

The Anointed Must Be Appointed

After leading an astounding 60 million people to Christ, Reinhard Bonnke is passing the baton of his ministry, Christ for All Nations, to 29-year-old preacher Daniel Kolenda. Here's what we can learn from this healthy transfer.

After the Old Testament prophet Elijah was dramatically taken up to heaven in a whirlwind and fiery chariot, his gift and power for working miracles immediately transferred to his apprentice Elisha. The Bible records in 2 Kings 2:9-11 that Elisha received a double portion of the prophet's miraculous anointing.

International evangelist Reinhard Bonnke says this biblical example of transference of God's gifts and calling is not just relevant today, it's also in operation within Christ for All Nations (CfAN)—the evangelistic ministry he founded more than 35 years ago. Bonnke, now 70, is stepping down as head of CfAN and has appointed 29-year-old Daniel Kolenda as his successor, CEO and president of the ministry that has recorded an astounding 60 million documented decisions for Christ during its recent years of evangelistic crusades in Africa and developing nations.

"I just turned 70 years of age and was looking for someone who could continue with the harvest," Bonnke says. "The harvest is on my heart."

With that as the driving force, Bonnke is turning over the reins of the ministry to Kolenda. In the past four years with Bonnke, Kolenda has led more than 10 million people to Christ while preaching the gospel. He has witnessed the blind, deaf

and lame all being healed—even the dead coming back to life. He has traveled side-by-side with Bonnke fulfilling the ministry's mandate to spread the gospel to the nations and to effectively make "hell empty and heaven full."

"Daniel Kolenda is an outstanding preacher with a message of salvation. He knows how to throw the net out and he knows how to pull it back in," Bonnke says of the young evangelist. "Many people are coming to salvation as a result of it. When I go [to the crusades] I will also preach, but he carries the heavy end of it—and I do that so there is some transition, so that there is some handing over. I want him to be established in his own right, in his own name, so that one day when I'm no longer in this world the harvest can continue."

'From Cape Town to Cairo'

As CfAN's new leader, Kolenda undoubtedly has large shoes to fill. The ministry has greatly expanded its reach since the early days when Bonnke struggled to draw crowds while preaching in Africa. Today's crusades regularly draw hundreds of thousands of people, with one 2001 service in Lagos, Nigeria, attended by an astounding 1.6 million.

The ministry now has numerous offices internationally. Besides the Florida headquarters, there are offices in Canada, Germany, the United Kingdom, Nigeria, South Africa, Singapore, Australia and Hong Kong. CfAN has distributed more than 185 million evangelism books, such as Bonnke's *From Minus to Plus*, in 140 languages and dialects worldwide.

The evangelistic ministry also has an internationally syndicated television program called *Even Greater* and produces the Full Flame Film Series to ignite a passion in believers for evangelism. In addition, CfAN runs School of Fire, an evangelism curriculum in which students who meet specific criteria can get credit through Southeastern University.

Just as Elijah found Elisha plowing in the field before he

called him into his ministry, Bonnke found Kolenda plowing through piles of mail as a postal clerk at CfAN's Orlando, Fla., headquarters. Kolenda had taken the job to supplement his income as a church-plant pastor and provide for his family.

A fifth-generation preacher, Kolenda graduated from Southeastern University in Lakeland, Fla., and Brownsville Revival School of Ministry in Pensacola, Fla., and has been preaching since he was 14. But he says he has learned the most about ministry in the last few years of working with Bonnke.

A husband and a father of three, Kolenda says the transfer of leadership is healthy and only scratches the surface of what God wants to do.

"This is not the ending—this is the beginning," he says. "May this harvest continue for another 50 years and may it sweep the rest of the [African] continent and go all the way up north into those Muslim nations—from Cape Town to Cairo. Africa shall be saved. We will see it in Jesus' name."

A Harvest Ministry

Bonnke is remaining as an active part of the ministry's board. He jokes about not knowing what retirement is and does not have plans to stop traveling and preaching the gospel. No matter who is leading the ministry, Bonnke says CfAN's priority will remain the same: souls.

"The ministry must remain a harvest ministry. We are after souls," he says. "This was my agenda, and this is also Daniel Kolenda's agenda. If ever that agenda would change, I would lose all interest. So I am sure in my heart that Daniel has that same burden on his heart for souls to be won. And that's why I back him with all of my might."

Though Bonnke is entrusting Kolenda with the leadership of CfAN, he wasn't always sure if that was God's plan. Unlike

Elijah, who knew beforehand that Elisha would succeed him as the prophetic leader of Israel (see 1 Kin. 19:16), Bonnke didn't know immediately that Kolenda, who is of no familial relation, would succeed him. God revealed His plan over time.

"I still remember when I said I'd give him 20 percent [of the ministry]: 'Maybe he is the one,'" Bonnke says. "Then I still remember when I said I'd give him 75 percent—until I was totally convinced that he was the one. He carries the same anointing, but he also carries the classic evangelistic message of how I would define evangelism. I can see that it would be a continuation."

Bonnke's confidence in Kolenda is now complete: "I have tested and tried him and found him to be the right man."

Felicia Mann is the online editor for *Charisma*.

Watch an exclusive video with Reinhard Bonnke and Daniel Kolenda as they cast vision for the ministry at·

The Harvest Continues



By Reinhard Bonnke

The anointing for seeing souls come to Christ will go on in my successor, Daniel Kolenda

Five years ago a young man named Daniel Kolenda walked through the doors of our ministry, Christ for All Nations in Orlando, Fla. He and his wife had planted a local church that could not

pay their living expenses. He needed a job. Who would have imagined that he would eventually share my vision, stand in my shoes, preach in my stead and see more than 10 million decisions for Christ from his invitations? Today he is still a young evangelist—only 29 years old!

People are asking me how such a thing could happen. They are making comparisons to the passing of the mantle of Elijah to young Elisha. They are wondering if this example can help ministry leaders groom and mentor the next generation.

Anyone who has read my autobiography, *Living a Life of Fire*, knows that I do not spend much time thinking about such matters. I am a doer, not an academic. I listen carefully for the voice of the Lord, and then I obey, even when it does not make complete sense to my natural mind. It is only later that I look back and see the turns in the path and recognize the full wisdom of God at work in such obedience. So it is with the story of Daniel and me.

The first quality I recognized in him was the Holy Spirit's anointing. He had been baptized in the Holy Spirit, as I had, and he did not approach anything in his strength alone. I saw also that he was a doer like me, listening and obeying the voice of the Lord. However, when he was in action, he was given special gifts for evangelism that did not come from his own diligence. Without this heavenly charisma, the rest of this story would never have entered my mind.

Education, talent, energy, sincerity, even family heritage—all these count for nothing next to the anointing. It stands above all else. The anointing is God's ordination of an individual. Not everyone understands or believes this.

One day as I watched Daniel at work, the Holy Spirit said to me, "The anointed must be appointed." Immediately I recalled my own struggles to enter my calling against the resistance of my pastor-father, Hermann Bonnke. I know many leaders believe

that anyone in leadership must endure the same struggle they did before they are seasoned enough for appointment.

The Holy Spirit was saying to me that, with God, this is not true. Young Elisha never challenged the prophets of Baal as Elijah did. Nor did he hack them to death with Elijah's bloody sword. Yet his accomplishments were double those of his mentor.

Then the Holy Spirit whispered, "Heaven is bigger than hell." These words shocked my evangelist mind. Wasn't the way to damnation in Matthew 7 wider than the narrow road to heaven? Then I saw it: After Jesus spoke these words He planted His cross in the middle of that highway to hell, His arms open wide.

I realized that the cross of Christ is the biggest roadblock of all time. When an evangelist preaches "Repent!" we are saying, in effect, "Turn around!" When one sinner makes a U-turn, heaven rejoices and hell is left with nothing to celebrate. The expanse of heaven is measured by God's love alone, and with nearly 60 million decisions for Christ since the year 2000 alone through Christ for All Nations, we dare not limit the reach of His grace tomorrow.

So, for me, this was reason enough to appoint the one God had anointed. I invited Daniel to travel with me in ministry. He has been shoulder to shoulder, stride for stride, learning, growing, preaching the gospel and seeing signs following, just as I have. It is impossible to be near a life of fire and not catch the glow. He is glowing, and so is this 70-year-old evangelist.

Passing the Baton



By Daniel Kolenda

A visionary Christian leader will empower his successor to continue the race he began

The Bible records in 2 Kings 13:20-21 an unusual account about a funeral. Some Israelites were burying a man when they saw a band of Moabite marauders approaching them. They panicked and threw the dead man into the grave where Elisha the prophet had been buried. The Bible says that “when the man ... touched the bones of Elisha, he revived” (v. 20, NKJV).

Some see this passage as a great compliment to the ancient prophet—how he was so anointed that even his bones brought life from the dead. I see it as a sad indictment—how unfortunate that Elisha took his great anointing to the grave with him. Elisha’s mentor, Elijah, had a very different approach. When he was swept away to heaven in a fiery chariot, he cast his mantle overboard for his young protégé and successor to catch.

In modern, Westernized Christianity, where individualism is a supreme virtue, successors often are either disregarded as unnecessary or feared as a threat to the incumbent leader. But when Elijah passed the baton to Elisha, he did not compromise his legacy. By transferring what he had to Elisha, he enabled his own prophetic ministry to continue for another generation and even double in impact through Elisha.

Successful generational transition is a matter that requires a great deal of humility from each person in both generations. Elisha is described as the one “who poured water on the hands of Elijah” (2 Kin. 3:11). His posture was one of humility, and it put him in a position to catch a mantle. Every Elijah needs an Elisha who is willing to pursue, serve, submit and honor. Likewise, every Elisha needs an Elijah who has the grace and humility to see beyond himself for the sake of the next generation.

