

2025

Prayers, Hopes and Dreams

By *Abiodun KOMOLAFE*

At last, we survived the Year 2024! For that, we give thanks to God! Not unexpectedly, the Year 2024 was marked by complexities and contradictions. On the one hand, social movements and activism gained momentum, shedding light on the shape and size of pressing issues like inequality and climate change. On the other hand, systemic inequalities persisted, and globalization disrupted traditional structures, fueling the hustle and bustle of uncertainty and insecurity. The COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical tensions, including conflicts in Ukraine, the Middle East and elsewhere, further underscored the challenges of our interconnected world. Reflecting on 2024, we're reminded that social reality is a complex and ever-changing phenomenon, which requires careful thought and attention. As the world enters 2025, the initial excitement of new beginnings gives way to a nuanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities ahead. In Nigeria, a stark paradox exists: despite vast natural resources, the country struggles to provide basic necessities for its citizens. Unless we are also sugarcoating the facts, the gown is threatened and the town is unsmiling! These harsh realities have stifled national potential, with underlying issues, including a flawed political system and unresponsive elite, giving rise to groups focused on basic survival needs. Added to these is the absence of the barometer for a clear public awareness, which enables those in power to exploit the system without accountability.

As the world bids farewell to 2024, Nigerians and global citizens greet 2025 with a mix of optimism and trepidation. The New Year unfolds like a blank canvas, full of possibilities. It's a chance to learn from past lessons and forge a new path. As we travel through the complexities of our global community, we recognize the profound impact of our collective choices. We confess that ignorance, false confidence, fake narratives and unattainable promises have robbed us of the



benefits of our prayers. We also confess that Nigeria's economy is struggling, with basic needs becoming unaffordable, and tribalism hindering its progress. Besides, the hymns of loot recovery ring hollow without the accompanying stanzas of responsible use. To this end, we ask You, God, to give us the power to create a better future for Nigeria, free from negative influences

that have held us back. Guide our leaders to rule justly, empower them to positively impact others, and bring Nigeria out of the current siege that strangles its potential. Eternal Rock of Ages, protect our land from the briars and scorpions – corrupt leaders and wicked individuals – who have turned Nigeria into a darkroom where negatives are developed.

As Nigeria faces banditry, kidnapping and ritual killings, due to inadequate security, teach us to take collective responsibility and work together to find solutions. Help us transcend ethnic and primordial divisions so that Nigerians can work together towards a safer, more secure future. Let those who threaten our country bid farewell to their weapons or get buried with their weapons and let there be no more threats against the land. Since no one pursues the shadow and catches up with it, let those pursuing us fall in their thousands at our right hand and tens of thousands at our left.

As Your Word reminds us, it's the Church's duty to care for the vulnerable, including widows, prisoners and the destitute. Almighty God, you are the Self-Existing, Without Origin! You are also the Omnipotent, the Omniscient and the Omnipresent! Grant our leaders wisdom to champion the rights of the marginalized, ensuring justice is served, particularly for those unjustly imprisoned. Let them expedite trial reviews, uphold timely justice and bring hope to the overlooked. Yahweh Elohim, grant them wisdom to recognize that true revolution comes from ordinary people seeking change, not the struggles of the political elite. Teach them to approach You with humility and make amends for past

wrongs.

The God of all flesh, it won't be sweet enough if we are listening to others' stories without others listening to ours. O God, the One who answers prayers, use our lives as proof of Your power this year. You are the God of generational covenant, the One who is also The Beginning and The End! In Your mercy, replace our shame with a double portion of blessings in all we do this year. Help us to overcome the flesh and forgive those who might have wronged us. You, who know our limitations, send our destiny helpers to us, and when they come, do not let them miss us!

As Nigerians navigate various challenges, it's crucial to recognize that adversity is a natural part of life. However, our collective future depends on how we respond to these challenges. Dear God, teach us to approach our struggles with resilience and determination and grant us the power to harness our

amidst challenges. By the reason of Your covenant, help us emulate Joseph's vision and perseverance, which led to his success in Egypt. Just as the prophets of Baal were brought down, disgrace and shame those who seek to destroy our country for their own gain. Grant us the courage to transcend our own limitations and let Your divine power course through us, revitalize our spirits and empower us to walk in the fullness of our potential.

Lord, we reflect on the lives of biblical giants: Methuselah, who lived 969 years; King David, who despite living only 70 years, became a pivotal figure in Jewish history; Moses and Joshua, who lived 120 and 110 years, respectively, leaving lasting impacts; and John the Baptist and Stephen, who, despite living only 30 years each, continue to inspire generations. Dear Heavenly Father, as we reflect on the lives of these biblical giants, grant us wisdom to make the most of the time You've given us, and help us to prioritize what truly matters and to fulfill the purpose You've ordained for us.



collective potential and work together towards a brighter future. In a world plagued by greed, gluttony and a noxious lack of empathy, inspire our leaders with unwavering dedication to prioritize elevating societal values over accumulating wealth.

Like Adam and Eve, who used leaves to cover their nakedness, Nigerians have resorted to makeshift solutions to address our nation's pressing challenges. But, O Merciful Father, wherever we have been naked, we do not ask for leaves but Your supernatural and unmerited favour. Make us move beyond temporary fixes and seek more lasting solutions to our problems. Let Your angels that control human affairs cover our nakedness and let there be a physical manifestation of our victory.

The Holy One, nobody knows the name of Peninnah's children but the Bible recorded Samuel, the great prophet, as Hannah's first child. Jehovah Jireh, the Infinitely and Unchangingly True God, bring hope and transformation

Lastly, Lord, Nigeria's 2024 Tax Reform Bills have ignited a heated debate, with supporters promising economic growth and reduced taxes for low-income earners, but critics warning of increased poverty. As we enter 2025, we recognize that You, our God, are a Specialist in possibilities. Give our leaders wisdom to work towards a brighter future for Nigeria. Guide them to make decisions that promote economic prosperity, equality, and justice for all Nigerians. Bless the antagonists of the Bills! Soften their hearts and grant them wisdom to see the benefits, that they may work towards the betterment of Nigeria and its people.

May this year bring breakthroughs, even for those who feel barren and hopeless, just as Hannah received her miracle, Samuel! May the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, grant us peace in Nigeria! ijejujesa@yshoo.co.uk; 08033614419 - SMS only.