JONATHAN'S TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN NIGERIA: LESSONS FROM THE BIBLICAL ABRAHAM

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Abstract

The issue of getting the right leadership to propel national growth and prosperity has been in the forefront of national debate in the last decade. Countries that desire to develop need special kind of leaders, leaders that are more than accomplished administrators and managers. They need leaders that have some charisma and possess the ability to inspire followers to subordinate their self interests for the good of the entire country. What most countries need are transformational leaders. Arguably, one of the greatest transformational leaders of all time was the Biblical Abraham. This paper examines the transformational leadership of President Goodluck Jonathan with special reference to the traits Abraham possessed. These are traits said to be useful to individuals desiring to become transformational leaders. With the use of Weber's theory of charisma, the paper analyzed issues of transformational leadership and the role it can play in sustainable development. Drawing experiences from developed and developing countries in the globalized era, it concludes that Nigerian leadership cannot successfully address challenges of national development, unless it embraces the qualities of transformational leadership which include vision, charisma, confidence, a willingness to be different, courageous, humility, a willingness to make great sacrifices for (his) vision, a strong sense of justice, and concern for others as well as

best practices cultivated and propagated from within Africa in the global era.

Introduction

One of the major challenges facing Nigeria and other developing countries is how to create the context of stable political, socio-economic development environment for policies and programmes to be implemented. The issue of getting the right kind of leadership to propel national growth and development has been in the front-burner of debate in the last decade. Indeed, at the core of Africa and particularly Nigeria's challenges as a developing nation, is the lack of transformational leadership imbued with vision of the likes possessed by Nnamdi Azikiwe, Obafemi Awolowo, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Mahatma Ghandhi of India, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Mother Theresa, Amin Cabral of Guinea, Tanzanian Julius Nyerere, Thomas Sankara of Burkina-Faso, and Samora Mitchell of Mozambique. These leaders' brought innovations and selfless services to bear in their various endeavours such that decades after their death, they are still fondly remembered by those they impacted on.

The need to create a system of government that would facilitate freedom of choice and liberty for people to pursue their individual and corporate interests cannot be overemphasized. Once these enabling environments are created, it becomes easy for the people to confront and resolve challenges facing them by using resources within their environment to create a condition of life where each stage is progressively better than the previous one.

Transformational leadership is crucial to realization of any giant stride taken in pursuit of development, anywhere in the world, Nigeria is not an exception. Here lies the importance of transformational leadership. Most Nigerians are of the view that positive leadership remains elusive in the country especially since the 1966 military incursion into politics to the present democratic dispensation. Historically, Nigerians are known for doing things in common to mitigate challenges of development and promote corporate coexistence (Osaghae, 1994). Identification and nurturing of transformational leadership is key to ensuring sustainable development in Nigeria.

It is evident that the World Wide Web and the rise of the global economy have changed the way and manner government business is conducted. Changing the way things are done in any given society is not easy. Countries/societies that desire prosperity need special leaders, leaders that are more than just accomplished administrators and managers. They need leaders that have some elements of charisma and possess the ability to activate and inspire followers to subordinate their self interests for the overall good of the entire country (Osofisan, 2012; Friedman and Langbert, 2000).

For anyone to dream of developing or making a change in his environment, he would require positive esteem i.e. having a healthy approving and loving view of oneself, a true self esteem that gives one a balanced realistic appreciation of one's talent and allows one to overcome overt views of others and how they perceive one.

People who display traits of high self esteem would definitely be positive, rational and have a realistic world view of others and themselves.

Consequently, Osofisan (2012) identified four critical requirements a man needs to be a development agent of his society. These include: good leadership, talent development, accountability and innovation. If every man decides to imbibe and embrace these concepts, the task of seeing the true potentials God endowed nation with would be massively unleashed on the continent and world in general. Yet, a leader that desires to be respected would keep to promises made to himself as a way to keep those made to others, draw up a disciplined framework to his life, create a definite and realistic growth plan, get value for each day and responsibility for life rather than accept it. However, majority of those who had found themselves in position of authority in Nigeria lack these qualities, which is impacting negatively on the society at large.

The invoking of the "Doctrine of Necessity" by the Nigeria Senate in 2010, occasioned by the ill-health of late President Yar'Adua which almost paralyzed the conduct of government business, ushered in Goodluck Ebele Jonathan as the Acting President of the country and later President following the death of President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua on the 8th May, 2010. The subsequent 2011 general elections solidified his position as the democratically elected president. Goodluck, on assumption of office, declared himself a transformational leader. The Otuoke-Bayelsa born President seems determined from utterances so far made to be a "transformational leader", to borrow his own words. To most critics his body language and actions do not portend any change from the status quo. It is based on the good assurance on the implementation of a transformation agenda that Professor Adamolekun Ladipo who gave an inaugural lecture, perhaps something of a new dimension tries to examine in his lecture titled, "A Transformation Agenda for Accelerating National Development".

It is in the light of this development, that the paper seeks to examine the transformational leadership of President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan with special reference to the traits Biblical Abraham possessed. These are traits useful to individuals desiring to become transformational leaders.

Transformational Leadership: Conceptual and Theoretical Considerations

In every administrative organization, there are administrators who derive their legitimate powers based on formal organization. Since their power is derived from their position, they can punish and reward subordinates according to the provisions of their legal powers (Ujo, 1999). The importance of leadership in any human organization cannot be overemphasized. As righty observed by Bedeian cited in Ujo (1999), leadership is both the adhesive that bind a work group together and the

catalyst that trigger employee motivation, thereby having major influence on organization performance. Leadership exists in diverse groupings and organizational settings. Some of the variants of leadership include: traditional leadership, spiritual leadership, political leadership, business leadership, and non-state leadership.

Transforming leadership in the words of Burns (1978) is a process in which leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation. Transforming leadership shapes alters and elevates the followers' motives and values. It unites diverse members in pursuit of higher goals, the realization of which is tested by the achievement of significant change that represents the pooled interests of leaders and followers. Transformational leadership motivates followers to make large changes. There is a significant amount of evidence that transformational leadership is more effective in achieving higher productivity, higher job satisfaction, and lower employee turnover rates (Robbins and Coulter, 1999). Transforming leaders are idealized in the sense that they are a moral exemplar of working towards the benefit of the team, organization and/or community.

Burns (1978) was the first to introduce the concept of transformational leadership in his descriptive research on political leaders, but this term is now used in organizational psychology as well. Bass (1985; 1990) and Bass and Avolio (1994) developed the concept of transformational leadership to include charisma, inspiration, individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation. Sashkin (1988) emphasizes the importance of vision in transformational leadership. Trice and Beyer (1991) argue that charisma is characteristic of founders of organizations whereas transformational leaders are organizational members who wish to change existing organizations.

Transformational leadership refers to leadership that motivates followers to ignore self-interests and work for the larger good of the organization to achieve significant accomplishments. Emphasis is on articulating a vision that will convince subordinates to make major changes (Black and Porter, 2000). These leaders have a profound effect on their followers' beliefs regarding what the organization should become. They provide their followers with guidance so that they are able to achieve their goals. Some examples of individuals who are considered as transformational leaders in present day Nigeria include: Governors Rochas Okorocha of Imo State, Chibuike Amaechi of Rivers State, Fashola of Lagos State, Adams Oshomole of Edo State, Godswill Akpabio, and Sule Lamido of Akwa-Ibom and Jigawa States respectively. Elsewhere in Africa, we talk gloriously of Nelson Mandela of South Africa.

Understanding the qualities that make one a transformational leader can be very helpful to administrators and leaders concerned with improving their effectiveness. It is also true that people who have the potential to become transformational leaders can easily lose this opportunity by making serious mistakes. Indeed, former President Olusegun Obasanjo may be an example of an individual

who botched the opportunity to become a highly successful transformational leader, because of his third term ambition. An examination of the foregoing submission suggests that transformational leaders are individuals capable of motivating and inspiring followers by appealing to higher goals and the common good rather than individual needs and self-interest.

There are several theoretical plat-forms to analytically and scientifically discuss the issues raised in the paper. These include trait, path-goal, exchange, social learning, contingency, behavioural and charismatic theories of leadership.   While other theories may be relevant in their right, the paper utilized the theory of transformational leadership rooted in Weber's (1952; 1978) theory of charisma, and his application of the theory to several historical examples, most importantly his interpretation of the respective roles of the ancient Jewish prophets and priests (Bryman, in Friedman and Langbert, 2000).

Charisma as conceived by Weber's (1979; 1952) theory of charisma is rooted firmly, although by no means exclusively in the real or imagined extraordinary qualities of a leader. Like any individual the charismatic leader is unique, and irreplaceable. A charismatic leader emerges from beyond the institution with the purpose of delivering the followers in their time of need. Charisma is rooted in persons, relationships, and contexts. With legal authority, obedience is to the legal order. With traditional authority, obedience is to whoever occupies a sanctified position while in the case of charismatic authority; obedience is given to an individual on the basis of extraordinary merit (Weber, 1978). Charismatic leaders emerge to fulfill the needs of their followers, which in times of societal distress are likely to be of an 'extraordinary' nature, particularly with regard to the need for meaning. Charisma must continually be proven in meaningful fashion to retain their recognition, without which it cannot exist.

The extent, to which a leader is transformational, is measured first, in terms of his influence on the followers. The followers of such a leader feel trust, admiration, loyalty and respect for the leader and because of the qualities of the transformational leader are willing to work harder than originally expected. These outcomes occur because the transformational leader offers followers something more than just working for self gain; they provide followers with an inspiring mission and vision and give them an identity. The leader transforms and motivates followers through his or her idealized influence (earlier referred to as charisma), intellectual stimulation and individual consideration. In addition, this leader encourages followers to come up with new and unique ways to challenge the status quo and to alter the environment to support being successful. Having seen what it takes to be a transformational leader, it is therefore imperative to situate this within the context of Adamolekun's (2011) submission. Situating our argument within position in the presidential inaugural lecture will enable us evaluate Jonathan's performance come 2015.

Adamolekun (2011) proposes five essential transformation result areas to include electoral legitimacy, peace and security, government policy stability, rule of law and anti-corruption. It is imperative and most significant that government that emerges through electoral legitimacy, free, fair and credible elections are expected to

be accountable that has entrusted it with the exercise of political authority. Indeed, the citizens who, through their votes decided who governs them have a duty to demand for accountability from their rulers. There is a general consensus among Nigerians and non Nigerian's opinion leaders that getting electoral legitimacy right is an antidote for development which has eluded the country since 1999. In fact all the elections conducted in the country since 1999 when Nigeria returned to democratic rule lack credibility (Adamolekun, 2011)

However, President Goodluck Jonathan in 2010 assured Nigerians as well as the international community of breaking the jinx of flowed elections in the country. This he has delivered to an appreciable extent on his promise of a free and fair election. Yet, bearing in mind that Nigeria's transformation geared towards electoral legitimacy is a continuum, Attahiru Jega, a professor of political science, the indefectible, honest and courageous chairman of the Independent Electoral Commission (INEC) has unarguably admitted that there are still some flaws in the electoral process that need to be corrected.

Assuring peace and security within the country is a challenge of a very urgent import and an incontrovertible prerequisite for any meaningful and genuine development effort in Nigeria. While post election violence in the states of Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina and Niger were as a result of political power struggle, religious fanaticism is the bean behind the violence unleashed by Boko Haram since the early 2000s which has now spread like wide fire. Literally the Hausa word Boko Haram means Western and or non-Islamic education is a sin. This is coming despite the fact that Nigeria is a 'Secular State' (FRN, 1999, 2011). It is based on these premises that the researchers wonder: "Is there a role for the Sovereign National Conference (SNC) that some opinion leaders have advocated since the early 1990s?" This needs to be addressed as a matter of priority which only a courageous leader can do.

It is worthy of note that stability in government policy reinforced by clarity and consistency is a major explanation for economic growth the world over. Government should consult stakeholders before embarking on policy reversal as not doing so could be inimical to development efforts. It is glaring that issues like Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) highly pursued all over the world as bedrock to development through improved service deliveries are not evident and apparent in Nigeria except on paper and electronic media. In fact, MDGs are now another avenue for embezzling public fund.

Most Nigerians are aware of the rot in the education sector, climaxing in a tertiary education level that has parents – and even the former Speaker, House of Representative – sending kids and relations to Ghana, South Africa to access better and quality university education (Adenle, 2011). The University Act started during the Obasanjo presidency, an Act that was almost immediately "placed on the back burner" leaves much to be desired. The rot in the Nigerian education sector is most severe at the apex institution – the university. But it appears that soon as rehabilitation efforts at that level begin to yield positive results, it cascades down to

polytechnics, secondary schools and primary schools. Also, most Nigerians are baffled and wondered why huge budgetary allocations to roads and electricity between 1999 and 2010 has not yielded better infrastructures. Nigerian Federal and State roads are mere death traps; electricity supply is more epileptic all over the country. The Nigerian public has no information on why such huge budgetary allocations for roads and electricity have not been used to construct good roads and improve power supply. Efforts of National Assembly to provide answers to what happened have resulted in numerous probes whose report is never made public. For example, the National Assembly's report on electricity has never been released years after its conclusion. The reason behind this is going to equity without clean hands which have remained a major challenge to the Nigerian National Assembly. It is disheartening to know that within the first six months in 2010, Nigeria imported more than $100 million worth of generators, the highest in Africa (Adamolekun, 2011). Yet, government knows the saboteurs and is doing nothing to stop them.

In spite, of the military having returned to the barracks, the country does not yet function fully as a country under the rule of law. A country under the rule of law means that government in all its actions is bound by rules fixed and announced beforehand. Rule of law underpinned by an independent court system implies a predictable legal framework which serves as channel for settlement of conflicts between the state and individuals on the one hand and among individuals or groups on the other. Therefore, in order to restore confidence in the judiciary, the president should, as a matter of urgency, base ball appointments to the Court of Appeal and Supreme Court primarily on merit, competence and integrity, federal character should be used as a secondary consideration.

Corroborating Adamolekun's position is the statement credited to Sule Lamido, the executive governor of Jigawa state shortly after the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) national convention which produced Alhaji Bamanga Tukur as the party's national chairman. Lamido cautioned the new leadership to chart a way forward on security and to create space for the younger generation. He went further to posit that the younger generation is expectant and must be motivated because there is so much despair in them. There are social problems like MEND, MOSSOP, MASSOB, Boko Haram etc. The question is what do we do? Because these are manifestations of a failed state (Akubo, 2012). Yet, free radicalism as witnessed today in Nigeria, is as a result of political and economic exclusion of the people.

Nigeria is widely acknowledged in the development literature as an example of a country where systemic corruption has been institutionalized. This is evidenced by the incidence of corruption in the country as given by Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) which arguably is the world's most credible measure of both domestic and public sector corruption.

Table 1: Nigeria's Score Card on Corruption Perception Index (CPI) 1996-2011

Year	CPI	Score	Nigeria's CPI Ranking Remarks
1996	0.69	54/54	Most Corrupt Country
1997	1.78	52/52	Most Corrupt Country
1998	1.9	81/85	2nd Most Corrupt Country
1999	1.6	98/99	2nd Most Corrupt Country
2000	1.2	90/90	Most Corrupt Country
2001	1.0	90/91	2nd Most Corrupt Country
2002	1.6	101/102	2nd Most Corrupt Country
2003	1.4	132/133	2nd Most Corrupt Country
2004	1.6	144/146	2nd Most Corrupt Country
2005	1.9	152/159	3rd Most Corrupt Country
2006	2.2	142/163	5th Most Corrupt Country
2007	2.2	147/180	9th Most Corrupt Country
2008	2.7	121/180	59th Most Corrupt Country
2009	2.5	130/180	50th Most Corrupt Country
2010	2.4	134/178	42nd Most Corrupt Country
2011	2.4	143/183	143 Most Corrupt Country

Source: **CPI** (2012)

Evidence of Nigeria's rating by Transparency International Corruption Perception Index is the ongoing prosecution of a permanent secretary and five directors in the ministry of Finance over #14.5 billion naira pension fraud, and the stealing of #300 million naira in three months by a former Secretary to the Adamawa State Government, Mr. John Eddie Manassa (See The Nation, 2012), as well as the recent shameful exchange of verbal missiles between the Chairman of the House Committee on Capital Market, Herman Hembe and the Director-General of Security and Exchange Commission Ms. Arunma Oteh which the country and indeed the international community witnessed in the last weeks are all typical examples of corruption in the high places (Oke, 2012). Yet, the conviction and sentencing of former Delta State Governor, James Ibori to 13 years in prison by Southwark Crown Court in London after seven years of escaping from the long arms of the law enforcement agencies and the judiciary is a slight and shame on the Nigerian judicial system where Ibori was untouchable. Today, Ibori that was discharged and acquitted by an Asaba high court, pleaded guilty to all the same corruption charges leveled against him in Nigeria.

Also, worthy of mentioning is the recent report of Nigerian House of Representatives ad-hoc committee on the management of petroleum subsidy which established that the actual subsidy paid out by the federal government as at 31st December 2011 was #2.587 trillion against #245 billion appropriated in the 2011 budget. However, the committee noted with great dismay that over one trillion naira

of the said fuel subsidy was paid to fake and non existing contractors in collaboration with some staff of the regulatory agencies such as: Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) and Petroleum Products Price Regulation Agency (PPPRA). Corruption in Nigeria is now cancerous and has eaten deep into the fabrics of the society. This can only be tackled by a visionary, missionary and courageous leader.

Interface between Transformational Leadership and Development

One major index of social change today is indeed transformational leadership. No nation can boast of having achieved development if a large percentage of her inhabitants are still wallowing under abject poverty, want and adept in socio-economic penury (Akhakpe, Fatile and Igbokwe-Ibeto, 2012). Nigeria arguably boasts of some of the richest human and material resources in the world. These potentials in most cases lie fallow waiting to be harnessed for the benefit of its teeming population due to poor leadership. However, for these resources to be harnessed for the growth and development of the country and its people, visionary, exemplary and selfless leaders are needed.

In Nigeria, empirical evidence shows that underdevelopments have continued to wage on the people despite the enormous resources the country is endowed with. All developed countries in the world today have at one time or the other, had leaders who were able to take on challenges of growth and development in their respective countries as issues which must be overcome and did everything within their abilities to ensure that they subdued these challenges in order to pave the way for individuals and groups to actualize their innate potentials and abi1ities for societal transformation. Bass and Bass (2008), posit that thirty years of research and a number of meta-analyses indicate that transformational leadership positively predicts a wide variety of development and performance outcomes including individual, group and organizational level variables. They identified four elements of transformational leadership that can engender development to include:

Intellectual Stimulation

The degree and extent to which the leader challenges assumptions, takes risks and solicits followers' ideas cannot be overemphasized. Leaders with this style stimulate and encourage creativity in their followers. They nurture and develop people who think independently. For such a leader, learning is a value and unexpected situations are seen as opportunities to learn. The followers ask questions, think deeply about things and figure out better ways to execute their tasks.

Another element of transformational leadership is **idealized influence**. It provides a role model for high ethical behaviour, instills pride, gains respect and trust. The visionary aspects of leadership are supported by skills that make the vision understandable, precise, powerful and engaging. The followers are willing to invest more effort in their tasks; they are encouraged and optimistic about the future and believe in their abilities.

The degree to which the leader attends to each follower's needs, acts as a mentor or coach to the follower and listens to the follower's concerns and needs is known as **individualized consideration.** The leader gives empathy and support, keeps communication open and places challenges before the followers. This also encompasses the need for respect and celebrates the individual contribution that each follower can make to the team. The followers have a will and aspirations for self development and have intrinsic motivation for their tasks.

Yet, **Inspirational Motivation** has also been emphasized. The degree to which the leader articulates a vision that is appealing and inspiring to followers is critical if any degree of success is to be achieved. Leaders with inspirational motivation challenge followers with high standards, communicate optimism about future goals, and provide meaning for the task at hand. Followers need to have a strong sense of purpose if they are to be motivated to act. Purpose and meaning provide the energy that drives a group forward in any human endeavour. Will there be the necessary political will to carry on in these way? That is a litmus test for Jonathan's administration.

Jonathan's Transformational Leadership in Nigeria: Lessons from the Biblical Abraham

There are valuable lessons for individuals interested in deriving leadership lessons from Western literature (Clemens and Mayer, 1999). It is in the light of this development, that this section of the paper seeks to examine the leadership traits that Biblical Abraham possessed. These are traits useful to individuals desiring to become transformational leaders. For these researchers, the Bible is another source to examine in order to learn about positive and effective leadership. Histories of some earliest leaders are found in the Bible. Yet, the Bible is replete with stories of both successful and unsuccessful leaders. Some of the Biblical leaders were charismatic and others were quite uninspiring. Across the ages, many people -- both believers and nonbelievers -- have turned to the Bible for their role models, examples, and metaphors (Friedman and Langbert, 2000). Weber (1952) discussed the Biblical examples of prophets in his seminal works. This section interrogates the characteristics of a Biblical Abraham who arguably was the most successful transformational leader in the history of mankind.

The story of the Hebrews starts with Abraham, a simple and easy going man whose concern and feelings for the progress of mankind made him very popular and generous with his time. A clan chief who believed in one single God, Abraham left Ur and became the father of Nations (Genesis, 17:5). Abraham sowed the seeds that helped destroy paganism, planted the roots for the three major monotheistic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam), and permanently changed the world with the ideas of monotheism, justice, and compassion. At least one-half of today's World has been influenced by Abraham's vision (Friedman and Langbert, 2000). It is not surprising that late Pope John Paul II expressed strong interest in visiting Ur (in Iraq), the birthplace of Abraham (Friedman and Langbert, 2000). An attempt to

locate this within the characteristics Abraham possesses that made him as capable as a transformational leader.

Abraham was humble: He was an individual of great humility. He referred to himself as "but dust and ashes" (Genesis, 18:27). When his wife Sarah passed away, Abraham approached the Hittites because he wanted to purchase a burial site. Abraham said regarding himself "I am an alien resident and settler among you" (Genesis, 23:4). The Hittites, however, knew who Abraham was and referred to him as a "Chieftain of God" (Genesis, 23:6). Abraham spoke to the Hittites with the greatest respect and even bowed down to them several times. He ultimately paid E'phron the Hittite the outrageous sum of 400 silver shekels for his land (Genesis, 23:14) while in Jeremiah (32:9) he paid only 7 shekels and 10 silver pieces for a similar parcel of land. Abraham knew what E'phron really wanted for the land since he stated the value while he was offering it for free. E'phron said to Abraham, in the presence of his fellow Hittites, "My lord, listen to me, a plot of land worth 400 silver shekels, what is that between me and you? Bury your dead" (Genesis, 23:14).

Abraham understood that E'phron was simply posturing and did indeed want 400 shekels; Abraham refused to take advantage of an offer that was not genuine.

When Abraham and his nephew Lot left Egypt they both had a considerable amount of cattle. Their respective shepherds began to quarrel because there was insufficient grazing land for the two herds. Abraham was a lover of peace and said to Lot "please let there be no quarrel between me and you and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen. Is not the whole land available to you? Please, separate from me. If you go to the left, then I will go to the right, but if you go to the right, then I will go to the left" (Genesis, 13:8-9). Abraham, though Lot's uncle and the head of the clan, was not arrogant and allowed his nephew to decide first in which direction to head. Arrogant people generally have difficulty providing subordinates with individual attention and often lack sensitivity to the needs of others. Clearly, some measure of humility is an important characteristic of transformational leaders. It is therefore no surprise that coldness and arrogance are some of the major reasons for leadership failure in Nigeria (See Nahavandi, 2000; Friedman and Langbert, 2000).

Abraham had a vision. His vision was to found a new Nation – the Promised Land, one where his descendents would live as a unified people believing in monotheism, concern for the helpless, and justice for all. Even though Jacob, Abraham's grandson, settled in Egypt, he wanted to be buried in the cave of Machpelah, the burial place of Abraham and Isaac. Jacob made Joseph swear that he would be buried in the Holy Land and was indeed buried there by Joseph and his brothers. He passed his love of the Holy Land on to all his children and we note that even Joseph made his brothers swear that they would bring his bones back to the Promised Land. In Joseph's words "I am dying but God will without fail turn His attention to you and He will certainly bring you up out of this land to the land about which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. God will surely remember you, and accordingly you must take my bones up out of here" (Genesis, 50:24-25). This

vision passed on from Abraham to Isaac to Jacob and to Jacob's children, sustained the Israelites through a bitter servitude in Egypt lasting many decades.

Abraham was a monotheist in a pagan society and spread the name of God wherever he traveled (Genesis, 12:8; Genesis, 13:4; Genesis, 13:18). Abraham planted a tamarisk tree at Beer-Sheba and there he proclaimed the name of Jehovah the indefinitely lasting God (Genesis, 21:33). It seems that the purpose of this tamarisk tree was to provide hospitality for travelers and to spread monotheism through the pagan ancient world (Friedman and Langbert, 2000). In fact, Abraham and Sarah used to invite strangers into their home and provide for them. After eating, they were encouraged to say grace to God. This approach enabled Abraham to spread monotheism and the values of hospitality and concern for others throughout the ancient world (Friedman and Langbert, 2000). It is not surprising that he was known in the ancient world as a "Chieftain of God" (Genesis, 23:6). Abraham not only had a vision but was also able to communicate this vision to his descendents living hundreds of generations later. Approximately two thousand years after his death, the Talmud states: "Whoever possesses the following three traits is of the disciples of our forefather Abraham: a good eye "(a generous nature), a humble spirit, and a modest soul (i.e., modest desires)" (Ethics of the Fathers, 5:19)

Abraham had courage and confidence; the Bible relates how Abraham mobilized his clan and, with only 318 people, waged war with four powerful kings in order to rescue his nephew Lot (Genesis, 14). Abraham was greatly outnumbered but pursued four powerful adversaries who had just soundly defeated five powerful kings (the Kings of Sodom and Gomorrah and three allies). After his defeat, the King of Sodom begged Abraham to give him souls and take all their goods, but Abraham said to the King "I lift up my hand in an oath to Jehovah the Most High God, producer of heaven and earth, that from a thread to a sandal lace, I shall not take anything that is yours" (Genesis, 23:21-23). Abraham was not only courageous but loyal to the members of his clan, even one who left to live in Sodom. Transformational leaders need courage to take risks and confidence to carry out their visions (Osofisan, 2012; Adamolekun, 2011).

Abraham cared about people and had a strong sense of justice; Abraham was the first person to tithe his possessions (Genesis, 14:20). Abraham was also extremely hospitable to strangers. The Bible relates that on one hot day, Abraham was sitting at his tent's entrance and noticed three strangers. He ran towards them and invited them to come to his home and "wash their feet" and eat a "morsel of bread" (Genesis, 18). Abraham did not offer them very much in order to make it easy for them to agree. Indeed, he provided them with bread, butter, milk, and a tender calf. Moreover, Abraham stood over them and acted as host and waiter. Abraham was an elderly man, yet the Bible states "and Abraham hastened to the tent". Abraham ran to the cattle (Genesis, 18:6, 18:7), when they left, the verse states that "Abraham went with them to send them on their way" (Genesis, 18:16). Abraham even showed his guests the courtesy of escorting them. His nephew, Lot, also

practiced hospitality in Sodom, a place that was violently opposed to treating strangers with hospitality (Genesis, 19).

Abraham's concern for others was also manifested when he heard that God intended to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham was so upset that he dared to ask God "Is the Judge of all the earth not going to do what is right"? (Genesis, 18:25). Abraham: 'What if there are 50 innocent people in the city? Will you still destroy it? God answered: 'If I find 50 innocent people in Sodom, I will spare the entire area.' Abraham: 'Suppose there are 45? God: 'I will not destroy it if I find 45'.Abraham: 'What if there are 40? God: 'I will not act if there are forty' (Genesis, 18:20-33).

As this conversation continued, Abraham proposed and God agreed to allow for 30, 20, 10 in succession, until Abraham finally gave up presumably because 10 innocent ones could not be found in those evil towns. If Sodom and Gomorrah had ten righteous individuals, the cities would have been spared. Unfortunately, ten innocent people could not be found in the entire city of Sodom, and it was destroyed (Genesis, 18: 23-33).

This story of Abraham's "haggling" God to save Sodom and Gomorra from destruction demonstrates great humanity and great love for people and an optimistic nature. Abraham could not believe that some people were so wicked that they were hopeless. A transformational leader cares for his followers and is nurturing and supportive no matter the situation (Osofisan, 2012; Black and Porter, 2000; Nahavandi, 2000; Ross and Offerman, 1997).

Abraham had charisma. Charismatic leaders have the ability to influence others because of their inspirational qualities. The Greek word kharisma means 'divine gift' (Friedman and Langbert, 2000) and individuals with charisma have the power to secure the devotion of large numbers of people. It has been argued that the followers of charismatic leaders make attributions of heroic and extraordinary abilities to them after observing certain behaviours; they are the inspiration of their followers, and are themselves models of the desired behaviours (Conger and Kanungo, 1988)

Abraham had the ultimate divine gift since God assured him that "I shall make a great nation out of you and shall bless you, I will bless those that bless you and him that calls down evil upon you I shall curse and all the families of the ground will certainly bless themselves by means of you" (Genesis, 12:3). Moreover, almost over four thousand years after his death, he is still a role model for billions of people. His burial place, the cave of Machpelah in Hebron, is a holy place that is visited by hundreds of individuals every day. Abraham was obviously able to attract a following and, as noted above, 318 people joined him in dangerous battle against four powerful kings. The Hittites respected him and referred to Abraham as a "Prince of God". His followers were very loyal to him and Abraham was able to send his servant with ten camels laden with goods to a distant country without worrying that the

servant would abscond with his property (Genesis, 24). His servant did an excellent job of finding a wife for his master's son and brought back Rebecca.

Abraham must have been quite influential since even King Abimelech and his captain, Phicol, desired to make an alliance with him. Their primary reason for wanting an alliance with Abraham was because "God is with him in all that he did" (Genesis, 21:22-33). Apparently, Abraham, the man from Ur, was so well known and revered throughout the world that even a king wanted to make a covenant with him.

Abraham was willing to make sacrifices for his beliefs; the story of Abraham's test, in which God asked him to sacrifice his beloved son Isaac, indicated Abraham's willingness to make a personal sacrifice for God (Genesis, 22). It is interesting to note Abraham's reaction after being told by an angel of God saying "Lay not your hand upon the lad nor do anything to him for now I know that you are a God-fearing man" (Genesis, 22:12). Abraham did not speak to his son, but "lifted up his eyes and saw, and looked, and behold behind him a ram". Abraham was looking for another offering since he was totally dedicated to God. A transformational leader must show total commitment not minding what it costs.

What was the reason for this trial of Abraham? This may have been God's way of indicating to Abraham that spreading monotheism would require great sacrifice on the part of believers. Indeed, it took thousands of martyrs before monotheism prevailed over paganism. Charismatic transformational leaders must be willing to make sacrifices on behalf of the country or an organization (Black and Porter, 2000). Yet, transformational leaders must motivate followers to sacrifice their own self-interests for the greater good (Osofisan, 2012; Northouse, 1997).

Abraham was a person who was willing to make a great sacrifice and that is why he proved that he was the right choice as the first patriarch. Throughout the centuries, Abraham's followers – believers in monotheism – also made great sacrifices to spread his values in a pagan world. Abraham dared to be different. He was a change agent; it is often dangerous to be different from the people around you. Abraham's clan was distinct unlike the people that surrounded them. Nigerian must also be willing to make sacrifice for peace, stability and development of the country.

Abraham's view of hospitality to strangers was also the diametrical opposite of the philosophy of Sodom and Gomorrah, places that hated strangers. Sodomite "hospitality" involved raping strangers entering their country. Abraham showed hospitality to strangers by personally serving them (Genesis, 19:4-5). Strangers were not treated well in much of the ancient world and this was exemplified in fear of Abraham when traveling with his wife to Egypt. He was afraid that he would be killed so that his wife could be stolen away (Genesis, 12:11-13). This is instructive in the current wave of ethno-religious crisis in parts of the country where non muslin residents and strangers are asked to live for their state of origin

Transformational leaders are change agents that have the ability to completely alter the direction of a society or an organization (Northouse, 1997). Abraham not

only dared to be different in his own time, but also changed the religious direction of mankind. This calls for attention of religious leaders in Nigeria.

Conclusion and Implications for Leaders

We commenced the paper by taking a look at the meaning of leadership in general, and transformational leadership in particular, relying on the views of various authors. We are relying on the various definitions of the authors because the summarized views taken together agrees with the position that leadership is both the adhesive that bind a work group together and the catalyst that triggers subordinates followership, thereby having a major influence on organizational performance (Bedeian quoted in Ujo, 1999).

The definition of leadership based on the transformational leadership theory enables us to have basis for accessing President Jonathan's qualities as regards his transformation agenda in Nigeria. What constitutes a transformational leadership/change agent which our literature review examined is also relevant because our thesis is on change agent. A brighter picture of transformational leadership in Nigeria which is the concern of the paper was presented through Weber's theory of charisma with special reference to Biblical Abraham.

To scientifically undertake the objectives of the study, this paper traversed theoretical framework, conceptualizations, and discussed dominant issues in leadership. These were followed by analysis of critical areas that deserve urgent attention in Nigeria. These issues bordered on electoral legitimacy, peace and security, education, infrastructure, rule of law and anti-corruption.

Abraham spread the belief in a single God in a world filled with paganism. Today's world has been dramatically changed because Abraham spread monotheism and the concomitant philosophy of caring for one's fellow human being. His philosophy eventually became institutionalized as the law of "you shall love your fellow as yourself" (Leviticus, 19:18). What traits did many of the influential Biblical leaders, especially Abraham, possess? The same characteristics that any transformational leader needs to change a society or an organization: a vision, charisma, confidence, courage, a willingness to be different, concern for others, and a willingness to make great sacrifices for one's vision.

Yet, Abraham's philosophies can serve as a paradigm or touchstone for the successful leadership of today and may be summarized as: vision, courage, confidence, caring about people, a love for humanity; hospitality, generosity, a strong sense of justice, humility, charisma, a willingness to make sacrifices for one's beliefs, daring to be different from the establishment and a change agent.

Leaders in whatever capacity who wish to be successful transformational leaders should study the character of Abraham, and of the other great Biblical leaders, and learn what it takes to communicate a new vision to their immediate society in particular and the world in general, a vision that would dramatically change mankind. Changing a society is probably going to be a very difficult task than

changing a firm. The leadership traits needed are those possessed by many of the Biblical leaders.

Citizens should demand accountability from Jonathan, especially in view of the high expectations of millions of Nigerians. Without equity and justice, there will never be peace in Nigeria between the ethnic nationalities despite an ethnic minority being president. We believe the citizens should be ready to engage themselves in forcing those in government to listen to their cries. Yet, the press must wake up to its role as watchdog of the country and citizens' interests by availing themselves with opportunities provided by the freedom of information Act 2011.

It is our humble opinion that it seems President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan has never been unemployed since graduation from the university in the early 1980's, a situation where millions of Nigerian graduates are unemployed or underemployed with no hope of getting a job, calls for urgent attention especially if the present security challenges facing the country is to be tackled. Thus, it is only a visionary, missionary and courageous (transformational) leader that can ignite such change machinery. Can Jonathan kick the ball rolling? The score card of his administration come 2015 will answer this question.

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