

“Real leadership”

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I am greatly honoured to have been invited to give this Harold Wolpe Lecture in honour of an outstanding son of our soil. I have no pretensions to being a social or any other kind of scientist but that's par for the course since for a long time in the struggle years I was thought to be a politician trying very hard to be a bishop. They did have some delicious Tutu stories then.

Our political atmosphere that has been remarkably stable given our less than propitious antecedents has recently been convulsed by the succession crisis in the ANC with cries of plots and conspiracies and all the fallout that has resulted in considerable turbulence. I thought it might not be entirely inappropriate to talk about leadership true, real leadership.

The key attributes of true leadership

There is an episode in the Christian Gospels when the disciples of Jesus were bickering about leadership positions. The two brothers James and John, sons of Zebedee wanted to be a cut above the other ten disciples so they stole a march on their comrades by approaching their master asking to be given quite prominent positions - one to sit on either side of Jesus in His glory. You couldn't have asked for anything more exalted. Their ten comrades fumed not at the lack of humility on the part of their colleagues. Not on your life. They were upset that the two had got in their claims first and, as it were, beaten them to the draw. It was an unsavoury incident as they quarrelled publicly about who would be the top dog. You would have thought that people who had been the associates of Jesus would be characterised by attractive qualities, such as humility and modesty. Not on your life it seems. So Jesus called them together to give them a profound lesson on true greatness, real leadership and it turned out to be one of the most paradoxical statements ever. Just listen (Mark 10: 41-50).

“And when the other ten apostles heard it, they began to be indignant with James and John. But Jesus called them to Him and said to them. You know that those who are recognised as governing and are supposed to rule the gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority and dominion over them. But this is not to be so among you; instead, whoever desires to be great among you must be your servant. And whoever wishes to be most important and first in rank among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to have service rendered to Him , but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.”

Now what kind of advice is that? Totally unrealistic sentimental and utopian. They would make mincemeat of you in a hard nosed cynical world where it is dog eat dog, survival of the fittest and devil take the hindmost and everyone for himself in a setting of cut throat competition. But is that kind of success really what people in fact admire,

indeed revere? Mother Theresa has been held in the highest regard, indeed reverence by very many in our contemporary world. There are many things you could say of her, but macho is certainly not one of them. She is revered not because she was a success. In many ways you could say she failed to stem the tide of poverty whose victims she served so selflessly, and yet she was considered to be a saint in her life time. Much the same could be said of a Madiba, of a Dalai Lama, of a Mahatma Gandhi, a Martin Luther King, Jr, a Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Thus we cannot rule out of court a priori that seemingly odd piece of advice.

You may be aware of the State Visits to England of two heads of State. The police had a hard time controlling the crowds - in one case the people wanted to mob a man they admired and in the other case, they wanted to assault him. One was the President of a country that was small beer indeed, the other the President of the only super power who did not travel in an open carriage with the Queen as is traditionally the case - for fear of the hostile crowd. The one President was Madiba and the other was President George Bush They say the US Secret Service suggested that the windows of Buckingham Palace be replaced with reinforced secure ones. The Queen was not amused.

People were in awe of the likes of Mother Theresa because they had given selflessly of themselves, poured out their lives on behalf of others.

The leader is there for the sake of the led

The formula Jesus propounded clearly was not so utopian and unrealistic. Almost all who have become outstanding leaders have demonstrated this remarkable attribute of selfless altruism. The leader is there not for what he / she can get out of this exalted position. No, the real, the true leader knows the position is to enable the leader to serve those she leads. It is not an opportunity for self aggrandisement, but for service of the led. And almost always this attribute is demonstrated most clearly by the fact that the one who aspires to lead suffers for the sake of the cause, for the sake of the people. It is the litmus test of their sincerity, the unambiguous stamp of authenticity of her credentials. Mother Theresa voluntarily took the vow of poverty and left the comfort of her European home to live in the squalor of her new Calcutta slum convent. The Dalai Lama has been in exile for four decades. Aung San Suu Kyi, a dainty, petite woman has made full grown men armed to the teeth to quake with trepidation and so they have made her spend ten of the last seventeen years under house arrest in her Burma (Myanmar) homeland..

Mahatma Gandhi left the comforts of a successful legal practice for his pursuit of Satyagraha, clad in skimpy costume and helped to make India independent. We could go on in this vein multiplying examples. King George VI and Queen Elizabeth were idolised in Great Britain because they remained in London during the blitz and would visit at the earliest opportunity any parts of the city that had been bombed, King Haakon of Norway endeared himself to his subjects similarly by sharing their lot when the Nazis were bombarding the capital. He used to travel by bicycle or the local train to play cards with his friends in the suburbs with no retinue of bodyguards. One Norwegian who claimed to be a republican and wanted the monarchy abolished declared incongruously but proudly, "Every Norwegian is the King's bodyguard".

It is because of this principle that suffering in some form validates the authenticity of the selflessness of the leader who is there not for himself but for the led that almost everywhere the leaders of Liberation movements won the first post independence elections of their newly independent countries so easily. They had demonstrated their

altruism by either being gaoled or exiled or being involved in other ways in the liberation struggle. Thus a Nkrumah, a Nyerere, a Kenyatta, a Machel, a Seretse Khama, a Nujoma, a Mugabe, a Mandela won in a canter. They passed the first test of a true leader, selfless altruism, with flying colours. Paradoxically as it turns out, the colonial or oppressive regime were being hoisted with their own petard for whenever they took action against someone in the struggle so they to that extent were putting a stamp of authenticity on their victim.

Integrity

The led, the people, the so called masses, in a way can be gullible for they almost always cannot believe that their leaders are not people of integrity upholding high moral values and so they are always hit for a six by the high-flyers who use their positions for corrupt self-aggrandisement and self-enrichment. I must confess that I have been quite naïve. During the days of our struggle our people were magnificently altruistic. We had a noble cause and almost everyone involved was inspired by high and noble ideals. When you told even young people that they might be tear-gassed, hit with quirts, or have vicious dogs set on them, that they might be detained and tortured and even killed, there was a spirit almost of bravado as they said, "So what?" "I don't care what happens to me as long as it advances our cause." They spoke of their blood watering the tree of our freedom. It was breathtaking stuff – yes they really meant it, that the cause was the be all and end all and they were ready to sacrifice anything, even pay the supreme sacrifice for this noble cause. My naiveté was that I believed that these noble attitudes and exalted ideals would, come liberation be automatically transferred to hold sway in the new dispensation. We South Africans were a special breed and I believed we would show the world, haggard especially in Africa, by the scourge of corruption. We would show that we were a cut above the hoi polloi. Wow! What a comprehensive let down – no sooner had we begun to walk the corridors of power than we seemed to want to make up for lost time. We succumbed to the same temptations as those others we had thought to be lesser mortals. All those others who seemed congenitally unable to keep their hands out of the till. Just last week a politician from an impoverished African country was reported to have had a R60 million spending spree in record time with one hugely expensive luxury car that has stood unused for two years whilst his people wallow in the most demeaning poverty and squalor. We had thought we would be quite different. At least we can say it shows we are quite human, that original sin has not passed us by. We have succumbed so soon to the same temptations to make a quick buck. How utterly despicable and how thoroughly disillusioning that there have been officials called civil servants who have proved to be neither civil nor certainly servants, who have actually robbed the most needy through pocketing their social welfare grants. The victims have been the elderly robbed of their desperately needed old age pensions often the only income in many homes where the traditional bread winners are part of the dolorous statistics of the large army of the unemployed. Such corrupt persons have shown they are devoid of a sense of shame and common decency.

How salutary that the Minister responsible has acted decisively and with almost brutal efficiency to bring the shameless culprits to book. Then there have been Travelgate and all the innuendos and allegations about the possible shady aspects in connection with the Arms Deal some relating to our former Deputy President but not just he. We do hope that there really will be a thorough investigation for there are media reports that prosecutors in Germany and France are taking steps that have a bearing on this Arms deal.

How simply wonderful to see how authorities can work for the common good instead of benefiting only a privileged elite. The governments of Dubai and Qatar are using their large oil revenues outstandingly for their people providing very attractive housing for the less well off, building an impressive infrastructure. A man I met in Qatar spoke proudly of how their government was working for the people. They have universal free healthcare and free education up to university level. Their governments have the advantage of dealing with relatively small populations.

Contrast that with what has happened in Nigeria or Saudi Arabia which both boast huge income from their oil but which tragically has notoriously benefited only a few.

People look up to their leaders for inspiration, they somehow believe they embody their best ideals, attributes and characteristics. This is how they want to believe they would be at their best. And so Winston Churchill exhibited what the British believed about themselves under adversity – bulldog tenacity and fearlessness when Hitler boasted that he would wring Churchill's neck like that of a chicken, the British Prime Minister warmed the cockles of British hearts by his rejoinder, "Some chicken, some neck". And so many South Africans saw their best selves in the generosity, magnanimity and willingness to forgive one's former enemies in the spectacular exhibition of their first democratically elected President who embodied the spirit of *ubuntu* so magnificently. They hoped, they wanted to believe, that is how they would want to behave under similar circumstances. They want their leaders in a way to be a Colossus without blemish, a paragon of virtue, of impeccable moral standards, not an idol with feet of clay. Though in fact they would be ready to be forgiving under certain circumstances. When Madiba was still President he lived with Mrs Graça Machel without benefit of matrimony. I criticized this arrangement publicly as setting a bad example. In a way that endeared him to the people even more, he corrected the situation, made a decent woman of her and they got married. Clearly there is conduct which is inappropriate for a President of a country.

I am very fond of Max du Preez and admire him quite a bit almost always agreeing with what he proclaims so well in his regular newspaper column. Last week he said he thought it was wrong to rule Mr Jacob Zuma out of the succession race simply because he had been involved in a rape case, had on his own admission, committed adultery, and possibly because he had no university education. He contended that quite a few leading political figures were known to have had affairs had had no university degrees but all this had not stopped them from pursuing an often successful political career. Thus Jacob Zuma should, if he was acquitted in the corruption trial, be permitted to run for the country's Presidency by running for that of the ANC. I agree that the lack of a university degree should not be a bar to his being President. But I disagree about the sexual misdemeanour as not posing such an obstacle. So far as I can tell no politician campaigned for public office having declared in advance a sexual misdemeanour. Knowledge of such has almost always come much later. More usual has been someone being guilty or suspected of this after taking office. President Clinton was nearly impeached for lying about such a misdemeanour whatever the motives of his accusers.

I certainly do not think the misdemeanour as such should necessarily disqualify a candidate. After all God did not balk at using an adulterer, King David, to be the ancestor *par excellence* of the Messiah. The crucial difference is that there was contrition and an asking for forgiveness in the case of David. I am not aware that Mr Zuma apologized for engaging in what he claims to have been consensual sex, a version accepted by the Court which acquitted him. He engaged in casual sex with someone young enough to be his daughter at a time when he had been heading up the Moral Regeneration Movement of the country. He apologised for his

extraordinary claim about the efficacy of a shower to ward off HIV/AIDS when he was at one time head of the government's HIV/AIDS campaign.

But all of these pale in the face of the behaviour of his supporters outside the court. That conduct was abominable and quite disgraceful. So far as I can tell, at no time does he seem to have been nonplussed or embarrassed by it. His supporters quite rightly demanded that their champion should be presumed innocent until proven guilty. Yet they did not accord the corresponding right to the plaintiff. They vilified and abused her. They intimidated her to such an extent that she had to use a *nom de plume* to hide her identity and the police feared for her life to such an extent that they provided her with a round the clock guard, and I am not sure whether she has not left our shores because no one could guarantee that she would not be assaulted and even murdered by incensed supporters. Our constitution which the country's President promises to guard and uphold guarantees to each of us the right to our point of view. I like Jacob Zuma as a warm, very approachable person, but he did nothing to stop his supporters. I for one would not be able to hold my head high if a person with such supporters were to become my president, someone who did not think it necessary to apologise for engaging in casual sex without taking proper precautions in a country that is being devastated by this horrendous HIV/AIDS pandemic. What sort of example would he be setting? I pray that someone will be able to counsel him that the most dignified, most selfless thing, the best thing he could do for a land he loves deeply is to declare his decision not to take further part in the succession race of his party. I appeal to his undoubted patriotism as demonstrated by his distinguished role in the struggle. The litmus test as I said at the beginning, is the wellbeing, the good of the people and not self-aggrandisement by the leader.

My father liked saying, "Improve your argument. Don't raise your voice." We should say about those we oppose, "I do not agree with you, but I will defend your right to your point of view to the death." Those who shout loudest often thereby demonstrate that their argument is less than compelling. It is deeply disturbing that an aspiring presidential candidate should not have found such conduct as that of Mr Zuma's supporters quite unacceptable.

What would prevent the new President from invoking the imperatives of Zulu culture to put damsels in distress out of their misery of what he perceived as their sexual arousal?

There surely is conduct which might be tolerated in a lesser mortal but that would be anathema in the Head of State. I used to fulminate against Madiba for his appalling sartorial sense for this reason, those awful shirts. He said it was thick coming from a man who wears a dress in public. He has an inherent dignity I suppose that helps him to get away with almost anything. We speak of gravitas, of in our language shadow, *isthunzi*, a presence. We want to experience our head of state as being presidential. He/she is not an ordinary person.

Humility

Almost paradoxically we also are attracted to a head of state who is humble and approachable not arrogant and aloof. I told President Thabo that long after people have forgotten most things about his presidency, two will remain indelibly impressed. During the last general election, he was canvassing in a largely white suburb. At one home the lady of the house said how she wished she could meet Charlize Theron who was in the country after winning her Oscar. The President told her he was in fact

hosting a reception for her in the Presidency and he invited this lady. She was besides herself in disbelief. He invited her into one of the cars in his motorcade. Till her dying day she won't forget this warm gesture of friendliness.

But the second story is even more heart-warming. He was due to visit a township home and preparations were made including a special chair for the President. Unfortunately an old man arrived before the President and plonked himself in the presidential chair. When President Thabo arrived, embarrassed officials wanted to shoo the old man off, when they were bowled over by the President's insistence that the old man should keep his seat and proceeded to plonk himself on the floor. I told him that people would say, "Hau, he has a heart!"

People want their leader as it were to have charisma, to be regal and exalted, dignified, almost godlike as expressing the best about their idealized corporate consciousness and identity. But they also want them to be people of flesh and blood, not remote, but down to earth in touch with them, aware of their aspirations, anguish, needs and know where the shoe pinches.

This tall order is more likely to be accomplished when the system is transparent and accountable. Our present way of electing our president and parliamentary and provincial and local representatives has served us well in our transitional period. We have held three elections which have been declared free and fair. Foreign observers can hardly hide their boredom at the hum drum routine. We need to make those elected more accountable to the electorate than to the party bosses who control the party lists. It is high time that our President was elected directly by the people. It is high time that the constituencies came into their own so that representatives knew they owed their primary loyalty and accountability to the constituents rather than to the party bosses. Ours would become an even more vibrant more engaged democracy, because it is still the case that he who pays the piper calls the tune. There would be a more rigorous putting through its paces of the executive branch by its legislative counterpart than is now the case. The party lists tend to foster acquiescence and a supine kow-towing sycophancy. The price of freedom we have been told times without number is eternal vigilance. Power is insidious. It can subvert the best of us and we need help to keep its corrupting attributes from corrupting even the best of us.

No human being is infallible

Most politicians seem to have a massive allergy to admitting they might have been wrong. I suspect most of us find humble pie unappetizing. We do not like to admit that we made a mistake. It is our peculiar hubris. Soon after the Iraqi invasion when it was abundantly clear that there were no WMD I suggested in a public address in London that especially President Bush and Prime Minister Blair would enhance their stature if they were to admit that they had been misled and that they therefore had made a mistake. Three years down the line we are still waiting at the empty confessional.

Once during the Truth and Reconciliation Process, we faced a major crisis when one of our Commissioners, Advocate Dumisa Ntsebeza was allegedly implicated in a criminal offence by a witness in an amnesty hearing. We asked President Mandela to appoint a judicial commission as a matter of urgency to look into those allegations. The President appointed Judge Richard Goldstone as a one person commission. One Sunday morning I got a call from the President's secretary. He wanted to know how to contact Dumisa. I suspected that he had received the report from Judge

Goldstone and wanted to put Dumisa out of his misery. I said to the secretary, "Tell the President I am very upset. I am the Chairperson of the TRC and I ought to be the first in the commission to know the findings of the Goldstone Commission." A few minutes later the phone rang and it was Madiba himself on the line. "Mpilo you're quite right. I am sorry." Not too many of us are big enough to be that humble. We think we must give the impression of being infallible. We think saying sorry means we are weak and we engage in verbal gymnastics that would have been unnecessary had we admitted to a *faux pas*. Minister Alec Erwin who is a very able and attractive person could have saved himself a few contortions by accepting that he did use the "s" word.

President Thabo has performed splendidly in most areas of governance. We have enjoyed a remarkable level of stability during his watch as well as an admirable economic growth rate, despite high levels of unemployment and crime. He is making a name for himself with his involvement in peace making on the African continent and in his interaction with the leaders of the G7 countries. I gather most have made it known that if President Thabo is to be absent from a particular Summit dealing with developing world issues then they would not be willing to attend such a meeting. And Time magazine designated him as one of the 100 most influential individuals. Those are all very impressive accolades and feathers in his cap.

A leader leads by leading

A true leader whilst eager to carry his constituency with him whenever possible, sometimes has to take a stand that is not too popular with his followers. But the real leader then demonstrates his mettle by leading through leading. It requires courage to do this, but the leader recalls that the tortoise makes progress only when it sticks its neck out. And so Madiba espoused reconciliation and forgiveness when many of his supporters disclaimed that path of accommodation. Mr F W de Klerk must be warmly commended too for his remarkably courageous initiatives of February 1990. He is still vilified by some in the white community for having capitulated and for selling the pass. Leadership can be a lonely vocation. President Thabo showed his courage when he sacked his deputy.

When I referred the Time magazine nomination to the President and went on to say that the magazine's praise would have been fulsome but for two matters in his policies, he retorted without hesitation and before I could mention them, "AIDS and Zimbabwe." He would rate an A if his AIDS policies particularly were more orthodox. At the least we should forego the luxury of sterile academic debates in the pejorative sense about what does or does not cause AIDS and have a coherent campaign to combat a devastating pandemic led unambiguously from the top. It is galling that we should be fiddling whilst our Rome is burning and it is distressing that we can be pilloried and lambasted as we were in the recent Toronto AIDS conference. Our country does not deserve it and we owe it to our people especially those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS.

Consensus building

It was so gratifying that the government which has a huge majority in Parliament sought to reach a resolution on the Middle East by consensus. The good leader in our African tradition was the one who listened to various and diverse points of view and would then sum up describing the consensus he believed had emerged. Everyone felt they had been listened to, that their views had been taken seriously into account and that indeed they mattered in the scheme of things. We experienced

some of this when we made our transition from repression to freedom. The winners were magnanimous in victory. They did not humiliate their erstwhile adversaries. The transition was characterized by a willingness to compromise – hence a polyglot anthem, an extraordinary flag (both of these instruments of nation building incorporating aspects that are dear to various sections of our population), which other country apart from a four language anthem boasts of having eleven official languages? I pray that we can invoke the spirit which prevailed during our transition when we sought to have a win-win situation and so ended up with a government of National Unity, in which recent adversaries who had been at one another's throats tried to work together as colleagues.

I pray that we can invoke that same spirit to engage Afrikaners feeling under siege, that we should have that same magnanimity in victory now as in the early 1990's as we try to deal with explosive issues such as the place of Afrikaans in education, such as place names, that no section of our nascent community should feel that their noses are somehow being rubbed in the dust by others who seem to be gloating top dogs. We should hear the *cri de Coeur* of Coloureds who claim that previously they were not white enough and now are deemed not black enough. They may be wrong in both those perceptions but perceptions are real for those who entertain them.

We have it in us to become a vibrant, prosperous and compassionate nation. And let us draw into the fray many who were involved in different ways in our struggle against apartheid who today feel disgruntled, unrecognized and sidelined. We need their passion, their commitment, their skill. We showed the world a thing or two when we made an almost peaceful transition. And we are regarded with awe and admiration for showing the world that it is possible for those who had been involved in bloody conflict to evolve into comrades – no, really to undergo the metamorphosis of the repulsive caterpillar into the gorgeous butterfly by opting for the path of forgiveness and reconciliation instead of retaliation retribution and revenge. Let us become what we are – the rainbow people of God, proud of our diversity, celebrating our differences that make not for separation and alienation but for a gloriously rich unity.

This kind of power is pre-eminently one that exercises a persuasive rather than a coercive authority that is characterized by a peremptory use of verbs in the imperative mood. Come, go, do this, do that – jump and as they say expect the addressed to ask docilely “how high?” Bishop Charles Albertyn used to tell us this story, “In this establishment, there are only two rules. Rule No. 1 – The boss is always right. Rule no. 2, in case the boss is wrong refer to rule No. 1.

It may seem as if the kind of leader who uses this style is always in charge, things happen, everybody dances attention. But in fact it is self defeating. It allows resentment and anger to build up in those who have been humiliated by the apparently decisive boss and then one day even the worm will turn. Recall what happened to Mr P W Botha who it is alleged often reduced adult men to tears with his withering scorn? He was dumped quite unceremoniously and has ever since been fulminating impotently in the Wilderness, or a Margaret Thatcher, the Iron Lady. Who used to call others derisively “wets” if they showed compassion, she too was dumped..

The people know who their leaders are. They have long memories and are almost always deeply appreciative. Mwalimu Julius Nyerere who epitomized true leadership with a gentle persuasive power declared he would return on retirement as President of Tanzania to his ancestral village with very modest accommodation. The people would have nothing of it. They built him a lovely indeed sumptuous home in the

village. Soon after his release from prison, Nelson Mandela received a brand new Mercedes Benz which the workers bought by donating portions of their wages. Remarkable. Most dictators have had to seek refuge in other countries skulking away there a far cry from the days when they were strutting arrogantly as so-called self proclaimed Presidents for Life. How many such have received a decent burial in their home country?

That surely speaks volumes when you contrast it with the adulation that the likes of Beyers Naude, Walter Sisulu, Princess Diana and others have enjoyed and the outpouring of love and admiration and genuine grief at their funerals.

Moral universe

We inhabit a moral universe where ultimately right and goodness and justice, truth and freedom will always prevail over their ghastly counterparts. It is God's world and God is in charge. The remarkable messengers of God declared God to be notoriously biased in favour of the little ones of this world, the despised, the oppressed, the marginalized represented in scripture by the triad of the widow, the orphan and the alien. These prophets told us God had a specially soft spot for them and always would act in their behalf against the top dogs, the powerful the cruel, the hard-hearted and so their God set free a bunch of slaves, this God acted on behalf of a non entity, a Naboth against the King. The God for Christians sent God's son born in a stable, of the village carpenter and his teenage wife. This Son companied not with presidents and archbishops but with prostitutes and sinners and claimed that we would be judged as worthy or not worthy of heaven by how we treated the hungry, the thirsty, the naked – and staggeringly declared that what we did or did not do to them we did or did not do for him.

Yes, power would always be judged by how it treated God's favourites.

Psalm 72

"Give the king your judging O God and your righteousness to the king's son.
Let him judge and govern your people with righteousness, and your poor and afflicted ones with judgement and justice.
The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the hills through righteousness.
May he judge and defend the poor of the people, deliver the children of the needy, and crush the oppressor,
So that they may revere and fear you while the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations.
May he be like rain that comes down upon the mown grass, like showers that water the earth.
In his days shall the righteous flourish and peace abound till there is a moon no longer.
He shall have dominion also from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth.
Those who dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him and his enemies shall lick the dust.
The kings of Tarshish and of the coasts shall bring offerings the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.
Yes, all kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall serve him.
For he delivers the needy when he calls out, the poor also and him who has no helper.

He will have pity on the poor and weak and needy and will save the lives of the needy.

He will redeem their lives from oppression and fraud and violence, and precious and costly shall their blood be in his sight.

And he shall live: and to him shall be given gold of Sheba, prayer also shall be made for him and through him continually and they shall bless and praise him all the day long.

There shall be abundance of grain in the soil; upon the top of the mountains the fruit of it shall wave like Lebanon, and the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.

His name shall endure forever, his name shall continue as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed and bless themselves by him, all nations shall call him blessed!

Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things! Blessed be his glorious name forever, let the whole earth be filled with his glory! Amen and Amen!"

Always without exception those who use power for their own self-advancement, their self glorification, self-enrichment at the cost of God's favourites come a cropper. They may strut the world's stage as if they were the cock of the walk but always, all will bite the dust. Stalin, Hitler, Franco, Amin, et al where are they now?

The perpetrators of the injustice of apartheid seemed to be invincible at the height of their power. Today hardly anyone admits to having supported apartheid.

And so we appeal to those who have power in the world, in the Middle East, in Zimbabwe, remember who God's favourites are and that if you act against them you will one day bite the dust and indeed do so comprehensively.

Conclusion

If you want to be the greatest then you must be the servant of all. It does not seem to be quite such a crazy piece of advice after all. Let us not become the callous materialistic and acquisitive ostentatious society lambasted by President Mbeki in his Mandela lecture last month. May we become the caring, compassionate society in which each one matters, is cherished, counts.