

## **JOSIAH'S REFORM AS A MODEL FOR RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL REBRANDING IN NIGERIA**

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### **Abstract**

*The call for rebranding the society at the national level confirms the level of moral decay in Nigeria. The multi-dimensional moral problems and crises are seen in every sector of the nation. This has accounted for various forms of evil being committed by people in the nation. Unfortunately, those in the religious sector are not immune to these evils. In fact, some of these atrocities are directly or indirectly connected with religious leaders. Therefore, this paper examines the Biblical Josiah and his reforms as a model for religious and political rebranding in Nigeria. This is with a view to highlighting some principles that would help us as a nation in our rebranding campaign. A historical method is adopted. Thus, Josiah's model of rebranding remains a yardstick for all religious and political leaders in Nigeria if the rebranding project will yield fruit.*

### **Introduction**

According to *Dictionary.com*, the word 'brand' has several meanings namely: one, kind, grade or make as indicated by a stamp or trademark; two, a mark made by burning or otherwise, to indicate a kind, grade, make, ownership, etc; three, a mark formerly put upon criminals with a hot iron; four, any mark of disgrace or stigma; five, branding iron; six, a kind or variety of something distinguished by some distinctive characteristic; and seven, a burning or partly burned piece of wood. When the word is used as a verb, it has the following meanings namely: one, to label or mark with or as if a brand; two, to mark with disgrace or infamy or to stigmatize; three, to impress indelibly; four, to give a brand name to; and finally, to promote a brand name. From all the aforementioned meanings and for the purpose of this paper, the word 'brand' means to mark or stigmatize someone or a nation with a mark of disgrace. It is an act of describing or stigmatizing someone or a nation as a very bad type

of person. Also, 'rebranding' is a compound word, that is, combination of 're' and 'brand'. 'Re' is a prefix which has three meanings namely: one, again; two, again in a new and better way; and three, back to a former state.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, rebranding is defined in this paper as an attempt to correct the wrong ideas and negative impression that have been made about Nigeria and her good people. This rebranding is done in such a way that Nigerians themselves are encouraged to be conscious of the way they live and by following moral and religious principles.

There is no doubt that Nigeria has been stigmatized as "a corrupt brand; a brand where there is a lot of confusion."<sup>2</sup> Explaining what informed the recent attempts at rebranding Nigeria, Dora Akunyili says:

Our image, especially in and outside this country, is highly battered. Outside this country, in particular, the perception about Nigerians is so bad that even on the internet you keep receiving information that people should not travel to Nigeria and all that. Every Nigerian is regarded as a fraudster and a criminal. We are never even given the benefit of the doubt.<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, in the light of the wrong and gloomy picture which people outside the country have about Nigeria and her people, the minister of information argues that the wrong impression can be corrected through rebranding. She says:

So I thought that the best way of addressing this problem is to do it in a systematic way. While the government is working hard on its own deliverables, we could also systematically work on our image. The most important way of working on a nation's image is through rebranding.<sup>4</sup>

While I tried to agree completely with the submission of Dora Akunyili as stated above, it is my opinion that a rebranding that will last and stand the test of time must begin with the leadership. It is in this light that we are considering Josiah's reform as a model for religio-political rebranding in Nigeria. Therefore, attempt is made in this paper to examine the following sub-topics: political situation of Judah in the seventh century; Josiah's early life and reforms; the Nigerian situation; and towards a lasting and permanent rebranding.

### **Political Situation of Judah in the Seventh Century B.C. before Josiah**

The last seventh century B.C. witnessed the fall of the mighty Assyrian empire. The largeness of the empire made it impossible for proper supervision and control. The vassal states fought for their independence one after the other. The Chaldeans dominated Babylon for more than two centuries, especially under the leadership of Merodach-Baladan (721-711BC).<sup>5</sup> They had tried many times to free themselves from the Assyrians but each attempt failed. Fortunately, at the death of Ashurbanipal, their prince and able leader Nabopolassar (626-605BC) was the viceroy in the southern province of Babylon. He took advantage and established the Babylonian empire. On 9/10 October, 626BC, he defeated the Assyrians who tried for the last time to capture Babylon. By 616BC Nabopolassar was in full control of Babylon and other places in Mesopotamia and by the end of 612BC, the three capital cities of Assyria namely: Assur, Nineveh and Nimrud were destroyed.<sup>6</sup> Incidentally, Judah was not left out in the bid for freedom. The long reign of Manasseh and his son came to an end. Josiah was enthroned by the people of the land who were always involved whenever the natural succession of the Davidic line was brought into jeopardy.

### **Josiah's Early Life**

Josiah, whose name means 'may Yahweh give' or 'God healed' was the son of king Amon of Judah and of Jedidah, the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath (2 Kgs 21:24; 22:1). He was eight years old when he succeeded his father on the throne and he reigned for thirty-one years (2 Kgs 22:21). He was the sixteenth king of Judah after its separation from the Kingdom of Israel. Both his father Amon and his grandfather, Manasseh were wicked kings. Their wickedness allowed for gross idolatry that prevailed in the land for over half a century. In fact, the wickedness of his father made the palace slaves slay him.

The account of the reign of Josiah is recorded in 2 Kgs 22-23 and 2 Chro 34-35. It has been noted that the Chronicler offers a different order of the events of the reign of Josiah from that of the Deuteronomist. The Chronicler's account widens the effect of the reform to Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon and as far as Naphtali (2 Chro 34:6).<sup>7</sup> Josiah was one of the few kings of Judah who "did right in the sight of God."<sup>8</sup> 2 Kgs 23:25 says:

Neither before nor after Josiah was there a king like him who turned to the LORD as he did- with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his strength, in accordance with all the Law of Moses.

Josiah was a reformer who made religious and political impacts on the nation of Judah. Josiah's reform is described as the most thorough-going in Judah's history.<sup>9</sup> Josiah had two wives namely Hamutal (2 Kgs 23:31; 24:18) and Zebidah (2 Kgs 23 :31).

### **Josiah's Religious Reform**

Josiah began to seek God while he was very young, at the age of sixteen (2 Chro 34:32). At the age of twenty, he began his massive reform work (2 Chro 34:3). He destroyed all the altars of Baal (2 Chro 34:4). He ground them into dust and scattered it over the graves of those who had sacrificed to them. He burned the bones of heathen priests upon their own altars (2 Chro 34:5).

Josiah began to repair the Temple at the age of twenty-six, that is, in the eighteenth year of his reign. This was after the land had been thoroughly purified from idolatry and all that belonged to it.<sup>10</sup> The high priest Hilkiah showed Shaphan, the royal scribe, a "book of law" which he had discovered in the Temple during the renovations ordered by the king. Shaphan read the sacred book to his royal master, who was filled with consternation at finding how far the religious practices of his time had strayed from God's commandments. The prophetess Huldah was consulted, and she revealed that the wrathful LORD would destroy Judah, though not in the lifetime of Josiah.

Josiah called a great assembly in the Temple of the priests and prophets, all the people, both great and small (2 Kgs 23:2) and he read the whole Book to them. He led the people in a massive repentance service upon the discovery of the Law of Moses (2 Kgs 23:1-3, 18-21, 19-32). He killed pagan priests whom previous kings of Judah had appointed (2 Kgs 23:5). He removed the shameful idol of Asherah from the Temple (2 Kgs 23:6). He tore down the houses of male prostitutes (2 Kgs 23:7). He brought back to Jerusalem the priests of God who were living in other cities in Judah (2 Kgs 23:8). He destroyed the altar of Topheth in the Hinnon valley so that no one could offer human sacrifice upon it (2 Kgs 23:10). He tore down the statue of horses and chariots which were located near the entrance of the Temple (2 Kgs 23:11). He also tore down Ahaz's pagan altars on the palace roof (2 Kgs 23:12). He destroyed those altars

which Manasseh had built in the two courts of the Temple. He removed the shrines of Ashtoreth (god of Sidon), Chemosh (god of Moab) and Mikom (god of Amon), which Solomon had built for his many wives (2 Kgs 23:13). He exterminated mediums, wizards and soothsayers (2 Kgs 23: 24).

Perhaps, the greatest reform of Josiah is connected with the great Passover celebration and the elevation of the sacred art of the Covenant to its proper place. This Passover celebration which started in Egypt nearly 900 years back (Exod 12) had evidently not been celebrated since the days of Hezekiah, over sixty years ago. Josiah determined to amend for this delay (2 Chro 35:7, 8). He presided over the Passover celebration where thirty thousand lambs, three thousand young bulls, and three hundred oxen were offered. According to 2 Chro 35:18, this was the greatest Passover of all time where Josiah elevated the sacred art of the Covenant to its proper place in the Temple (2 Chro 35:3). Writing on the major features of the reform, John Bright notes:

The major features of the reform are clear. It was first of all, a consistent purge of foreign cults and practices. Assyrian cult objects, of course, being the anathema to all patriotic people, were doubtless the first to go; repairs to the Temple, in progress before 622, perhaps represented a purification following their official removal. Various solar and astral cults, mostly no doubt of Mesopotamian origin (2 Kgs 23:4-5, 11-12) likewise went, as did native pagan cults, some introduced by Manasseh (vs. 6, 10), some of the very long standing (vs. 13f); their personnel, including eunuch priests and prostitutes of both sexes, were put to death. In addition, the practice of divination and magic was suppressed (vs. 24). The cult places of northern Israel, being from the point of view of Jerusalem uniformly idolatrous, could scarcely escape so zealous a performer as Josiah.<sup>11</sup>

### **Josiah's Political Reform**

It is noteworthy that Josiah was not only zealous for religious reformation but he was also determined to establish his throne politically. His desire to unite Israel took him beyond the borders of Judah to Israel (Northern Kingdom). He tore down the altar and shrine at Bethel which

Jeroboam had made (2 Kgs 23:15). His reform there was recognized as the fulfilment of an old prophecy dating from the time of its first king (2 Kgs 23:17 cf 1 Kgs 13:1-2).<sup>12</sup> His effort at uniting both Israel and Judah yielded result as evidenced in the contribution sent from the north for the Temple work (2 Chro 34:9) and the presence of the people of the north at the Passover celebration (2 Chro 35:18). Obviously, Josiah aimed at re-establishing the kingdom of David (2 Chro 34:3).

The event that led to the tragic death of Josiah was politically minded. In an attempt to strengthen his political grip on the nation, he intercepted Pharaoh Neco of Egypt who was on his way to Carchemish to aid the Assyrians against the Babylonians. In spite of Neco's message to him that he (Neco) was not after him, Josiah went ahead to intercept Neco (2 Chro 35:20-21). The reason for Josiah's interception of Pharaoh Neco was not clear. Perhaps, he was equally an ally of the Babylonians, as Hezekiah once had been, or whether he acted independently. Obviously, he could not have wished an Egypto-Assyrian victory, the result of which would have been to place him at the mercy of Egypt's ambitions.<sup>13</sup> Consequently, Josiah refused the peace offer; he disguised himself and attacked Neco in the valley of Megiddo. This led to the death of Josiah at the age of 39 years (2 Kgs 22:1; 23:28-30) and the end of whatever progress he had made. Unfortunately, his sons Johanan, Jehoiakim, Zedekiah and Shallum (1 Chro 3:15) could not sustain his achievements and Judah gradually lost what remained of nationhood until Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon took them in 586 BC. Perhaps, the only weakness of Josiah lies in his involvement in the international political manoeuvring of his days. In other words, he should have limited himself to the religious reform of his nation, where he had a significant impact. Getting involved in fighting a battle as he did despite warning, was a costly mistake that led to his untimely death. Perhaps, no king that reigned in Israel was ever more deeply lamented by all his subjects than Josiah, as reflected in the ode of Jeremiah which he composed on that occasion (2 Chro 35:25-27).<sup>14</sup>

### **The Nigerian Situation**

The Nigerian society, in spite of her eleven years of unbroken democracy is still confronted with diverse problems ranging from ethnicity to religious, political, economic and various social vices which unquestionably require a kind of rebranding of our hearts and attitudes. Our national dailies are filled with various disheartening news of wickedness, greed, violence and so on. Some of the captions read thus:

“A renowned preacher, Rev. P.F. Owa shot by robbers”<sup>15</sup>; “Armed men attack one Oyo ANPP lawmaker, injured his aged mother and went away with over ₦2 million”<sup>16</sup>; “The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) alleged that Ibori stole ₦9.1 billion belonging to the state. He was arraigned on a 103 count charge.”<sup>17</sup> “Gunmen attack 32 INEC officials over Ondo Assembly poll”<sup>18</sup> etc.

The recent cases of killings of innocent people especially women and children have brought a new dimension to the lawlessness and violence in Nigeria. It was reported that some invaders went to Dogo Nahawa village with genocide in their minds, held their victims hostage between 3 and 6a.m; set fire on their houses and waited with guns, daggers and knives for their victims to rush out. As the residents scampered for safety, they ran into the hands of their invaders who hacked them down.<sup>19</sup> Obviously, the level of killings in the country show the low value placed on human life.<sup>20</sup> Worried over the killings of innocent people in Jos South Local Government Area of Plateau State, the former Inspector General of police, Mr. Ogbonna Onovo has threatened that henceforth, Divisional police officers in the state will be held responsible for any outbreak of crises in their respective domains.<sup>21</sup>

Kidnapping has become the order of the day. It was reported that “Gunmen kidnapped seven persons in Onitsha, Anambra state, amidst the worsening security situation in the commercial city.”<sup>22</sup> Also, the only son of the suspended local government chairman of Oriohmwon Local Government Area of Edo State, Honourable Patrick Aisien was abducted by gunmen suspected to be kidnappers. The son, Mr. Uyi Aisien was said to have been abducted between 6 a.m-7a.m at the gate of the University of Benin where he is a final year student of industrial mathematics. The kidnappers contacted the father demanding ₦50 million.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, there was pandemonium on the 6th of April 2010 at the University of Benin Teaching Hospital following the abduction of the chief medical director, Professor Michael Ibadin by unknown gunmen.<sup>24</sup>

Indeed, the level of crime in the nation is on the soaring on a daily basis. It has been reported also that some armed robbers in a bid to escape arrest neatly packed their weapons in a Bible. The Ogun State Commissioner for Police, Alhaji Musa Daura explained that men of the underworld were becoming more deadly and desperate by the day. Hence, they will do anything to escape the eagle eyed policemen on patrol.<sup>25</sup>

Asking Rev. Dr. Moses Iloh, a renowned social activist, sportsman and clergyman who turned 80 recently to compare the Nigeria of then to the Nigeria of now, he had this to say:

I am sure that God in Heaven is looking at us in amazement. This is a country that used to be a country where no man is oppressed, where you do not care where he came from, where you do not ask what religion he belongs to. But today, what do we have? We are in a bad situation where there is tribalism... Nigerian leaders will kill and destroy their own people...<sup>26</sup>

Unfortunately, some of our religious leaders are adding to the problems of social vices in the nation. The most disturbing aspect is the involvement of some so-called men of God in the social problems confronting the nation. Perhaps, the level of poverty and unemployment in the country has produced several false prophets in the society.<sup>27</sup> Some of the several cases of atrocities committed by the so-called men of God are: “two pastors of the Redeemed Christian Church of God were accused of stealing about ₦50 million”<sup>28</sup>, “Pastor dragged to court over ₦2.7 million church fraud”<sup>29</sup>, “Pastor arrested for allegedly raping 17 year old UTME candidate”<sup>30</sup> and “Prophetess, others held over prostitution ring in Libya.”<sup>31</sup> There is a case of one Church in Osun State where a five-year-old corpse is worshipped as ‘Christ.’<sup>32</sup> Also, the desire of a young lady to seek spiritual help from a Pastor has landed her in a hospital with burns on her body. The burns are allegedly the result of the different anointing oils poured on her during a prayer session by the Pastor. As the last bottle of oil was poured on her head, her body literally caught fire; she managed to remove her dress and ran outside wearing only pants and bra.<sup>33</sup> In addition, the level of greed and inordinate ambition for material things among some religious leaders call for a serious religious reform in the nation. While it is true that religion is on the increase in Nigeria; it can also be said that morality is on the decrease. Many of the men of God need to look inward to see whether they are really preaching the Gospel or they are propagating themselves. It is unfortunate that some are simply exploiting their gullible and unsuspecting members. Imagine a so-called man of God who was invited to preach at an open air crusade. This man brought several copies of his almanac which has the inscription of his ministry, bold picture of himself together with his wife and a tiny 2012 calendar. The most ridiculous thing is that this man of God sold his



almanac to many poor people who came to revival at a ridiculous price of N200.00 per copy.

Obviously, all the above cases of moral and religious decadence indicate lack of the fear of God. The Bible says “the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom...” (Prov 1:7). It is the fear of God that helps one to do well and hates that which is evil.

### **Towards A Lasting and Permanent Rebranding**

For the rebranding project to be effective and to have a lasting impact on the Nigerian populace, all the stakeholders, especially parents, religious leaders and government must be willing to make it work. Efforts must be made to help the teeming population of children and youths who will surely become leaders and policy makers tomorrow.

On the part of the parents, efforts must be made to see that children have all round education. Emphasis must not only be placed on academic excellence but also on moral and spiritual development. Parents must see that their children have religious education whereby the fear of the Lord is inculcated into their lives early enough. The Bible says “Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it” (Prov 22:6). There is no doubt that Josiah had a good home training which helped him to make spiritual impact upon the nation. The fact that he did right in the sight of God, walking in the ways of his father David and not turning aside to the right or left (2 Kgs 22: 1-2) meant that he had a good mother who led him in the way of the LORD.

On the part of religious leaders, they must sincerely seek God on several issues relating to the individual members and the nation. Josiah sought God earnestly. Even when the book of the Law was found in the Temple, he sought God concerning that which was written in it (2 Kgs 22:11-13) and the message was related to him through prophetess Huldah (2 Kgs 22 : 14- 20). Also, religious leaders must aim at getting rid of the society of any form of idolatry as Josiah did (2 Chro 34: 3-4). Gospel preachers must preach undiluted message without any form of self-propagation. Furthermore, religious leaders must come together to pray for the nation concerning numerous challenges confronting her. Josiah had a similar programme as he had a great assembly of the levites, priests and prophets, both great and small (2 Kgs 23:2) where the whole book of the Law was read and he led the people in a massive service of repentance. In addition, the unity of the nation must be paramount in our rebranding efforts. Individuals, leaders and followers must speak of the

indivisible entity of the nation. In other words, peaceful co-existence among various ethnic nationalities in the nation must be our concern. This was equally demonstrated by Josiah in the great Passover celebration which he organized. It was a celebration that united both the northern and southern Kingdoms of which the Bible says such had not been done since the days of prophet Samuel and none of the kings of Israel had ever celebrated such a Passover as Josiah did (2 Chro 35:18).<sup>34</sup>

On the part of the government, there are some issues which those connected with policy making must look into. Top on the list is the introduction of compulsory teaching of religious knowledge in both primary and secondary school levels. The genesis of many of the evils being perpetrated in our society is connected directly or indirectly with the non-chalant attitude of the government to the teaching of religious education in our primary and secondary schools years ago. The manifestation of evils in the Nigerian society is as a result of lack of the fear of the Lord. Therefore, in an attempt to rebrand Nigeria and her people, God must not be left out. Thus, it is in the teaching of religious education that the fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom will be carefully taught. Josiah was able to carry out his religious and political reforms because he had the fear of God even from childhood.

Another important issue to be addressed by the government in her rebranding effort is that of corruption which has been defined as “the absence of the integrity that ought to be there”<sup>35</sup>. Corruption which manifests itself in diverse ways as abuse of office or misuse of power by the public officer for private gains, embezzlement of public fund, bribery, nepotism, etc has eaten so deeply into the fabric of our nation.<sup>36</sup> Collins opines that the main cause of corruption in Nigeria is greed.<sup>37</sup> Corruption is the main problem that is confronting Nigeria as a nation. Speaking on corruption, Bishop Awelewa Adebisi says:

Corruption is an embarrassing cankerworm that has eaten deep into the fabric of our nation. It started a long time ago, and it is still with us but as the church of God, we pray that it will be successfully nipped in the end and in our lifetime; otherwise the future of this country with graft in control will be disastrous for our generation yet to come.<sup>38</sup>

Incidentally, the problem of corruption has been the major headache of subsequent administrations in Nigeria of which various programmes are

put in place to control it. At the time of Gowon, there was the decree number 38 of 1975 which was put in place to control corruption. At the time of Murtala/Obasanjo administration in 1975, there was the public complaints commission in place to check corruption. President Shehu Shagari in 1982 instituted the ethical evolution committee with the aim of controlling corruption. General Buhari in 1984 put in place the Public Property Recovery Panel and War Against Indiscipline campaign while General Babangida in 1989 put in place the Mass Mobilization of Social and Economic Recovery Programme (MAMSER) and the Code of Conduct Tribunal. General Abacha instituted the failed Banks' decree in 1985. President Obasanjo put in place the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Crimes Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC).

Unfortunately, the level of corruption in Nigeria remains disturbing in spite of all the programmes put in place. For instance, in 1997 the Transparency International ranked Nigeria as the most corrupt country in the world<sup>39</sup>. Also in its September 2000 report, the organization also put Nigeria on top of the corruption table worldwide stating that corruption has so permeated the public and private sector in Nigeria to the extent that the social plague could pose a serious threat to democracy, political stability and socio-economic development. Furthermore, the 2004 report of the organization rated Nigeria as the third corrupt country after Bangladesh and Haiti.<sup>40</sup> Besides, there are several cases of corrupt practices as reported daily in our National Newspapers.<sup>41</sup> It is with this background that the government of Late President Musa Yar'Adua put in place the 'rebranding project,' a project which the present administration is still working on. Obviously, corruption in all its manifestations must be controlled for a meaningful and permanent rebranding to take place.<sup>42</sup> Dora Akunyili during the rebranding campaign said that "we cannot grow in an atmosphere of corruption".<sup>43</sup>

Indeed, the leadership of our nation must learn from Josiah who took a drastic measure in checking the menace of corruption in his nation. He simply got rid of all corrupt officers appointed by his predecessors, appointed new officers from every town of Judah and he removed every object that may cause them to sin ( 2 Kgs 23: 5-9).

## **Conclusion**

The paper has demonstrated that the young king Josiah will ever be remembered in Judah as a result of his religious and political

contributions to the nation which stemmed out of his fear of the LORD. Indeed, Josiah's reform is a model for religious-political rebranding for the nation of Nigeria. Incidentally, Josiah carried out his reforms not as an adult; he started as a boy of eight years. This makes it mandatory for parents to take care of the moral and religious education of their children. In other words, the best rebranding that can be done by parents is to see to the spiritual, moral and social development of their children as these children will become the religious and political leaders tomorrow. On the part of the government, efforts must be made to promote the teaching of religious education in both primary and secondary schools. This will cause the teeming population of the youths to have the fear of God.

### Notes and References

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3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Caleb O. Ogunkunle "The Prophetess in the Religious Life of Israel: A case study of Huldah," in *Biblical Studies and Women Issues in Africa. Biblical Series 1*. S.O. Abogunrin et al (eds.). (Ibadan: Philarem Corporate Printers, 2003), p. 58.
6. Ibid.
7. John Bright, *A History of Israel*, Third Edition, (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1981). pp. 317-9, cf. H.B. Maclean, "Josiah" in *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible. 5 Volumes*. George Arthur Buttrick et al (eds), (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984), 2:996-9.
8. Two other kings who did right in the sight of God include Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah.
9. John Bright, p.317.
10. See "Josiah" in *McClintock and Strong Encyclopaedia*, Bible Soft, PC Study Bible, Version 5.
11. John Bright, pp. 318-319.
12. John Franklin Genung, "Josiah" in *International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, Bible Soft, PC Study Bible, Version 5
13. John Bright, p. 324.
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20. *The Nation*, February 21, 2010, p.13.
21. *Saturday Tribune*, Ibadan, Nigeria. March 13, 2010, p.7.
22. *Sunday Tribune*, January 9, 2005, p.6.
23. *The Nation*, Saturday, February 21, 2010, p.54.
24. *The Nation*, April 7, 2010, p.7.
25. *Nigerian Tribune*, Tuesday, April 13, 2010, p.36.

26. *The Nation on Sunday*, February 7, 2010, p. 52.
27. C.O. Ogunkunle, "Prophet Ezekiel on False Prophets in the Context of Nigeria". In *Biblical Studies and Corruption in Africa. Biblical Studies Series Number 6*. S.O. Abogunrin et al (eds) (Ibadan: Alofe Nigeria Enterprises, 2007), pp.166-7.
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30. *Sunday Tribune*, April 25, 2010, p.7.
31. *Saturday Punch*, Lagos, Nigeria. November 13, 2010, p.12.
32. *Saturday Punch*, January 23, 2010, p. 10.
33. *Saturday Punch*, November 13, 2010, p.9.
34. Incidentally, a similar thing happened in Nigeria recently. On one occasion, during the oil subsidy protest in Abuja in January 2012, when it was time for Muslim prayer, everybody waited on the road while the Muslims prayed and the Christians watched them. Immediately after the Muslim prayer, the Christians conducted a service while the Muslims watched them. On another occasion, the Muslim youths in Minna got wind of the information that one group was going to attack one Catholic Church in January 2010. On their own volition, these Muslim youths went to the Church and prevented those who planned to attack the Church from gaining entrance.
35. I. O. Umejesi, "Religion and the Rule of Law: Antidote to Corruption Among Public Officers in Nigeria." In *Religion and Democracy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. R. A. Akanmidu et al (eds.), (Ilorin: Decency Printers, 2010), p.205.
36. Ibid.
37. Ugwu J.K Collins, "The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Church and the Fight Against Corruption in Nigeria In *Religion and Democracy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. R. A. Akanmidu et al (Eds), pp.244-5.
38. Awelewa Adebiyi, "Fighting War Against Corruption" *Tribune*, Ibadan, Nigeria. March 9, 2008, p.15.
39. N. Bagudu, *Corruption and Sustainable Democracy in Nigeria*, pp. 9-10 as quoted by Ugwu J.K Collins, p.238.
40. Ibid.
41. An example is the former Delta State Governor James Ibori who was charged by the EFCC for stealing ₦9.1 billion. For details, see *The Nation*, Lagos, Nigeria. Friday December 14, 2007, cover page, pages 4 and 5.

42. Collins suggests three possible ways of fighting corruption in Nigeria. These are objective teaching and preaching; discouraging the celebration of dubious persons; and formation of organizations. For details, see Collins, “ The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Church and the Fight Against Corruption in Nigeria” In *Religion and Democracy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. pp. 247-8.
43. Dora Akunyili, *TELL*, Lagos, Nigeria. March 23, 2009, pp.20-27.