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**CONCEPT OF EKLOGEN IN ROMANS 9: 6 – 13 AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE
PREFERMENT OF CLERGYMEN IN KWARA ANGLICAN DIOCESE**

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Abstract

Preferment in the Anglican Church, a process of selecting and appointing Clergy to Senior positions, is deeply rooted in the Church's tradition and involves a combination of human discernment and divine guidance. However, it is alleged that the process has been eroded by favouritism and patronage, which has significant implications for the Church's leadership and the careers of its Clergy. Extant literatures have a little discourse on Preferment in the Anglican Church especially in the context of the selected pericope and its implications for Kwara Anglican Diocese. This study explored the concept of eklogên (divine election) in Romans 9:6–13 and applies this theological idea to the practice of clergy preferment in the Kwara Anglican Diocese. This is with a view to addressing the controversies on the process. Premised on Moo's Theory of Divine Appointment, this work employed Qualitative methods to gather data through exegetical analysis of the selected passage and unstructured interviews of clergy and members within the Diocese of Kwara. It is observed that the biblical passage entrenched spiritual guidance for preferment. Most preferment within the Diocese is not totally in alignment with the biblical view and this sometimes leads to tribal sentiment, backbiting, rancor and clash of personality. The work underscores the fact that Preferment in the Anglican Church should be bible based and devoid of human sentiments. Therefore, it is imperative for Church to review system of church governance through the biblical lens.

Keywords: Eklogên, Divine Election, Clergy Preferment, Kwara Anglican Diocese, Church Governance.

Introduction

The Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion takes it descends from the Church of England. This study necessitates a brief history of the Church of England in order to have deeper understanding of the recent historiographical trends. The Church effect on Anglicanism as denomination, on the socio-political influences and on the Clergymen, the ruling of the Church and the terrified means of the ruling of the Church by the religious leaders of the 17th and 18th Centuries which had adverse effects on the promotion, election or preferment of Clergymen.¹

Before the recent torrent of books, Anglicanism was neglected as peripheral, almost unworthy of the scholars attention. Yet the Hanoverian bishops and clergy crowned Kings and harangued Parliaments; controlled the Universities and ensured that none but

those professing the national faith were eligible for public employment; they secured popular acquiescence in the authority of most exclusive ruling order in British.² According to Clark, the political institution meeting the need of the population in their everyday life was not the administration, let alone parliament.³

Since the spiritual controls the physical affairs of any group or individuals, it was prominently observed from the history of the Church in the eighteenth century, was been directed by the worldly affairs of their time and not spiritual affairs.⁴ Newman, a prominent representative of the Oxford movement until he converted to Catholicism, wrote that the Church of England was a direct descendant of the Christian Church settled by the Apostles.⁵



Abbey and Overton posits:

The (eighteenth century) Church partook of the general sordidness of the age; it was of great material prosperity, but of moral and spiritual poverty, such as hardly finds a parallel in our history.⁶

Abbey further claims

In the Church of England, the insidious advance of indolence would no doubt have been greatly counteracted if its chief rulers had been carefully selected for the qualification which best be seen in a bishop.⁷

In summary of the moral decadence of the Church of England in the eighteenth century. It was customary to describe the Church of England in the eighteenth century as a morass of corruption, indifference and mediocrity. From Plummer and Namier to Hill and Plumb, the story was pretty miserable.⁸ During the 1980s, such historians as Sykes,⁹ Gordon,¹⁰ Ravitch¹¹ and Pocock¹² accomplished a significant revision that restored some respect to the Priests, Bishops and Laity of the eighteenth century church and found far more vitality than earlier critics had ever discovered. Jacob's thorough and comprehensive study of the Church of England from 1640-1840 enhances that revisionary turn and depicts an English Church that enjoyed remarkable success in large part because of a conscientious, competent, well-educated Clergy.¹³

The historical perspective of the Church was of necessity to give clearer views of the position the Clergymen were and how they will fit into the Church through the Church authority to enhance preferment into higher pedestal of the Church hierarchy in this present dispensation. Contrary to the eighteenth century, Church of England systems which was inadvertently corrupted by the State (Government), the Anglican Church of today are particularly independent of the ruling government but the Anglican Church in Dioceses headed by the elected Bishops are Synodically governed.¹⁴

The Bishop of the Diocese of Kwara, had been empowered by the Constitution of the Diocese of Kwara 2013 to 'assign any Priest to any Office and all Priests in the Diocese shall hold their post at the pleasure of the bishop'.¹⁵ Therefore, the Bishop of the Diocese of Kwara, like other Bishops in other Dioceses have the prerogative to assign Priest to any post as he wishes. This is what is called 'Preferment'. Thus, Preferment in the Anglican Church refers to the process of selecting and appointing Clergy to senior positions, such as Dean, Archdeacons and Canons. This process is deeply rooted in the Church's tradition and involves a combination of human discernment and divine guidance.¹⁶ Ravitch's study explores how the Church of England's Clergy advancement system (*preferment*) was influenced by patronage, where wealthy and influential individuals sponsored Clergy members for promotion.¹⁷ This system had significant implications for the Church's leadership and the careers of its Clergy.

In the light of the works of Scholars on preferment, in the Anglican Church Worldwide, few works are recorded to have been done and

they specifically work extensively on the socio-political and economic perspectives as it affects the Clergymen in the eighteenth century. The idea of preferment in the Anglican Church, especially in the Church of Nigeria is a sacred area where Scholars are yet to explore, may be because it has to do with Clergy, but various negative views are held about preferment.

However, some hold the belief that preferment is based on sentiment, favoritism, nepotism and tribalism. Kwara Anglican Diocese Clergymen cannot be exonerated from such views in so much that some held grudges of the fact that they have been ordained for years and yet the bishop have not deem it fit to prefer them while some recently ordained Priests are preferred above them. Despite the fact that those set of Priest knew that in Anglican Church preferment is not promotion, but it is always based on whom the bishop wishes to work with, that he will prefer based on the Kwara Anglican Constitution which states the power of Bishop to assign any Priest to any office and all Priests in the Diocese shall hold their post at the pleasure of the bishop.¹⁸ This in tandem with Apostle Paul's views as expressed in Romans Chapters 9-11. But specifically in Romans 9:6-13 about God's sovereign will to elect whomsoever He will. This is the main focus of this dissertation to study the concept of *eklogen* in Romans 9:6-13 and its implications for the preferment of Clergymen in Kwara Anglican Diocese.

Extant literatures have examined the practices of Anglicanism and its relative effects on the Clergymen in different context. Clark pointed out the romance of the Anglican Church with politicians of their time and their negative impacts on the Church and the Clergy. Stephen,¹⁹ Trevelyan,²⁰ Williams,²¹ Namier²² critically diagnose a condition of advanced moral decay in the body of the eighteenth century Church. Newman impugn in the lackadaisical attitudes of the Clergymen to spiritual affairs of the Church.²³ While Wordsworth condemned the eighteenth century church as an indolent entity with grievous effects on every Christian virtue.²⁴ Sanni emphasized that election is grounded in grace and not merit.²⁵ However, little or no literature has looked into concept of *Eklogen* in Romans 9:6-13 and its implications on the preferment of Clergyman in Kwara Anglican Diocese. Therefore, this research will examine *Eklogen* and its impacts on Preferment within the scope of this study. The aim, being to specifically pursue Paul's theology on election using Romans 9: 6-13 to authenticate the sovereignty of God's will and its impact on preferment of clergymen in Kwara Anglican Diocese. The objectives progress naturally from understanding the sources (Bible, Doctrine) to describing reality (Practices, Perceptions) to critical evaluation (Alignment) and finally applications (Recommendations).

The study would offer a recommendation to the Kwara Anglican Diocese about the effective ways of preferment of Clergymen in order to elucidate peace and tranquility among the Clergy in the Diocese. This study will also offer a conjecture which will engender the growth of the Diocese without discord and acrimony. This study would also serve as a guide for future researches on the

issues of *Eklogen* and its influences on preferment in the Anglican Church.

The Study also looks critically on the history of early church with reference to Church of England in the eighteenth century and its adverse and positive influences on the Church and the Clergymen. The study extends its purview on the recent happenings in Kwara Anglican Diocese on Preferment of the Clergy and the relevancy of concept of *Eklogen* in Roman 9:6-13 to the issues at stake.

This research is critically justified from the biblical-theological imperative: The doctrine of divine election (*ἐκλογήν*) in Romans 9 is not a peripheral topic but central to Paul's theodicy and soteriology. Ignoring its implications for ecclesial practice risks severing Scripture from the Church's lived reality.²⁶ Moo argues Paul's use of Jacob/Esau "demolishes any theology of merit" in divine calling.²⁷ Wright notes that neglecting this text distorts the "covenantal framework" of leadership.²⁸

In conclusion, therefore, this research is justified by its commitment to biblical and theological integrity, its focus on a critical practical-theological tension with real-world consequences for church health, its contextual specificity addressing a significant gap in knowledge about Kwara Diocese and Nigerian Anglicanism, and its potential to generate actionable insights for enhancing spiritual discernment, transparency, and the effectiveness of clergy leadership selection. It is not merely an academic exercise but a necessary inquiry for faithful and fruitful governance of the church.

Historical Context of the Anglican Church

According to Oyebanjo,²⁹ quoting Asaju opined that Anglican Church generally has its foundation laid on the tripod of the scripture, reasoning and tradition. This was based on the Ecclesial Governance theory which explores the theological and structural organization of the Church, where authority is seen as a form of pastoral service rooted in divine mission.³⁰

There are different categories of the Anglican Church and their different emphases, preferences and agenda all over the world.³¹ This is enshrined in the Ecclesial governance theory which addresses the theological, pastoral and institutional principles through which the church exercises authority, leadership and organization.³² At its core, the theory is not merely concerned with administrative structures but is deeply rooted in the divine mission of the Church. It seeks to embody the Spirit of Christ, who came "not to be served but to serve" (Matt. 20: 28) and thus defines governance not as domination but as service and stewardship.

The Concept of *Eklogen* (Election by God)

The theological concept of *Eklogen* derived from the Greek term *ἐκλογήν*, plays a significant role in biblical literature especially within Pauline theology. Translated as 'election' or 'choosing', it signifies God's Sovereign choice of individuals or groups for a particular purpose or destiny, often concerning salvation. The Apostle Paul uses the term extensively in his epistles, particularly in Romans Chapters 9-11, where God's election is presented as both merciful and mysterious. Paul emphasizes that God's choice is

not based on human merit but on divine Will and grace. As Dunn notes, "Paul's concept of election is rooted in the Hebrew Scriptures but radically reframed through the Christ event."³³

Evaluation of Romans 9: 8-13

τοὺτ' ἔστιν, οὐτὰ τέκνα τῆς σαρκὸς ταῦτα τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ, ἀλλὰ τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας λογίζεται εἰς σπέρμα. This means that "it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring"

This Greek phrase: τὰ τέκνα τῆς σαρκὸς ταῦτα τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ, ἀλλὰ τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας (the children of the flesh are not children of God but the children of the promise) originated from τέκνον which is noun neuter, meaning a child, descendant, inhabitant, thus τὰ τέκνα means the children. τῆς σαρκὸς is genitive singular feminine of σαρξ (sarx) is noun feminine meaning flesh, body, human nature, materiality; kindred. Paul redefined membership in God's people. True descent is not biological (ἐκ σαρκὸς) but based on God's elective promise (ἐκ τέκνον ἐπαγγελίας). Dunn argued this distinction is crucial for Paul's argument that God's word has not failed. The true Israel consists of those who respond in faith to God's promise, fulfilled in Christ, not merely ethnic Israel.³⁴ Wright opined and emphasizes the corporate dimension. "Children (τέκνα) of the promise (ἐπαγγελίας)" refers to the single, multi-ethnic family God always intended, brought into being through Christ and faith. Physical descent alone is insufficient.³⁵ This is reflective of Romans 8:14 as opined by Paul that "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (KJV). Paul uses it to remind believers that they enjoy an intimate relationship with God and that they will inherit many of the promises and blessings given to Israel. Christians are no longer minor or slaves, but mature children with full rights.³⁶

τοῦ θεοῦ is "of God." τῆς ἐπαγγελίας, τῆς is a definite article which is genitive feminine singular and defined ἐπαγγελίας, is genitive feminine singular of the promise. The children of promise are born by God's supernatural intervention,³⁵ while λογίζεται is verb, present passive indicative 3rd singular of λογίζομαι means "to reckon" "to consider" "to impute. Romans 4: 3 speaks of divine reckoning quoting Gen, 15:6. The Greek word λογίζεται echoes Abraham's faith being "reckoned" as righteousness; covenant status is by divine accounting.³⁶

ἐπαγγελίας γὰρ ὁ λόγος οὗτος· κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν τοῦτον ἐλεύσομαι καὶ ἔσται τῇ Σάρρα υἱός. For this is what the promise said: "About this time next year I will return, and Sarah shall have a son."

The phrase ἐπαγγελίας γὰρ ὁ λόγος οὗτος· Paul emphasizes what the word of promise of God says at that time of life concerning barrenness of Sarah in complete assurance as the creator, who speaks and come to pass (Numbers 23:19) and nothing changes the word (ὁ λόγος), a masculine noun which appear 177 times³⁷ in the New Testament gave credence that God honour His Word more than His Name (Psalms 138:2) that Sarah shall have a son. Schreiner highlights that Isaac's birth demonstrates God's sovereignty in fulfilling his promise independent of human ability

or merit. Ishmael, born “according to the flesh,” is excluded from the covenant despite being Abraham’s son.³⁸ The same had been established in Jeremiah 32:17 that God, as the all-powerful creator of all things, the sovereign Lord could do what He had promised for His people. Also, Jeremiah 32:27: The Lord affirmed that He is the Sovereign God of all the people of the world. Using rhetorical question, the Lord also affirmed that nothing is too hard for Him. Therefore, Cranfield stresses that the promise itself created the reality. Isaac’s existence and status are entirely dependent on God’s initiating word and action.³⁹

οὐ μόνον δέ, ἀλλὰ καὶ Ῥεβέκκα ἐξ ἐνόσκου ἡνέχουσα, Ἰσαὰκ τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν. And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, οὐ μόνον δέ, ἀλλὰ καὶ Ῥεβέκκα ἐξ ἐνόσκου ἡνέχουσα, Ἰσαὰκ τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν. In this Greek sentence, Paul previewed what the sovereign God did in the life Isaac, the covenant child of Abraham on whom the promises made was to be fulfilled (Genesis 12:1-3; 17:1-7), Genesis 25:21 it was recorded that for twenty years, Rebekah was barren, like Sarah. This condition tested their faith. How could they be childless when God promised that nations would issue from them? Isaac pleaded with the Lord and the Lord answered Isaac’s prayer. Isaac apparently learned from his father’s mistake (Genesis 16:1-3) and responded in faith.⁴⁰

μήπω γὰρ γεννηθέντων μηδὲ πραξάντων τιὰ γὰθὸν ἢ φαῦλον, ἵνα ἡ κατ’ ἐκλογὴν πρόθεσις τοῦ θεοῦ μένη, though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God’s purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls—

The argument of Paul in this verse formed the basis for election by the sovereign God. The entire Greek sentence μήπω γὰρ γεννηθέντων μηδὲ πραξάντων τιὰ γὰθὸν ἢ φαῦλον, ἵνα ἡ κατ’ ἐκλογὴν πρόθεσις τοῦ θεοῦ μένη, spoke of God’s intentional will for the yet to be born twins, but the purpose of God for their lives had been determined. No human circumstances differentiated Isaac’s sons, Jacob and Esau. Notare they born to the same mother, but they were also conceived at the same time. Instead, Paul argues, that the difference between them was of God’s choosing.⁴¹ Piper argues forcefully that this passage teaches God’s unconditional, sovereign choice of individuals for salvation through Christ, rooted solely in His will and purpose of election. The “purpose of election” purpose governs the choice.⁴²

Rom 8:28 previewed Rom 11:29 “For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.” In God’s original plan, the Jews would be the source of God’s blessing to the Gentiles (Gen 12:3). When the Jews neglected this mission, God blessed the Gentiles anyway through the Jewish Messiah. He still maintained His love for the Jews because of His promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The privileges and invitation of God given to Israel will never be withdrawn. But someday all faithful Jews and Christians believers alike will share in God’s mercy. God’s plan will not be thwarted: He will “have mercy on everyone.”⁴³

ἡ ... πρόθεσις (“the purpose”) is a nominative feminine singular modified by κατ’ ἐκλογὴν is a prepositional phrase. τοῦ θεοῦ is a noun feminine; noun masculine, but τοῦ θεοῦ (“of God” is a genitive of source). The verb μένη meaning “to remain”, “endure”, “stand firm,” is present active subjunctive, 3rd person singular. The entire phrase κατ’ ἐκλογὴν πρόθεσις τοῦ θεοῦ μένη (“according to election ... might stand”) acts as the predicate, describing the subject πρόθεσις.

Therefore, God’s sovereign plan (πρόθεσις) is the central actor. Moo opined that πρόθεσις emphasizes God’s predetermined plan, anchored in His freedom, not human actions.⁴⁴

The subjunctive μένη stresses God’s intent for His purpose to endure unchallenged. This is confirmed in the scripture. “The counsel of the Lord stands forever” (Psalm 33: 11; cf. Isaiah 46: 10). Theologically, the syntax highlights divine sovereignty by placing God’s purpose (πρόθεσις) as the subject, using a genitive absolutely to exclude human effort (“not yet born ... done nothing”).⁴⁵

Furthermore, Eph. 1: 11: “Him who works all things according to the πρόθεσιν of His will.” Also, 2 Tim. 1: 9: “He saved us ... according to His own πρόθεσιν and grace. These scriptures powerfully reinforce Paul’s theology: God’s elective purpose stands irrevocably- not because of who we are, but because of who He is. οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων ἀλλ’ ἐκ τοῦ καλοῦντος, ἐρρέθη αὐτῇ ὅτι ὁ μείζων δουλεύσει τῷ ἐλάσσονι, she was told, “The older will serve the younger.”

This Greek verse was quoted from Gen 25:23 “...the elder shall serve the younger.”- ὁ μείζων – takes the Lexical from μέγας, an adjective, nominative masculine singular with a degree of comparative meaning exceedingly great or greater it was used 34 times in the New Testament which depicts that Esau was the older of the twins.⁴⁶ Δουλεύσει - transliterated: douleúō is a verb of future tense indicative with active voice and 3rd person singular meaning to be a slave, or be subject to, described the situation of being subservient to somebody younger.⁴⁷ τῷ ἐλάσσονι. – transliterated: elassón, adjective, dative masculine singular with a degree of comparative meaning smaller in relative term to Jacob- the younger of the twins.⁴⁸ God spoke these words to Rebekah before the twins were born. As the older of the twins, Esau was Isaac’s natural heir. But Esau sold his birthright to Jacob and ceded his position to his brother in fulfillment of God’s promise.⁴⁹ Gen 25:23 further revealed rivalry between Jacob and Esau in the womb, and their descendants (Israel and Edom) fought continuously throughout their history. In their many conflicts, Israel achieved supremacy over Edom. Your older son will serve (δουλεύσει) the younger son: God’s choice of the younger ran against natural order (Gen 48:12-14 καθὼς γέγραπται· τὸν Ἰακώβ ἡγάπησα, τὸν δὲ Ἠσαὺ ἐμίσησα.

As it is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.”

The introductory phrase καθὼς γέγραπται (“as it is written”) emphasized the words of God which is sure and will never change. The verb γέγραπται (“it is written”) from the root word γραφῶ to write, is perfect passive indicative 3rd person singular. This

introduces scripture citation of (Malachi 1: 2-3 LXX). καθώς, an adverb modified γέγραπται to affirm what has been written.

The core clause, τὸν Ἰακώβ ἠγάπησα, τὸνδὲ Ἡσαΐ ἐμίσησα in which τὸν a definite article, a word rooted in lexical ὁ including feminine he (hay) and the neuter (to) in all their inflections; the definite article (which is omitted in the Greek clause in English idiom). Ἰακώβ is proper noun, indeclinable. The subject “I” (ἐγὼ) is God from Malachi 1: 2. ἠγάπησα, loved, ἠγάπησεν is past tense of 3rd person singular verb in conjugation and its root word ἀγάπη (love) is covenantal loyalty electing love, unconditional love from the Sovereign God, is aorist active indicative, 1st person singular, which is a deeper love emanating from God as in John 3:16 and it conveyed deeper meaning when compared to φιλῶς referred to the New Testament scriptures (Rom.12:10; Heb.13:1; 1 Pet.1:22). Φιλαδελφία, brotherly love rooted from φιλῶς + ἀδελφός. This means that ἀγάπη was the point of reference of Paul in his argument in Romans 9:13.⁴⁹

ἐμίσησα (“I hated”) is a verb aorist active indicative 1st person singular and the root word is μισέω meaning a covenantal rejection, loveless, detest, to hate, esteem less (cf. Gen.29:31; Luke 14:26). Cranfield opined that “ἐμίσησα means ‘rejected in the role of covenant-bearer’ – Esau’s line (Edom) was excluded from God’s redemptive purpose”⁵⁰

Theological Interpretations

The doctrine has been a point of contention among theologians, especially in debates between Calvinist and Arminian traditions. John Calvin saw election as an unconditional act of divine sovereignty, a view that shaped Reformed theology profoundly.⁵¹ In contrast, Jacob Arminius and his followers argued for conditional election based on foreseen faith.⁵² Early Church Fathers like Augustine also contributed significantly to the doctrine. Augustine emphasized divine grace in election, particularly in his dispute with Pelagius. According to Augustine, “God’s choice is antecedent to human response.”⁵³

Modern Scholarly Perspectives

Contemporary Scholars offer a variety of interpretations. Wright argues that Paul’s use of *eklogen* must be understood within the framework of Jewish covenant theology rather than later doctrinal systems. He states that election is about vocation and purpose rather than exclusive salvation.⁵⁴ Karl Barth opined in contrast, reinterprets election Christocentrically, asserting that Christ is both the electing God and the elected man. For Barth, “election is the sum of the Gospel.”⁵⁵ Recent postcolonial and liberation theologians have critiqued traditional doctrines of election for their potential exclusivism. Scholars like Carter⁵⁶ and Jennings⁵⁷ argue for a re-conception of election as radically inclusive, grounded in the communal identity formed in Christ.

The Concept of *Eklogen* remains central in soteriology, with interpretations ranging from divine determinism (Calvinism) to conditional election (Arminianism) and corporate missional calling (Wright).⁵⁸ Recent scholarship emphasizes covenantal and

Christological dimensions, moving beyond rigid predestination debates.

The Concept of Preferment in Anglican Church

Preferment in the Anglican Church refers to the advancement or promotion of Clergy to higher offices or position within the ecclesiastical hierarchy, such as becoming a rector, canon, and archdeacon. This concept has historical, theological and institutional implications, particularly within the Church of England, where ecclesiastical appointments were closely to patronage and often reflected both spiritual and political considerations.⁵⁹ Jeremy Gregory notes in his work that the Church of England’s system of preferment during the 18th and 19th centuries was often shaped by networks of influence, family ties, and academic affiliations: “Preferment in the Church of England often came not out solely as a reward for holiness or learning but as a result complex network of patronage and political loyalty.”⁶⁰

While preferment can serve legitimate purposes of recognising leadership and spiritual maturity, it has also been critiqued for encouraging ambition and clerical careerism. Hooker, a foundational Anglican theologian, emphasized the importance of spiritual integrity and vocation in ecclesiastical office rather than worldly ambition. He that seeks to be preferred in the Church for ease, honour or wealth must needs to be judged to have utterly perverted the ends and duties of his calling.⁶¹

From the findings in the past in the Kwara Anglican Diocese, preferment was scarcely done, this explicitly gave way to wrangling among the priests in the diocese which resulted in suspicion, discord and acrimony among the priests, for those that were preferred were selected few. This brought about accusations of favouritism, tribalism and nepotism in the preferment process in the Kwara Anglican Diocese. The happenings necessitated this study on preferment of clergymen in Kwara Anglican Diocese.

The findings of the data collected and collated from the respondents among the clergy of the 100 respondents, only 80 clergymen were able to submit for collation. Percentage was used in the analysis of the data. Of the 80 respondents 95% of them agreed and strongly agreed when summed to divine election, particularly God’s sovereignty in Romans 9:11. All other parameters like age of priests, year of ordination and positions held in the diocese, were positive and agreed that preferment should followed the infallible stance of God electing individual or group of persons which was in tune with Paul’s theology on divine election as argued in Romans 9: 6-13.

Furthermore, Key Informant Interview (KII) was conducted with some senior clergy (three archdeacons) to corroborate the respondents views.

The following questions were posed to the Archdeacons:

1. Should preferment be based on Bishop’s will or God’s will?

2. Should preferment be based on pastoral competence and theological integrity or patronage inclusiveness?
3. Should preferment be based on ambition than service to God?
4. Should preferment follow historical clerical careerism or should create meritocratic system?
5. Should preferment increase the spiritual growth of the church of the said clergy being preferred?

Omotoye responding to these questions agreed with Paul's theodicy on *Eklogen* and advice that subsequent preferment be based on God's sovereign will to engender peace in the diocese.⁶² In addition Idowu suggested further that discernment committee be put in place to advice the bishop on preferment.⁶³ Whereas Olugbemiro opined that for peace and tranquility to reign, advice that the bishop should follow God's sovereign choice on election as argued by Paul theology on preferment in the Kwara Anglican Diocese.⁶⁴

Finally, it was discovered from the respondent's views that collegiality and good relationship among clergy and also with the bishop can breed peace and progress in the diocese. This will permit principled preferment through the Diocesan, thus in line with argument of Linda Belleville⁶⁵ on preferment process.

Conclusion

The study concludes that aligning preferment practices with biblical principle of *Eklogen* would promote integrity, transparency, and spiritual authenticity in the church leadership. All these are to make the command and the sovereignty of God stands forever, thus it can be juxtaposed with preferment of clergy being totally in the hand of Bishop, (according to Anglican tradition), to do the sovereign will of God for such clergy by divine grace

Recommendation

In view of the research findings, the following recommendations are necessary:

- i. The bishop should pursue his leadership duties with clarity of the ecclesial governance theory and following the Anglican traditions in decision making concerning any matter including preferment.
- ii. Bishop should always put into consideration clerical careerism and diligence of clergymen to duties assigned to them and how they fare in carrying out the duties and their impact on the church and the diocese.
- iii. The mannerism and behavioural pattern of the clergy to be preferred to the duties both at the parish level and diocesan level should be part of the priority to be considered.
- iv. The spiritual prowess of the clergy must be of utmost importance, because this attribute will gear up the spiritual growth of the laity both at the parish and diocesan levels.
- v. The bishop should beware of sycophancy of clergymen and their innate ambition for preferment.

- vi. Preferment should be done to breed motivation, equity and total commitment from the clergy in the Kwara Anglican Diocese.
- vii. The bishop should carefully follow the leading of the Holy Spirit directive as well as the consideration of the diligence of the clergy involved in their duty-post and canonical obedience to the bishop and diocese before preferment is pronounced.
- viii. Where necessary, the bishop should create discernment committees for preferment.

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