ABSTRACT

Leadership remains a big issue on the African continent. One can conceive of state leadership as totally separated from religious leadership. However, I will demonstrate from an analysis of Zechariah’s oracles in 3:8 and 6:12 that although state and religious leadership have distinct areas over which they exercise their authority, they nevertheless ought to collaborate with each other. Such cooperation would strengthen the cultural and moral values that are indispensable for good leadership, whether for the State institutions or for any other social institution. This paper first analyses the צֶמַח texts of Zechariah in their contexts. Second, it discusses the lack of collaboration between state and religious leaders in Africa. Third, by relating the biblical texts analysed here with the context of the reader in a kind of conversation between them, suggestions are made as to how African state and religious leadership could collaborate in their respective roles within the community.

INTRODUCTION

The name Zechariah means "Yahweh remembered." He is probably the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo whose name "is included in a list of priests who returned from the Babylonian exile (Neh 12:4). Nehemiah (12:16) reads that Zechariah was probably "the head of the priestly family of Iddo in the days of the high priest Joiakim" by the first half of the fifth century B.C.E. I "may infer that" Zechariah was among the "responsible members of the postexilic Judean" re-settlement in Zion-Jerusalem. His ministry is confined to the period of "early 520 B.C.E. (Zech 1:1) and later the beginning of the following century (Neh 12:16)."

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Zechariah is not mentioned in connection with the event of the Second Temple, but his message is appropriate to the re-construction of the Temple and re-dedication of the people’s life. The prophet "is mentioned in a close relationship with Haggai, his companion, and with the reconstruction of the house of God." I focus on the first part of Zechariah’s book (chapters 1-8), which refers to the Persian control over the Judeans under Cyrus leadership. The new "conquered neo-Babylonian empire in 539 BCE provided the conquered people with a new policy which advantaged them. Cyrus released the remnant people of Judah to return to their homeland and re-establish their religious authorities and local cults." This Persian attitude of tolerance towards Judeans enabled the latter through Zerubbabel, and Joshua and his colleagues to organize social life in Zion-Jerusalem.

The high priest, Joshua, and the figure of Zerubbabel, the governor, are described as key players for the effective leadership of the rebuilding of Zion-Jerusalem after the exile. This article demonstrates that, although African leadership must necessarily be different in many ways from what we find in this period of Israel’s history, still, like what we see in this text, a close collaboration between the state and religious leadership may improve a country’s leadership standard. The article, firstly, analyses the צֶמַח texts in Zechariah "dually considered in their respective contexts." Secondly, it discusses the current realities of collaboration between the state and religious leaders in Africa (particularly in the DRC). Thirdly, an appropriative reading of the aforementioned texts on the "branch" will provide African (Congolese) leadership and people with a better vision of the need for state and religious leadership to collaborate with one another. This may strengthen unity and the country's leadership moral values.

**THE צֶמַח TEXTS IN ZECHARIAH IN THEIR CONTEXTS**

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3Andiñach, "Zechariah," 1187.

4“Depression and lack of a clear future began to dominate the lives of the people. Persian control over Judean affairs seemed to perpetuate and therefore, there were no signs of social change in terms of well-being and social justice in the community. "Zechariah (1:8) is situated in this historical and literary context. Haggai speaks of the reconstruction of the Temple and hope for socio-justice when God will rescue the people." Andiñach, "Zechariah," 1187.

5Andiñach, "Zechariah," 1186.

Marko Jauhiainen recognises that in the context of the postexilic Jewish community, "Zechariah 3 and 6 suggest a form of leadership’s close collaboration between the Zadokite priesthood and the political authority of the time."7 This is relevant to my concern in this paper. The analysis of the צֶמַּח texts from Zechariah will highlight the close relationship that existed between the state and religious leadership in Judean community after the exile.

1 The צֶמַּח in Zechariah 3:1-10

The unit 3:1-10 contains a vision and oracle which have to do with Joshua (the high priest) and his office. This visionary scene contains a great deal of imagery. It is set as a meeting overseen by divine leadership. Zechariah’s night visions move from the rebuilt city through the protecting presence of God to the city’s sacral leadership.8 In the section 3:1-10, the prophet uses a new term צָנִיף, "diadem" (v. 5), instead of מַחֲלָצוֹת, "turban" (v. 4).9 In Isaiah 62:3, the term צָנִיף, "diadem," occurs in a synonymous parallelism with תִפְאֶרֶת עֲטֶרֶת, "the crown of glory or splendour" (cf. Jer. 13:18). Here, it is clearly used to signify royal authority and power. It means that royal symbol has been applied to the high priest, a usage that must be intentional and fully within the prophet’s overall purpose (cf. 3:5, 14).10 In poetic style, the unit portrays a ritual or cultic presentation of the expanded role of Joshua in his newly defined office of high priesthood. It is expressed by the use of the terms of "high priest" (v. 1); "diadem" (v. 5) and "render judgment in my house" (v. 7).11

My focus here is on verse 8, especially, on the introductory oracular formula, אנא שְמַע meaning "please listen." It refers to Joshua and his friends. A causal particle כִּי introduces three clauses in the verse. The first clause is translated as "for these men are of good omen;" or "for these men are a sign." The second כִּי serves as a subordinate conjunction that introduces a subordinate sentence in 3:8.12 The phrase צֶמַּח אֶתְנַעֲדֵי (my servant the branch) is made clear by the use of the second emphatic word כִּי. The introductory particle הִנֵּה, "certainly or surely," reinforces the message that Zechariah announces. Then, "my servant the branch" is the direct object introduced by the prefix את in verse 8. The verse is expressed in figurative language in a dramatic style, which suggests the immediacy of the emergence of צֶמַּח, "a rightful leadership."13 The royal symbols are

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8Cody, "Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi," 354.
9The NRSV translates the word צָנִיף as "diadem." I consider indifferently "diadem for turban."
given to Joshua, conferring upon the priesthood political prerogative. This marks a change in the character of the relationship between religious and state leadership. This change is expressed in an enigmatic style in this passage. The words, "Take off his filthy clothes," refer symbolically to Joshua’s being cleansed and purified (v. 4). The "rich garments" (מַחֲלָצוֹת), and the "diadem" (צָנִיף), given to Joshua mark his enthronement ceremony not only as "a high priest" but also as a colleague or assistant of the state leaders (v. 4-5).

This refers to the Davidide who is not excluded from this visionary scene but rather is included in this vision of a time yet to come. In that future moment, the city and its people would be restored. The passage closes with a statement that people will call their neighbours to visit them under their vine and fig tree (3:10). These symbols of things to come suggest that Zerubbabel will be one of Joshua’s colleagues and will emerge as a governor, a state "rightful leader." As a result, the state and religious leadership, after the exile, complemented one another. This expressed hope for a better life for the people in Judean society after their return from exile. It implied reconciliation between the people and Yahweh on the one hand, and among the people themselves on the other.

2 The הָצִיר in Zechariah 6:1-15

Zechariah 6:1-15 concerns chariots, crowns and leaders. The night visions come to an end in v. 8. An oracular section 6:9-15 seems to be an appendix. The final vision in vv. 1-8 joins the first vision to form an inclusio around the collection, with the section in 1:7-17 which creates an expectation of a great action of God. The unit gives an account of Zechariah’s eighth and last vision, presented in a descriptive and narrative style using figurative language. It seems to be a reminder of the first unit (hence the inclusio with similar elements in 6:1-8) in which four chariots come out from between two bronze mountains (v. 1). These mountains are mentioned nowhere else in the Bible. Presumably, they symbolise God’s dwelling place. In the form of a narrative style, the prophet describes the vision in a mythically cosmic sense. The number four in verses 2-3 is determined by the four winds (v. 5).

The point is that the cosmic messengers head off in all four directions, over all the earth (v. 7). The description of the cosmic emissaries in this last vision underlines a troubling
situation which stirs all the earth into a state of unrest, making Judah’s rise to freedom possible (v. 6). This antithetic imagery of the vision expresses the reverse state of the facts. In the first vision there is a contrast between peace on earth and God’s anger (1:15). God’s anger, in turn, results in the unrest on earth that is reflected in this last vision. Finally, the unrest that is the outcome of God’s judgment now puts God’s Spirit at rest (v. 8). The guilt and wickedness have shifted from Judah to Babylonia (5:11), God’s wrath has all the more reason to be aimed in that same direction (v. 8).

There are literary and grammatical uncertainties over the number of horses and the directions in which they go. The emphasis is placed on צָפוֹן אֶל־אֶרֶץ, which means "the land of the north" (6:8). Probably two chariots (black and white) are sent to the צָפוֹן אֶרֶץ. Upon their arrival, the horses would provide rest ("have given my spirit rest"). The the hiphil of the verb נוּהַח, "to rest," is followed by the preposition אֶת which introduces a direct object. In this verse, the direct object is רוּחִי, but the meaning is probably close to what we find in Ezekiel 3:14 with the phrase רוּחִי חֲםַת, which means "the wrath of my spirit or my wrath." There is a close connection between רוּחִי, "my spirit" and כַּלּוֹתִי, "my anger" which effects are demonstrated also in Jeremiah 49:36-37. 

The phrase צֶמַח־יִצְמָח, translated literally as "branch branching" (v. 12), is a cognate accusative which emphasises through repetition the certainty and significance of the action of צֶמַח, the "branch," sprouting forth. This syntactic form "branch branching" is also found in Jeremiah 33:15. This literary style expresses an emerging forth which, clearly, would refer to Yahweh's power alone. "Yahweh would cause 'a branch of righteousness' to flourish out of David (33:15)." The phrase "out of David" or "for David" in Jeremiah 3:15 is syntactically parallel to "from his place" or "out of his place" in Zechariah 6:12. It implies that the formulations of Zechariah 6:12 are analogous to Jeremiah 33:15, but also to Isaiah 4:2 and 11:1-2. Hence, I would expect Yahweh to be the source of the luxuriant growth of the "branch" as that is described, albeit in the enigmatic form, in Zechariah 6:12.

In this unit, a crown is to be made for Joshua, the high priest. Verses 11 and 14 have the plural "crowns" which suggests that a crown could have been made for the state leader as well. The role played by the messenger is that of a "mediator" between the prophet and

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prosecutor. In Zechariah’s epoch, connotes only a trouble maker (or accuser, or adversary as indicated above). In this passage, the accuser has raised an opposition against Joshua, the high priest, but the accusation itself is not indicated. It may be directed at some acts only known to Zechariah’s contemporaries. There were probably some persons who would have been hostile to Joshua. They would have claimed that he was unworthy of the high priest’s office. It may simply be the fact that they lived during the exile. Cody, "Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi," 355.


21Petersen, Haggai and Zechariah 1-8: A Commentary, 276.

the "reality of God." In both Zechariah 6:12-13 and 3:8 the future state leader is called צֶמַּח, "branch." He is given a high status as a "rightful leader" to come. The state leader is identified as Zerubbabel (4:6-9) who emerges, צֶמַּח־יֵצֵּמַּח, "branch branching," in order to rebuild the temple (6:10-12). The synonymous parallelism in verses 12-13, ties in the builder of the temple with צֶמַּח. The phrase יְהֹוָה אֶת־הִיכַל יִבְנֶה וְהוּא יְהֹוָה אֶת־הֵּיכַל וּבָנָה is the end of verse 12 and the beginning of verse 13 meaning "and to build the Temple of Yahweh and he will build," expresses the immediacy or imminence of building the Sanctuary of Yahweh. The repetition is used to emphasise the idea that the Sanctuary would certainly be built. In this respect, צֶמַּח, referring to Joshua and his colleagues including Zerubbabel (in chapter 4), dominates the vision-oracle.

In this section I analyse two additional components of the phrase "bear royal majesty" which are: וְהוּא־יִשָּׂא, "and he will bear," and יְהוָה, "royal majesty" (v. 13). Both terms are well attested to in the Hebrew Bible. The combination of the two is unique and suggests that the prophet has taken great care to provide a new idiom to characterise the future legitimacy of the Davidic scion. The expression is the second in a series which delineates the role of the monarchic rule. The first, as we have indicated, denotes the dynastic legitimacy through the vehicle of temple building. The second is introduced in the two successive verbs, "sit and rule." Together, they provide the future "rightful leader" with the proper authority and form part of the royal connotation of the term יְהוָה meaning "royal majesty" in the Hebrew Bible.

The term יְהוָה often designates Yahweh’s universal cosmic power. It would reflect on the fact that the Davidic kings’ earthly power was integrally related to Yahweh’s rule.

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23 Andiňach, "Zechariah," 1186.
26 The corresponding Mesopotamian idiom, מַלְכוּת יְהוָה, conveys monarchic authority in the royal Akkadian inscriptions and finds echoes in seven biblical expressions of יְהוָה מַלְכָּל לְעָבְדָּיו, the kingdom majesty.’ The Hebrew term יְהוָה occurs apart from יְהוָה seventeen additional times in the Bible and conveys a sense of royalty as it is used in both divine and earthly settings. In two late instances, יְהוָה is followed by מַלְכָּל and expresses royal rather than divine majesty in a very direct manner (1 Chron. 29:25; Dan. 11:21).” Meyers & Meyers, Haggai, Zechariah 1-8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, 359.
throughout the world. This disposition points to the coming era when the entire land and its leadership would be cleansed of all guilt. As a result, the priestly and the state leadership would be "clothed with majesty" in order to rule over the kingdom in genuine harmony (v. 13).

3 A Synthesis of the Texts in their Contexts in Zechariah

In Zechariah’s oracle (3:8), is used in a figurative sense as it is in Jeremiah (23:5; 33:15). It symbolises the emergence of a "rightful leadership" who will care for the people in the community. The phrase "my servant the branch" specifies the messianic qualities of the leadership to come. Joshua, the high priest, and Zerubbabel, the governor, represent these leaders symbolised by the image of "branch." is an epithet of "my servant" from the Davidic lineage. A "rightful leadership" would be efficient to build the temple and sit upon the throne. This expected "loyal leadership," the "branch branching," is, in the context after the exile, Joshua and his colleagues including Zerubbabel. They respectively were the religious and state leaders who would re-construct a type of prosperity similar to what the patriarchs had known. This is perceived in the emergence of a "good leadership" in the Davidic line and in the priest-Levites (Gen 13:16; 15:5; 22:17).

In the Hebrew Bible, Zechariah 6:12 is especially related to verses 10 and 13 in a chiastic structure. This literary style emphasises the importance of the subject, , and what would be able to achieve in Zion-Jerusalem. The "branch" would branch out of his place and act in Jerusalem (v. 12). The people of Jerusalem were expecting the coming of this "true shoot," symbolising the emergence of a "rightful leadership," which would result in or bring about better social conditions in Judah. Thus, the sprouting forth of my "servant the branch" fulfils the emergence of a "good leadership," which would have the power or ability to restore everything in the community. This took place during the time of Joshua and Zerubbabel, who were in charge of rebuilding the Sanctuary in Zion-Jerusalem. The effectiveness of such leadership would have resulted from their close collaboration, which would have been a necessary means of establishing social order in Judah. Close

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29 "The stone indicates maybe a precious stone fixed to the sacerdotal clothes as the sacred diadem in Exod. 28:36 and 39:30, bearing seven Hebraic letters like an inscription on a seal: ‘dedicated to the Lord’ (Isa. 35:8). In this case, the seven ‘eyes’ express the protective presence of God ensured for the priesthood and people. The stone could also mean the Sanctuary itself, placed before Joshua, and entrusted to his diligence, which the Lord himself realises sculptures (cf. 1 Kings 6:29; 7:36; 2 Chron. 3:7)." Amsler et al...,(eds), *La Traduction Oecuménique de la Bible (TOB)*, 1245; John W. Rogerson, "Zechariah," in *Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible* (eds. James D. G. Dunn and John W. Rogerson, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 723.
collaboration between the state and religious leadership in Judah would have perceived as a model for any other context where there is need for religious leaders to work closely together with the state ones.

C COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE CURRENT STATE AND RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP IN AFRICA

It is not easy to describe efforts at collaboration between the African state and African religious leadership in the contemporary context. Nevertheless, I would explore some cases referring to conflicts opposing certain church leaders to the governing classes in African countries. African ideals of solidarity would have sustained a close collaboration between state and religious leaders, nevertheless, cultural and moral corruption had been inoculated in African people's minds, and then, affected their identity. Mavinga says: "The identity of African leadership has seriously been distorted throughout its history." It is well known that Africans now have access to every form of higher education, but what is still lacking are those moral values that are indispensable for any country’s leadership. The exercise of power in most African states would require state and religious leaders to act closely together in order to improve the leadership moral values in society. Throughout Africa, moral and cultural values should be seen as absolutely necessary for a country’s leadership level. Mavinga recognises in most African states the existence of "an unfair socio-political administration," which has been assimilated by African "people since the colonial time up to" the present. "The colonial model of exploitation of the country’s wealth" has now become a kind of leadership culture.

The key motive that would require the state and religious leadership close collaboration in African countries is mainly to improve the people’s and leadership’s cultural and moral values. These values are indispensable if leaders are to live up to their commitment to developing good societies for all, free of corruption, discrimination and violence against women and children. What is needed is a mind change, mainly of the leadership, so that effective collaboration could take place among leaders in the exercise of their authority. The question is then, what is the current state of collaboration between political and religious leaders in African countries?

35 What should be understood is that "authority" does not derive from title due to one’s qualification be it academic or religious, but it is "the quality of relationship" between the leaders themselves and the people they lead. "One may acquire title and positions, they may have status in the local or global context but these are empty if the pursuant relationships with the subjects of that authority are not" relevant for the social development of public life in the community. Tony
A poor quality of state leadership in most countries in Africa has been a root cause of bad governance that is hindering social development throughout the continent. Conflict often arises within the ruling classes in many countries in Africa to the extent that they focus on personal interests instead of on the common good in society.36 Interpersonal conflict within governing classes produces the polarisation of different factions and mutually distrusting groups. Paul Béré, citing an African historian and theologian Engelbert Mveng, refers to "the anthropological pauperisation" of African people, arguing that this social reality has depersonalised Africans (more specifically, Ivorian people).37 This describes some of the reasons why close collaboration within state leadership itself and between the state and religious leadership is missing in most African countries.38 In the leadership’s exercise of authority, a real inter-unitary conflict subverts what ought to be their true objectives in favour of less relevant sub-goals. In this connection, a French proverb reasonably states: *il n’y a pas de mauvaises troupes; il n’y a que de mauvais chefs," There are no bad troops; only bad officers.*

During the Mobutu presidency, Joseph Malula (a church leader in Kinshasa of the time) tried in vain to advise the governing class concerning the right way of ruling over the state.39 A failure of collaboration between the state and religious leadership is often due to a strong desire on the part of political leaders to remain in power, on the one hand, and their refusal to be advised by religious leaders on the other. A corrupt mind based on the selfishness of state leadership has created a short-sighted vision on their part which now prevents most of them from encouraging social development in African states. A kind of "political culture" has been instilled in African minds over time which now reflects the poor leadership as we have it in Africa. Paul B. Decock would say (adapting his words slightly) that African leaders must know that good wealth derives from one’s work and comes as a result of God’s blessing. If leaders had a healthy attitude of self-reliance and self-assurance, they would have been able to improve their abilities by learning from other people’s experiences. Thus, the quality of social life and the material prosperity of African societies would have been improved so far as political leaders and their people

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37 "The anthropological pauperization" of the African people means the alienation of their being. It is also the affected identity of the African people over time. Paul Béré, "תָּוְפֵּה לְהָדִיר: La ‘paupérisation’ comme argument contre l’exercice humain de la royauté (1 S 8, 11-18)," in *Pauvreté et richesses dans la Bible: Lectures exégétiques dans le contexte de l’Eglise Famille de Dieu en Afrique* (eds. Jean-Bosco B. Matand, Paul Béré, André Kabasele, Mary Sylvia Nwachuku, Antony I. Umoren, Kinshasa: Jules Impress, 2009), 97.
would have worked closely together in their respective countries on the African continent.  

The lack of loyalty, honesty and patriotism in public affairs on the part of African leaders demonstrates their alienation. Their short-sighted self-interest is also perceptible in the gap that exists between the living standard of politicians and that of the majority of their people. This self-seeking tendency leads the governing class to eliminate its perceived enemies ruthlessly in order to remain in office. The social injustices connected to this kind of leadership continue to be orchestrated by western powers in collusion with local state leadership in post-independence African countries. It also intensifies internal conflict among local leaders in many African countries. Collaboration between the state and religious leaders could serve to improve the quality of political leadership throughout Africa. It would be a right way of releasing state leadership from western interference in public affairs in Africa. Furthermore, both leaders and their people would acquire moral and cultural values which would help them make serious efforts to assume justly their responsibilities.

D AN APPROPIATIVE READING OF יִצְמַח TEXTS IN ZECHARIAH IN THE CONTEXT OF LEADERSHIP COLLABORATION IN AFRICA

The image of יִצְמַח symbolises the emergence of good leadership patterns, which could be effective in improving a country’s approach to and experience of leadership. The effectiveness of such leadership would derive mainly from a close collaboration of leaders from different sectors, whether of the state or of the religious domain.

The leadership of the post-exilic society needed specific abilities to achieve particular tasks of the time. It would have been a leadership centred on the goal of sharing with other leaders and with the people rather than on self-seeking advantages. This kind of leadership would have been surely based on a close collaboration as we would have wished it within the African societies. A leadership collaboration between those from different viewpoints, domains, sectors or institutions in African societies. Laurent P. Mosengwo argues that "good leadership does not seek its personal interest in accumulating its own fortune but rather deprives itself of its advantages in order to strengthen solidarity and close sharing within the community’s leadership."

The socio-political and religious context of Zechariah’s oracle (3:1-10) has to do with the dedication of the Sanctuary, which had just been rebuilt. It underlines a close

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collaboration which would have existed within the leadership community in Judah after the Exile (Ezra 6:15). At that time, Zerubbabel and Joshua, who represented respectively the state and priestly leadership, collaborated to build the Sanctuary in Zion-Jerusalem. This improved their effectiveness, which in turn, reinforced overall Judean leadership which, certainly, impacted on public life in the Judean communities.  

The reference to a "diadem" in Zechariah's oracles (3:4-5; 6:11-15) relates to that of Isaiah's (62:3) which refers to royal authority and power. It implies a close collaboration between the priestly and state leadership, both collaborating under royal prerogatives in ruling over the people. Joshua had largely contributed, along with Zerubbabel, to the rebuilding of the Sanctuary.  

Collaboration between African head of states and church leadership is essentially non-existent. This can be perceived in Monsengwo's comments about the result of the presidential elections in November 2011 in the DRC. The attitude of the governing class toward these comments shows a lack of mutual trust and dialogue between the church and state leadership. The ruling class of the Congo had been accused of having falsified the result of elections instead of respecting the choice of the people.  

The exercise of authority on the part of leaders should be based on the people's power. This would bring about mutual trust between a country’s leadership and its people. Under these conditions, the leadership's exercise of authority would bring about social justice in the community. Thus, leaders, in African states (and the DRC in particular), would effectively achieve personal and collective social development.

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42 "Darius’s political and economic policies with regard to Yehud (Persian Empire) brought about organisational changes. First, the restoration of the Sanctuary was a politically strategic ploy from the viewpoint of the Persians which brought the role of chief priest to the fore. Joshua was an important administrator, along with Zerubbabel, of that project and also was soon to resume the full responsibilities of a functioning high priesthood, once the temple was restored. Second, the Yehudites, like other imperial subjects, found themselves required to deliver tribute, or a regular tax revenues, to the empire for the first time after 522 BCE Zerubbabel as governor and titular Head of the government would have been charged with that responsibility as well as other responsibilities in a civilian administration […]" Meyers & Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 220.


45 An election rigging which aroused political parties reactions and Cardinal Laurent Monsengwo Pasinya’s intervention has been an fascinating political experience to the Congolese people by November-December 2011.

Zechariah’s oracles (3:8; 6:12) show that Israel’s "rightful leaders" had become able not only to work closely together with their colleagues but also to care for the people in the community. After the Babylonian Exile, this leadership acquired moral qualities which facilitated a close collaboration between Joshua, the high priest, and his colleagues, especially Zerubbabel, the governor. Thus, religious and state leaders were able to work together to re-build the Sanctuary in Zion-Jerusalem.

Similarly, the state and religious leaders in Africa would experience mutual trust and confidence "in taking actions which express solidarity" among people in society. In this way, African leaders would learn to improve their moral and cultural values by collaborating with one another. They would acquire honesty and be willing to share the countries’ wealth with their compatriots in the country. As a result, African people would enjoy social justice, fairness, health, well-being, prosperity and security which would ensure that they feel "at home." In this way, African leadership, whether state or religious, would no longer "betray the social" task of caring for the people as so often happens today in most African states.47

In Zion-Jerusalem during the post-exilic time, Yahweh wanted all survivors from the disaster of the Exile to enjoy public life and security. This hope for "a rightful and effective leadership" in Africa derives from the call of Joshua the high priest, and of Zerubbabel, one of the high priest’s colleagues who, together, serve as a paradigm of leaders ruling closely together over the people.

Similarly, African countries are in dire need of state and religious leadership working in close collaboration. I suggest that leaders "should be more involved than they have been till now" in considering other persons’ abilities to improve each other’s cultural and moral values.48 The leadership would then place more emphasis on care for the poor and needy, "solidarity, warmth of relations, acceptance, dialogue and mutual trust."49

Zechariah 6:12 underscores the importance of the emergence of the "branch" and the purpose it would achieve in Zion-Jerusalem. This "true leadership" would represent moral qualities that would bring about social justice, fairness and peace or prosperity in the land (v. 12). African countries expect their leaders to work in close collaboration. This could promote better social conditions for the people throughout Africa. This kind of close collaboration is what had happened in Judah when the priestly and state leadership worked together to rebuild the Sanctuary in Zion-Jerusalem.

Steve de Gruchy, citing Paulo Freire, would assert that "dialogue," within a community’s leadership, "imposes itself as the way by which" each person "achieves significance as human being." Thus, "dialogue is an existential necessity." This foregrounds the necessity for state and religious leadership to collaborate in ruling over African countries. Zechariah's oracle expresses this with a call for attention. "Please listen" (v. 8) constitutes a key phrase which addresses Joshua and his colleagues and underlines the significance of what they would achieve.

Zechariah speaks of men who are a sign. Yahweh is providentially causing "his servants" to emerge, one of whom is named the "branch." Symbolising the emergence of a "rightful leadership," the latter would be equipped to restore public order in Zion. This new "emerging" leader comes from the same "shoot" from which the previous leadership was cut off. Africans are still expecting for this kind of "new leadership" that would effectively collaborate with other leaders in building a good society for all.

The lack of collaboration between the state and religious leaders is "the antithesis of" "liberating" action on the part of legitimate leaders. This kind of leadership that worked closely together in society existed in the African tradition. Such cultural and moral values were part of bumutu (Bakongo culture) or ubuntu (Zulu culture). These moral qualities promoted harmony among leaders, which in turn encouraged the peace, well-being, prosperity and security of the people in the African society (Congolese society in particular).

Leadership in Africa (and in the DRC in particular) can learn from Nelson R. Mandela’s

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55 To maintain themselves in close collaboration with their colleagues and in caring for the people in the community, the leaders should practise bumutu (Bakongo culture), ubuntu (Zulu culture), ubünst (Kirundi culture), buntu (Kaonde culture in Zambia), omutxu and omuttu (respectively Lomwe and Makhawa cultures in Mozambique) which means, putting people first and doing them justice. Augustine Shutte, UBUNTU: An Ethic for a New South Africa (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2001), viii; Tokunboh Adeyemo, "Leadership," in Africa Bible Commentary (eds. Tokunboh Adeyemo, Solomon Andria, Issiaka Coulibaly, Tewodemedhin Habtu, and Samuel Ngewa, Nairobi: WordAlive, 2006), 546; Kwame Bediako, "Scripture as the Interpreter of Culture and Tradition," in Africa Bible Commentary (eds. Tokunboh Adeyemo, Solomon Andria, Issiaka Coulibaly, Tewodemedhin Habtu, and Samuel Ngewa, Nairobi: WordAlive, 2006), 3.
example as a good first leader of an African state. He demonstrated a way of promoting reconciliation, social justice, peace, and democracy in South African society based on a leadership principle of working together closely. His collaboration involved dialogue in which women and men from all races to play a significant role to building a good society for all. He had involved people from all origin to resolve socio-economic, political and religious problems in society. This implies that it is possible for African states and religious institutions to develop appropriate standards for a state and religious leadership.

E CONCLUSION

The Davidic leadership (the kingship in Israel) was expected to collaborate with religious leadership, especially with the prophets. This would have met a type of leadership collaboration in the African tradition. Leader in this context had been a kind of ancestors' representative doing people justice in the community. Kings in Israel were to be the representatives of God alongside the people. Prophets were the mouthpiece of God, and were in charge of reminding, warning and challenging those in the governing classes of the Kingdom on the one hand, and the people on the other. The role of an Israeliite king would have been to promote justice and fairness in society. However, this kind of justice and righteousness that God required, which would have characterised a good society for all, was lacking in Israel before the disaster of the Exile in 587 B.C.E. The Exile proved to be a learning experience for both the leadership and their people. As a result of those lessons, leaders learned to work closely together in order to care for the people.

Zechariah’s oracle as analysed in this article is about the emergence of a "rightful leadership" that fulfilled Yahweh’s great desire. The governing class and the priestly leadership demonstrated an ability to promote public life in Zion-Jerusalem. Moral qualities necessary for leadership had been forged beforehand through the suffering of the Exile. This learning experience made the state and religious leaders effective as they worked together to rebuild the Sanctuary in Jerusalem. In order to correct deficiencies in current African leadership, and to reinforce its moral and cultural values, I would recommend this analysis of the נְצָח texts in Zechariah, which underscores the importance of a close collaboration between religious and state leadership, to be reflected onto the African state leadership context. It would result in greater effectiveness in the leadership of African states.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


