

ISSN: 2141-4262



Ife

Journal of Religions

Volume 13, 2017

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Subscription rates

Nigeria: #750.00

Foreign: \$35; £15; and €20

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All correspondence relating to editorial matters should be sent to:

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Ife Journal of Religions Vol. 13 (2017)

List of Contributors

1. **DarmaDikkoBature**, PhD, Lectures in the Department of Islamic Studies, Umaru Musa Yar'adua University Katsina, Nigeria, dikkobdarma@gmail.com
2. **FawenuBamideleOlusegun**, PhD, Lectures in the Department of Religions, History and Heritage Studies, Kwara State University, Malete, Kwara State, Nigeria, bobfawenu 1 @yahoo.com
3. **Okanlawon Samuel O.** PhD, Lectures in the Department of Religious Studies, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria. samtoscares@yahoo.com
4. **Okunoye Job Oluremi**, PhD, Lectures in the Department of Philosophy and Religion, Mountain Top University, Prayer City, Ibafo, Ogun State, Nigeria. oluremiokunoye@gmail.com
5. **OlugbemiBerekiah**, PhD, Lectures in the Department of Religious Studies, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria. berekiah2@yahoo.com

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IN SEARCH OF GOOD GOVERNANCE: DOMESTICATING SELECTED THEMES IN PSALM 72 FOR POLITICAL LEADERS IN NIGERIA¹

Bamidele Olusegun FAWENU, Ph.D.
Department of Religions, History and Heritage Studies
Kwara State University, Malete, Ilorin, Nigeria.

And

Job Oluremi OKUNOYE, Ph.D.
Department of Philosophy and Religion
Mountain Top University, Ibafo.

Abstract

The level of development in many countries in Africa is not congruent with the stupendous natural and human resources at their beck and call. This situation has generally been connected to poor governance. Therefore, the quest for good governance is one of the major concerns of most countries in Africa and Nigeria in particular. Righteousness and Justice are indicated in Psalm 72 as germane if good governance will be actualized. Leaning on the classification of the Psalter by Hermann Gunkel, the fact that Psalm 72 is one of the Royal Psalms that describes the commitment of an ancient Israelite King to govern his people aright makes it a relevant choice for this study. Therefore, the themes, righteousness and justice as presented in the Psalm were domesticated for Nigeria political leadership. Both historical and exegetical methods with bias for historical-grammatical analysis of the Psalm were used for this paper. The

¹This paper was first presented at the 2015 ICCRS International Conference at Kwara State University, Malete.

exegetical engagement of the text brings to fore the symbiotic relationship between (personal) righteousness and administration of justice in governance as *sine qua non* for the prosperity of the governed. Such prosperity emerges as a moral cause-and-effect nexus built into reality for the governed.

Introduction

Good governance, defined as the exercise of political power for the promotion of the public good or welfare of the people appears to be elusive in Nigeria. Poor infrastructure (road, water, housing, electricity, health etc.), unemployment, poverty and injustice are some of the evidences of the need for good governance in the largest black nation of the world. Campaign promises of Nigerian politicians at every election year have recurrently revolved around the provision of social amenities in a manner that suggests that previous administrations had failed to meet the aspiration of the governed. This suggests that the nation is yet to have a government that lives up to its responsibilities of ensuring effective delivery of public goods and services, maintenance of law and order, and administration of justice. A government cannot be termed good; if it cannot guarantee good living for the people he owes the duty of leadership. The good living or prosperity of the governed cannot be achieved where the leadership defaults in personal righteousness which is a necessity for administration of justice. The Bible, especially the Psalms is very rich on the theme of righteousness and justice. How then did Psalmists relate these themes to governance and how can this help in the search for good governance in Nigeria?

Since the publication of Gunkel's *Die Psalmen* in 1892, and *The Psalms: A Form-Critical Introduction* in 1926, scholarship on the Psalter has received immense patronage. The classification of the Psalms in the light of what was obtainable in the wider literary analysis of his time is one of the positive contributions of Gunkel to the study of Psalms. He used the *gattung*(genre) as the rallying point to classify Psalms into six major types in furtherance of his earlier

classification into four - Hymns of Praise, Private Hymns of Thanksgiving, National Hymns of Lament and Private Hymns of Lament (Rowley, 1967:178). The Royal Psalms is one of the later additions to his classification. Others are hymns, enthronement psalms, communal complaints, individual complaints, and individual thanksgiving psalms plus a number of smaller genres and mixed types. Therefore, he is recognized as the Father of modern approach to the study of Psalms (Crenshaw, 2001:80). Gunkel's intention was to show that Psalms was not just a number of isolated units, but bunches arising from specific situation and serving particular purposes (Rowley, 1967:178). The Royal Psalms have both literary and theological significance in the Psalter as attention of a meticulous student of the Psalter is quickly drawn to the placement of some of the Psalms (belonging to the same class) at the seams of the five books of Psalms. In this regard, we can easily underscore three of the eleven Royal Psalms in such positioning. Psalm 72 is one of the three royal Psalms reputed to have occurred at crucial locations in the Psalter. While Psalm 72 serves as the conclusion of book II and Psalm 89 concludes book three, Psalm 2 is placed at the commencement of book I; all in a manner that suggests deliberate editorial agenda (McCann, 1993:43).

Royal Psalms obviously describe the unique relationship between God and the King of Israel² in a manner that projects the ideal of governance. Justice and righteousness stand out as key elements demonstrating the; King's total dependence on God in Psalm 72. The positive ripple effects of governance built on the culture of justice and righteousness is desirable. This informs

²Gunkel described the Royal Psalms as those Psalms that are Messianic in content or those related to the Hasmonaean rulers but now applied to the pre-exilic king and considered to have been sung in celebration of special events (like accession or wedding, anniversary of founding of dynasty, undertaking of military campaign and victorious return from battle) in their lives. See H.H. Rowley, *Worship in Ancient Israel: Its Forms and Meaning*, 181

the thrust of this paper; to examine Psalm 72 in its *sitzimleben* and advance the standard set in it on good governance for Nigeria. Therefore, the thesis of this paper is that an atmosphere of righteousness and justice is *sine qua non* to harnessing the rich natural and human resources of Nigeria for improving the welfare of her people.

The Royal Psalms in the Psalter

Eleven (11) of the one hundred and fifty (150) canonized Psalms are designated royal Psalms. They are Psalms 2, 18, and 110 which are associated with David; Psalms 45 and 132 which are described to be of northern (Israel) origin; The remaining are Psalms 20, 21, 72, 89, 101 and 144 (Holladay, 1993:38). The Psalms in this category play great role in Gunkel's interpretation of Psalms. He applied them to the public events involving the reigning descendants of David. Generally, royal Psalms are understood from the backdrop of the Davidic monarchy in Jerusalem (Crenshaw, 2001:82). Kaiser describes the Psalms as follows: "The royal psalms are steeped in the ideology of the Davidic dynasty and presuppose the promise and oath made to him. They formed a unity centring on the Davidic king who, as Yahweh's son, resided in Zion, the chosen city, ruled over Yahweh's people, and was heir to the promise" (Kaiser, 1978: 159). This set of Psalms portrays some unique characteristics. Firstly, they describe the relationship between Yahweh and the king. The king is presented as Yahweh's son and servant (Lucas, 2003: 63). In relation to Psalm 2 and 172, Crenshaw contends that the king is Yahweh's adopted son in psalm 2, the anointed one with his throne in Zion. It was this divine recognition of kingship in Psalm 2 that gives way to human supplication on behalf of the king in Psalm 72 (Crenshaw, 2001:98). This first characteristic has great implication for Governance. The king sees himself foremost as privileged to lead the people on behalf of Yahweh; therefore, he is restrained from human self-serving impetus and propensities. His leadership is dictated by the person and nature of Yahweh as

communicated in the Torah and that is why the spokespersons for Yahweh, the Prophets, played prominent role in watching and guiding the activities of the palace either as royal advisors or polemics against the royal courts as occasions demanded (Hutton, 1994:113-115). Particularly, the Prophets expressed passionate disgust against syncretism in the worship of Yahweh and social injustice perpetrated by kings and the aristocrats of their era (Kitchen, 2003:401).

Secondly, the Psalms contain element of Messianic hope, which is inseparably connected to the idea of Davidic monarchy as an interface for the eschatological, eternal and just rule of a Messianic figure (Howard, 2005:27). According to Kaiser, David was appointed to be a symbol and pledge of God's kingdom on earth (Kaiser, 1978:161). Thirdly, the Psalms stress total dependence of the king on God. These characteristics affirm the opinion of Howard that in the Psalter, the idea of kingship is viewed very favourably. This is indicated by the prominent place David occupies as a king and author of approximately half of the Psalms (Howard, 1988:33). This positive portrayal is connected to the fact that the royal Psalms reflect the prescribed ideal to which the kings would aspire (Broyles, 1999:21).

In line with the view of Longman and Dillard, two classes of kingship Psalms are found in the psalter. The first are the Psalms that extol God as king and the second are those that extol the ruler of Israel as king (Longman and Dillard, 2007:252). On the strength of this classification as well as the contents and tone of Psalm 72, it can be deduced that Psalm 72 belongs to the category of Psalms that extol the ruler of Israel as king. This opinion is heightened by the view of Wilson who dwells on the premise of variation in the king-related terms found in the five books of Psalms to opine that, in contrast to the emphasis in the first three books, Yahweh and not Davidic or any human king is the focus in the last two books (Wilson, 2005:236). This view allows for the historicity of this Psalm rather than seeing it as an eschatological composition that is

yet to have a glimpse of reality. A sustained perfect scenario painted in the Psalm might be difficult to establish in human history, yet the peaceful and prosperous reign of King Solomon obviously is iconic as the historic reality that served as the basis for anticipating a surpassing future messianic rule in its perfection. However, it should be reiterated that Psalm 72 was not initially composed as a messianic hymn or prayer, it was interpreted as such by Jews of the Hellenistic period and by Christians, who adopted it as a prophecy of the Messiah (Terrien, 2003:522).

Analysis of Psalm 72

There is no dissension in Old Testament scholarship on the Davidic leaning of Psalm 72. However, contention exists on the specific Davidic king who should take credit for this Psalm. While some scholars attribute its authorship to David, others attribute it to Solomon, who was the son of David. This struggle is noticeable in the attempt to translate the Hebrew title of the book, *lish'elomondin*^{1?!?1?}) by some English translations. While R.V., and NKJV label it as "Psalm of Solomon," A.V., probably leaned on the LXX to tag it as "Psalm for Solomon." The contention is on whether it is a Psalm for Solomon or a Psalm of (i.e. by) Solomon. A possibility is that, it could be David's Psalm done for Solomon because the Psalm suggests a composition meant for coronation (Holladay, 1993:38). On the other hand, Solomon could have been the author as the title of the MT suggests. Charles Spurgeon's rapprochement of the polarity of view on this issue is thoroughly mediatory. Spurgeon corroborates the view of Kidner, that the title favours Solomon (Kidner, 1973:254). However, Spurgeon explains how the Psalm became Solomon's, He contends that internal witness especially from verse 20 suggests the Psalm was David's prayer, shortly before his demise. Thus the words belong to David who was too close to death to do the writing. Solomon inherited his dying father's song, fashioned it into goodly verse, and, without robbing his father, made the Psalm his own. He conjectures that the Psalm is the prayer of David, but the

Psalm of Solomon (Spurgeon, 1976:226). However, in view of the existence of Davidic Psalms with double attribution e.g. "for Jeduthun, a Psalm of David" (Psalms 39 and 62), one would expect Psalm 72 to have reflected double attribution (for Solomon, a Psalm of David) for Spurgeon's position to hold impeccably.

Generally, Gunkel thinks the psalms were essentially private expressions of piety modelled on cultic prayers. Specifically, he assigned royal psalms to specific situations for which they were sung. In this respect, he identified psalm 72 along with psalms 2, 21 and 110 as psalms sung at king's enthronement or at the royal festival. Such occasions, especially the enthronement involves the making of a solemn vow by the king as well as outpouring of enthusiastic praises of the king and exuberant good wishes for his welfare by his subjects (Gunkel, 1967:24). However, Mowinckel, (one of the students of Gunkel) took the life setting of psalms away from the private life of the psalmists. He used Gunkel's classification to stress the cultic origin and usage of the psalter (Williams, 1957:119). He demonstrated generally, that the psalms were indeed part of Israel's Temple cult, where they functioned to express the pleas and praises of Israel and where they served as verbal accompaniments to ritual acts, essentially sacrifice (1 Kings 8; 'Psalms 54:8; 116:17). While he tagged some Psalms as non-cultic, he specifically thinks the royal/enthronement Psalms were used for the celebration of the enthronement of Yahweh as the universal king during the New Year festival in Jerusalem (Mowinckel, 2004:4). Scroggie identified the narrative of II Samuel 7 as the fitting *sitzimleben* for Psalm 72. He argues that the kind of reign described in the Psalm was simply David's desire and prediction for his son (Scroggie, 1965:130).

Regarding the number of strophes that make up the Psalm, Terrien recently discussed its content in seven strophes. He asserted that the Psalm is a prayer of intercession for the king architecturally constructed from seven strophes of three bicola; (1) Social justice

and cosmic fertility - vv. 1b-3 (2) As long as the sun and moon -vv.4-6 (3) Until the final dark of the moon - vv.7-9 (4) Gold from Tarshish, Sheba and Seba - w. 10-11 (5) The Salvation of the poor - vv. 12-14 (6) Wealth, prayers and benedictions - vv. 15-16 (7) The King's enduring name vv.17-18 (Terrien, 2003:519-522). Earlier discussants of this Psalm like Smith and Briggs identified fewer strophes in the Psalm. While Smith identifies four strophes in the Psalm, (Smith, 1993:195) Briggs recognises three divisions in it (Briggs, 1889: 137-140). This paper adopts Briggs' approach which divides the Psalm into three strophes as follows: (1) The Fairness and Justice of the King 72:1-7; (2) The Scope of Influence of the Just King 72:8-14; (3) The Prosperity of the People under the Just King 72:15-19. The division into three helps to structure the Psalm clearly and enhances the achievement of the purpose of this paper.

(1) The Fairness and Justice of the King (72:1-7)

Like others in book II, Psalm 72 prefers the name *'elohim* for God (Goulder, 2005:349). *'Elohim* is often used to denote the true God and emphasizes His sovereignty over creation. Also, it is used to describe God as judge (Scott, 1980:40). The choice of the term *'elohim* (and not Yahweh) as the name of God to whom this prayer was directed broadens the scope of the relevance of this Psalm. The use of Yahweh would have limited the thrust of the Psalm to Israelite royalty. Therefore, the vocative O' *'elohim* as the addressee is indicative of the fact that in all human government, the desire for righteousness and Justice in the governance of people is desirably fundamental. The Psalmist's belief that justice and righteousness in governance can be divinely induced is a reflection of his religiosity. King Solomon on whose behalf this petition was offered had the same understanding. At the dawn of his kingship, he asked God for the ability to administer justice to the nation of Israel (1 Kings 3:7-9). The narrative where his request was made dovetailed into the account of two prostitutes who sought Solomon's intervention concerning a dead and a living child. The king's administration was

reckoned established as a result of his ability to grant justice in a very difficult case. In 1 Kings 3:28, the Israelites ascribed Solomon's ability to dispense justice to divine enablement that he received from God. Justice and righteousness are essential characteristics of God in biblical theology. God required that anyone who is given the responsibility of leading his chosen people should demonstrate these characteristics. In reality, any Israelite King was seen as God's shepherd who was expected to show loving care for God's flock. Routledge says, "...the king is answerable for the right use of his royal power" (Routledge, 2008:237). Any citizen no matter the social status had access to the king to get help in resolving legal problems, and the king was to ensure that the local judges were being fair and honest in their judgements.

The Scope of Influence of the Just King (72:8-14)

The just dealing of the king among his own people made his influence to spread beyond the borders of his nation. He became the toast of other nations and attracted foreign aids. By implication, when justice and righteousness thrive in governance of a nation, the international relation of that nation is enhanced. While the King's international relation was obvious, his primary assignment is to stand in defence of the weak and the less privileged of his nation. The mention of the Kings of Tarshish, Seba (in Upper Egypt) and Sheba confirms Solomon's connection with this Psalm. Solomon maintained relationships with the Kings of the nations mentioned in this Psalm through his international policy; trade, treaties and marriage (Merrill, 1996:291-293). 1 Kings 4:21 reports the expansive influence of King Solomon, especially during the early days of his kingship, when he demonstrated righteousness and justice in leadership. In fact, tributes and gifts were earned by Solomon from the Kings of other nations (2 Chron. 9:23-24; 1 Kings 10:1-10).

The Prosperity of the People under the Just King (72:15-19)

The goodwill of the governed is directed towards the righteous ruler. Rather than disdain and curses, the people who have enjoyed justice and good governance pronounce blessings on the king and are willing to pursue noble courses (Proverbs 29:2). The just society invariably leads to prosperity for all citizens. The prosperity is reflected in the availability of resources for the government to use, the availability of food for the citizens and the cordiality of relationship between the leader and the led. This cordiality makes the citizens to desire continual leadership of the king and thus pray for his longevity in age and in office. The anchor word the Psalmist used to describe the prosperity of the citizenry in verse 17 is *barakh*. It is a verb that suggests being blessed. The blessing described by the term has both spiritual and material connotations. The noun form of the word, *berakhah*(blessing) generally denotes bestowal of good (Wassel, 1999: 144). The Israelites were made to expect material benefits in terms of fertility, economic prosperity, peace and victory over human enemies as long as they maintain unalloyed relationship with God (Evans, 398). Therefore, in the context of Psalm 72, *barakh* describes all round prosperity for the nation whose leadership is good.

Selected Themes in Psalm 72 in the context of Governance in Nigeria

Justice: The Hebrew term for justice, *mishpat* is mentioned twice in Psalm 72 (verses 1 and 2). Subsequent statements in the Psalm rally around the term justice. *Mishpat* is a derivative of the term *shapat*. *Shapat* means judge or govern and thus describes the process of government. Unlike the modern government, the ancients did not always distinguish the functions of the legislative, executive and judicial arms of government. Therefore, among the ancients generally and in biblical times in particular, governance is all encompassing. Invariably, *shapat* is the commonest word that designates the function of government in any realm and in any form.

These among others include acting as ruler and deciding cases of controversy as judge in civil, domestic and religious matters (Culver, 1980:947). The main term for Justice in Psalm 72 is reinforced by other related terms like *diyn* (to redress a wrong), *shapat* (to defend), *yashcf* (to deliver, save or grant liberty), and *daka'* which means to crush the oppressor in favour of the oppressed (Culver, 1980:947). The beneficiary of justice in the Psalm is the defenceless in the society. The defenceless are described by the terms *'aniy* (poor), *'ebyon*(needy) and *dal* (weak). These various terms describe conditions of economic deprivation, political injustice and, legal injustice. According to Nixon, such economic deprivation could be traced to a number of factors in the Old Testament. The factors include but not limited to natural disaster, vicissitude of life (as in the case of orphans and widows), oppression by powerful neighbours (Nixon, 1999:945). This class of members of the society were not known in the Patriarchal era in ancient Israel; emphasis on distinction between the rich and the poor became prominent in the monarchical era and the defenceless were always at the mercy of the rich and the powerful of the society (Akao, 2000:41-59). Therefore, God expresses passionate displeasure against oppression of the defenceless. In fact, Prophets stood as the representatives of God and spoke sternly against the ill-treatment of the defenceless. They expressed God's displeasure and anger against those who perpetrated injustice on the poor, needy and weak members of the society (Amos 8:4-6; 5:11-12 and Micah 3:14-15). In sum, God defends and protects the poor and oppressed against their enemies (Psalm 4:5-6; 34:9, 15-22).

This theme has immense implication for political leadership in Nigeria. Though unlike the ancient Israel where monarchy was the system of Government, Nigeria operates Democracy, yet the Nigerian President has been generally described as the most powerful of democratically elected presidents in the world. This means that the president has a lot of privileges and authority constitutionally bequeathed to him. The power and the privilege

should be seen foremost as tools for governance; means of making sb¹ better for the governed. The present reality in Nigeria shows the need for redefinition of Governance, where pursuance of justice is not confined to the judicial arm of the government alone. The Presidency needs to lead by example, provide the enabling environment that makes life liveable and as well ensure thorough supervision of every organ of government.

Also, according to Sheng of the United Nations, governance can be described as good if it demonstrates the following characteristics: "It is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law"(Sheng, 1). Governance that exhibits such characteristics obviously is people oriented and seeks the good of the governed. In fact, it agrees with what is envisioned in the Psalmist's prayer for the king in Psalm 72. Sheng added that the governance "assures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making. It is also responsive to the present and future needs of society" (Sheng, 1-2). An alignment can be established between Sheng's view and the biblical demand for justice in governance. The biblical demand frowns at corruption and oppression of the vulnerable or the defenceless in the society. Good governance is such that allow every member of the society have a sense of belonging as stakeholders in the affairs of the society and in the share of the prosperity of the society'

Righteousness: The Hebrew noun, *tsedaqah* (rightness, rectitude and virtue) occurs thrice in Psalm 72 (see verses 1, 2 and 3). Its and five form, *tsaddiyq* (just, lawful, and righteous) occurs once (see verse 7). Both the noun and the adjective evolved from the verb *tsadaq*, which means to be right in moral and forensic sense; *tsaiqah* is the word translated as righteousness in the English versions of the Bible.

In English usage, distinction between the term righteousness and justice is more obvious unlike in the biblical usage of the terms. Righteousness describes individual moral rectitude, while justice refers to the right social order. In biblical usage, those concepts are equally present but the two terms are interrelated that it is always difficult to separate one from the other. In other words, both personal ethics and forensic connotations are closely knitted. Seifrid states that "the biblical terms often translated as righteousness or justice belong to a single word group that is associated with the *sdq* root in Hebrew, or that based on *dik* root in Greek" (Seifrid, 2000:740). This view is clearly seen in the synonymous use of the two terms in Psalm 72:1-2. The author of the Psalm made use of synonymous parallelism, where the thought of the first line of a Hebrew poetic verse is repeated by the second line using different vocabularies (Harrison, 1970:966).

Milne opines that biblical understanding of righteousness is so rich that it is difficult to render either the Hebrew or the Greek words concerned by a simple English equivalent (Milne, 1996:1020). In the Old Testament, righteousness is a relational term (Seifrid, 2000:740). It is measured in terms of 'God to man relationship' as well as 'man to man relationship.' In the case of God's relationship to the Israelites, God's righteousness places obligation on Him to always protect and save His people from enemies (Mowvley, 1979:109). Therefore, in the case of relationships among men, righteous actions are those actions that conform to the requirements of the relationship and in a more general sense promote the well-being and peace of the community. This connotation connects the term in a forensic sense with justice built on strong ethical notion of action which is to be legally upheld because it is productive of communal well-being (Milne, 1996:1020). In the Old Testament, righteousness is presented as the antithesis of wickedness and evil (Routledge, 107). The Old Testament Prophets connected righteousness with idea of showing kindness to the poor and the needy in the society.

Therefore, the king is expected to be personally righteous, if he will guarantee dispensation of justice that is needed for the promotion of the well-being and peace of his community. According to Psalm 72:1 such righteousness is derived from God. God is intrinsically righteous, therefore, righteousness in the sense of God to man relationship is what defines, righteousness among men. Milne says: "righteousness implies a correct relationship to the will of God which was particularly expressed and interpreted by Israel's covenant with God. Righteous action is hence action which flows out of God's gracious election of Israel and accords with the law of the covenant" (Milne, 1020).

Nigeria is a very religious nation, yet deficient in moral sanity.³ The centrality of religion in the national life and governance of the nation is enshrined in the preamble of nation's constitution as follows:

We the people of the federal republic of Nigeria, having firmly and solemnly resolved to live in unity and harmony as one indivisible and indissoluble sovereign nation under God, dedicated to the promotion of inter-African solidarity, world peace, international cooperation and understanding and to provide for a Constitution for the purpose of promoting the good government and welfare of all persons in our country on the principles of freedom, equity and justice, and for the purpose of consolidating the unity of our people, do hereby make, enact and give to ourselves the following Constitution (Nigeria Constitution, 1999).

³See Peter OlusegunOke who concisely describes the multi-dimensional nature of corruption in Nigeria but with much emphasis on the failure of the nation's religious institutions. Peter OlusegunOke, "Curbing the Menace of Corruption for Good Governance: the Role of Religious Leaders," in *Religion and Governance in Nigeria*, Religious Studies Series, Volume 4. Eds. Jacob KehindeAyantayo, Oyinloye A. Dada and Helen A. Labeodan, (Ibadan: Department of Religious Studies, University of Ibadan, 2012), 91-95.

Majority of the country's political leaders swore to the oath of office using either the Holy Bible or the Qur'an, both being the sacred literatures of the Christian and Muslim faiths respectively. However, the ideals of these religious faiths have not been effectively reflected in the leadership of the nation. Moral rectitude that dissuades man from engaging in corrupt practices such as embezzlement, bribery, misappropriation of public fund and abuse of power among others, is obviously missing in the conduct of most of the Nigerian political office holders. It is very dis-heartening that many political office holders comfortably steal public fund and lodge such in Bank accounts in foreign nations while the poor are languishing in pain and struggling to cope with non-existing or at best decayed infrastructures (Oke, 2012: 94-95). It should be recalled as stated by Nthamburi that poverty, oppression and subjugation are social sins; they are perpetrated on the less privileged of the society through neglect, indifference and corruption. Such activity shows the failure of the leaders to adhere to the divine injunction of being a keeper of a fellow man through love and service (Nthamburi, 1999:110). The righteousness that is derived from the teachings of the religions about God and the demands made on leaders for the well-being of the society must be respected by the leaders.

Conclusion

The paper has attempted to make an ancient Psalm relevant for contemporary readers in relation to good governance. Psalm 72 contains imperatives and impetus for good governance. Therefore, the Psalm showcases that royalty comes with the responsibility of making living comfortable for the citizens. Governance as done in Nigeria today falls short of the ideal because the legitimate rights of the governed are being circumvented. The paper contends that, personal righteousness of the leaders demonstrated in ethical behaviour and forensic dealings with the led are inevitable for creating an atmosphere of peace and prosperity for Nigeria. Such righteousness must be built on the knowledge and fear of God. In

theory, the idea of the fear of God is not alien to Nigerian leaders, but in practice much is desired. Political office holders need to see their positions as privilege and trust from God for the good of citizens. If political leaders draw personal righteousness from the divine source, then it will not be difficult to be fair in leading the people and judiciously managing and administering national resources for the benefit of the governed. When this is done, Nigeria will become the toast of other nations. The country's international relation will blossom; foreign investors will confidently patronize the country, which will in turn enhance the economic and social prosperity of the Nation.

Recommendations

1. Religious Leaders need to consciously teach on responsible governance from the sacred literatures. In the case of Christian Faith in Nigeria, the use of Psalms should not be limited to prayer of imprecation, invocation of blessing and appeal for divine protection, other types of Psalms that touch on responsible leadership and righteous living like Psalm 72 should be taught to the congregation. Certain ideals contained in another class of Psalms known as National Psalms could equally be explored.
2. Also, political office holders should not use religion as just a tool for securing people's vote and securing divine aid to win elections. Religious teachings on responsible governance demonstrated in righteousness and justice should be embraced.
3. Religious institutions should as a matter of urgency start to breed new generation of leaders through religious instructions on what it takes to be a responsible and godfearing leader. Specialized youth retreat, conferences and workshop on leadership and state governance should be organized. Such events should be well structured with well-defined curriculum and concretely couched measurable goals.

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