

Cat.7 # 10 AFRICA'S POVERTY AND HER HOPE.

Why Is Africa So Poor?

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(This teaching developed while ministering at conferences in Nairobi, Kinshasa and Harare during the spring and summer of 2004. These were my 12th, 13th, and 14th trips to Africa, the continent I am getting to love more and more.

I humbly submit this understanding to my African friends. While taking full responsibility for it, I want to thank the leaders of the intercessors networks of Uganda, Zimbabwe and Kenya. Par 1-4 is analytical, par 5 is confrontational, and par 6 is on God's ways.)

(January 2013, I am still in relation, friendship with these leaders, but out of care I withhold their names here.

The poverty of Africa is so incompatible with the human and mineral resources the Creator has invested in this continent, and so incompatible with the character of the Creator, that only He can explain why Africa is so poor and indicate what could be the way out. God cares for the righteous and the unrighteous (Matt 5:45). But when God is blocked out, as is the case in Africa in four characteristic ways and at continental scale, we must recognise God's care is also blocked out.

1 Idolatry: blocking out the God of abundance.

This is the first of the four main causes why the continent is so poor.

*Idolatry, Freemasonry, Mammon-service, bloodshed **at tribal and national scale before, during and after colonial times** is an invitation to collaboration with other gods, and so is **blocking out the God of abundance!***

It was God who initiated the idea of humankind worshiping, sacrificing and making covenants at tribal and national level, but this was intended to have **God Himself as THE focus!** Idolatry, Freemasonry, Mammon-service, blood-shedding are *anti-God covenantal actions*. God's response to that is, as He promised: curses and woes!

Amos 1 and 2 clearly show that God, as Judge of the earth, has recorded what nations do to each other, and seven times he says: '*For three sins of Damascus, of Gaza (and of London, or Paris) of the Ammonites, of Moab (of Holland, of Uganda, of Congo) even for four, I will not turn back my wrath.*'

Curses:

Curses are a normal ingredient of God-initiated covenants and illustrate the severity of covenant breaking and unrighteousness; see Lev 26. The curse of poverty is a dreadful spiritual tool of God to formalize the separation between Himself and the nation that sins: instead of abundance: drought and poverty.

- Those who curse what God has blessed are under a curse themselves (Gen 12:3, 27:29, Numb 24:9). This primarily concerns all forms of anti-Semitism but may also cover those who despise weak and vulnerable nations.

- Treachery activates a curse (Josh 9:23,57; Zech. 5:3).

- Tyrants and revolutionaries are under a curse (Eccl 10:16, Zeph. 3:10), and so are nations that exploit their subjects (Jer. 22:13; Nah 3:1; Hab. 2:9).

- Nations that caused bloodshed are under a curse (Ezek. 24:6,9; Nah. 3:1; Hab. 2:12)

- Secular leaders who sin and approve of sin are under a curse (Rom. 1:18,32).

Laws of course are a normal ingredient of modern life. So are covenants and curses, though not under these names; treaties, agreements, contracts, and penal clauses are the words we use, also in the rapidly increasing international legislation. These are all as binding as the covenants of old.

Thrones:

Thrones (places and objects with assigned spiritual significance, Col 1:16), symbols, banners, fetishes, at the tribal and national scale, are legal footholds for evil principalities. Any attention to these equals **sacrificing at the altar of a not-God**. Therefore, God's curses apply.

Occultism:

Occultism is collaborating with and using the power of evil spirits. Jesus performed miracles, not *because* he was God, but *in order to* show the kingdom of God. 'If I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you' (Matt 12:28). **Occultism is the opposite, it is the worst thing a nation can do!** So, God's curses apply.

These types of idolatry have been committed at tribal and national scale for centuries before, during and after colonial times, removing Africa far from God's presence. Corporate, national and continental confession and repentance alone can reverse the curse. For hope see par 6.

(Are other continents less guilty? Western civilization was based on Judeo-Christian values, and at national level these sins have long been called sins, forming a formal base for God to bless.)

2 Ancestor worship: blocking out the God of development.

This is the second of the four main causes why the continent is so poor.

*Worshipping the dead **at tribal and national scale before, during and after colonial times, is blocking out the God of life!***

God said: "Subdue and fill the earth... You will know the way to go, since you have never been this way before... Disciple the nations... You will perform miracles greater than I did... The servant who multiplies his talents by 2 or 5 or 10 is rewarded... Your works will follow you... We are looking forward to a city to come..."

These are some of the many examples of God's challenge to **look and to move forward!** That's why "the young man shall **leave** his father and mother... to go forward! **Time is for a purpose** to be reached: from tribe to people to city, from not knowing the one true God to all knowing Him... from knowing in part to knowing fully... to become mature, attaining the whole measure of the fullness of Christ... from Fall and Babylon to redemption and the New Jerusalem.

Ancestor worship is: not leaving your father and mother but continuing to submit to them!

On the other hand, leaving father and mother is: cutting the spiritual ties of submission and dependence (and guilt and anger) and becoming an independent person directly under God. Parents have 20-25 years to educate their children and must then release them, even to become a prodigal son, as did the father in Luke 15!

Honouring father and mother is: respecting and obeying the God-given authorities in God's way, in obedience (not to father and mother but) to God! That way God is not blocked out, but He is the focus of praise and the source of guidance, leading the adult person to his destiny, leading the nation to her destiny!

Traditionally and in modern days, with state and church money for extravagant funerals, **ancestor worship clouds the Father heart of God;** it obscures His direct and divine protection and provision; it mutes His challenge and motivation towards His future with His intimate encouragement, it robs of the single-mindedness of heart in goal-setting and perseverance.

The sin of ancestor worship, in many modern variations, has ruled the continent at tribal and national scale for centuries, before, during and after colonial times, removing Africa far from God's presence. Corporate, national and continental confession and repentance alone can reverse the curse. For hope see par 6.

(Are other continents less guilty? Western civilization was based on Judeo-Christian values, uniquely understanding the concept of history with a meaning. Rationalism and materialism have dangerously undermined this fruitful base of Western society, and so her access to the God of life!)

3 Flesh/individualism: corrupting society/economy; not becoming a people under God.

This is the third of the four main causes why the continent is so poor.

*Allowing the flesh (the unchecked mind, will, emotions, and body) to rule, through immorality, fear, greed, bribing, individualism, self-centeredness, tribalism, **at tribal and national scale before, during and after colonial times is blocking out the rule of God!***

Immorality:

Immorality leads to bondage. God-control leads to self-control! Abstinence before marriage (even abstinence from "soft" porno) and faithfulness in marriage is the norm, not just against Aids, but for all of life. Immorality calls for *a curse over the nation/continent.*

The fear of not surviving:

This fear motivates greed. "Surviving" implies "coming through at some cost," or even, "*coming through at any cost.*" "*If only I can survive this day, this week...*". However, "Whoever wants to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel, will save it." (Mark 8:35). In other words: *to survive we must give (life) to the Author of Life!* God says: *Give Me something finite even out of your finiteness, suffer your finiteness; give Me 10% of your resources and even 14% of your time (a day per week, 14,3%), then I will give you abundance out of my infinity.* Who can offer survival at all, and guarantee such a promise, other than the Author of Life?

In society survival has become the major motivating force towards the end of the 20th century. The UN seems to be concentrating on the survival of Mother Earth. But God rested on the 7th day, and Abraham gave tithes to

the Eternal Melchizedek (Gen. 14:20), making these things universal principles. This goes completely against an economy of scarcity! Every thought that giving 10% and 14% of your (personal-business-national) money and time budgets is too much to survive, is mistrust of God, and puts *the people and the nation/continent under a curse* (Mal. 3:9).

Submission:

Hierarchy is not: lick up and kick down, but: worship up and care down. In the hierarchy of God – government – nation – husband – wife – children – animals – nature, God establishes a flow of care down. With God out of sight, the system collapses and the “widow and orphan” and nature suffer. But He is the God of the “widow and orphan”! The pursuit of “women’s rights, children’s rights”, the right of hltb’s or the “rights” of the Earth are ways of overthrowing the hierarchy, which is rebellion against God. These exclude God from his rightful place *and keep a nation poor.*

The sin of individualism, in its many modern variations, has more and more undermined tribal life, and is ruling the continent more and more, removing Africa from God’s presence. Corporate, national and continental confession and repentance alone can reverse the curse. For hope see par 6.

(Are other continents less guilty? Western civilization is more individualistic, and in this respect guiltier than Africa, the Judeo-Christian values only barely and less and less restraining extremes, causing a breakdown of society and economy, and removing the Western world far from God’s presence.)

4 Bondage of the mind: living a lie instead of living and showing forth the truth.

This is the fourth of the four main causes why the continent is so poor.

*Lies against your Corporate Identity, and living under strongholds (abortion, free sex, divorce, individualism) **at tribal and national scale before, during and after colonial times** block out God’s creative and liberating truth and so **block out the God of truth!***

Corporate Identity, definition:

““The Corporate Identity (CI) of a corporate person is a. the expression of God’s character in that person, because of which it contains b. her destiny in God’s purposes, and c. her redemptive gift to her fellow nations; the Fall has distorted / corrupted the corporate identity, but it can be redeemed.”“

or *““The Corporate Identity (CI) of a nation is the creative and liberating truth of God over a nation.”“*

To corporately know who we corporately are, the Church receives revelation, to live that truth!

For a practical example, consider the church in Antioch, where Barnabas and Saul, Jews; Simeon, an African; Lucius an Arab, and Manaen, probably an Edomite, form a truly international, intercultural, interracial leadership team. It does not matter what the CI’s are of the nations involved. Their very internationality would ruthlessly expose all unredeemed Jewish-ness, African-ness, Libyan-ness and Edomite-ness, but the Holy Spirit would eagerly employ all these identities so far as they were redeemed. That would be His opportunity to mature the church leadership and to make possible the sending of missionaries.

The church must learn to face national and cultural differences and work through the fear of differences by inviting ‘others’ into the leadership, not by giving in to prejudice or tribalism/nationalism, but by discerning and appreciating the different CI’s involved.

Major weaknesses in nations, and therefore in their churches, are caused by distortions of positive character - traits that the Creator himself deposited in us.

- **CI of Africa: Spiritual Authority**, severely distorted internally through idolatry and ancestor worship, and externally through slave trade and colonialism. However, Africa has now started to send ‘prophets to the nations’ instead.
- CI of England: **Humorous Father**, with solid administration and a unique humour industry, in colonialism so aggressively distorted into Arrogant Empire Builder.
- CI of USA: **Adventurous Leader**, blessing the world with well -organized progress in many aspects; but its present expression as Presumptuous Leader has caused world-wide anti-Americanism.
- CI of France: **Queen of Beauty**, leading in eloquence, art and philosophy, and corrupted by philosophy, superficiality or manipulation.
- CI of Belgium: **Creative Friend**, awesome creativity in homely simplicity, utterly corrupted in the most cruel colonialism (Congo), also into a sense of inferiority and into cliquishness.

In Benin and in Surinam, many consider voodoo or winti a central part of their cultural heritage. In Algeria and Libya, they think the same of Islam. IT IS NOT; these are oppressive forces that distort the CI.

Understanding the CI of a nation has a national *and an international application*. God created the Corporate Identities. Satan only came later, with perversion of the CI and other evils. When we first recognize the God-given features in another (denomi-)nation, we can more easily discern their corruption, and without giving in to

prejudice. The Church should constantly *speak the creative and liberating truth of God to her nation*. In the case of tribal/national prejudice: The Church must discern the Corporate Identity of these peoples, or at least get a grasp of it. To combat your prejudices, think of at least five positive qualities of, for instance, white people, Arabs, Jews, Americans, Baptists, etc.

Strongholds:

Strongholds are piles of disconnected lies: ‘constructions of lies and reasonings, against the will of God, that control the mindset of individuals and groups in an intimidating way’ (2Cor. 10:4-6).

Some examples of strongholds at corporate level: discrimination, national prejudice, elitism, taboos; also: accepted views of abortion, free sex, divorce, individualism, technological progress, ... Other strongholds are the social acceptance of ‘soft’ pornography and ‘soft’ drugs, allowing ‘certain forms’ of abortion and divorce. An example of the disconnectedness of the lies, in e.g. the stronghold of abortion: -it is just a bunch of cells, – there are too many children anyway, -I am not able now to educate a child, -my carrier is more important, -it is my personal right... (Every stronghold exists through such a “construction” of dis-connected lies.)

Strongholds are (evil-designed) intimidatingly strong: “Will ever anyone give in that these were lies?”

The sin of corporately living a lie, in its many variations, has ruled the continent at tribal and national scale for centuries, before, during and after colonial times, removing Africa far from God’s presence. Corporate, national and continental confession and repentance alone can reverse the curse. For hope see par 6.

(Are other continents less guilty? Not at all! Lies, against the Corporate Identity or as a stronghold (a pile of lies) have been employed by the father of lies everywhere. The lie of white pride at the expense of black people being among the most hurtful ones)

5 The earth itself witnesses against Africa’s inhabitants, keeping the continent poor.

This section is based on the teaching of Langton Gatsi: “Dealing with the Vagabond Spirit,” delivered at the 8th Prayer Networking conference, August 2004, at Harare, Zimbabwe. The previous sections, 1-4, are more analytical, section 5 covers the same area, but is more confrontational.

When Cain murdered his brother, God said: **“What have you done? Blood cries from the ground, the ground will refuse you crop, you will be a restless wanderer, a vagabond... (Cain laments: whoever finds me will kill me”** (after Gen. 4:10-14). This record of the first murder contains a terrible truth, very relevant in Africa. Three scriptures:

- Deut. 30:15-19: As you sin God calls heaven and earth as witness against “you and your children”; in other words: the earth records “what have you done” against you.
- Jer. 22:28-29: Land, land, land, record this man as childless, that neither he nor his offspring will prosper.
- Numb. 5:17-27: The accused woman will drink water with some soil, so that, in case of hidden(!) sin, the earth can witness against her, because the earth recorded it.

The concept is this: Sin that defiles the earth will cause the earth to witness against the sinner and refuse harvest, prosperity and peace, will cause the earth to vomit him out (Lev. 18:26) and cause him to be a wanderer and a beggar, a vagabond. The following four sins defile the land and cause a vagabond spirit:

1 **Idolatry:** Ezek. 7:7-8: “Doom on the land... because of your detestable practices.”

(This sin corresponds with the above par 1: Idolatry.)

2 **“Bloodshed** pollutes the land” (Numb. 35:33-34). Atonement for the land is necessary.

3 **Immorality:** “If you (so) defile the land, it will vomit you out” (Lev. 18:24-26).

4 **“Disobedience** and violation of laws defiles the earth” (Isa. 24:5-8). Joy turns into bitterness.

(These three sins correspond with the above par 3: Flesh and individualism.)

The sin of defiling the land, causing the vagabond spirit, is deeply rooted in Africa, permeating society in many modern forms. Children, men, pastors and presidents are begging; earth and climate prevent harvest; the mineral-rich soil refuses to be mined; strangers take the riches; Africans are vomited out and wandering all over the Diaspora. “What have you done” Africans, through centuries of idolatry, through massacres of bloodshed, through unashamed immorality, even among Christians, through light-hearted disobedience and corruption? This has removed Africa from God’s presence. Only corporate, national and continental “atonement for the land” by the sinner or his descendant (Numb. 35:33), can reverse the curse. For hope see par 6.

(Are other continents less guilty? Western civilization was originally based on Judeo-Christian values, and as that basis evaporates, God’s basis for blessing evaporates also.)

6 The Church as model nation: You are THE salt and THE light.

Idolatry (par 1), Ancestor worship (par 2), Immorality (par 3), Bondage of the mind (par 4), and the Vagabond Spirit (par 5), at tribal and national scale before, during and after colonial times block out God! This keeps the continent so poor.

The above-mentioned sins are sins, not just at individual level, but even more at collective level (socially accepted individual sins) and corporate level (tribal and national sins). Also: the above-mentioned sins were committed before, during and after colonial times. In other words: **African tribes and nations cannot just blame colonial times, but only themselves, for the God-determined consequences of their corporate behaviour.**

These sins are very severe, and of continental scale. Easy triumphalism or mass-evangelism with mass conversions will not make a difference. Only a struggle towards thorough national repentance, change of the wicked ways at national scale, will make Africa turn around. This process is already starting!

The Church is THE salt and THE light of the world (Matt 5:13-14), the only salt and light to cure and cleanse and preserve and enlighten the continent of Africa. The Church is God's only and especially chosen and empowered Partner in the Harvest of the Nations!

6a Church as model nation, properly using Holiness, Unity and Love.

God will rise up prophets like Elijah, in a way that shows that the church is not a nonentity but God's major ally to speak to the nations. Radical **unity** and radical **love** will do that. This is already happening in Africa. It is better for the church to feel weak and cry out to God, than to be weak and remain complacent, like in the western world. The Church of Africa should not try to be western in any sense, but at the same time totally cleanse herself of (the above mentioned typical African) sins.

There is still a long way to go to radical **holiness**, as this attribute has been traditionally weak, and weakened through international influences (media, feminism, certain UN-related NGO's). Immorality, fear, greed, wrong hierarchy, separately and together, lead to breakdown of society and economy... and to poverty. God clearly commands: "I am holy, you be holy too" (Lev 11:44, 1Pet 1:16).

Religiosity, rampant in any continent, individualizes, and leads to breakdown of society. But unity, love and holiness establish a base for God to bless the continent. As the Church will be salt and light, first government leaders will be attracted, and then governments will be alerted and attracted.

6b The Church as model nation, properly using the Cross.

When the land has been defiled, when a tribe or nation has sinned, when wars and hatred have raged, the Cross of Jesus needs to be applied at corporate (tribal, national) level.

"Atonement for the land"

- >> needs to be made by the sinner or his descendant (Numb 35:33).
- >> Kneeling on the land the sins need to be confessed, and
- >> the repentance (turning of the wicked ways) needs to be evident, and
- >> the land needs to be rededicated to the Lord.
- >> The owner of the land, or "government" of the area, has the responsibility to see this executed.

Identificational confession of historic corporate sins

- >> is real and necessary.
- >> It is based on Lev. 26:40-42 and illustrated in Jer. 14:20-21 and 44:9-10.
- >> The principle of **progressive representation** is important to observe: identificational confession starts from the intercessors level (Daniel, see Dan 9), which opens the way to the spiritual leaders level (Ezra, see Ezra 9), which opens the way to the government level (Nehemiah, see Neh. 1). For all national sins each level must be observed, to prevent presumption!
- >> The final or real repentance is established through the official government (top-down). Even when the social control inside the nation (the bottom-up part) does not yet follow the government, it is real. The bottom-up aspect prepares the forgiveness and, after the top-down part, applies the forgiveness.

How far back into history?

- >> Jesus' example of spiritual mapping, Matt 23:35-36, goes back 400 - 4000 years. "*The earth will disclose the bloodshed upon her; she will conceal her slain no longer*" (Isa. 26:21); we must go back to the 'foundation' (Hab. 2:12). David takes responsibility, including *restitution*, for Saul's sin against a covenant Joshua had made 400 years before (2Sam. 21). 'What shall I do for you? How shall I make amends so that you will bless the Lord's inheritance?' (:3).

- >> In other words: For all historic tribal and national sins, we should go back in history as far as possible and take complete responsibility.

Reconciliation between people groups.

- >> Both parties must dare to face the facts of pain, guilt and differences, and do proper research and present the outcome in a communicable way.
- >> That is the basis for identificational confession (through a process of progressive representation).
- >> After repentance (and that means including cease-fire and stopping all animosity) the top-down establishment of the process opens the way to loving one another.
- >> In case of pain at all levels; it starts with individuals, goes progressively up until the government itself lives it out and leads the individuals to live it out among each other.
- >> In Togo I was in a meeting where representatives of fourteen different tribes confessed to one another the most atrocious deeds of tribal hatred, discrimination and bloodshed. There is no place or setting in the world where this can happen, except in the Church, applying the Cross of Jesus Christ at corporate level.

6c The Church as model nation, waging spiritual warfare at corporate level.

Spiritual warfare is not primarily confronting evil spirits, but exercising God's power at corporate (tribal and national) level. After all, the spiritual war is a war on the tribes and nations and cities!

Covenants, old and new, false and true.

- >> God wants to covenant tribes, nations and cities (see my book "[The Nations Called](#)").(Dutch: De Volken geroepen.)
- >> Therefore, the core question is: Does the church discern covenants, both old idolatrous and modern false covenants (such as legislation, treaties, UN-relations, international Queen of Heaven dynamics)?
- >> Does she have the authority to break evil covenants and establish good ones?

Reversing ancestor worship.

- >> Jesus teaches us to hate father and mother in order to follow Him (Luke 14:26). Parents have 20-25 years to educate their children and must then release them, even to become a prodigal son, as did the father in Luke 15! Only then an individual, a congregation or a ministry, can mature directly under God.
- >> Only the Father heart of God --can make us comprehend His direct and divine protection and provision, --can declare His challenge and motivation towards His future with His intimate encouragement, and --can release the single-mindedness of heart in goal-setting and perseverance.
- >> The Church can show the world what freedom is, as the parents release their offspring to God's destiny for them.

Giving as covenantal behaviour.

- >> Not considering poverty but considering the Giver should motivate us.
- >> Giving to God is part of the exchange of gifts between covenant partners. God says: *Give Me something finite even out of your finiteness, 10% of your resources and even 14% of your time, then I will give you abundance out of my infinity!*

Reversing a curse.

- >> Since a curse is the "penalty clause" in a covenant, to reverse a curse requires going back to the original covenant.
- >> If it was a covenant with God, corporate repentance is required.
- >> If it was a covenant with idols, that covenant must be broken while immediate shelter is secured under a better covenant, with God!

To think about: Has the "refugee crisis" to do with point 5 , mentioned above:

5 The earth itself witnesses against Africa's inhabitants, keeping the continent poor.

African prayer leaders who have read this whole article confirmed it, before the refugee crisis.