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Editorial Brief

We have in the second volume of IJMGS articles that were peer reviewed by scholars in the field. All, but one, were presented at various times on virtual weekly webinar organized by the Centre. They were then revised and independently reviewed as part of intellectual rigour the Journal editorial is noted for. The coverage is multidisciplinary in contents, and trans-global in analyses. The current world discourse is predicated on three main issues: health and development in the midst of ravaging COVID-19 pandemic; climate change; and food security. The commonality with the three challenges, and scholar's interrogation, is the phenomenal transdisciplinary Migration and its global context. The articles in this volume are rich in contents, informative in analyses; and refreshing in evidence. They are useful in all parameters and will add value to finding solutions to some of the issues raised on all topics.

Hakeem I. Tijani
Editor

Exile and Migration: Ancient Israel's Experience and its Relevance to Nigeria's Socio-Economic and Political Development

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Abstract

Migration as a global phenomenon has been variously considered from the socio-political and economic perspectives with the view to finding how it could facilitate development and improve opportunities for all. Incidentally, Nigeria ranks among the highest in international migration and it is already impacting negatively on the nation's development. This paper is an attempt to access possible impacts of migration on development from the theological perspective using ancient Israel's experience of exile as a locus for discussion. Therefore, it is the objective of this paper to survey ancient Israel's exilic history, evaluate its impacts on the socio-political and economic development of ancient Israel, appraise contemporary migration challenges in Nigeria and examine possible lessons from ancient Israel's experience for Nigeria's development. A qualitative research methodology which employs the tool of historical analysis and historical-grammatical hermeneutics has been adopted for this paper. Anchored on the historical-structural model of dependency theory, migration is seen as detrimental to the economies of developing countries as well as one of the very causes of underdevelopment, instead of a path towards development. However, Israel's experience of forced migration was not a total disaster as it equally gave birth to the new Israel that is still soaring high today. Thus, Nigeria can overcome the challenges of international migration by adopting ancient Israel's strategies.

Keywords: Migration, exile, ancient Israel, socio-Economic and political development

Introduction

Migration as a global phenomenon has been variously considered from the socio-political and economic perspectives with the view to finding how migration could facilitate development and improve opportunities for all. This paper written from the perspective of a biblical scholar, examines Israel's response to the socio-political and identity crisis of the exile. The intention is to engage this experience from a very different historical and cultural setting conversant with present-day migration challenges of Nigeria and its national development. The term 'exile' has been translated from the Hebrew *galah* as a way of expressing the tragedy of Jewish forced migration. Thus, the biblical exile provides helpful motifs from which to develop this thought since these events mirror the experience of migrations in many ways. Therefore, it is the objective of this paper to survey ancient Israel's history of exile, evaluate its impacts on the socio-political and economic development of ancient Israel, appraise contemporary migration challenges in Nigeria and examine possible lessons from ancient Israel's experience for Nigeria's development. A qualitative research methodology which employs the tool of historical analysis and historical-grammatical hermeneutics has been adopted for this work. The purpose is to lend a theological voice to the ongoing discussion on the global phenomenon of migration as it affects Nigeria's development. The work will invariably add to knowledge both in the field of social sciences generally and increase the volume of literature in migration studies and biblical scholarship.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Migration takes place either nationally or internationally when people move from one area to another for the purpose of establishing permanent, temporary or seasonal residence¹. This paper focuses mainly on the historical-structural theory and its related models. Historical-structuralism provides a radically different interpretation of migration paradigm on development, having its intellectual roots in Marxist political economy and in world systems theory.² In current scholarship, historical-structural theory is seen as a response to neo-classical theory which assumes that labor markets and economies move towards equilibrium in the long run through trade and migration. Hence, migrants move from societies where labour is abundant and wages are low, to societies where labor is scarce, and wages are high (European Union). According to De Haas, historical-structuralists postulate that economic and political power is unequally distributed among developed and underdeveloped countries, that people have unequal access to resources, and that capitalist expansion has the tendency to reinforce these inequalities. Instead of modernizing and gradually progressing towards economic development, underdeveloped countries are trapped by their disadvantaged position within the global geopolitical structure.³

A group of loosely related theoretical models have been traced to the historical-structural theory including the dependency theory first linked to

¹ “What is Migration?” “Internet Geography,” <https://www.internetgeography.net/topics/what-is-migration>

² S. Castles and M. J. Miller, *The Age of Migration* (London: MacMillan Press Ltd, 2003), 25.

³ Hein De Haas, “Migration and Development: A Theoretical Perspective,” paper presented at the conference on ‘Transnationalisation and Development(s): Towards a North-South Perspective’, Center for Interdisciplinary Research, Bielefeld, Germany, (May 31- June 01, 2007),15. <http://www.comcad-bielefeld.de/haas>

Adre Gunder Frank's notion of the 'development of underdevelopment.'⁴ Instead of a path towards development, the dependency school views migration as detrimental to the economies of underdeveloped countries as well as one of the very causes of underdevelopment. This can be explained by the fact that while migration is both from the developed and under-developed countries, however, migrants from developed countries come to their host under-developed countries as expatriates to tackle technological, leadership, scientific, education and economic problems. Migration in this case is not born out of joblessness, poor salary, and condition of service as is the case with under-developed countries.⁵

Migration can be voluntary or involuntary. Voluntary migration involves mainly the movement of human resources from places of poor economic conditions to seek better economic conditions. By contrast, forced migration occurs as a result of war or enslavement hence Paul Tabori defines exile as:

a person compelled to leave or remain outside his country of origin on account of well-founded fear of persecution or for reasons of race, religion, nationality, or political opinion; a person who considers his exile temporary (even though it may last a lifetime), hoping to return to his fatherland when circumstances permit – but unable or unwilling to do so as long as the factors that made him an exile persist.⁶

⁴ Adre Gunder Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America*. (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1969),34 and Adre Gunder Frank *Dependent Accumulation and Underdevelopment* (London: Macmillan, 1978),56.

⁵ Ojo, O. D. N. O. A. Ugochukwu and E. J. Obinna "Understanding the Escalation of Brain Drain in Nigeria from Poor Leadership Point of View," *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*. 2, no. 3 (September, 2011): 434-458, <https://www.mcser.org>

⁶ Tabori, P, *Anatomy of Exile: A Semantic and Historic Study* (Michigan: George G. Harrap and Co. Ltd, 1972), 36.

Drawing from Tabori's definition, the term exile refers to a person who has been separated from the country of origin involuntarily, as well as to the act and state of being separated, the condition(s) leading to the separation, and period of separation. Thus, exile refers to both the person and the circumstance. Involuntary exiles may also include those people who leave seemingly of their own accord but really because of circumstances beyond their control. The exile is reluctant to leave, and only does so when "leaving is only just better than staying."⁷ In this study therefore, exile refers to both involuntary (forced) migration and migrant experiences of ancient Israel. Lim⁸ has expanded involuntary exile to include the following sub-categories:

- i. Derivative forced migration resulting from geopolitical rearrangement. This is mirrored in the conquest of Judah by Babylon in 597 BCE (2 Kgs 24:10-17). Geographical movement was not connoted in this exile; ancient Israel remained in their land but lost their sovereignty due to foreign conquest. Another form is viewed from the post-exilic period, when ancient Israel was allowed limited autonomy in their homeland by Persian authorities.
- ii. Purposive forced migration refers to people being forced to relocate physically at the hands of a dominant power. The events of 587 BCE when Jerusalem was destroyed and Judeans transported to Babylon would fall under this category of migration (2 Kgs. 25:8-21).
- iii. Responsive forced migration describes people fleeing voluntarily to escape tyranny, oppression, poverty, and other threats to their

⁷ Berg, N. E., "Exile from Exile: Israeli Writers from Iraq" *SUNY Series in Israeli Studies* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1996), 4.

⁸ B. O. Lim, "Exile and Migration: Toward a Biblical Theology of Immigration and Displacement. *The Covenant Quarterly*, 74, No. 2 (May, 2016), 7-8) <https://www.covquarterly.com/index.php/article/view>. Accessed 15th July, 2020.

security. Jeremiah's flight to Egypt with a group of Judeans in 582 BCE is an example of this form of migration (Jer. 41:16–43:7).

The above categorization suggests different experiences of ancient Israel. Ahn⁹ employs the categories to distinguish between the various exilic experiences of ancient Israel as follows.

- i. Israel's movement into Egypt in the days of Joseph (Gen. 46:1-34).
- ii. Following the Old Testament's eschatological hope exile includes every Jew scattered among the nations outside of Israel beginning with the Assyrian conquest of the Northern Kingdom in the eighth century (see 2 Kgs 17-18).
- iii. The idea of exile in 2 Kings 24 and 25 (24:14, 15; 25:11, 21) is expressed in Babylon's use of cross-deportation which resulted in mass deportation of Israelites to Babylon. The exile in this picture continues even to the present times since with the Cyrus' edict of return in 539 BC, many Jews continue to live out the Promised Land. It is therefore necessary to situate this work within the experience of exile pictured in the fall of Jerusalem in 587 BC and the Return in 539 BC.

Reflections on Ancient Israel's Experience of Exile between 587 and 539 BC

⁹ J. J. Ahn, "Forced Migrations Guiding the Exile: Demarcating 597, 587, and 582 BCE," *By the Irrigation Canals of Babylon: Approaches to the Study of Exile*, ed. J.J. Ahn and J. A. Middlemas, (London: T&T Clark, 2012), 173-89

There are several biblical texts on ancient Israel's exilic experiences out which the following five passages: 2 Kings 24 and 25 (24:14, 15; 25:11, 21), Jeremiah 29:4, Daniel 6, Ezra 3 – 6 and Nehemiah: 1 and 2 have been chosen for the purpose of this study.

- i. 2 Kings 24 and 25 – the fall of Ancient Israel to Babylonian Empire
Babylon was one of the world's most ancient cities and the center of the Babylonian civilization; and by the late 600 BC was the dominant power in the Near East. Babylon captured Nineveh the capital of Assyria around 612 BC and finally defeated her around 605 BC. This conquest was further extended by Nebuchadnezzar II (605-562) whose campaigns led to the fall of Jerusalem around 587 BC. Consequent upon his conquest, Nebuchadnezzar:

Took Jehoiachin prisoner... carried away all the treasures from the LORD's Temple and the royal palace. He stripped away all the gold objects that King Solomon of Israel had placed in the Temple. King Nebuchadnezzar took all of Jerusalem captive, including the commanders and the best of the soldiers, craftsmen, and artisans – 10,000 in all. Only the poorest people were left in the land. Nebuchadnezzar led King Jehoiachin away as a captive to Babylon, along with the queen mother, his wives and officials, and all Jerusalem's elite. He also exiled 7,000 of the best troops and 1,000 craftsmen and artisans all of whom were strong and fit for war (2 Kgs. 24:12-16).

What can be garnered from this passage is that King Nebuchadnezzar chose people from the royal class, the elites, able bodied and best soldiers, craftsmen, artisans, and costly treasures from the Temple but left the poorest in the land. This way, he stripped Israel of her best brains and robbed her of the needed manpower for redevelopment. Israel's situation fits into the concept of brain drain or brain waste saga in Nigeria. Fundamentally, brain drain involves the transfer of knowledge, experience, skill and expertise from one region, country or geographic location to another. Brain waste refers to skill downgrading, where an individual is working in a job that requires a skill level lower than the one, he/she has acquired¹⁰ (Pires, 2015:2).

An example is Jeremiah's Letter to the Exiles (Jeremiah 29:1-7). This passage contains a letter believed to have been written by Jeremiah and was sent to Babylon through his friends encouraging the exiles in Babylon to settle down. Jeremiah 29:1-7 describes long-term projects by the use of the phrases: building houses, planting gardens, and benefiting from the land.¹¹ Ahn¹² believes the letter instructs Judean exiles to create long-term ethnic enclaves in Babylon. He translation of Jeremiah 29:4, "Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the immigrants whom I have sent into forced migration from Jerusalem to Babylon." Verse 7 "And work for the peace and prosperity of the city where I sent you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, for its welfare will determine your welfare;" places responsibility on the exile to bless the land. This may include working, paying their taxes, studying hard, and

¹⁰ Armando J. Garcia Pires, "Brain Drain and Brain Waste" *Journal of Economic Development*, 40 no. 1, (March, 2015), 2. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC4027850>.

¹¹ D. Wiseman, "Jeremiah" in *New International Bible Commentary*. Gen. Ed. F. F. Bruce (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979), 782.

¹² J. J. Ahn, *Exile As Forced Migrations: A Sociological, Literary, and Theological Approach on the Displacement and Resettlement of the Southern Kingdom of Judah*, BZAW 417. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), 138.

showing themselves worthy of trust. Rightly viewed, the goal of the letter was to motivate them to make the most of the exile.

ii. **Daniel 6 – Daniel a Symbol of Israel’s Excellence in Exile**

As an administrator in the Babylonian empire, Daniel distinguished himself as the most capable of all the administrators and maintained high level of integrity. Daniel as a character among other Jews shows that the letter written by Jeremiah really impacted positively in the lives of the exilic community.

iii. **Ezra 3 – 6 – Cyrus Edict of Return**

After conquering the Babylonian empire in 539 BC, King Cyrus II of Persia allowed exiled peoples, including the Jews to return to their homelands (1:3). The returned exiles approached the work of rebuilding their homeland as a unified group. They started with the rebuilding of the altar, then the construction of the new Temple. However, the Wall of Jerusalem remained in ruins until 445 BC when it was rebuilt under Nehemiah’s leadership as can be seen below because more hands were needed.

iv. **Nehemiah :1 and 2 – Nehemiah a Symbol of Patriotism**

Nehemiah was still living in Susa the capital city of Persia after King Cyrus’s edict. As a migrant, he served as cup-bearer in the royal court. This is another position of honour and trust taken up by the exile in the foreign land still indicating that they were truly prepared for the period. The passage reveals Nehemiah’s devastation from the news that Jerusalem’s wall was broken and the people there were living in utter disgrace. He became emotionally attached to the problem, prayed and then acted by requesting and getting the King’s

approval to restore the hope of Israel by rebuilding Jerusalem's wall. By rebuilding the wall, a sense of security was restored for both those in the land and those still in Diaspora who may wish to come back.

In all, Israel's experience of migration buttresses King's¹³ assertion that population movements have been the carriers of innovation from one region to another. The land became desolate because the exiled population carried with them the economic and social political strength of the nation. They became the strength of their host nations and occupied both leadership and economic positions.

A Brief Survey of Migration in Nigeria and Lessons from Ancient Israel's Experience of Exile

Nigeria and ancient Israel are two different nations with their uniqueness. Israel for instance, was a theocratic and mono-ethnic nation. More so, there were religious connotations to their exilic experience which has not been emphasized in this work while Nigeria is not. Moreover, Israel's exile/migration was occasioned by the Babylonian conquest. Nonetheless, Nigeria's current experience of migration is very similar to ancient Israel's experience of responsive forced migration/exile.

As of 2017, the United Nations' Population Division report estimated the number of international migrants worldwide at almost 258 million (or 3.4 percent of the world's population). The UN migration data portal reveals that

¹³ R. King, *Theories and Typologies of Migration: An Overview and a Primer* (Malmo: Malmo Institute for Studies of Migration, Diversity and Welfare, Malmo University, 2013), 87.

there were 1.3 million emigrants from Nigeria in 2017, which represented 0.6% of the total population (net migration is 300,000 in the last 5 years).¹⁴ Though the official records do not include those born of Nigerian parents in the Diaspora and therefore, hold citizenship of their birth countries. Unofficial reports state that there are about 15 million Nigerians in the Diaspora.¹⁵ Within the embers of the unofficial reports, Ikuteyijo has ascertained that young Nigerians make up the largest population of the growing flow of irregular migrants from Africa to developed countries.¹⁶ Busari discloses that more than twenty thousand (20,000) involved in the crossing of the Mediterranean Sea were reported to be from Nigeria in 2017. In addition, between 2017 till late 2019, hundreds of Nigerian migrants were deported from various destinations including Italy, Libya and South Africa. These young people undertake very risky journeys across the globe, and casualties continue to be on the increase on a daily basis.¹⁷

The large number of emigrants from Nigeria explains the reason for the nation accounting for the largest inflow of remittances into Africa in 2017 but dropped to second place behind Egypt in 2018.¹⁸ The actual amount of remittance flows into the country is arguably higher if many of the unrecorded transactions that take place through irregular (informal) channels

¹⁴United Nation Population Division, 2017 Report, un.org/development/desa/population/data/estimates17

¹⁵ A. S. Nevin and O. Omosomi, *Strength from abroad: The economic power of Nigeria's Diaspora*. PricewaterhouseCoopers Limited, (2019), 31. <https://www.pwc.com › pdf › the-economic-power-of-nigerias>

¹⁶ L. O. Ikuteyijo, "Irregular Migration as Survival Strategy: Narratives from Youth in Urban Nigeria" *Researchgate* (2020),1 <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/336697660>.

¹⁷ S. Busari, "In 2017, Hundreds of migrants stranded in Libya are returned to Nigeria" CNN News, November 2017, <https://edition.cnn.com/2017/11/29/africa/nigeria-migrants-returned-libya/index.html>

¹⁸ A. S. Nevin and O. Omosomi, 32

are recorded. It has also been noted that in 2018, migrant remittances to Nigeria equaled US\$25 billion, representing 6.1% of GDP, a figure that translates to 83% of the Federal Government budget in that year.¹⁹

However, the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) (2000) report reveals that the African continent is losing the most important people it needs for social, economic, technological and scientific development. Accordingly, Carrington an economist at the U.S. Bureau of Labour and Statistics, Washington, DC, has observed that over three million Nigerians are in the United States and Canada. He notes that people rather than commodities constitute the greatest export of Nigeria from which U.S. and other countries of the world profit. Carrington went on to describe Nigerians in the U.S. as accomplished immigrant group due to the fact that they excellently contribute to all sectors of the U.S. economy. He further states that Nigerians in Diaspora are the most educated and talented black people to be found anywhere on earth and that they choose to remain the U.S. because of the fear of corruption and insecurity in their country.²⁰ Adding weight to Carrington's revelations is the speech given by Obasanjo – former Nigerian President, given at a gathering of Nigerian Diaspora, who states:

Many of our best men and women for lack of opportunity and challenge at home have had to work outside our shores. We should challenge them to return by putting in place the enabling environment and the

¹⁹ A. S. Nevin and O. Omosomi, 32

²⁰ W .J. Carrington, "Brain drain, corruption, insecurity damaging Nigeria," *Daily Independent* (2013), 164. <http://dailyindependentnig.com/2013/10/darin-brain-corruption-insecurity-damaging-nigeria-carrington>

tools, with which they will be able to give this country the full benefit of the education, training and experience....²¹

The reasons for both regular and irregular migration are similar echoing the push factors inherent in the Nigerian society. World Poverty Clock (2018) report reveals that Nigeria has more people living in extreme poverty than any other country in the world. The poverty rate goes in hand with the high rate of unemployment. According to the the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). In the fourth quarter of 2020, the unemployment rate in Nigeria reached 33.28 percent. Between 2015 and 2020, the unemployment rate grew. In particular, in 2017 the unemployment rate registered the fastest growth, increasing by about six percentage points during the year.²² These economic trends, coupled with other variables such as political instability and rising waves of conflict, higher wages in the destination country, career advancement and/or training, access to the best facilities and technologies have led to the rising rate of migration from the country.²³

Lessons from Ancient Israel's Exile Experience

The study so far argues that Nigeria's highest export is in human resources and its adverse effect on national development. The study also reveals a

²¹Cited in J. Ibieta and S. Joshua, "Leadership and the Failed State status of Nigeria (2010-2012): An enquiry" *Acta Universitatis Carutius Administratio*, 5(1), (2013), 49-69.

²² Simona Varrella "unemployment rate in Nigeria 2015-2020" *Quarterly (March 19, 2021)* <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1119375/unemployment-rate-in-nigeria-by-quarter/>

²³ L. O. Ikuteyijo, "Irregular Migration as Survival Strategy: Narratives from Youth in Urban Nigeria" *Researchgate*, (2020), 66-72.

justification of the historical-structuralist theory which maintains that migration breeds unequal distribution of economic and political power in which case, the underdeveloped countries are ensnared by their disadvantaged position within the global geopolitical structure. However, the study does not present a total disaster on the part of Israel as she was able to rise from the dungeon of the exile into a great nation. The following lessons can be learnt from Israel's experience:

i. International Exposure with High Sense of Responsibility

Living in Diaspora may pose cultural, food, clothing, religious and integrity challenges as Daniel exemplifies. Yet, Nigerians in Diaspora can learn to be dependable, skilled in their work, work hard towards the development of host nations. This will guarantee acceptability and favorable ground to tap into the economic and political strength of their hosts with the view of coming back home in the long run to contribute to the development of the country with the acquired skills. Apart from returning, migrants can improve the country's political institutions by transferring political norms, voting from abroad or return home to vote in case absentee voting is not permitted and lobbying activities from abroad through their financial remittances.

ii. Need for Manpower Development

Israel's experience echoes the fact that the wealth of a nation depends largely on the constitution of her human resources. The demise of the best brains in ancient Israel led to the disastrous fall of the nation. In as much as Nigeria needs the high remittance flows, more than that, she needs human beings with the needed skills to build the socio-economic and political organizations for national development. Adeyeye posits that while capital and natural

resources are passive factors of production; human beings are the active agents who accumulate capital, exploit natural resources, build social, economic and political organizations, and carry forward national development.²⁴ If human beings are not central to the growth of any nation, why is it that developed countries have very low remittance flow yet very strong economy? The answer is simple; they have the needed skilled manpower for development.

Social Protection Policies

The Persian Edict of Return could be viewed as policy statement to end the exile. The country must endeavour to control migration through polices that are human oriented, focused in terms of security of lives and property, economic and political stability among others. The social protection policies can be classified as one of such polices. Social protection policies mean:

All public and private initiatives that provide income or consumption transfers to the poor, protect the vulnerable against livelihood risks and enhance the social status and rights of the marginalised; with the overall objective of reducing the economic and social vulnerability of poor, vulnerable and marginalised groups”²⁵

While social protection policies have been in existence in Nigeria before its independence, it has been observed that it is characterized by a lack of

²⁴ T. C. Adeyeye, “Manpower Development and Economic Growth in Nigeria” *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development* 6, No. 9 (2015), 26, <https://www.iiste.org>

²⁵ S. Devereux and R. Sabates-Wheeler, “Transformative Social Protection” *Institute of Development Studies*, Brighton (2004), 1, <http://www.ids.ac.uk/publication>

coverage, poor financing and administration, lack of trust in government, and corruption.²⁶ It can be argued that deteriorating living conditions have created a “migration culture”, whereby people regard the malfunctioning social protection system as incapable of solving their overwhelming and ubiquitous problems and see in migration the only solution. Social, economic and political ills bedevil the entire country, leaving people with few options for securing a dignified future. If fully tapped, social protection could ensure that basic needs are met and subsequently also reduce the high levels of inequality. This in turn might lead to greater satisfaction and reduce the need and inclination to migrate.

iii. Patriotism

Nehemiah’s story is an important reminder of migrants’ responsibility to their home country. As has been shown above, the Nigerian diaspora is made up of people of rich and varied skills. However, this is not to undermine the fact that there are many more people of low and no skills as well as those who are inclined to crime in diaspora. If they were to remember their own people, Nigeria could see great socio-economic and political development. The establishment of Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM) is a step in the right direction. However, the vision of utilizing the human, capital and material resources of this demography in the socio-economic, cultural and political development of Nigeria should not be given a still birth.

Conclusion

This paper has considered the concept of migration from the biblical or theological perspectives. It demonstrated that ancient Israel’s experience of

²⁶ E. Schüring and others, *Social Protection as an Alternative to Migration? An assessment of the role of social protection in reducing push factors for migration in different country contexts* (Berlin: H. HEENEMANN GmbH & Co. KG 2017), 59.

exile provides helpful motifs from which to develop a theological perspective to contemporary migration challenge in Nigeria since this event mirrors the migration experience of underdeveloped countries in many ways. Israel's experience of exile agrees with the historical-cultural theory anchoring largely on the dependency theory that views migration not just as detrimental to the economies of underdeveloped countries but also as one of the very causes of underdevelopment, rather than as a path towards development. Exile stripped Israel of her very best thereby leaving the land desolate all through the period. Those left in the land were without the needed skill to develop the nation both socio-economically and politically; hence the returned exiles' immediate challenge was the rebuilding of the land. The exiled people were well prepared to make the most out of the period by seeking the peace and the prosperity of the land through hard work, tax payment, studying hard, and exhibiting high sense of responsibility. As a result, they found themselves at the corridors of power in the foreign land and acquired the skills necessary for the development of any nation. At the return, they put the acquired skills to work and the nation bounced back. Hence, for Israel, the exilic history was not a total disaster. Or better put a disaster that lasted only for some time until the people rose to the challenge of rebuilding their nation. Arguably, the study has shown that the rate of migration from Nigeria is alarming. However, the nation can draw from the positive impact of the exile on ancient Israel by re-strategising through governance and governmental policies that are built towards making use of the current migration population as a tool for socio-economic and political development. This calls for the need to revisit social protection policies to widen the coverage, ensure proper funding and administration, rebuild people's trust/confidence in government, eliminate

corruption and guarantee that basic needs are met and subsequently also reduce the high levels of inequality. This might lead to greater satisfaction and reduce the need and inclination to migrate.

Secondly, the National Orientation Agency should come up with campaigns that will prepare migrants to be their best in the host countries as well as instill in them the yearning to contribute towards the development of their own country; for there is no place like home.

Lastly, patriotism is highly needed if the nation must be made great again. Those who have found the greener pasture oversea should not forget home. The government on her part should appreciate those who are here trying to make the country work by implementing policies that will relax the push factors for migration in Nigeria.

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