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## Book review: Africa's Roots in God: The Knowledge of the Creator Embedded in the Indigenous African Culture

Loren Seibold (<https://www.ministrymagazine.org/authors/seibold-loren.html>)

I have always been fascinated by unexpected relationships between cultures that were temporally and geographically separated, such as when we hear echoes of Bible stories in the fables of pagan peoples long disconnected from Christian influence or biblical concepts preserved in Chinese characters. These cultural echoes exist, we assume, because we all came from the same roots—people moved, and their ideas moved with them. Yet, over time, those truths dimmed.

Sednak Yankson, a Ghanaian Seventh-day Adventist pastor and scholar, has traced astonishing connections between the Old Testament and the indigenous religious practices of West Africa. Yankson shows how Hebrew names, words, concepts, and even entire ceremonies survived in some African cultures, including, interestingly, the Sabbath. The parallels are too clear to be accidental, such as a celebration by the Ga people that is surprisingly similar to the Passover (right down to painting the house doorposts red) or the Akans' golden "mercy seat," on which blood was sprinkled for atonement.

That Africa was a dark continent before the arrival of the missionaries is only a partial truth, insists Yankson; the truths of Scripture were wrapped in the ceremonies and the stories of the African people, awaiting only missionaries to restore to them the complete salvation story.

Those cultural anthropologists who would quibble about the soundness of one or another of Yankson's tethers between indigenous Africa and the Hebrews would be missing the point. These connections are meaningful to us as believers because they prove that God's truth cannot be snuffed out, no matter how languages, ethnicities, miles, and centuries may have obscured it. It is because of these roots that Africans responded so readily to the Bible's stories—and why the once Dark Continent continues on its way to having the largest concentration of Christians in the entire world.