

Messianism and Zionism in Jewish Nationalism: A Panacea for Nation-Building in Nigeria

By

Aponorie Simeon Iruo-Oghene & Iyanda Abel Olatoye

Abstract

Some of the notable liberating mechanisms and advocating organs recognizable in the Jewish national history are Messianism and Zionism. While Messianism is a religious ideology, Zionism remains the political organ that expresses the messianic ideology towards the re-building and development of the Jewish nation. Previous scholars had interpreted these concepts to express different ideas ranging from the liberation of the oppressed to the advent of an eschatological utopian state, yet adequate attention has not been paid to how the messianic concept gave impetus to the Zionists to re-gather and re-build the Jewish nation. Adopting Historical-Critical and Contextual methods, this paper analyses a few selected messianic texts in the Old Testament in the context of Messianism and Zionism. These texts are selected because they were historically instrumental in sustaining the Jewish faith towards the fulfilment of their national dreams. Findings revealed that the Jews experienced exile and travails in history yet they sustained the messianic ideology through didactic devices and literature, which eventually helped the Zionists in actualising their national goal. Data were subjected to exegetical analysis of the selected biblical texts. Similarly, available Jewish documents were explored. The paper recommends that Nigerians and their leaders should learn from the Jews' dispositions towards the messianic ideology and the patriotic move of the Zionists. It concludes that the Messianic ideology and the Zionist patriotism could serve as impetus and veritable templates for re-building any given nation into an enviable status.

Keywords: Messianism, Zionism, Jewish nationalism, nation-building, Nigerian context

Introduction

In human history, the idea of deliverance and restoration of mankind has found its expressions in various contexts. A very prominent one in the Old Testament is Messianism. Messianism is a concept that is epitomised in the prophecies about the re-gathering and re-establishment of the Israelites into a nation. Previous scholarship widely expressed the phenomenon as an organ for political movements that demand a radical transformation of society¹, re-establishment of nationhood² and re-gathering of the exile into utopian state.³

Historically, the messianic concept began when the first man lost his world and Yahweh promised thereafter to raise a Messiah in the person of the זרע Zera' (Seed); to whom the *Tanakh* (Hebrew Scripture) refers as: זרעהאשה Zera' ha-ishah "the Seed of the woman" (Gen.3:15). But later, the concept became so prominent with technical usage; and it developed beyond its root meaning. According to Klausner, the concept developed into a singular focus, which forms according to events and circumstances; but always at the base of one great longing, which is to redeem Israel from servitude into freedom and restoration.⁴ Being a progressive concept with different interpretations in the Israelite prophetic tradition; the messianic prophecies become so prominent in the Old Testament, particularly, in the prophetic books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Zephaniah and Zechariah. These books typically set the hopes of re-gathering of the exiles from diaspora, re-establishing them to their homeland and re-building their public life and system. Keying into these hope and aspiration, a political organ that sued for rebuilding of the Jewish nation grasped these biblical prophecies and promises of national restoration and re-establishment. It approached and achieved her vision and mission through political means.

Thus, this paper views the historical events around the Jews' aspiration for deliverance and restoration into nationhood in the light of the Old Testament messianic prophecies. It infers that their processes of freedom from diaspora and re-establishment in their homeland were through the religious interpretation and political efforts of the Zionists. It explores how the Zionist Movement eventually ushered in a utopian state, invested in nation-building and brought about good governance in the Jewish nation. Consequently, the paper recommends that Nigerian citizens should learn from the Jews' dispositions to the messianic ideology, be patriotic like the Zionists and intensify efforts in re-building the nation if they wish to actualise the Nigeria of their dreams. It concludes that the Jewish Messianic ideology was a modality for freedom, re-gathering and re-

establishment for the Jewish people, and that though Nigeria is a multi-religious nation with cultural diversities, yet her citizens can garner modality from the messianic faith and the Zionist mission to re-build her wholeness.

Conceptual Meaning of Messianism and Zionism

Etymologically, the term “Messianism” comes from the word “Messiah”.⁵ It is derived from the Hebrew word *Mashiach* “to anoint”, or the anointment of some individuals such as priests, prophets and kings for divine assignments. It is also traditionally used in biblical history for deliverers or redeemers of God’s people, who would also establish them in His Kingdom.⁶ Zionism, on the other hand, is the socio-political group that has been canvassing and promoting the re-settlement of the Jews in their ancestral homeland, and the re-establishment of Hebrew language as a national language throughout Eastern Europe. The Movement is collectively known as **ציונות** “*lovers of Zion*”. It is derived from the noun “Zion”, that is, the historic reference to the holy city of Jerusalem.⁷ Modern Israel actualised the declaration and inauguration of the modern nationhood by the influence and pressure of Zionism. Jews in the Russian Empire established the Zionist Movement (Sect) in the late 19th century. The Movement politically canvassed for the establishment of territorial Jewish State seeing the afflictions and persecutions their people were going through. They were zealous promoters of the Jewish re-settlement⁸ who keyed into the biblical prophecies and promises of re-gathering and re-settlement of the Jewish people (Israelites) into their homeland.

The Development of Messianism in the Jewish Tradition

The works carried out by a class of scholars with a peculiar reference to the work of Blocks on Messianism in the Old Testament give a common submission that the concept is too broad and complex to be reduced to single word-study.⁹ The implication of this is that the Old Testament messianic concept cannot adequately be discussed by restricting it to its concept of anointment or the anointed with its elements of redemption and restoration.¹⁰

Historically, the messianic ideology takes a progression in the Old Testament. The concept began with the first dominion of the first man over the world of his time, who fell when the dominion was influenced by Satan. As a result, the book, Genesis, records a consolatory prophecy, holding that the dominion of sin and the evil arising from sin, shall not last forever, but rather, the **זרעה אישה**, *Zera’ ha-ishah* “the seed of the woman” shall, at some future time, overthrow their dreaded conquerors and

reinstate humanity into its permanent abode.¹¹

In the era of Abraham, the messianic concept received a fresh interpretation. According to Nadler, Abraham was saved from the midst of idolatrous people, and as well promised a great nation.¹² This promise of the great nation to Abraham and his descendants set the hope of the Jews towards the realisation of the Promised Land (nation) through a messianic figure. The first nation, however, got lost in slavery in the land of Egypt, and had messianic deliverance, in-gathering (restoration) under the leadership of Moses and Joshua. After this freedom, Israel was again deported to Assyria in 722 B.C, where she lost her national identity and religious dignity; and later the southern kingdom (Judah) was exiled to Babylon in 586 B.C where a nation of honour became a laughing stock. At this dawn of frustration, the Old Testament prophets began to give prophecies and hope of re-gathering and re-establishment. Some Israelites (Jews) took these prophecies metaphorically, but God set a messiah for them in the person of King Cyrus The Great who liberated the Jewish exiles, gave them freedom to return to their homeland, and got re-established as a nation.

However, with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD by the Romans, the Jews were scattered all over the world again and suffered in the hands of their captors. But they kept their faith alive through didactic devices and literature. They held firm to the messianic prophecies that ensured their return and re-gathering as a nation where they would live in peace, safety and in prosperity, trading with nations under a godly anointed prince (Ezekiel 34:24; 38:12). Predicating on this religious faith by the Zionists in modern Judaism, the concept receives a fresh interpretation; jettisoning the idea of the supernatural figure(s), it is interpreted as a galvanised political ideology and intellectual philosophy for the liberation of the downtrodden and the re-gathering of the dispersed people.¹³

Selected Messianic Prophecies as Bases for Zionism in the Biblical Texts

According to Binyom, a common fact about Messianism regarding its restoration concept in the Jewish perception and writings is that most of the books of the Old Testament are virtually messianic in nature¹⁴, as they express the *Shevutekh*¹⁵ (the hope of good welfare and governance for the people of God). This faith became the major prophetic element of the prophets of Yahweh in the era, which robustly addressed the return and re-establishment of the people of God.¹⁶

In the Pentateuch, the record of the Deuteronomist gave consolation to the

house of Israel about her eschatological hopes of return, re-gathering and nationhood in the word: *Then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes and show you mercy. He will gather you again from all peoples, where He has scattered you. If your out-casts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there he will fetch you; and the LORD your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed that you may possess it, and he will make you more prosperous and numerous than your fathers* (Deut. 30:3-5 NIV). Prophet Isaiah while giving the hope of restoration to the house of Israel who were suffering slavery in Assyria under the political hegemony of Sargon II (740—698 BCE) said, *In that day, the Lord will extend his hand yet a second time to recover the Remnant which is left of his people from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Ethiopia, from Elam, from Shinar, from Hamata, and from the coastal land of the sea* (Isa. 11:11, NIV). Moreover, Zephaniah (641—612 BCE), who also prophesied at the time when Israel was scattered all over the territory of the Assyrians, revealed thus: *At that time, I will re-gather you home, at the time when I gather you together, yes, I will make you renowned and among the people of the earth, when I restore your fortunes...’, says the LORD.* (Zeph.3:20 RSV).

Dramatically, God gave Ezekiel a vision of the valley full of dry bones and prophecy of restoration between 590—570 BCE. According to the record in Ezekiel 37:11, God told the prophet, *son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel.* The text is crystal clear that the resurrection of the dry bones was a reference to the restoration of the house of Israel. The prophecy came in a clear term after the dramatic scene put as: *Then say to them, “Thus says the Lord God: “Surely, I will re-gather the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from everywhere and side and assemble them into their own land* (Ezekiel 37:21 NIV). Specifically, Jeremiah, the Judaeen prophet who began his prophetic ministry in 627 BCE through the final deportation of the Judahites to Babylon in 586 BCE, thereafter assured the Israelites the hopes of return and re-establishment in future. He made an expressed prophecy proclaiming: *I will re-build you again, O maiden Israel!... I will bring them in from the northern land; gather them from the surface of the earth...in a vast throng, they shall return here. I will bring them (the Jews) out of the nations and gather them from the countries, and I will bring them into their own land. I will pasture them on the mountains of Israel in the ravines and in all the settlements in the land. And I will make them one nation in the land on the mountains of Israel. There will be a king over all of them, and they will never again be two nations or divided into two kingdoms* (Jeremiah 31:4,5; 34: 13; 37:22 NIV).

Precisely, in 587/6 BCE, the people of Judah were exiled to Babylon under the leadership of King Zedekiah (Jeremiah 52). It was an experience of torment and lamentation when people of honour became insignificant figures in the land of heathens.¹⁷ They were molested and ridiculed at the riverside of Babylon that the people longed for a return and restoration into their homeland. At this time (520—518 BCE), Prophet Zechariah came to the prophetic scene and proclaimed that: *I will signal for them and gather them in, for I have redeemed them... Though, I scattered them among the nations, yet in far countries, they will remember me, and with their children, they shall live and return. I will bring them home...and gather them.* (Zechariah10:8-10 NIV). All this were biblical literature that gave the Israelites hopes of restoration and re-establishment. Similarly, these prophetic texts were the basic points of reference which gave impetus to the Zionists in their pursuit for the Jewish nationhood.

Messianism and Zionism in the Socio-political Context

Messianism expresses its conceptual and ideological tentacles beyond its religious perspective. Today, several efforts have been put in place by some individuals and groups in order to explore its socio-political phenomenon. The activities of the social group (the Zionists) in this regard took paramount space in contemporary history. Modern Israel actualised the declaration and inauguration of the modern nationhood by the influence and pressure of Zionism. The Movement politically canvassed for the establishment of territorial Jewish State after the Jews had undergone many afflictions and persecutions without a compromise. By the end of the century, however, the Remnant Jews themselves became the strongest advocates of their “Return” to Zion, their homeland. The communal spirit of the Jews at this period sprang up when they remembered the “prophecy” of Theodor Herzl¹⁸ who, according to history, published an influential political pamphlet called “The Jewish State” in 1896.

Theodor Herzl: A Zionist and Messianic Vanguard

Herzl, being a Zionist, political activist and a passionate Jewish nationalist, envisioned a mass emigration of Jews from Diaspora, especially from Europe. He advocated therein that the establishment of a Jewish State was the only way of protecting the image of the Jews from Anti-Semitism. His vision was motivated by the messianic prophecies about the return, restoration and restructuring of the Israelites into a homeland, where they would enjoy socio-political and economic bliss (Isaiah 11:11; Zephaniah 3:20; Ezekiel 31:4,5; 34: 13; 37:22; Zech.10:8-10). He deemed it that the exodus of the Jews would be in accordance with religious incentives

(ancient prophecies of return) to return to a homeland. He advocated that the up-building itself would bring about modern scientific and technological instruments, and a model in the social lines. Below is an extract from his pamphlet:

Let the message be heard once again, the message of the ancient days (biblical prophecies): The Jews will be given a portion of land for their State. We shall definitely live as free citizens in our land and also die at our due age peacefully in our own land. The whole world will surely benefit by our liberation. And many will come to benefit mightily from that which we seek for, for our own use.¹⁹

Herzl's call was said to have been received favourably and unfavourably among his own people, to an extent that some called him the "modern Moses" or the "new Moses" whose reference had been made in the Pentateuch (Deuteronomy 30:1-5). Christians as well as Jews, leaders and the masses also hailed his suggestions. Based on this influence, the ideology of Zionism, therefore, came to the limelight as to create for the Jewish people a home in Palestine with secured public space. These four-point plans for re-building the Jewish nation were reached.²⁰ The plans read as follows:

1. The advancement of agriculture within the colonised land by the Jewish agricultural and industrial workers. This plan really helped the Jews to penetrate into every nook and cranny of a larger portion of land in Palestine. They seized this opportunity to procure and cultivate many pieces of land all over the Palestinian territory, and thereby dominate a larger portion of land, which opened door for them to re-settle when they were finally permitted to return to home.
2. The encouragement of a united and wholesome Jewry by means of appropriate and constituted institutions in both local and international bodies in accordance with the laws of each country.
3. The encouraging and fostering of sophisticated Jewish national feelings and consciousness. (By these, there is sanctity of life, and every Jewish soul counts and matters to the Jewish nation).
4. Formal and appropriate steps must be taken towards obtaining government permission for the achievement of the aims of the Zionists, which include: freedom, peaceful relations, political stability and economic buoyancy).

The Zionists believed strongly in the homeland (nationhood) of the Israelites, particularly Jerusalem (Zion), as a special place for and in the plan of God. The presence of the Ark and the building of the Temple as

God's dwelling place in Zion (Jerusalem) invariably emphasised the plan and programme of God for them. Moreover, in Jerusalem (Zion), it is believed that Abraham passed the greatest test of faith and the right to be the father of the nation, Israel. Similarly, it is undoubted that David established his capital in Jerusalem, while Solomon built the Lord's Temple therein. Premised on these facts in the later days, the Balfour Declaration identified with these and recognised the right of the Jewish people to national home in Zion (Jerusalem) with the agendum of re-building.²¹

The Zionist Politics towards the Birth of the Jewish Nation

History has it that all over the United States and in Great Britain, there was advanced agitation to censor free entrance and open immigration for the Jews into Palestine. To their credit, in January 1944, the United States Congress gave her full support in favour of unrestricted immigration of Jews to Palestine and the establishment of a Jewish State (nation) in the territory.²² In view of this, the British Labour Party was said to take a clue from the action in the United States. It thereby passed a resolution suggesting that efforts should be made to enforce the Arabs to vacate Palestine and make residential space for the Jews to occupy. This suggestion was denounced by some sectors of the Jews, who expressed their hope that Zionist aims and request could still be achieved without displacing or harming the Arab population.

Thus, the Labour Party reflected on the direction of Labour government policy after its election to power in 1944.²³ Encouraged by Labour political sentiments, the World Zionist Conference which met in London in August, 1945, approved of the Jewish request as regards the Jewish homeland, which the Jewish Agency in Palestine had presented to the British government.²⁴ According to Bein,²⁵ the petition included the following requests:

1. That a resolution to establish the Palestinian land as the State of Israel be taken without a delay.
2. That the Jewish Agency be given every necessary authority to absorb into Palestine Jews willing to settle therein, and to develop fully and speedily all the resources of the country, especially in agriculture and power resources.
3. That an international loan and other social assistance be rendered to the Jews with regard to the transfer of thousands of Jews to Palestine, and for the quick economic development of the State.

4. That reparation in kind and cash from Germany be released to the Jewish people for the re-planning of Palestine, and for the re-settlement and development of Jews from all the European countries.
5. That international facilities be made available for the exit and transit for every Jew who wished to immigrate to Palestine for settlement.

Bein added that the nations that voted in favour of the petition were more than those that voted against it.²⁶

The Birth of the Nationhood of Israel (the Jewish State)

The Israeli ‘Declaration of Independence’ *הכרזת העצמאות Hakh^eratsatHa ‘atzma’ut*, which was the formal Declaration of the State of Israel was pronounced on the 14th May, 1948 (5 Iyar 5708) by David Ben-Gurion, the Executive Head of the World Organization, and the Chairman of the Jewish Agency for Palestine.²⁷ He was born as David Grein in 1886 in Czarist Poland. But he decided to give himself a new Hebrew name. He chose Ben-Gurion, which means “son of lion.”²⁸ He was the man who anchored the fulfillment of the ancient prophecies via the re-establishment of the nation. With the declaration of the Jewish State in *Eretz-Israel* (the Land of Israel), the State of Israel came into effect on the termination of the British Mandate in Tel Aviv.²⁹

Messianism and Zionism in Relation to Nation-Building

It is obvious from the above discourse that messianism is a religious faith while Zionism is a social organ and political mechanism for the re-establishment of the Jewish nation. The various messianic organs shared utopian hopes using the prophetic framework as recorded in the texts of the Bible (Ezekiel 37:21). Politically, the Zionist Sect championed the course of messianism, translating it into political mechanism basically on biblical prophecies as impetus for the pursuance of their political ambition. Their longing was to regain the lost nationhood of Israel and re-build the land — its citizenry, political system, economic structure, social status and religious faith in order to bring about its earthly bliss for the Israelites (Jews) in their homeland. All this were echoed in the maiden address of the inauguration ceremony of the state of Israel in 1948; as they expressed the events, travails, suffering and persecution of Jews in history together with the hope for solace and comfort in conformity with the prophetic hopes by the prophets of Israel. Here is an extract from the address:³⁰

The Land of Israel was the birthplace of the Jewish people... Exiled from the land of Israel, the Jewish people remained faithful to it in all the countries of their dispersions, never ceasing to pray and hope for the return and the restoration of their national freedom.

...In the year 1897, the first Zionist Congress, inspired by Theodor Herzl's vision of the Jewish State, proclaimed the right of the Jewish people to national revival in their own country.

This right was acknowledged by the Balfour Declaration of November 2, 1917 and re-affirmed by the Mandate of the League of Nations...It is the natural right of the Jewish people to be a nation, as all other nations, in its own Sovereign State.

ACCORDINGLY, WE, the members of the National Council representing the Jewish community in Palestine, and the World Zionist Movement, are met together in solemn assembly today, the day of termination of the British Mandate for Palestine and by virtue of the natural and historic right of the Jewish people and of the Resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

WE HEREBY PROCLAIM the establishment of the Jewish State in Palestine, to be called Madinat Israel (The State of Israel).

WE HEREBY DECLARE that, as from the termination of the Mandate at mid-night the 14th -15th May, 1948, and pending the setting up of the duly elected bodies of the State in accordance with a Constitution.

THE STATE OF ISRAEL will be open to the immigration of Jews from all countries of their dispersions; ...will be based on the principles of liberty, justice and peaceful co-existence as conceived by the Prophets of Israel...

Our call goes out to the Jewish people all over the world to rally to our side in the task of immigration and development and to stand by us in the great struggle of the fulfilment of the dream of generations for the redemption of Israel.

Indeed, the re-gathering of the Israelites into nationhood brought about a lot of benefits and good governance to the Israelite nation. A few of these include: emergence of good leaders starting with David Ben-Gurion (1948-53) to Benjamin Netanyahu (third term, 2022 to date).³¹ According to Hagee, the Jewish nation has been built as

a home for some of the world's holy sites, a start-up centre for technology, a slave-free nation, an enterprising tourism centre with strong economic facilities, an internally generated revenues nation, a nation with strong security apparatuses, a nation that offers free education facilities for citizens, especially the Rabbinic family, a

nation well known for agricultural advancement and good management of natural resources, a good player of global affairs, a nation with minimal corruption tendency and a nation with Judeo-Christian practical realities; just to mention a few.³²

Messianism and Zionism as Panacea for Nation-building in the Nigerian Context

Unarguably, Nigeria is a blessed nation in terms of its geographical features and natural characteristics, but it continues to grapple with the monster of bad leadership and governance, which, according to Oni and Excellence-Oluye, have been the bane of political instability and poor state development in the country.³³ Consequently, these anomalies have led to the exodus of many technocrats and professionals from the country to search for greener pastures and better living elsewhere. Presently, the country is sadly expressing an emigration mantra called *japa*, that is, 'running away from the country to the United Kingdom in search of greener pastures'. It is obvious that the socio-political system of the nation is majorly marred by blatant mal-administration, inequality, injustice, poor distribution of available resources and poor policies that are making life difficult for the masses.

Paradoxically, Nigeria, the so-called giant of Africa, wallows in socio-economic, political and infrastructural decadence in all her services.³⁴ Moreover, as the nation is contending with factors of under-development, she is plagued by deadly insurgency, oil theft, violence, criminality, inflation and debt, inadequate power supply, problems in the communication sector, state-society gap, marginalisation, corruption, social vices, excruciating economic policies, poor human capital development, bad leadership, among other problems. This is why there is need for a new impetus which could spur the country to develop a mechanism for re-building the nation and curtailing the ills, woes and structural deformities presently afflicting the nation.

In the past, various leaders have made several efforts to restructure and re-build Nigeria. Ikenna,³⁵ in an article on the topic, highlighted some of the re-building efforts of past Nigerian leaders since independence. He made reference to Tafawa Balewa (1960-1966) who created the Mid-western region from the Western region under a central federal authority. General Aguiyi Ironsi (January 1966-June 1966) cancelled Native Authority policies and made the federal government to take over control of revenue. General Yakubu Gowon (1966-1975) created 12 states to replace the 4 regions; introduced free primary education; changed currency from pound to naira; introduced NCE, NYSC; took over control of schools from

private owners; and created the Ministry of Petroleum Resources. In the short time of General Murtala Mohammed (1975-1976), he started the process of relocating federal capital from Lagos to Abuja, which was executed by General Olusegun Obasanjo in his first regime. Obasanjo in his first regime also established the mechanism that gave Nigeria a new constitution and presidential system of government; introduced free tuition in federal tertiary institutions, and established JAMB and the Nigerian Labour Congress.

President Shehu Shagari (1979-1983), who became the first civilian head of state since 1966, introduced 6-3-3-4 educational system, and created the Ministry of Science and Technology. Major General Ibrahim Babagida (1985-1993) created OMPADEC (now NDDC), broke NITEL's monopoly of the communication sector and created NCC to attract private sector investment; he also decreased the years of service before qualifying for pension from 15 years to 10 years. General Sanni Abacha (1993-1998) created additional 6 states and introduced value added tax. Abdulsalam Abubakar (1998) drafted a new constitution for Nigeria by modifying the 1979 constitution, removed local government autonomy and licensed the first private university (Igbinedion University, Okada, Benin City, Nigeria). General Olusegun Obasanjo (2nd Regime) restored 13% derivation to all oil producing areas, established EFCC, and introduced 8-year tenure for civil servants (Directors and above).

President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua (2007-2010), who became the first Nigerian head of state to take over power democratically from a civilian predecessor, granted amnesty to Niger Delta militants and rehabilitated all militants who handed in their weapons to the federal government. Dr Goodluck Ebele Jonathan (2010-2015) took a bold step in convening a National Constitution Conference and became the first leader in sub-Saharan Africa to concede to election defeat, joyfully congratulating the winner, just for the nation to be delivered, rebuilt and developed. In the tenure of General Mohammadu Buhari (2015-2023), there was a proposal for fuel subsidy removal and the proposal was implemented by the current President, Senator Bola Ahmed Tinubu. Indeed, all these vigorous efforts were targeted at restructuring and re-building the educational, political, economic, administrative, social and regional fabric of the nation. In spite of all these, the current state of the country shows that more needs to be done before Nigeria can achieve monumental transformation and development.

Nation-building, though imbued with diverse interpretations, suggests a true process of constructing or reshaping a nation's institutions, infrastructure, culture, and identity to foster unity, stability and

development within a defined geographic and political territory. It often involves establishing or strengthening governance and structures, promoting a shared national identity, enhancing social cohesion and improving the overall well-being of the population. Comparatively, Jewish messianism occasioned a re-gathering into a utopian condition. It also brought about restructuring and re-building, hence this statement in their inaugural address: *the state (nation) of Israel will be open to the immigration of Jews from all countries of their dispersions; ...and will be based on the principles of liberty, justice, bliss and peaceful-coexistence as conceived by the Prophets of Israel.* Today, Israel is making optimal use of her resources in generating income and dividends in the socio-economic and political sectors through tourism and other economic means.

Equally, cultivating more nation-building habits in Nigeria would not only make the nation more stable politically, but would bring more agricultural advancement, national value, sanctity of life, security of lives and properties, good roads, economic progress, and encourage hard work at the federal, regional and local levels. It would equally allow every sector in the nation to develop at its own pace. Nation-building is a paramount way to salvage Nigeria's fledging situation, provide national bliss, incapacitate corruption, celebrate harmonious living and give good leadership at every level.

Recommendations

1. For Nigeria to be built into an enviable status, there is need for her leaders from all sectors to borrow a leaf from the patriotic Zionists who believed in the ancient prophecies of their religious leaders and messages of hope, and developed a drive to accomplish their dreams through political means. No doubt, Nigeria is a multi-religious and multi-cultural nation; it is, therefore, an obligation on all and sundry to use their religion to re-brand and build a better, peaceful and a more habitable Nigeria.
2. Nigerians at every level should bear in mind their fatherland, aim at building it with all their resources, work harder to reconstruct and re-brand their personalities, live as citizens of integrity, constitute a habit of hard work, and exhibit diligence and discipline every where they find themselves. By so doing, the country will take a new shape and carve for itself a better international image.

Conclusion

The messianic phenomenon served as motivational faith that spurred the Jews and their political organ(s) such as Zionism into action. The Jewish

leaders expressed the messianic concept beyond its religious circle and the advent of an eschatological saviour to a radical political philosophy. The Zionist Movement and other lovers of the Jews gave the concept a political interpretation, which encapsulated in the liberation, re-gathering and re-establishment of the Jews into their homeland. Comparatively, though Nigeria is a multi-religious and multi-cultural nation and some significant roles have been played by past leaders as attempts to build the nation, it is advocated that more commitments can still be made in order to enthrone justice, equity, security, sanctity of life, economic buoyancy, an accountable polity, rapid educational advancement, robust public services and other social amenities that enhance the overall wellbeing of all citizens. A well-built Nigeria is a political and religiously stable Nigeria where every area, region or zone will be able to look inwards, concentrate on the natural and other assets within its area; and research, analyse, and explore its mineral and agricultural resources with a view to harnessing them for its own good and towards developing the country's socio-economic standing.

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Author Information: Dr Akponorie Simeon Iruo-Oghene is of Archbishop Vining College of Theology, Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria. *Email:* akponoriesimeon@gmail.com



Dr Iyanda Abel Olatoye is of Department of Religious Studies, Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo, Ondo State, Nigeria. *Email:* iyandaolat@gmail.com



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