward the Adventist worldview. The general challenges of Muslim converts to Christianity were also discussed.

## CHAPTER 4

### METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains all aspects of this study's methodology to explore the lived experience of Adventist Muslim Background Believers (AMBBs) in the Conakry District of the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) church in Guinea regarding their conversion from Islam to the Adventist church. Research methodology delineates the systematic way to solve the research problem. It shows how the exploration of AMBBs' lived experience will be conducted scientifically.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Research Setting**

##### Guinea-Conakry

The Republic of Guinea is a coastal country in West Africa. It borders the Atlantic Ocean to the west, Guinea-Bissau to the northwest, Senegal to the north, Mali to the northeast, Cote d'Ivoire to the southeast, Sierra Leone and Liberia to the south. To differentiate it from Guinea-Bissau and Equatorial Guinea, Guinea is sometimes referred to as Guinea-Conakry.<sup>2</sup> The capital of Guinea-Conakry is Conakry. It has a population of fourteen million. It also has an area of 245,857 square kilometers. Though the country continues to have multi-party elections, it experiences ethnic conflicts, corruption, and abuses by the military and police.

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.al-islam.org/invitation-islam-survival-guide-thomas-mcelwain/theological-differences-between-christianity-and>

<sup>2</sup>"CFI - Africa - Guinea Conakry," May 11, 2011, [https://web.archive.org/web/20110511084226/http://www.cfi.fr/partenaires\\_en.php3?id\\_rubrique=24&id\\_article=473](https://web.archive.org/web/20110511084226/http://www.cfi.fr/partenaires_en.php3?id_rubrique=24&id_article=473).

Guinea-Conakry is divided into four geographic regions. These are Maritime Guinea on the Atlantic coast, the Fouta Djallon or Middle Guinea highlands, the Upper Guinea savanna region in the northeast, and the Forest Region, a tropical forest region. The official language of Guinea is French. However, more than 24 indigenous languages are spoken in Guinea.<sup>3</sup>

The largest of these languages are Susu, Pular, and Maninka, which are predominant in Maritime Guinea, Fouta Djallon, and Upper Guinea. Forest Guinea is ethno-linguistically diverse. Agriculture and mineral production dominate Guinea's economy, which is the second-largest producer of bauxite in the world and has deposits of diamonds and gold.<sup>4</sup>

Religiously, Guinea has 87.3 percent Muslims, 3.4 percent Christians, 9.1 percent Ethno-religionists, and 0.3 percent following other religious practices. The Muslims are predominantly Sunni. Among Christians, Catholics are the largest group at 3.4 percent. However, it is essential to note that many of these Christians and Muslims practice syncretism.<sup>5</sup>

They follow local traditional practices while professing to be believers in Islam and Christianity. Conakry, the capital city of Guinea, is home to various cultures, ethnic groups, and religious beliefs. The community is characterized by a

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<sup>3</sup>Guinea-Conakry," February 5, 2009, <https://web.archive.org/web/20090205044119/http://www.uiowa.edu/~africart/toc/countries/Guinea-Conakry.html>.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid

<sup>5</sup>wwl-2024-guinea-full-country-dossier (1).pdf

rich tapestry of traditions and practices that shape its members' lived experiences.<sup>6</sup> Conakry is predominantly Sunni Muslim.

The Soninke merchants from Ghana were responsible for spreading Islam throughout Guinea during the 11th century. The northern part of the country was part of the great Mali Empire during the 13th and 14th centuries. Most of the Indigenous tribes converted to Islam during this period. French missionaries were the first Europeans to bring Christianity to the country.<sup>7</sup>

After independence in 1958, the Sékou Touré government followed a policy of socialism and secularism. The regime attempted to reduce the influence of various powerful Islamic and religious figures. Also, it closed down the French Catholic schools and expelled most of the French missionaries from the country. The successive regimes that followed Touré sought to reduce government control over religious affairs and promote tolerance among religious groups.<sup>8</sup>

In September of 2021, the military government headed by Lieutenant-Colonel Mamady Doumbouya, now president of the Republic of Guinea, suspended the 2020 constitution. The suspended Constitution explicitly upholds the principles of freedom of religion and the separation of religion and state. It provides persons with the right to practice their faith openly without interference.

However, the government attempts to restrict the influence of certain Islamist groups through its Secretariat of Religious Affairs (SRA). In 2019, SRA inspectors

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<sup>6</sup>wwl-2024-guinea-full-country-dossier (1).pdf

<sup>7</sup>Ibid

<sup>8</sup>Ibid

were present at most church and mosque religious services to monitor the content of sermons preached (US State Department, IRFR 2019 Guinea).<sup>9</sup>

The precarious political climate not only endangers democratic values but also strains Guinea's relative religious tolerance. The rise of Islamic militancy in the surrounding region casts a long shadow over the country's future, particularly threatening its Christian minority. The Portuguese arrived along the coast in 1462, but their main interest was establishing a trading center rather than spreading Roman Catholicism. No effort was made to evangelize in the country until 1877. From 1877 onwards, Roman Catholic missionaries began to arrive. Protestants did not enter the country until 1918. After independence from France in 1958, the Sékou Touré government followed a policy of socialism and secularism.<sup>10</sup>

The regime attempted to reduce Western influence, closed the French Catholic schools down, and expelled most of the French missionaries from the country. Subsequent governments attempted to ease state control over religious matters and foster interfaith tolerance. In 2019, SRA inspectors attended services at many churches and mosques to monitor sermon content.

Moreover, the rise of Islamic militancy in the region and stringent government regulations threaten the fragile harmony among religious communities. This precarious political situation risks undermining democratic values and complicating Guinea's relative religious tolerance. The increasing tide of Islamic extremism in surrounding areas poses a significant risk to the country's Christian minority.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>wwl-2024-guinea-full-country-dossier (1).pdf

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid

Furthermore, the government's stringent oversight of mosque sermons could provoke frustration among Muslims, heightening tensions. The intense control that the military and the administration exert over religious dialogue may contribute to an even more hazardous situation for Christians and other religious minorities. Thus, creating many challenges for the gospel mission in Conakry, especially Muslims' conversion to Christianity, which Islam does not tolerate.<sup>12</sup> The situation has shaped the lived experiences of many Muslim Background Believers, in terms of persecutions and oppression of many kinds.

Subsequently, Christians experience persecution across various regions, particularly in rural areas where Islamic beliefs intertwine with indigenous traditions, leading to greater hostility. Regions like Middle, Upper, and Forested Guinea display significant Islamic oppression.<sup>13</sup>

Converts from Islam to Christianity face particularly severe challenges; in many areas, they encounter death threats, violence, or are forced to abandon their homes. In regions such as Fouta-Djalon, converts must remain discreet about their faith, avoiding open expressions of Christianity. In larger cities like Conakry, Kindia, and Labe, conservative Muslim landlords may also restrict Christian access to housing, creating additional pressures for believers.<sup>14</sup>

Non-traditional Christian communities, such as Baptist, Evangelical, and Pentecostal groups, are active in Guinea. They also experience difficulties in finding places for worship and face hostility from radical Islamic groups in certain areas.

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<sup>12</sup>ww1-2024-guinea-full-country-dossier (1).pdf

<sup>13</sup>Ibid

<sup>14</sup>Ibid

Pressure is strongest when Christians in this category engage in evangelism or work with converts to Christianity. Most interestingly, the above literature serves as a motivating factor for studying the lived experiences of Muslim Background Believers to formulate strategies for nurturing them, which is part of the Seventh-Day Church's Mission.<sup>15</sup>

#### Seventh-day Adventist Church in Guinea Region

The Seventh-day Adventist church in the Guinea region was organized in 2002. It was reorganized in 2013. Besides, it was renamed from Guinea Mission Station to Guinea Region in 2017. As of June 30, 2023, the SDA church in the Guinea Region had 6 churches with a membership of 2,856 in a country with a population of 14,191,000.<sup>16</sup>

### **Research Approach and Design**

The research approach consists of the plans and procedures for conducting research, encompassing the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods for data collection, analysis, and interpretation.<sup>17</sup> The qualitative research approach is applied in this study. Qualitative research enables an investigator to access research participants' thoughts and feelings, thereby enabling the researcher to comprehend the meanings people attach to certain experiences.<sup>18</sup> This study endeavors to evaluate the

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<sup>15</sup>ww1-2024-guinea-full-country-dossier (1).pdf

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2014).

<sup>18</sup>J. Sutton and Austin Z., "Qualitative Research: Data Collection, Analysis, and Management" *Can J Hosp Pharm* 68, no. 3 (2015): 226-231.

lived experiences of Muslim converts to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, employing qualitative research.

Phenomenology is the qualitative research design most appropriate for unraveling people's lived experiences of a phenomenon, and this study employs it.<sup>19</sup> This study employs hermeneutic phenomenology, which involves a researcher interpreting participants' experiences regarding a phenomenon.<sup>20</sup>

### **Population and Sampling**

A population refers to the entire group or set of units to which the research findings will be applied.<sup>21</sup> The population for this study is 19 Muslim Background Believers (MBBs) in the Conakry district of the Seventh-day Adventist church. A sample is a fully representative portion of the population. This means the units selected as a sample must reflect the diverse characteristics of all types of units within the population.<sup>22</sup>

The sampling method employed in identifying informants for this study is purposive sampling. Purposeful sampling consists of choosing a restricted number of participants with the capacity to help the researcher understand the research problem and the study's central phenomenon.<sup>23</sup> That restricted number is (6).

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<sup>19</sup>John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (London: Sage Publications, 2018), 13.

<sup>20</sup>Leroy R. Thacker II., "What Is the Big Deal About Populations in Research?" *Progress in Transplantation*, 2020;30(1):3-3.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2007), 125.

Homogeneous, purposive sampling, which involves selecting similar cases, is used in this phenomenological study. This provides a focus for the research but encourages individual participants to describe their experiences from their own perspectives to help understand the studied phenomenon.<sup>24</sup> Therefore, the study will be conducted among six AMBBs in the Conakry district of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

### **Selection Criteria**

The researcher will employ the purposive sampling method<sup>25</sup> to select one AMBB currently serving as a Mission Global pioneer in the Conakry District, another AMBB serving as a literature evangelist, and four AMBBs who are ordinary church members. The selected AMBBs will comprise male and female Muslim converts aged 18 to 75 who have been members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church for 1 to 9 years. Their family members reject some of the AMMBs, some face economic hardship, and one is physically challenged.

Among the chosen AMBBs, five will speak French, and one will speak the Susu dialect of Guinea. A total of six AMBBs will be interviewed individually, while six different AMBBs will participate in a focus group discussion. Audio recordings will be used to collect data from interviews and focus group discussions.

### **Data Collection and Procedure**

Data was collected through in-depth interviews of the six AMBBs. These AMBBs were contacted through their personal contacts and networking. A researcher discovers significant information from informants concerning a phenomenon through

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<sup>24</sup>John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2007), 125.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

in-depth Interviews.<sup>26</sup> The interviews conducted in this study will be semi-structured. There will be a question guide used during the interview discussion with the participant. This question guide is in Appendix D.

To ensure triangulation in this study, a focus group will be utilized to collect data from the AMBBs. Focus group discussions are a qualitative approach for gaining an in-depth understanding of social issues.<sup>27</sup> This method aims to gather data from a deliberately selected group of individuals rather than from a statistically representative sample of a broader population. The focus group will consist of six non-randomly selected AMBBs who will not participate in the individual interviews. The question guide for the focus group discussion will be in Appendix G.

I included follow-up questions in the interview to obtain the data needed for analysis. These follow-up questions are not in the question guide, but I introduced them during the interview with the AMBBs. The study considered the environment and circumstances in which the interviews were conducted to inform the organization of the interview.<sup>28</sup> Permission was sought from the participants to audio-record the interviews to obtain accurate data.

### **Data Analysis**

I transcribed the audio recordings from the semi-structured interviews with the six AMBBs in the Conakry district of SDA to begin data analysis. Intelligent transcription was employed in this study. The implication of using intelligent

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<sup>26</sup>John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, 125.

<sup>27</sup>Tobias O. Nyumba, Kerrie Wilson, Christian J. Derrick and Nibedita Mukherjee, "The Use of Focus Group Discussion Methodology: Insights from Two Decades of Application in Conservation," *Methods of Ecology and Evolution*, 2018, Vol. 9, 20-32.

<sup>28</sup>Jerry W. Willis, *Foundations of Qualitative Research: Interpretive and Critical Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2007).

transcription is that I didn't include pauses, stutters, or filler words in my transcription. Besides, I also corrected the grammar of the transcribed data to improve understanding.<sup>29</sup>

There was coding of the transcripts by assigning phrases or words to emerging themes in the data. These emerging themes were refined through primary and secondary coding. The final theme was harnessed to answer the research questions. Then, the missiological implications of the lived experiences of AMBBs in the Conakry district of SDA were presented in this study.

### **Ethical Consideration**

Ethical considerations address the moral problems associated with conducting research.<sup>30</sup> They involve a researcher knowing what is right and wrong in undertaking research.<sup>31</sup> The main ethical consideration is that a researcher be responsible for the rights and interests of their participants.<sup>32</sup> The ethical considerations below will be made before, during, and after data collection, as well as the procedure and analysis.

Firstly, the study obtained ethical approval from the Adventist University of Africa Institutional Scientific and Ethics Review Committee (AUA-ISERC)<sup>33</sup> by submitting its consent form (Appendix A) and data collection instruments for review and approval. After the approval, all AMBBs to be interviewed will sign the consent

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<sup>29</sup>Jörg Hecker and Neringa Kalpokas, "Transcripts in Research | Overview, Types & Examples," ATLAS.ti, accessed May 7, 2024, <https://atlasti.com/guides/qualitative-research-guide-part-2/research-transcripts>.

<sup>30</sup>Jaap Bos, *Research Ethics for Students in the Social Sciences* (Cham: Springer Int

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> "Ethics and Review Board," *Adventist University of Africa | A Seventh-Day Adventist Institution for Higher Learning in Africa*. (blog), accessed April 10, 2024, <https://www.aua.ac.ke/ethics-and-review-board/>.

form before they are interviewed. The informed consent is in Appendix A of this study.

Secondly, I ensured that all participating AMBBs were treated with respect during their in-depth interviews. None was manipulated or exploited. During the interviews, I spoke to them with utmost respect. When clarification was needed, it was done professionally and respectfully.

Thirdly, participants' privacy was protected. Their names were kept anonymous throughout the research. If a participant's name or that of others appears during the transcription of the audio recordings, those names were omitted or replaced with pseudonyms.

Fourthly, participants' pseudonyms' rights, interests, dignity, and honor were considered before mine as a researcher. I honestly explain the purpose of the research to them. Besides, transparency was maintained throughout the research. Moreover, the research results will be made available to the participants.

### **Issues of Trustworthiness**

This section provides how the study was conducted to ensure validity and reliability. The thesis is trustworthy because the participants' experiences concerning Muslim conversion from Islam to the Seventh-day Adventist church are faithfully represented.<sup>34</sup> In this case, careful and thoughtful attention was given to the data collected from the Adventist Muslim Background Believers (AMBBs) to address trustworthiness in this study. The study used four criteria to ensure the trustworthiness of the investigation: credibility, dependability, transferability, and conformability.

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<sup>34</sup>J. M. Morse, *Designing Funded Qualitative Research*. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln, *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishers, 1994), 220-235.

## Credibility

This aspect of trustworthiness occurs when, after the researcher provides the findings, participants see them as relating to their experience of the phenomenon studied. This study ensured credibility through extensive engagement with participants during the in-depth interviews. Besides, there was also peer debriefing, negative case analysis, and member checking.<sup>35</sup>

## Dependability

Dependability helps evaluate whether qualitative research is reliable. Dependability is achieved when the findings of a study are credible, as discussed in the previous section on credibility. This involves a thorough examination of the data in relation to its findings, interpretation, and recommendations, to ensure they are coherent and there are no discrepancies among them.<sup>36</sup> This study will ensure dependability by thoroughly examining the data collected from AMBBs on their lived experiences and comparing them with the findings to determine whether they support them.

## Transferability

Transferability in issues of trustworthiness indicates the applicability of a research's findings in a similar context, people, and settings. Therefore, if the findings from evaluating the lived experiences of AMBBs in the Conakry district of Guinea can be applied to the experiences of other AMBBs in other districts in Conakry and other countries, then transferability is achieved in the study. The study will ensure transferability by meeting the criteria of credibility, dependability, and

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<sup>35</sup>E. G. Guba, "Criteria for Assessing the Trustworthiness of Naturalistic Inquiries," *ECTJ*. 1981; 29 (2):75.

<sup>36</sup>Zia Ul Haq Kakar, Rizwana Rasheed, Aamir Rashid and Salma Akhter, "Criteria for Assessing and Ensuring the Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research," *IJBR*, 2023, Vol.4-ISS 2 2023, 1.

conformability. This will ensure the accuracy and validity of the data collected from the AMBBs.<sup>37</sup>

### Conformability

The reliability of qualitative research, such as the present study, has an evaluative aspect known as conformability. When a researcher demonstrates credibility and appropriateness, they are said to have attained conformity in their research. The study will undergo a process of ensuring credibility and appropriateness, as already indicated in the previous sections, to ensure the study's conformity.<sup>38</sup>

### Summary

In summary, this investigation employs a phenomenological research design, a qualitative approach to understanding people's meanings attached to their experiences. In this case, the phenomenon under study is the lived experiences of Adventist Muslim Background Believers (AMBBs) in the Conakry district of the Seventh-day Adventist church.

There will be semi-structured in-depth interviews with six AMBBs in the Conakry district of SDA. The collected data from the AMBBs will be analyzed through coding and theme synthesis to answer the research questions. Trustworthiness will be ensured through credibility, dependability, transferability, and conformability.

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<sup>37</sup>D. F. Polit, and P. B. Hungler, *Nursing Research: Principles and Methods* (Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 1999), 429.

<sup>38</sup>Ahmed Kalid Sirwan, "The Pillars of Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research," *Journal of Medicine, Surgery and Public Health*, April 2024, Vol. 2, 1.

## CHAPTER 5

### DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This chapter analyzed the collected data and presented the research findings. The data were based on an exploration of the lived Experiences of Adventist Muslim Background Believers (AMBBs) in Conakry District, Guinea. This missiological research would be crucial in helping the Seventh-day Adventist Church effectively reach Muslims with the Adventist faith. As specified in Chapter 4, data collection was successful using an interview guide developed in both English and French (See Appendix B and Appendix C, respectively).

I prepared a separate question guide for the focus group discussion, which is in Appendix E. These question guides guided me during the interviews and the focus group discussions. Furthermore, this chapter described the participants and drew out the findings. The research questions guided the discussion of the findings. Finally, there is a summary of the chapter.

#### **Description of the Participants**

The study gathered data through in-depth, semi-structured interviews. In addition, I employed homogeneous purposive sampling to select the appropriate participants for the interviews. In homogeneous purposive sampling, a researcher chooses similar cases related to the study. It explored the lived experiences of Adventists with a Muslim Background in the Conakry District of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. In my data processing, I used the manual method.

Furthermore, I utilized coding and a thematic model approach in data analysis. I identified and established emerging themes from the data obtained through

the in-depth interviews. The six participants were AMBBs from the Guinea region of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The participants were between 18 and 75 years old. There were four women and two men, among whom were two Global mission pioneers, a man and a woman.

P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, and P6 were the pseudonyms I used to represent the participants, ensuring their privacy by not disclosing their true identities. Moreover, I used FG 1, FG 2, FG 3, FG 4, FG 5, and FG 6 to represent data collected from the focus group discussion. The participants' demographics are in Appendix L.

## **Findings and Discussions**

### First Research Question

The first research question is: What is the worldview of the AMBBs in the Conakry district? To answer this question, I traced the evolution of AMBBs' worldview from their Muslim to their Adventist identities. Based on the findings, I categorized the worldview evolution of AMBBs into religious and cultural forms.

**Religious worldview evolution.** The following was the religious worldview evolution of AMBBs in Conakry. The themes and their categories for the discussion in this section are in Appendix M.

***Belief in God.*** Their religious belief in God as the Creator did not change significantly after their conversion. They believed that God created the universe, including human beings, when they were Muslims, and found out that it is the same belief as Christians. They did not know about the Ten Commandments that God requires His creatures to obey when they were Muslims, but now believe and obey the Ten Commandments. In commenting on how his belief in God changed after conversion, P1 said,

When I was a Muslim, I had the knowledge that God created the universe. There was no teaching about the commandments. They just taught us that God created the heavens and everything in them, including Adam and Eve. The last creation God made was human beings. Well, we have heard that again.

P2 knew that God is good and gentle. Also, God blesses people but punishes wrongdoers. He added that God made Adam and Eve, and through them human beings exist. This knowledge from Islamic teaching was the same he found in Christianity as an Adventist. P4 also shared P2's assertion that God blesses people. P3 also knew, as a Muslim and now as an Adventist, that God is the Creator of heaven and earth and all things. Besides, it was to God they always fasted and prayed.

From the above analysis, belief in God as the Creator can serve as a bridge-builder between Seventh-day Adventists and Muslims. It could be used as a springboard to eventually lead a peaceful Muslim to recognize that the Creator who created the universe is a Triune Being. Besides, this Triune Being consists of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

***Knowledge about the Sabbath.*** The Adventist Muslim Background Believers (AMBBs) did not know that Saturday is the Sabbath day of God, which human beings have to keep as the day of worship when they were Muslims. Though the AMBBs visited the Mosques regularly on Fridays, they did not participate in these Friday prayers with the Sabbath concept. P2 made it clear that she did not have any knowledge about the true Sabbath, Saturday, when she was a Muslim. P1 explained his knowledge of regular Friday worship in Islam this way:

The Quran informs us that when God was creating the universe, He did not set a day so that every day would be a day of rest. When I was Muslim, we went for vacations at our mother's place, because she is a Christian, she would teach us about creation without a doubt. After we returned, my sister would ask, "What is the right day of worship? My mother would say, "My kids, the right day of worship is Saturday." Then, I would ask, "Why are we praying on Friday?" My father would reply that Allah revealed through the Prophet Muhammad that Friday is the Sabbath day.

Though these Adventist Muslim Background Believers had inadequate knowledge of the Sabbath, the concept of the Sabbath is not foreign to the Quran. Hence, in reaching out to Muslims, the Quranic references on the Sabbath can be used to lead them to keep the true Sabbath (Surah 2:65-66; 4:47; 4:154; 7:163; 16:124). It can also be used as a discipleship tool to enlighten AMBBs about how to reach their Muslim relatives regarding the keeping of the true Sabbath.

***Belief in Muhammad as a prophet.*** The Adventist Muslim Background Believers knew that Muhammad was the one Jesus promised would follow Him on earth after His departure to heaven. However, after becoming Adventists, they know it is a different reality according to the Bible. The One to follow Jesus is the Holy Spirit, the Third Person in the Trinity, who is the promised Comforter. P1 made it explicitly clear that he knew, as a Muslim, that Muhammad was the one Jesus promised His disciples that the comforter would follow him, instead of the Holy Spirit.

P2 also said: “The teacher also mentioned that Jesus warned his followers that after He left, someone would come after Him. I asked, “Was Jesus referring to Muhammad?” The teacher said, “Yes.” This was common knowledge among them because P3, P4, and P5 reiterated the same idea. It implies that, in discipling AMBBs, the Church should consciously help them undergo a worldview transformation from viewing Muhammad as the one to follow Jesus to recognizing that the Holy Spirit was the one to follow after Jesus’ departure to heaven.

***Belief in paying back evil with evil.*** The Adventist Muslim Background Believers were taught while in Islam to pay back evil with evil without forgiveness, but in Christianity, they now know about forgiveness. This is what P2 confessed: she knew in Islam that they were to follow the principle of eye for eye and tooth for tooth, paying evil with evil without having sympathy to forgive anyone who offends them.

P2 said, “In Jesus, there is forgiveness for one another, but in Islam, we were told not to forgive.”

***Belief in salvation.*** The Adventist Muslim Background Believers were not taught much about salvation in Islam, as has become glaringly clear to them in Christianity. P3 knew that when a person dies, angels will come from heaven and weigh the person’s good and bad deeds to see which one outweighs the other. If the good deeds outweigh the bad deeds, then the person will go to heaven.

However, if the bad deeds surpass the good, then the person will go to hell. This weighing of good and bad deeds was common knowledge among all six participants, including the focus group discussions. P4 explained that her knowledge that there is judgment after death was the same as he found in Christianity, but they differed in how that judgment is meted out after death.

P5 was clear that one has to pray five times a day and make sure one is not killed by a non-Muslim to obtain salvation. This is how she put it after she was asked what a Muslim is to do to obtain salvation:

To pray every day, the salat, the zuhr, the Asr, and the Maghrib. We also believed that if you allow yourself as a Muslim to be killed by a Christian, you will not go to heaven. If you allow a Christian to defeat you in any way, you will not go to heaven. However, if you kill a Christian in the name of Allah, you will go to heaven.

Since salvation is the main reason a person will join a particular religion or not, enough time must be spent on a Muslim to fully understand the biblical understanding of salvation so that they can unlearn the faulty salvific ideologies in Islam. Islam teaches salvation by works, according to the response of these AMBBs, but Christianity teaches salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ (Eph 2:8,9).

**Cultural worldview evolution.** The themes and their categories for the discussion in this section are in Appendix N. The following are the cultural worldview evolution AMBBs underwent after converting from Islam to Christianity.

**Sitting arrangements for men and women.** When the Adventist Muslim Background Believers were Muslims, men were separated from the women at the mosque. However, as Adventists, men and women sit together in church. They do not sit in separate places, blocked from each other's view. This made the AMBBs feel uncomfortable when they were first introduced into the Adventist Church setting. P3 introduced this cultural evolution by noting that, when they were in the mosque, male and female worshippers did not sit together, as they had found in Adventism.

P6 added that it is not only in the Mosque that men and women were separated, but even in their daily lives, they were not allowed to mingle with men as women freely. Her exact words were, “And you were not allowed to mingle with men freely. Yes. Even my siblings, I was not allowed to mingle with them. Even in terms of sleeping, I was not mingling with even my brothers.”

This presupposes that it is a serious issue in Islam for men and women to be seen sitting together. It is therefore expedient to contextualize worship settings for newly converted Muslims according to this separation of men and women to prevent any shock that can lead to their backsliding. Then, gradually, they can be taught to know why it is not a sin for men and women to sit together in a Church setting.

**Value of women.** P2 indicated that, in Islam, women are not allowed to choose till death, but in Christianity, women have a level of freedom to make their own choices. She added that “as a woman, we were taught to pray with our voices down. We were not to lift our voices.” This implies that even in their prayers, women

are told not to let their voices be heard by another person, showing that women are directly instructed and suppressed by their male worshippers.

From a statement by P5, women in Islam are held in low esteem to the extent that they are even restricted in their frequency of attendance at the mosque. She said;

Sometimes women can also go to the mosque, but if you do, you will have your own place separate from the men. The men would be at the front, and the women at the back. Usually, we liked to do it at home, but when it was time to go to the mosque, we would go, but not mingle with the men. We had to be at the back, not at the front, as women.

Therefore, the high value Christianity places on women can be harnessed to attract Muslim women to the gospel truth as found in Jesus. Adventist women, through their women's ministry, can reach out to Muslim women and teach them how precious they are in the sight of God by mingling with them through cooking competitions and marriage seminars tailored to them.

**Learning the Arabic language.** P1, P3, and P5 were taught Arabic to enable them to have a perfect knowledge of God and his prophet Muhammad. Still, in Christianity, there is no special language to learn to attain such knowledge. Though the Old and the New Testaments of the Bible were written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, respectively, the Bible versions in these languages are not accorded the same level of respect as in Islam. Learning Arabic is important to Muslims because the Quran is believed to be a direct word from God, revealed verbatim to Muhammad in Arabic. Any other translation of the Arabic Quran is considered merely a commentary on the original.<sup>39</sup>

On the rigorousness of the Arabic education in Islam, P5 recounted:

We go to an Islamic school. You wouldn't miss that because it ushers you into the Islamic teaching. It is where you will learn about Muhammad and the

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<sup>39</sup>Mohamed Aslam Mohamed Haneef, "Islam, the Islamic Worldview and Islamic Economics," *IJUM Journal of Economics & Management* 5, no. 1 (1997): 42.

rituals. We go to school from Monday to Friday. Then, on Saturdays and Sundays, we go for Islamic education. As a Muslim, I was second in the class in reading, reciting, and dictation. I was very good at it. Even now, I can write Arabic names.

Adventist mission to Muslims can utilize modern technologies that enable the Arabic Quran to be translated directly on a laptop, resolving arguments among Muslims stemming from the use of English translations of the Arabic Quran. Some modern English translations distort the original meanings of the Arabic Quran to prevent readers from arguing against some of their teachings, which are contrary to the Quran, but the Quran's ideas support a biblical view.

**Reading of religious scripture.** P2 was forbidden to read the Bible when she was a Muslim, but she now reads the Bible and not the Quran as she used to. P2 narrated that:

I said, "Papa, how is it possible that the Quran talks about Jesus, but the Bible does not talk about Mohammed. Is it that they took out the part of the Bible that talks about Mohammed? My father said, "Human beings wrote the Bible, but the Quran was written by Allah Himself, the all-powerful God. This is why I told you not to read the Bible. Man created Christianity." He asked me to give him the Bible, but I said no. I said, "When I read the Bible, I feel better than the Quran." So, he said to me, "You want to be like your sister. You want to rebel against me."

P5 indicated that they were forbidden to read the Bible when she was a Muslim. P3 had a Bible during the process of his conversion, which was snatched by his father, who in turn burnt the Bible. The restrictions placed on Muslims in reading the Bible make it difficult for them to learn the biblical truth by themselves. Therefore, since there are bridge-building verses in the Quran that can lead a Muslim to have faith in the Christian Bible and God, we can make good use of them to lead Muslims to have faith in the Bible and its teachings.

**Summary of Research Question 1 Findings.** The religious worldview of AMBBs, which evolved during and after their conversion, centered around.

1. Belief in God
2. Knowledge about the Sabbath
3. Belief in Muhammad as a prophet
4. Belief in paying back evil with evil
5. Belief in salvation

The cultural worldview of AMBBs, which evolved during and after their conversion, concerned

1. Sitting arrangements for men and women in the mosque
2. Value of women
3. Learning the Arabic language
4. Reading of religious scripture

### **Second Research Question**

The second research question is: “What is the biblical-theological foundation of conversion?” The themes and their categories for the discussion in this section are in Appendix O.

**Definition of Conversion.** The biblical definition of conversion involves turning away from idols or evil and returning to God through repentance. This concept is illustrated throughout both the Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament, individuals turned to the God of Israel for various reasons: Obedience to God’s call (e.g., Abraham), seeking protection or deliverance (e.g., Rahab and the Ninevites), following a relative’s example (e.g., Ruth), receiving healing (e.g., Naaman), and acknowledging God’s supreme power (e.g., Nebuchadnezzar).

In the New Testament, people were drawn to Jesus Christ for equally diverse reasons: witnessing miracles (e.g., Peter), having their secrets revealed (e.g., the

Samaritan woman), and discovering a previously unknown God (e.g., Athenian converts).

**Factors of Conversion.** Several factors influenced these conversions: divine revelations, including dreams; reports of God's miraculous deeds; the exemplary lives of believers; the preaching of prophets and apostles; and personal encounters with Jesus Christ. However, new converts also faced significant challenges, such as delays in divine intervention (e.g., struggles like childlessness), cultural adaptation to the life and practices of the Israelites, and persecution from unbelieving Jews and Gentiles.

In conclusion, conversion is a dynamic, personal, and time-dependent process. It does not happen instantly and greatly varies from individual to individual. Each person's journey toward God is unique, shaped by their experiences, revelations, and the challenges they face along the way.

**Factors of Conversion from the Muslim Faith.** The following factors contributed to the conversion of the AMBBs.

***Divine Healing.*** P2 got converted through receiving divine healing. Before her healing, she had been possessed by demons and had visited many churches for deliverance, but all to no avail. In the first place, her father took her to eight *karamoko* (traditional healers) for treatment, but they were unsuccessful. One of them invited her to his house for her to be delivered, but there was no healing. This particular *karamoko* told P2's father that only the prayer to Jesus can heal his daughter. Based upon this recommendation, P2 was taken to many Christian denominations for divine healing, but received no healing until she was sent to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, where she was completely healed.

These were some of her words in relation to her divine healing:

I was converted through challenging the church because I had visited so many churches, but my problem was not solved. I told my mother, "Mother, I don't

really believe because I have gone to many churches, but I was not healed.” ... She said to me, “I am not saying that Jesus is not in those churches, but if you come here, Jesus will heal you.” ... My mother brought me to Pastor Gbalé, and the pastor also entrusted me to Elder Fortunate Kalou Bi, where I spent three months in prayer sessions. My father would call and ask if I was getting better. He warned me not to become a Christian. My answer was, "I am only here to receive my healing." It was there that I began to feel better and received my healing.

P4 and P3 also got converted when they received divine healing from their sicknesses.

They had different sicknesses and were healed through prayers. This is what P4 said concerning how she received her healing:

I had intense pains in my legs that wouldn't allow me to walk. I went through many treatments, but I did not get well. I used to see the evangelists passing to evangelize. I could not walk. While I was sitting at the house one day, the Lord Jesus sent Evangelist Tranquille Facinadouno. I told Him that “I see you passing here every day. What work do you do?” He told me that “We don't have any different work to do, but to pray for people.” So, I got up and said to him, “Come and pray for me.” He prayed for me and gave me the booklet, “Great Hope.” He told me, “I will pray for you to walk without using any medication.” He proposed that we fast and pray for three days. After the prayer, he gave me the days of the meeting at the church and continued praying for me until he invited me to go and worship with them. He came for me on a motorcycle on the first and second Sabbaths of my visits to the church. On the third Sabbath, he came for me again, but the motorcycle was not found at the house because I had walked to the house on my own. It was a miracle God wrought in my life that day, surprising my family and the neighbors. When I saw that I could walk to the church, I got encouraged to go to church continuously until I got baptized, from whence my persecution started by my family members.

FG 1 also became an Adventist through the receiving of divine healing. This was how she put it:

The condition I was in when I came was not favorable. I was seriously sick. However, when the Adventists prayed for me, I became well. My family members had rejected me, but the church took better care of me and gave me a place to live where I am presently. The church members showed me love.

FG 4 also got converted through divine healing from his sickness. He said:

I was sick and became paralyzed. Although my father is a *karamoko* (traditional healer), my parents took me to many other *karamoko* to heal me. They failed to heal me, including my own father. My friend told me to go with her to a pastor. She said he could pray for me to be healed. She accompanied

me to the pastor. He constantly prayed for me. One day, while I was sitting, God made me walk. While I was going to the prayer, I was hiding from my father until I walked. After my healing, I continued to go to church while hiding from my father. If he had known about it, the entire family would have disowned me and driven me out of the house. I continued to hide and attend church services until I met my husband. Since that day the pastor prayed for me, I haven't gone to the Mosque again.

Divine healing was also the means through which God led Naaman to his conversion to a faithful belief in the God of the Israelites. Therefore, it is no wonder that these AMBBs mostly became Adventists after receiving their healing.

*Dreams.* P5 got converted through a divine intervention, specifically through a dream. This was how she narrated the ensuing circumstances between her and an Adventist evangelist, leading to God giving her a dream of conviction.

When I was a Muslim, one day Evangelist Tranquille came to our place around 4 pm, which is a moment of prayer in Islam. I had wanted to go and pray after my ablution. He gave me a booklet. I told him that I was a Muslim. I am going to pray, so I cannot hold that book. He said to me, "Madam, hold this book." I accepted the book and threw it away. I then left for the prayer. I said in Arabic, "God is Great." Surprisingly, I lost all the verses that I was to recite during the prayer, so I was unable to pray. I left the prayer site, came to him, and said, "Which paper did you give me that made me unable to pray?" He said, "Madam, leave that and come, and let us study the word of God. He taught me about Jesus. I said, "The people can come here to us, but for us Muslims, we are not allowed to talk about Jesus, because He is not the Savior of the world; it is Mohammed." During the night, I prayed to God that, if what I was taught was true, He would show me, and He did through the dream He gave me.

She continued to share the specific dream she had in these words:

I had a dream in which I saw two people, one was a Christian and the other was a Muslim. The Muslim was running after the Christian when Jesus appeared between them. So, the Christians went away, and the Muslims didn't pass through. Jesus said to him, "Anyone who is baptized will receive no harm." When I got up that morning, I went to the church at 6 am and called the Evangelist. He said, "What happened?" I told him about the dream that I had, and then I requested to be baptized. He asked that we pray, which we did. I asked about the meaning of baptism because Jesus told me that if one is baptized, no harm will befall him or her. Therefore, I wanted to be baptized. He said, "Pastor is not here." However, God so blessed me that the pastor came that week. We went into the pastor's office and explained to him. He said there is no problem; I will organize a baptism ceremony for you.

P3 also received a divine revelation after being sick for a while and being healed. He said,

When I was a Muslim, I fell sick in 1987 at the age of 17. I was mentally disturbed. My friends forsook me, and my family, too, failed to provide care. Through God's provision, my father got the medicine for my treatment. God started to resolve my problem. I started to receive revelation from God.

These conversion stories of Muslims through dreams confirm the biblical narrative of Abraham becoming a true follower of the true God through a dream. God revealed Himself to Abraham in a dream and commanded him to leave his father's gods and follow God Almighty.

***Bible Studies.*** From the conversion stories of Adventist Muslim Background Believers, it can be seen that Bible studies played a pivotal role in leading them to become Adventists. For instance, P5 attended Bible studies led by Evangelist Tranquille, during which she had a dream confirming what she was taught. Besides, P4 received the missionary book entitled "Great Hope," which is rich with valuable bible lessons by Ellen G. White.

P1 hinted that the Bible studies her Christian mother gave her whenever they left their Muslim father and went for vacation at their mother's house contributed immensely to her becoming an Adventist Christian. She said, "When we go for vacation to our mother's house, because she is a Christian, our mother told us about creation without some doubts." These teachings from her mother continued to raise doubts in her mind about some of the Quran's teachings, until she finally decided to follow the Bible.

### **Third Research Question**

The third research question was: What challenges do AMBBs face in the Conakry district during and after conversion?

The fifth research question is: “What challenges did AMBBs face before deciding to leave Islam?” The themes with their categories for the discussion in this section can be found at Appendix R.

***Warned not to mention Jesus’ name.*** The Adventist Muslim Background Believers were warned not to mention Jesus’ name and have anything to do with Christianity. P1 recalled how his father gave him a strong warning not to mention the name Jesus again, this way:

I told my father, “If you read all the verses of the Bible, you will not see the name of Muhammad, but in the Quran, you will see the name of Jesus Christ more than Muhammad himself.” My father responded, “My kids are no longer obeying me. Are you becoming a Christian?” I said, “No, I’m not becoming a Christian, but I want to know because it’s a wonderful story—the story of Jesus.” “You must never mention that name,” my father warned.

P5 was even prevented from watching a movie about the Passion of Christ.

This is how she put it:

I began asking questions about Christ, who he was and how I could be saved. And whenever I was told about him, I paid more attention to it, and I fell in love with the stories. During Christmas, when they showed the passion of Christ on television, I would cry and cry, and my cousins would come and beat me. Those who could slap me would slap me. They would switch off the television, and I would put it on again. If they persisted, I would go out and watch it on someone’s television. That was how Christ was entering into my heart, even when I was resisting, he was still knocking at my door.

***Visited many churches for deliverance.*** P2 had a challenge of demonic possession and visited many Christian churches, but none of the prayers healed her. However, after she visited a Seventh-day Adventist Church, she received her healing. She narrated her ordeal in the following words:

I was converted through challenging the church. I had visited so many churches, but my problem was not solved. I told my mother that I don’t believe because I had gone to so many churches and I was not healed. I was possessed by demons. I had not loved church at all because I was not convinced after visiting other churches. I went to the *palaix de peuple* (The Palace of Peace) for prayer by a renowned pastor, but I was not delivered. I only went to church for my healing. I told my mother, “You said that your Jesus can heal, but I have gone to many churches and I have experienced no

deliverance. She said to me, “I am not saying that Jesus is not in those churches, but if you come here, Jesus will heal. Certainly, I was delivered through powerful prayers offered by the church members, most especially Elder Fortunat Kalou.

***Being slapped, pushed and wounded.*** During a religious argument with her father, P2’s father slapped and pushed her. Later on, he slapped her three times unmercifully. This is how she put it:

My father said, “The Bible was written by human beings, but the Quran was written by Allah Himself, the all-powerful God. This is why I told you not to read the Bible. Christianity was created by man. He asked me to give him the Bible, but I said, “No. When I read the Bible, I feel better than the Quran. So, he said to me that you won’t be like your sister. You want to rebel against me. What does the Quran say? I said to him that the Quran does not prohibit women from speaking. However, there are verses in the Quran that support women to defend themselves. From there, he slapped and pushed me and said to me, “You have no right to stand against me. You are the only child that have challenged me. My children, including the firstborn, have not done so. Who are you to challenge me? Is it your mother that have brainwashed you to challenge me? He slapped me three times.

An Islamic teacher who had been asked by her father to teach her beat P3 till she was wounded when he was teaching her.

***Burning of their Bibles.*** The father of P4 took the Bible she had been given by her mother and burnt it. This is how it happened, as narrated by P4:

He asked me to give him the Bible, but I said no. I said that when I read the Bible, I feel better than the Quran, so he said to me, “You want to be like your sister. You want to rebel against me. What does the Quran say?” I said to him that, “The Quran does not prohibit women from speaking. There are verses in the Quran that support women to defend themselves. From there, he slapped and pushed me and said to me, “You have no right to stand me. You are the only child that have challenged me. My own children, including the firstborn have not done so. Who are you to challenge me? Is it your mother that have brainwashed you to challenge me?” He slapped me three times. He took the Bible from me and said that he would burn it. I told him not to do so, but he insisted. He burnt it.

***An attempt by parents to give them earlier in marriages to Muslim men.*** In vowing to do all he could to prevent his daughters from becoming Christians, P2’s father attempted to give her and her sister in marriage to Muslim men, but she

refused. They were locked up in a room without permission to go out. This is how she narrated it:

I said to him, “We are fed up in this house. Why are we locked out of this house only to read the Quran after school? The pressure is too much. Are we in prison here? Even those who are in the prison compound are not treated in this manner.” So, I cried with all my strength. I wounded myself with a razor blade because I was tired of everything going on in the home, because we were like prisoners. I told my sister, “We are leaving this house.” Having understood that, He decided to give us out in marriage before the age of 18. I said to him, “I will not marry before my age.” So, he prepared the marriage of my sister when she was 14 years old in Junior Secondary School. My father said he will marry my sister out because we are not allowed to walk about, and we have started to rebel.

***Rejection by family members and friends.*** Individual participants and focus group discussions made it clear that AMBBs were rejected by family members and friends during the period of their conversion. This is what P1 had to say:

When I became a Christian, I struggled a whole lot. I feared rejection from my family, friends and neighbours. My mother kept telling me, “Don’t be afraid. If you receive Jesus, your salvation is secure in Him”. At school, I faced rejection. They turned their back on me when they found out that I am a Christian. Eventually, my father stopped paying my school fees, but the church helped to pay my school fees.

P1, P2, P4, P5, P6 and FG 1 – FG 6, except P3, suffered cessation of all family assistance after becoming Christians. Moreover, P4 was dislodged from the family residence and denied the father’s heritage. This was the experience of P4 in his own words:

My family rejected me when I became a Christian. The family members and friends had no more assistance to give me because I had become a Christian. One family member called for meetings three times at different places, asking me to tell them my final decision. They had wanted me to reconsider my decision. At the time, I was living on the mission compound. The last meeting was the big and final meeting. It was during the first that I was asked to confirm if I was a Christian because they had heard it from rumours. I confirmed that I was a Christian because I could not walk, and Jesus healed me. The reaction to my confirmation was that I was dislodged from the family home. At the third meeting, the family decided that I definitely leave the home. During that meeting, I went with my Bible in my bag. My uncle came

from Moriah, a far distant place from Conakry to be a part of the meeting. He invited the town Chief and some important personalities around our community. In that meeting, they told me that “You are to tell us if you are a Christian so that we can say goodbye to you.” I told them that “I have no problem, I will tell you the hundred per cent truth today”. I took out my Bible from my bag and laid it down, and they also laid their Quran. My uncle told me to choose between the Bible and the Quran, and I chose the Bible. The chief told them to wait till he had talked with me. He told me that your family invited me here so that I could be a witness. He said to me “The family wants you to sign that you are no longer part of the Touré family, which means you have no possession in the heritage your father left behind.” My father was a businessman; he left many houses and lands. “Will you sign?” He asked me. I said “Yes.” The document was brought for signature, which of course I did. I was cut off from the family because of my faith in Jesus Christ.

“What challenges did AMBBs experience after converting to Adventism?”

The themes with their categories for the discussion in this section can be found at Appendix S.

***Church members, except a few, do not care for AMBBs after their conversion.*** Most of the AMBBs (P1-P6) were not properly cared for by church members. Only a handful of the Adventist Church members showed a level of care for the AMBBs in relieving them of some of the challenges they faced after their conversion.

P6 shared his challenge:

Frankly speaking, it had not been easy because there are some Pastors who do not understand those who convert from Islam to Christianity. It was difficult for me. My family had the means, so we had fewer problems, but the time I became a Christian, things became difficult for me. I was there with my problems. Our spiritual leaders considered me to the same level as other Christians. They did not try to find out what my problems were in order that solutions could be found, so that I could have a little stable life. They didn't find out what I wanted. The men of God had principles that I knew, but I needed someone to support me. They usually would tell me to stop flouting those principles, and I could not stop some of them. I flouted some of those principles because of financial constraints. I was ashamed to ask for financial aid from someone more than once. They had stopped me from doing any kind of business. Because of the difficulties I experienced during my conversion, I

decided to become an entrepreneur to enable me to assist people who, like me, have been converted from Muslim backgrounds who may be in a similar situation, to work and remain in the church. That is why I went to (Guinea) Bissau (from Conakry); it was difficult. I experienced hunger and other hard times. Whenever I talked to the men of God, there was no favourable feedback. Instead of putting me somewhere despite my competence, to receive a small thing, at the same time, to remain in the church to follow the teaching, I was not supported.

***The problem of pastors and church leaders rating AMBBs with the same level of expectation as all Church members.*** Some Adventist pastors and members did not see the difference between a converted person from another Christian denomination and one from an Islamic background. Hence, they used the same standard of adaptation after conversion for both of them. This discouraged the AMBBs so much since they were always seen as not meeting expectations from pastors and Church members. For instance, P6 narrated his ordeal concerning this issue this way:

Frankly speaking, it had not been easy because some pastors do not understand those who convert from Islam to Christianity. It was difficult for me. My family had the means. We had fewer problems. But when I became a Christian, things became difficult for me. I was there with my problems. However, our spiritual leaders considered me at the same level as other Christians. They did not try to find out what my unique problems were in order that solutions could be found, so that I could have a little stable life. They didn't find out what I wanted.

***Family rejection and persecution.*** P5 suffered not only family rejection but family persecution, cutting off family support in transportation, food and employment. P5 was employed by the Ministry of Justice through the recommendation of one of her parents. Having become a Christian, the parents informed employers that she had become a Christian; therefore, her job should be blocked. This is how P5 put it: "When I became an Adventist, I was working in an organisation with the help of my parents. My parents went there and told them that I am now a Christian, so they

stopped my employment. I came and explained it to my elder. He said that “If that is the case, I will give you a job as an evangelist.”

P3 said that her family persecuted her a lot. Her ex-husband beat her till she was wounded and bled. The family attempted to kill her, but Jesus never allowed it to happen. The family said that there is no Christian in their family; therefore, she could not become a Christian and live among them.

*Cutting off transportation support and food.* FG 6 faced this challenge after her conversion. Before the loss of her job, her brother stopped paying her transportation to go to work because at that time, she was not receiving a salary. Her family urged her husband to cut off the food expenses for the family. However, she recounted, “I was supported by the treasurer of the Guinea Region of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church.”

This was how she narrated the ordeal:

When I became a Christian, it was not easy for me because everyone knew that I was a Muslim. My ex-husband reported to my aunt that I have become a Christian. She called me and said, “Because you have become a Christian now, I don’t want to see your face asking for anything. I said, “If it is because of that, I will remain where I am.” She told my husband to stop covering all the home's expenses, including food.

#### **Fourth Research Question**

The fourth research question is: What contextualized strategy can be developed for effective AMBBs retention in the Conakry district? To give a proposed strategy, two additional questions were investigated among the AMBBs which informed the formulation of the strategy beside the data gained through the first three research questions. The first is “How do the AMBBs navigate their relationship with family, friends, and the broader Muslim community?” The themes with their categories for the discussion in this section can be found at Appendix P.

The responses to this research question from the findings included the following.

***Good relationship with Muslims.*** Some of them have good relationships with Muslims, even more than Seventh-day Adventists, after their conversion. From the focus group discussion, FG 1 shared his relationship with Muslims this way:

Presently, my relationship with Muslims is very good compared to Adventists. I show the Muslims that we are one. I eat with them and move together with them. To date, my relationship with Muslims has not changed because God says we should love one another. Besides that, we have the same father, who is Abraham. On the contrary, my relationship with the Adventist is not the way it is expected. When it comes to sincere love, the Adventists do not have a love to win a soul, most especially in this church at Kaporo. There are many things to understand. Because we are among many Muslims, we need to show them love. About 85% are Muslims; therefore, we must show them that we are one. That is what we have to do as Adventists of Guinea-Conakry. We must not show any difference between the Adventists and Muslims.

FG 3 shared a similar experience by saying,

You are aware that I am from a Muslim background. God led me from there to come on a mission. My relationship with the Muslims is better than with the Adventists. They highly consider me, whereas they know that I am a Christian from a Muslim background. My family knows that I am a Christian. However, I am not persecuted. My relationship with the Muslims is cordial and strong compared to the Adventists. With the Adventists, we occasionally collaborate. For example, during ceremonies, we meet and talk. Besides that, everyone takes care of their own problem. I have a hundred percent good relationship with the Muslims. It is God who created me, and He knows what I am saying is true.

The statement by FG 3 implies that not all Muslims are persecuted after their conversion from Islam. Therefore, there should be thorough conversations with potential converts from Islam into the Adventist Church to know how probable it is for them to be persecuted should their conversion be known by their families and security measures taken accordingly.

Some AMBBs evangelize harmless Muslims they get close to showing how cordial their relationship with them is. By harmless Muslims, I mean Muslims who

are peaceful and would not resort to violence in defense of Islam in a religious dialogue. FG 2 said,

I have many Muslim friends whom I evangelise in the Market. They told me to wait because it was the Ramadan period. On Sabbath days, I go to my brothers to pray with them. I have evangelised my younger sister. She is now an Adventist. I told them that if they want to go to heaven, they must give their life to Jesus. I was baptised here. I am an evangelist. I cannot see the goodness of a person and keep silent. I give the good news, whether they accept it or not, but I will always tell them.

From the above finding, it presupposes that Adventist Muslim Background Believers can best serve as missionaries to their Muslim relatives and friends since they still maintain cordial relationships with them even after their conversion from Islam to Christianity.

**Good relationship with fellow Adventists.** Some of the Adventist Muslim Background Believers also have cordial relationships with Seventh-day Adventists.

FG 5 also indicated that he has a sound relationship with fellow Adventists. He said,

I have good relations with the Muslims. Many of them know that I am no more a Muslim. Many of my friends call me Esther, while others call me Maïmouna. However, I love the Esther name because that is the name that Jesus gave me, which gives me joy. With my friends, many of them are now understanding because I evangelize to them when we are together. I told them that your present status as a Muslim will not save you when you die. In our home, there are both Christians and Muslims. My relationship with the Adventists is cordial. It is hundred per cent. I collaborate with everyone.

The cordiality of the relationship between AMBBs and their fellow Adventists should be utilised to pair them in a well-thought-through discipleship endeavour to enable them to have a full worldview transformation after their conversion. Adventists who are fully converted should be well-trained to disciple AMBBs when they come into the Adventist Church.

The second question is: “How do AMBBs engage with and respond to missiological initiatives in their communities?” The themes with their categories for the discussion in this section can be found at Appendix Q.

*Personal involvement in evangelism.* Adventist Muslim Background

Believers are personally involved in evangelism. P3 indicated that he engages in a mission to other Muslims on an individual level. He engages in evangelism online on social media platforms such as whatsapp, through which he has led two souls to Christ.

P1 was explicitly clear that she shares her story as a testimony to win other Muslims to a saving knowledge and faith in Jesus. In her own words, she said, “Now, I share my story with others. I tell them, “Islam is not the way to salvation. Jesus is.” I’ve evangelized many. It’s not easy—people resist. But we pray and do our best. The truth is, there’s no peace of mind in Islam—only pressure, lies, and fear. But with Jesus, there’s truth and freedom.”

P5 is also involved in personal evangelism, including evangelizing her family. She made a profound statement that “I am doing a mission for Christ. If I live today, it is by the grace of Jesus. I cannot sit down and fold my hands without evangelizing my parents and my friends. Because if I am saved today and my parents are not, God will ask me. Therefore, I am doing many things for the Lord.”

Since AMBBs are already doing personal evangelism, consciously planning a mission to Muslims for them as a Church will lead them to make exploits for God in winning many Muslims to faith in Jesus. Let us train them adequately with the available Adventist Muslim Relations materials prepared by experts in Muslim mission and equip them with the necessary resources to go into their families and friends and reach them for Christ, and it will surprise us how the Lord will do wonders through them.

P4 got involved in personal evangelism by sharing his faith with visitors. After he had been separated from his Muslim family when persecuted, some concerned

family members visited him. However, he seized the opportunity to share his newly found faith in Jesus with them. Most of these visitors would come with the intention to convince him to return to Islam. P4 would then prove to them how his new faith is right and they are wrong.

*Serving as gospel outreach evangelists and global mission pioneers.* Some of the AMBBs are employed as evangelists or global mission pioneers in their local mission. P5 said she is currently employed as an evangelist for her local church. Also, P6 serves as a global mission pioneer in his local mission. FG 3 recounted how he became an evangelist in the Adventist Church this way:

Right now, I thank God. From the outset, things were very difficult, but now all is well. In the Church, some people do not understand the problem of new converts from a Muslim background. On the other hand, some deeply understand the difficult situations. I don't consider myself worthy to work in the church. Despite my failure in some areas, I have been accepted to work in the Church. Presently, I am working as a Global Mission Evangelist at Sonoyah community, Conakry, Guinea. That happened because the majority of the elders were on my side, though some were not happy. When elder Michel interviewed me, he found out that I never had adequate knowledge about the word of God; nevertheless, I was employed as an evangelist. Today, I work with Evangelist François Gromou at Sonoya. It is not easy on the field, but I thank God for the elders who are supporting me. My work as an evangelist is strengthening my faith. I am understanding many things in the work of God.

FG 4 and her husband work as global mission pioneers and this is how she shared her experience before becoming a pioneer:

When I accepted Jesus Christ, my family blocked all my activities, including food. It was the church that supported me to develop the courage to remain. When I received my baptism, the Guinean regional Seventh-day Adventist Church was always there for me. God protects me against every evil attack from my parents. I had a dream in which my aunt hit my stomach and said to me, "You shall not bear a child." I got up from sleep with a loud shout. My husband prayed for me and gave me some anointing oil to take in. During the dedication of my daughter, I invited my family to take part in the church. It was my mother who held my baby for the dedication. They appreciated the service a lot and told me to invite them whenever there is such a program. This church is good because there is no dancing or shouting. We are supported by

prayer. We prayed a lot. My husband and I are working as Global Mission Pioneers. We get our own money for food and other needs. We don't depend on somebody or family for our survival. God provides for us.

These experiences of the AMBBs in working for the Church as evangelists testify to the efficacy of involving AMBBs in the mission of the Adventist Church. Especially in a Muslim-dominated country like the Guinea, AMBBs will be best in reaching out to Muslims with the gospel if well-trained and resourced.

**Summary of Findings.** In summary, AMBBs positively respond to mission initiatives in the communities because

1. They are personally involved in evangelism.
2. They served as gospel outreach evangelists and global mission pioneers.

**Missiological Implications.** *First, there should be a well-designed and implemented education of pastors, elders and church members in Guinea Conakry on the worldview, traditions and theology of Islam.* From the findings, the mission to Muslims is unique from any other mission endeavours geared towards people from other Christian denominations. Therefore, in order for the Church leadership and laity to understand Muslims in their communities and relate accordingly, they must be oriented through the Adventist Muslim Relations workshop. This will enable them to be able to engage a Muslim to lead them to have a cultural and religious evolution from Islam to Christianity.

*Second, Muslims believe that the Bible is corrupted, hence are put off the moment a Christian pulls a Bible for studies, so the Quran must be used as the initial book of reference for engaging Muslims in doctrinal teachings.* Muslims have six Quranic verses that they use to condemn the Bible by saying it has been corrupted. These verses are Surat Al-‘Imran 3:78; Surat Al-Baqarah 2:75, 78-79; Surat An-Nisa 4:46; Surat Al-Maidah 5:13, 41. However, when carefully read and

interpreted correctly, these verses rather mean that the people of the book misinterpreted the Bible but the Scriptural texts were not tampered with. Therefore, these same Quranic references can be used to lead Muslims to have ultimate faith in the Bible and have faith in Jesus Christ.

In the instance when a Muslim tries to argue that the English Quranic translations are not the Quran but are commentaries, Adventist missionaries can utilise modern technologies for direct translations from the Arabic on a laptop to resolve any argument. Some of the modern English translations distort the original meanings in the Arabic Quran to prevent readers from having arguments against some of their teachings, which are contrary to the Quran, but the idea in the Quran may support a biblical view.

*Third, contrary to the traditional evangelistic method of public campaigns and rigorous advertisement of the efforts, Missions to Muslims must be done in secrecy and confidentiality.* From the findings, AMBBs face family rejection and persecution, death threats and so on. Some are even denied of fathers' heritage and source of livelihood, all because their families and friends got to know that they were becoming Christians. Therefore, it is expedient that AMBBs are not exposed publicly about their decision to convert from Islam to Christianity.

The Adventist Church in Guinea Conakry should make use of the house Church model as demonstrated in the book of Acts to nurture and disciple AMBBs. The worship done in these house Churches should be faithfully contextualised to have every aspect of it mimic Islamic worship, but still have Jesus Christ as the central focus.

*Fourth, effective and ceaseless prayer should accompany every mission endeavour among Muslims.* Prayer is a major key in winning Muslims to Christ

because of the spiritual bondage the devil has put on Muslims. Besides, since their religion is structured in such a way that the system protects Muslims from accepting any other religion, it takes the power of God and God's wisdom for a missionary to lead a Muslim to Christ. Prayer should ascend to God daily, weekly, monthly and annually for both entered and unentered Muslim communities, for God to reveal Himself to Muslims in dreams and visions.

When fervent prayer ascends to God to touch the hearts of Muslims in Guinea Conakry, miracles will be wrought among them, and thousands of them will give their lives to Jesus. There should be a deliverance ministry in each Adventist Church in Conakry where Muslims with spiritual challenges can have their freedom and eventually believe in Jesus.

***Finally, Adventist Muslim Background Believers should not be disciplined with the same discipleship program as converts from other Christian denominations.*** Before a Muslim's worldview will evolve religiously and culturally to the biblical worldview, a conscious effort must be made by the Church to disciple AMBBs to have a complete worldview transformation. This will prevent dual allegiance and syncretism. Dual allegiance and syncretism are when a person becomes an Adventist but still retains some practices contrary to the Bible from his or her previous religion. The gospel demands the transformation of all unbiblical worldviews.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>Paul G. Hiebert, "Conversion and Worldview Transformation," *International Journal of Frontier Missions* 14, no. 2 (1997): 85.

## **Proposed Strategy**

Having analysed the findings from the exploration of the lived experience of AMBBs in the Conakry District, the following is an eight-point proposed contextualised strategy for nurturing and discipling AMBBs to maintain them in the Adventist faith and to serve as missionaries to their family members and friends, most especially those of the Muslim background. The study has also provided a strategic plan that will facilitate achieving the proposed strategy.

First, pastors, elders, evangelists, and church members should be primarily trained on how to take better care of AMBBs. They should be equipped with resources for the Mission to the Muslims. The Adventists from a Muslim background and regular Adventists should not be treated at the same level. There should be a special consideration for AMBBs. From the interview, P6 said that when he was converted, the pastors, elders, evangelists, and some church members treated him like any other Church member, whereas, as an AMBB, he had special problems that were not addressed. In nurturing and discipling AMBBs, the evolving worldview from Islam and their backgrounds should be considered.

Second, there should be a regular, effective prayer meeting in support of AMBBs. Many of the AMBBs got converted through prayers. One Focus group member said that her husband was sick and they never had a child; the pastor and elders prayed for them. As a result of those prayers, her husband was healed, and God blessed them with a child.

P2 said that she was demon-possessed. Her father carried her to many Karamoko for deliverance, but she was not delivered. She promised her mother that if Jesus healed me, she would become a Christian. This woman had a strong hatred for

Christians. More interestingly, when the pastor, elder, and her mother prayed for her, she was delivered, and today she is a baptized and devoted Adventist.

Third, the Islamic Worldview should be gradually replaced by the biblical worldview, with doctrines taught through intensive Bible teaching on salvation, the second coming of Jesus, the Final Judgment, and the Last Day event.

Fourth, the Guinea Region and the local churches must plan to assist new converts from Islam who are rejected by their families, caretakers, and friends. For example, P4 was thrown out of her family home and disowned upon becoming a Christian. P1 and P3 had their school fees cut off, and P5's husband stopped giving food expenses, all because she had become a Christian.

Fifth, Adventist Muslim Background Believers' dreams should be gathered and analyzed by grouping theophanic dreams into trivial and non-trivial categories for proper redress.

Sixth, Adventist Muslim Background Believers should be involved in Church activities.

Seven, the Adventist Muslim Relations department should be established in the Guinea region of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Eight, the biblical principle of house church should be harnessed to accommodate AMBBs (1 Cor. 16:19; Acts 2:42). House church is one of the best methods for nurturing and discipling AMBBs, especially those who were converted in secret and are persecuted. The new converts can easily understand one another with fewer challenges than when they mingle with ordinary Adventists.

However, there is a special situation in Conakry, where about 95% of houses are owned by Muslims. Many] of them do not accommodate Christians in their houses. Some can lodge Christians, but in most cases do not allow a prayer group in

their houses. Whenever it is discovered that Christians are praying in their house, the landlord will ask them to leave. Therefore, Muslims who become Adventist Christians should not be allowed to quickly identify with Christianity but have their faith developed within their context gradually until they are very much independent, even in terms of accommodation, before they can openly practise Christianity.

### Proposed Strategy Plan

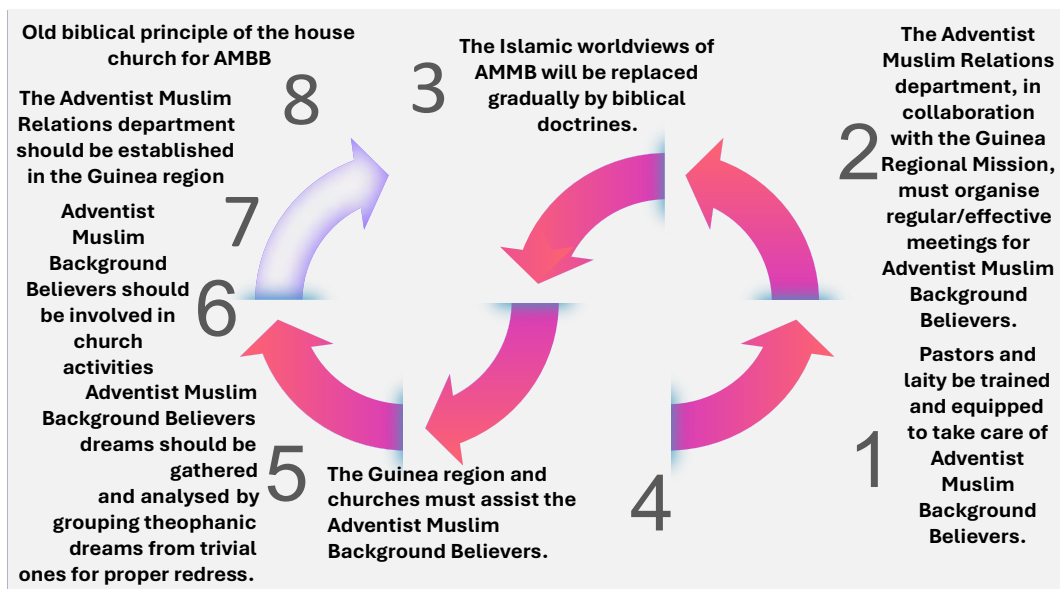


Figure 1. Pictorial Model of the Proposed Strategy Plan

The following Tables 1 to 8 cover the strategic plan for achieving the proposed strategy for the Muslim mission as demonstrated in Figure 1 above.

*Table 1.* Pastors and laity be trained and equipped to take care of Adventist Muslim Background Believers

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Resources/Inputs needed</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Location</b>
1	Arrange seminars for Pastors and evangelists on how to nurture and disciple AMBBs	Training materials handouts	Guinea region -AMR director AUA-trained missiologists	Regional headquarters N'Zerekore headquarters
2	Mobilize pastors and lay members to care for AMBBS and the mission to Muslims.	Make available materials for training	Director- AMR AUA trained Missiologists	Districts and churches GR

*Table 2.* The Adventist Muslim Relations department, in collaboration with the Guinea Regional Mission, must organize regular/effective prayer meetings for Adventist Muslim Background Believers.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Resources needed</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Location</b>
1	Weekly, monthly, and quarterly prayers for AMBBs/mission to Muslims	Hymnals Bibles Prayer manual	Guinea region AMR director AUA trained Missiologists Pastors Elders and church members	All churches, companies, Sabbath school branches, and places of work
2	Prayer for AMBBs during Ramadan and Friday prayers	Hymnals Bibles Prayer manual	GR, AMR director, all Pastors, Evangelists, elders, and members	All churches, companies, Sabbath school branches, and places of work

*Table 3.* Biblical doctrines should gradually replace AMMBs' Islamic worldviews.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Resources needed</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Location</b>
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1	Weekly teaching of biblical doctrines	Fundamental doctrines of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Bible	Pastors, Elders and Evangelists	All churches, companies, Sabbath school branches
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*Table 4.* The Guinea region and churches must assist the Adventist Muslim Background Believers.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Resources needed</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Location</b>
1	Provide shelters, food, support school fees and medication, and provide clothing.	Houses, food support, money, and clothes from generous offerings by Church members in the Guinea region.	Guinea region church members (volunteers), the minister of the school	Conakry and N'Zerekore

*Table 5.* Adventist Muslim Background Believers and Muslims' dreams should be gathered and analyzed, grouping theophanic dreams into trivial and non-trivial categories for proper redress.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Resources needed</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Location</b>
1	Dream about Jesus Christ or a man in a white gown being recorded and transcribed, with a file being opened on a computer.	Telephone, tape recorder, and computer	AMR director, all AUA-trained Pastors	Conakry and N'Zerekore Districts
2	A WhatsApp group should be created for AMBBs	Telephone and Computer	Trained AUA Missiologist	Conakry District

*Table 6.* Adventist Muslim Background Believers should be involved in church activities

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Resources needed</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Location</b>
1	Incorporate AMBBs in various departments	Church manual, programs, sheets of church activities	Pastor, Elders, and Evangelists	All the districts in the Guinea region

2	AMBBs should be encouraged to take part in church seminars	Hymnals Bibles	Pastor, Elders, and Evangelists	All the districts in the Guinea region
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*Table 7.* The Adventist Muslim Relations department should be established in the Guinea region

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Resources needed</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Location</b>
1	Arrange a training workshop for the Guinea region leaders, Pastors, Elders and Evangelists.	Qur'an, Bible, AMR documents, projector and computer	AMR trained Pastors	All the District of Guinea Region

*Table 8.* Old biblical principle of the house church for AMBB

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Resources needed</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Location</b>
1	Train the Guinea Region Church's officers, Pastors, Elders, and Evangelists on the importance of the house church for AMBBs.	House church establishment and instructional resource material from GR, AMR	Guinea Region AMR Director and all AUA, AMR-trained Pastors	Conakry District

## CHAPTER 6

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATION

Chapter six summarises the entire research on the exploration of lived experiences of Adventist Muslim Background Believers in Conakry District of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, which covers chapters one to five. This summary highlights the missiological implications of the researcher's proposed strategy. In addition, the chapter includes the conclusions and recommendations.

#### **Summary**

Chapter one introduces the study and presents the problem to be solved. Moreover, it explored the lived experience of Adventist Muslim Background Believers in the Conakry District of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church to develop a contextualized mission for nurturing and discipling AMMBs. This chapter outlined the methodology that was employed.

Chapter two provides the biblical-theological foundation for conversion. Conversion is defined as the turning away of a person from worshipping idols and from doing evil to return to God. In both the Old and New Testaments, people were converted by hearing divine revelation, by dreams and visions, and by living exemplary lives of other devoted worshippers of God and pious Christians. Some were converted through their encounters with Christ. However, these converts were faced with many challenges, including death threats, difficulties in living like Israelites, and persecutions by unbelievers.

Chapter 3 carries the Literature Review of the above-mentioned research topic. This literature review explored previous research by scholars, including

scholarly articles and other relevant resources, to examine the lived experiences of Adventist Muslim Background Believers (AMBBs).

Chapter 4 explains the methodology of this study to explore the lived experience of AMBBs in the Conakry District of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. Research methodology describes the systematic way to solve the research problem. It shows how the exploration of AMBBs' lived experience was conducted.

Chapter 5 presents the analysis of data collected through in-depth interviews with 6 participants and a focus group of 6. The findings were used to propose a contextualized strategy for nurturing and discipling AMBBs to maintain them in the Adventist faith and to involve them in mission. This chapter also provided a strategic plan for achieving the proposed strategy.

### **Religious Worldview Evolution**

The religious worldview of AMBBs, which evolved during and after their conversion, centered around.

1. Belief in God
2. Knowledge about the Sabbath
3. Belief in Muhammad as a prophet
4. Belief in paying back evil with evil
5. Belief in salvation

### **Cultural Worldview Evolution**

The cultural worldview of AMBBs, which evolved during and after their conversion, concerned.

1. Sitting arrangements for men and women in the mosque
2. Value of women
3. Learning of special language

4. Reading of religious scripture

### **How Adventist Muslim Background Believers Navigate their Relationship with Family and friends and the broader Muslim Community**

3. They are personally involved in evangelism.
4. They served as gospel outreach evangelists and global mission pioneers.

### **Challenges Adventist Muslim Background Believers face before Deciding to Leave Islam**

1. They are warned not to mention Jesus' name.
2. They visited many churches for deliverance.
3. They were slapped, pushed, and wounded.
4. Their Bibles were burnt.
5. Their parents attempted to arrange an early marriage for them.
6. Family and friends reject them.

### **Challenges Adventist Muslim Background Believers Face after Leaving Islam**

1. Church members, except a few, do not care for AMBBs after their conversion.
2. There is the problem of pastors and church leaders rating AMBBs with the same level of expectation as all church members.
3. There is family persecution.
4. There is the cutting off of transportation support and food.
5. There is rejection from family and friends.

### **Proposed Strategy**

1. Pastors, elders, evangelists, and church members should primarily be trained in how to better care for AMBBs.
2. There should be a regular, effective prayer meeting in support of AMBBs.

3. Biblical doctrines should gradually replace the Islamic worldview through intensive Bible teaching.
4. The Guinea region and the local churches must plan to assist new converts from Islam who are rejected by their families, caretakers, and friends.
5. Adventist Muslim Background Believers and Muslims' dreams should be gathered and analyzed, grouping theophanic dreams into trivial and non-trivial categories for proper redress.
6. Adventist Muslim Background Believers should be involved in Church activities.
7. The Adventist-Muslim Relations department should be established in the Guinea Region of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
8. The biblical principle of house church should be harnessed to accommodate AMBBs.

### **Conclusion**

The conclusion of the research on the exploration of the Lived Experience of Adventist Muslim Background Believers has shown that AMBBs face many difficult challenges during and after their conversion. It was discovered that the Islamic worldview of AMBBs is transformed. Pastors, elders, Evangelists and other church members should coordinate their efforts to better care for and properly disciple the AMBBs. In this way, the AMBBs will remain in the faith and worship their God peacefully. In that light, they can become missionaries for the Muslim Mission.

### **Recommendations**

The researcher has made the following recommendations:

1. The proposed strategy for nurturing and discipling Adventist Muslim Background Believers and preparing them for the mission to Muslims should

be implemented by all missions and conferences of the West Africa Union Mission.

2. Adventist Muslim Background Believers (AMBBs) should be trained to do Mission for Muslims.
3. There should be special funds allotted for the Adventist Mission to Muslims
4. Further Research should be made on how to effectively reach Muslims and how the house model of Muslim discipleship can be effective in WAUM.

## APPENDICES

### **A. Informed Consent Form**

You are being asked to participate in a research study entitled: An Evaluation of Lived Experiences among Adventist Muslim Background Believers in Conakry District, Guinea: A Missiological Response. The information below tells you about what is involved in the research, what you will be asked to do, and the potential risks and benefits of participating in this study. You are encouraged to ask questions and seek clarification about the nature of the study. Please note that choosing whether to participate in this research is voluntary and entirely your choice. You may refuse to participate or discontinue your participation at any time during the study.

This study aims to evaluate the lived experiences of Adventist Muslim Background Believers and give missiological implications.

Your participation: You will be asked to participate in an interview. This means you will be asked to share your experience on how you were led from a Muslim Background to Seventh-day Adventism. The interview will take about one (1) hour to complete. You will be asked to answer questions on how you became an Adventist from a Muslim Background.

Benefits and Risks: If you participate, you will contribute to knowledge about the conversion of Muslims to the Seventh-day Adventist church. A missiological response in the form of missiological implications will be developed from your experience to help the Adventist church in the Conakry district to strategize to reach Muslims with the gospel in the territory.

There are no identifiable risks in participation. However, you may experience emotional discomfort depending on how traumatic your experience in your conversion to the Adventist church is. You will be made to answer the next question when you become very emotional in answering the question relating to your challenges. If your emotions become too much, the interview will be rescheduled to another appropriate time.

#### Confidentiality

Your personal information will be kept confidential. Your interview responses will be anonymized so they will not be identified in any report or publication of this study.

Please carefully read and sign this Form if you are willing to participate in the study. My participation in this research project is voluntary. There is no explicit or implicit coercion whatsoever to participate.

I may withdraw and discontinue participation at any time without penalty.

I understand that if I feel uncomfortable during the interview, I have the right to decline to answer any question or end the interview or discussion.

I understand that the interview will be audio-recorded to accurately capture my own words and a transcript will be produced for data analysis.

I understand the researcher will not identify me by name in any reports using information from this interview or discussion.

If you have any ethical concerns about your participation in this research, contact the Institutional Scientific Ethics Review Committee, Adventist University of Africa:  
ethics@aua.ac.ke

I have read and fully understood the statements on this Form. All my questions were answered satisfactorily. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Participant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Contact the supervisor or the researcher if you need more information or have questions:

Olaotse Obed Gabasiane, PhD (gabasianeo@aua.ac.ke)

(MA Missiology Program, koikoia@aua.ac.ke, +224623087717

Thank you.

Arthur Moni Koikoi

## **B. Translated Consent Form**

(From English to French)

Il vous est demandé de participer à une étude de recherche intitulée : Une évaluation des expériences vécues parmi les croyants d'origine musulmane adventiste dans le district de Conakry, en Guinée : une réponse missiologique. Les informations ci-dessous vous renseignent sur ce qu'implique la recherche, ce que l'on vous demandera de faire et les risques et avantages potentiels de la participation à cette étude. Vous êtes encouragé à poser des questions et à demander des éclaircissements sur la nature de l'étude. Veuillez noter que le choix de participer ou non à cette recherche est volontaire et entièrement votre choix. Vous pouvez refuser de participer ou interrompre votre participation à tout moment au cours de l'étude.

Cette étude vise à évaluer les expériences vécues des croyants d'origine musulmane adventiste et à en tirer des implications missiologiques.

Votre participation : Il vous sera demandé de participer à un entretien. Cela signifie qu'il vous sera demandé de partager votre expérience sur la façon dont vous avez été conduit d'un milieu musulman à l'adventisme du septième jour. L'entretien durera environ une (1) heure. Il vous sera demandé de répondre à des questions sur la façon dont vous êtes devenu Adventiste d'un milieu musulman.

Avantages et risques : Si vous participez, vous contribuerez à la connaissance de la conversion des musulmans à l'Église Adventiste du septième jour. Une réponse missiologique sous forme d'implications missiologiques sera élaborée à partir de votre expérience pour aider l'Église Adventiste du district de Conakry à élaborer une stratégie pour atteindre les musulmans avec l'Évangile sur le territoire.

Il n'y a aucun risque identifiable à participer. Cependant, vous pouvez ressentir un inconfort émotionnel en fonction du degré de traumatisme de votre expérience lors de

votre conversion à l'Église adventiste. Vous serez amené à répondre à la question suivante lorsque vous deviendrez très émotif en répondant à la question relative à vos difficultés. Si vos émotions deviennent trop fortes, l'entretien sera reporté à un autre moment approprié.

#### Confidentialité

Vos informations personnelles resteront confidentielles. Vos réponses aux entretiens seront anonymisées afin qu'elles ne soient identifiées dans aucun rapport ou publication de cette étude.

Veuillez lire attentivement et signer ce formulaire si vous souhaitez participer à l'étude.

1. Ma participation à ce projet de recherche est volontaire. Il n'y a aucune contrainte explicite ou implicite de quelque nature que ce soit pour participer.
2. Je peux me retirer et interrompre ma participation à tout moment sans pénalité.
3. Je comprends que si je me sens mal à l'aise pendant l'entretien, j'ai le droit de refuser de répondre à toute question ou de mettre fin à l'entretien ou à la discussion.
4. Je comprends que l'entretien sera enregistré audio pour capturer avec précision mes propres mots et qu'une transcription sera produite pour l'analyse des données.
5. Je comprends que le chercheur ne m'identifiera pas par mon nom dans aucun rapport utilisant les informations de cet entretien ou de cette discussion.

Si vous avez des inquiétudes éthiques concernant votre participation à cette recherche, contactez le Comité d'éthique scientifique institutionnel de l'Université adventiste d'Afrique : [ethical@aua.ac.ke](mailto:ethical@aua.ac.ke)

J'ai lu et pleinement compris les déclarations figurant sur ce formulaire. Toutes mes questions ont reçu une réponse satisfaisante. J'accepte volontairement de participer à cette étude.

Signature du participant \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature du chercheur \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Contactez le superviseur de la recherche si vous avez besoin de plus d'informations ou si vous avez des questions :

Obed Olaotse Gabasiane, PhD (gabasiano@aua.ac.ke)

Merci.

Arthur Moni Koikoi

(Programme de missiologie MA, koikoia@aua.ac.ke, +224623087717)

## Back-translated Consent Form

(From French to English)

You are being asked to participate in a research study entitled: An Assessment of Lived Experiences Among Adventist Muslim Believers in the Conakry District of Guinea: A Missiological Response. The information below will inform you of what the research involves, what you will be asked to do, and the potential risks and benefits of participating in this study. You are encouraged to ask questions and seek clarification about the nature of the study. Please note that your choice to participate or not in this research is voluntary and entirely your choice. You may decline to participate or discontinue your participation at any time during the study.

This study is designed to assess the lived experiences of Adventist Muslim believers and to draw missiological implications from them.

**Your Participation:** You will be asked to participate in an interview. This means that you will be asked to share your experience of how you were led from a Muslim background to Seventh-day Adventism. The interview will last approximately one (1) hour. You will be asked to answer questions about how you became an Adventist from a Muslim background.

**Benefits and Risks:** If you participate, you will contribute to the knowledge of Muslim conversion to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. A missiological response in the form of missiological implications will be developed from your experience to help the Conakry District Adventist Church develop a strategy to reach Muslims with the gospel in the territory.

There are no identifiable risks to participating. However, you may experience emotional discomfort depending on the degree of trauma of your experience when converting to the Adventist Church. You will be prompted to answer the following

question when you become very emotional in answering the question about your difficulties. If your emotions become too strong, the interview will be rescheduled for another appropriate time.

#### Confidentiality

Your personal information will be kept confidential. Your interview responses will be anonymized so that they will not be identified in any reports or publications from this study.

Please read and sign this form carefully if you wish to participate in the study.

1. My participation in this research project is voluntary. There is no explicit or implicit coercion of any kind to participate.
2. I may withdraw and discontinue my participation at any time without penalty.
3. I understand that if I feel uncomfortable during the interview, I have the right to refuse to answer any questions or to end the interview or discussion.
4. I understand that the interview will be audio recorded to accurately capture my own words and that a transcript will be produced for data analysis.
5. I understand that the researcher will not identify me by name in any reports using information from this interview or discussion.

If you have any ethical concerns regarding your participation in this research, please contact the Adventist University of Africa Institutional Scientific Ethics Committee: [ethics@aua.ac.ke](mailto:ethics@aua.ac.ke)

I have read and fully understood the statements on this form. All my questions have been satisfactorily answered. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Participant Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Contact the research supervisor if you need more information or have any questions:

Obed Olaotse Gabasiane, PhD (gabasiane@aua.ac.ke)

Thank you.

Arthur Moni Koikoi

(MA Missiology Program, koikoia@aua.ac.ke, +224623087717)

## **D. Interview Questions**

### **Individual AMBBs**

What was your knowledge about God, His creation, mode of salvation and the state of death when you were a Muslim?

What was your conversion story to the Seventh-day Adventist church?

What were your pre-conversion challenges when you wanted to leave Islam?

What were your post-conversion challenges when you became an Adventist?

How will you respond to missiological initiatives in your community?

## **E. Translated Interview**

Questions D'entretien

(From English to French)

1. Quelle était votre connaissance de Dieu, de sa création, du mode de salut et de l'état de mort lorsque vous étiez musulman ?
2. Quelle a été votre histoire de conversion à l'Église Adventiste du Septième Jour ?
3. Quels ont été vos défis avant la conversion lorsque vous avez voulu quitter l'Islam?
4. Quels ont été vos défis après votre conversion lorsque vous êtes devenu Adventiste?
5. De quelles manières répondrez-vous aux initiatives missiologiques dans votre communauté ?

## **F. Back-translated Interview Questions**

(Individual AMBBs)

1. What was your knowledge of God, his creation, the mode of salvation and the state of death when you were a Muslim?
2. What was your conversion story to the Seventh-day Adventist Church?
3. What were your challenges before conversion when you wanted to leave Islam?
4. What were your challenges after your conversion when you became an Adventist?
5. In what ways will you respond to missiological initiatives in your community?

### **G. Focus Group Discussion Interview Questions**

1. What are some aspects of Adventism that influenced you to become an Adventist?
2. What were the reactions of family and close community about your decision to become an Adventist?
3. What is your relationship like with both Muslim and Adventist communities?
4. What do you do to cope with the challenges of being AMBB?

## **H. Translated Focus Group Discussion Questions**

(From English to French)

1. Quels aspects de l'adventisme vous ont poussé à devenir adventiste?
2. Quelles ont été les réactions de votre famille et de votre communauté proche à propos de votre décision de devenir adventiste?
3. Quelle est votre relation avec les communautés musulmane et adventiste?
4. Que faites-vous pour relever les défis liés au fait d'être AMBB?

## **I. Back-Translated Focus Group Discussions Questions**

(From French to English)

1. What aspects of Adventism inspired you to become an Adventist?
2. What were the reactions of your family and immediate community to your decision to become an Adventist?
3. What is your relationship with the Muslim and Adventist communities?
4. What are you doing to address the challenges of being an AMBB?

## J. ISERC Approval



# Adventist University of Africa

*Developing Leaders for Service*

A Private Chartered University Accredited by Commission for University Education, Kenya



10<sup>th</sup> March 2025

Arthur Moni Koikoi  
Theological Seminary  
Adventist University of Africa  
Kenya

**Reference: AUA/ISERC/24/02/2025**

Dear Arthur Moni Koikoi

**RE: Exploring the Lived Experience of Adventists with Muslim Backgrounds in Conakry District, Guinea: A Missiological Perspective**

This is to inform you that the Adventist University of Africa Institutional Scientific Ethics Review Committee (AUA-ISERC) has reviewed and approved your research proposal titled above. Your application approval number is AUA/ISERC/2025/0014. The approval period is 10<sup>th</sup> March 2025 – 9<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements:

- i. Only approved documents (including informed consent and study instruments) will be used.
- ii. All changes including (amendments, deviations, and violations) are submitted for review and approval by AUA-ISERC.
- iii. Death and life-threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to AUA-ISERC within 72 hours of notification.
- iv. Any changes, anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affect the safety or welfare of study participants and others, or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to AUA-ISERC within 72 hours.
- v. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to the expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal.
- vi. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days upon completion of the study to AUA-ISERC.

Prior to commencing your study, you are expected to obtain permissions or any other clearances needed.

Yours Sincerely

Josephine Ganu, Ph.D.  
Chair, Institutional Scientific Ethics Review C'ttee  
[ethics@aua.ac.ke](mailto:ethics@aua.ac.ke)



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## **K. Letter of Permission**

Dear Arthur Moni Koikoi,

You have my permission and support for your research project which you want to undertake in Conakry.

I pray that the Lord leads and guide you in your field work so that your work will contribute to the success of mission.

God be with you.

Pastor Dr. James K. Badu

### L. Demographics of Participants

No	Participant Pseudonym	Gender	Category
1.	P1	female	Church member
2.	P2	female	Evangelist
3.	P3	female	Church member
4.	P4	female	Church member
5.	P5	male	Global Mission Pioneer
6.	P6	male	watchman
7.	FG1	male	Church member
8.	FG2	female	Church member
9.	FG3	male	Church Member
10.	FG4	male	Church Member
11.	FG5	female	Church Member
12.	FG6	male	Church member

Table 9.

## M. Research Question 1 Themes A

Table 10. Religious Worldview Evolution

Theme	Category
1. Belief in God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. God is the Creator.</li> <li>b. God is good and gentle.</li> <li>c. God blesses people.</li> <li>d. God punishes wrongdoers.</li> </ul>
2. Knowledge about the Sabbath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. No knowledge about Saturday Sabbath before</li> <li>b. They knew Friday is the worship day</li> <li>c. Now know about the Saturday Sabbath</li> </ul>
3. Belief in Muhammad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Muhammad is the prophet of Allah.</li> <li>b. Muhammad was the one to follow after Jesus.</li> <li>c. Muhammad is not a prophet of Allah.</li> <li>d. Muhammad is not the one to follow Jesus.</li> <li>e. The Holy Spirit is the one to follow Jesus.</li> </ul>
5. Belief in Paying Back Evil with Evil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Pay back evil with evil without forgiveness in Islam</li> <li>b. Forgive offenders in Christianity</li> </ul>
6. Belief in Salvation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Angels visit in the grave at a person's death.</li> <li>b. Angels weigh good deeds and bad deeds.</li> <li>c. A person goes to paradise when good deeds are more than the bad ones.</li> <li>d. A person goes to hell when bad deeds are more than the good ones.</li> <li>e. Judgement after death in Islam differs from Christianity.</li> <li>f. Salvation by works in Islam</li> <li>g. Salvation by grace in Christianity</li> </ul>

## N. Research Question 1 Themes B

Table 11. Cultural Worldview Evolution

Theme	Category
1. Sitting Arrangements for Men and Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Men are separated from women in Islam in the Mosque.</li> <li>b. Men and women sit together in the Church</li> </ul>
2. Value of Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Women are not allowed to choose till death in Islam.</li> <li>b. Women have freedom of choice in Christianity.</li> <li>c. Women are restricted in their frequency at the mosque.</li> <li>d. Women are not restricted in their frequency to the Church house.</li> </ul>
3. Learning the Arabic Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Muslims are taught the Arabic language</li> <li>b. Christians are not compulsorily taught Hebrew, Aramaic or Greek.</li> </ul>
4. Reading of Religious Scripture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Muslims are forbidden to read the Bible.</li> <li>b. Christians read the Bible but are not forbidden from reading the Quran.</li> </ul>

## O. Research Question 2 Themes

Table 12

Theme	Category
1. Definition of Conversion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Conversion is the turning away from idols or evil and returning to God in repentance.</li> </ul>
2. Factors of Conversion in the Bible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Divine revelation</li> <li>b. Reports of God's miraculous deeds</li> <li>c. The exemplary lives of believers</li> <li>d. The preaching of prophets and apostles</li> <li>e. Personal encounters with Jesus</li> </ul>
3. Challenges of Conversion in the Bible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Delays in divine intervention</li> <li>b. Cultural adaptation to the life and practices of the Israelites</li> <li>c. Persecution from unbelieving Jews and gentiles</li> </ul>
4. Factors of Conversion from the Muslim Faith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Divine healing</li> <li>b. Dreams</li> <li>c. Bible Studies</li> </ul>

### P. Research Question 3 Themes

Table 13

Theme	Category
1. Good Relationship with Muslims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Good relationship with Muslims more than Christians</li> <li>b. Not all Muslims are persecuted after conversion</li> <li>c. Some AMBBs evangelize harmless Muslims</li> </ul>
2. Good Relationship with Fellow Adventists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Cordial relationship with Adventists</li> </ul>

### Q. Research Question 3 Themes

Table 14

Theme	Category
1. Personal Involvement in Evangelism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Mission to Muslims on Individual Level</li> <li>b. Online evangelism on social media platform</li> </ul>
3. Serving as Gospel Outreach Evangelists and Global Mission Pioneers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Some AMBBs are employed as evangelists.</li> <li>b. Some AMBBs are employed as global mission pioneers.</li> </ul>

### R. Research Question 5

Table 15

Theme	Category
1. Warned not to Mention Jesus' Name	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. They should not mention Jesus' name.</li> <li>b. They should have nothing to do with Christianity.</li> <li>c. Prevented from watching a movie on the passion of Christ.</li> </ul>
2. Visited Many Churches for Deliverance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Some AMBBs have challenges of demonic possession.</li> <li>b. They visited many Churches to solve spiritual problems.</li> <li>c. These problems were not solved until they visited the SDA Church.</li> </ul>
3. Being Slapped, Pushed and Wounded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. They were slapped.</li> <li>d. They were pushed.</li> <li>e. They were wounded.</li> </ul>
4. Burning of their Bibles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>d. Their Bibles were burnt.</li> </ul>
5. Attempts by parents to give them earlier in marriages to Muslim men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Attempt to give female Muslims to early marriages.</li> </ul>

6. Rejection by Family Members and Friends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Rejection by Family Members</li> <li>b. Rejection by Friends</li> <li>c. Cessation of all family assistance</li> <li>d. Dislodged from family residence</li> <li>e. Denial of father's heritage</li> </ul>
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### S. Research Question 3 Themes

Table 16

Theme	Category
1. Challenges of AMBBs after Conversion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Church Member, Except a Few, do not Care for AMBBs.</li> <li>b. The problem of pastors and Church leaders rating AMBBs with the same level of expectation as all Church members.</li> <li>c. Family rejection and persecution</li> <li>d. Cutting off transportation support and food.</li> </ul>

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## VITAE

### Personal Information

Name: Arthur Moni Koikoi  
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Nationality: Liberian  
Marital Status: Married  
Address: Conakry, Guinea  
Phone: +224623087717  
Email: koikoia@aua.ac.ke/ arthurkoikoi72@gmail.com

### Academic Achievement

Adventist University of West Africa	Bachelor of Arts in Theology	2016
Tepei-Macenta Refugee High School	High School Diploma	1993

### Work Experience

September 2025 to Present-----Director of Guinea Region  
March 2021-2024-----Ministerial Secretary, R G  
September 2016-2024-----District Pastor, Nzerekore District  
March 2017- 2024-----Publishing Ministry, Guinea Region  
March 2018- 2024----- Sabbath School and Personal Ministry Director  
February 2002 to 2004----- Global Mission Pioneer  
August 2006 –2012-----Gospel outreach evangelist  
March 1995—2002-----Classroom Teacher  
October 2003-----English Teacher, Amilcar Cabral High School, Macenta -  
Guinea  
September 2012-2016-----Literature Evangelist  
September---2014 -----Bible Teacher, Adventist High school- Monrovia, Liberia

### Skills

Leadership and Teamwork  
Community Development  
Communication and Interpersonal Skills  
Certifications  
Certificate in Leadership Training  
Certificate in Community Development  
Certificate in Computer Applications  
Certificate B in Teacher Education

### Languages

English (Fluent)  
French (Fluent)  
Local Languages: Lorma

### References

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