

58th Inaugural Lecture
“OH GOD! WHAT HAVE WE DONE?”
AN ESCHATOLOGICAL EXCURSUS

Delivered at the Lagos State University, Ojo, Lagos

By

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On Tuesday, 28th February, 2017

DEDICATION

This Inaugural Lecture is dedicated to the Glory of Almighty Allah
and to the memory of my father, Alhaji (Chief) Alimi Akintola

“OH GOD! WHAT HAVE WE DONE?”

AN ESCHATOLOGICAL EXCURSUS

PROTOCOL:

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The Dean, School of Postgraduate Studies
All Deans of the University
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All Academic and Non-Academic Staff
Students of Lagos State University
Members of the Akintola Family
Members of the Anisere Family
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen
Gentlemen of the Press

AL-MUQADDIMAH (INTRODUCTION):

“My God, what have we done?” This was the rhetorical question asked by Robert Lewis who dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima in Japan at exactly 8.15 *ante meridiem* on August 6, 1945. The bomb, launched from an American Air Force bomber called Enola Gay, killed 130,000 people with immediate effect.¹

Three days later, on August 9, 1945, Kermit Beaham, another bombardier on the US-B-29 jet dropped a similar bomb on Nagasaki. 70,000 Japanese living in Nagasaki died instantly.² It was a second holocaust within three days. Emperor Hiroshito announced Japan’s surrender and signaled the end of the Second World War (1939 – 45).

Robert Lewis’ rhetorical question, “My God, What have we done?” was uttered instinctively as an expression of regret for killing 130,000 people in less than one second. But what lesson has the world learnt since that tragic incident? To the consternation of the eschatologist in particular and the rest of *homo sapiens* in general, man continues to take regrettable actions.

The eschatologist wonders why man insists on destroying himself. Why does he enjoy dragging himself or fellow human beings backward? Why does he relish in corruption, religious extremism, killing in the name of religion, cultism, indecent dressing, examination malpractice, excessive accumulation of wealth, etc? The eschatologist sits back and asks himself, “My God! What have they done?”

Now we must ask who is this eschatologist and what is eschatology? Perhaps we may want to start with the latter.

Eschatology:

The word ‘eschatology’ is from two Greek words, namely, ‘*eschatos*’ and ‘*logos*’. ‘*Eschatos*’ means ‘last’ or ‘final’ while ‘*logos*’ means ‘theory’.³ Literally, therefore, eschatology means the theory of the last things.

While Findlay (2009) and Filoramo (1992)⁴ limit the departments of eschatology to three, *viz.* death, resurrection and the last judgement, Simpson and Weiner (1989) extend them to four, namely: death, judgement, heaven and hell.⁵

Vice Chancellor Sir, I disagree with the compartmentalization adopted by these scholars. Those who see only three divisions, i.e. death, resurrection and the last judgement ignore heaven and hell while those who extend it to four, namely, death, judgement, heaven and hell have ignored resurrection. It is my contention that heaven and hell constitute the crux of *al-Akhirah* (the Hereafter) while resurrection is its launching pad. Findlay, Filoramo, Simpson, Weiner *et al* who limited the departments in eschatology to three or four have been economical with their postulations. I posit that eschatology contains five divisions, viz, death, resurrection, judgement, heaven and hell.

The operational definition in this inaugural lecture is therefore the doctrine of the five last things, namely: death, resurrection, judgement, heaven and hell.

Islamic Eschatological Teachings:

Eschatological belief in Islam is as vital as the religion itself. This is why the Glorious Qur'an pays special attention to eschatology in eleven out of the one hundred and fourteen (114) chapters. Islam brandishes a fatalistic philosophy of death. It holds that nobody is immortal. Man will start to reap the reward of his good or evil deeds right from the grave. Death is not the end of everything (Qur'an 4:78; 16:38 – 40; 9: 120 – 121; 45:24 – 26).

It is interesting that a single verse in the Glorious Qur'an aptly encapsulates Islam's eschatological teachings:

Every soul shall have a taste of death; and only on the Day of Judgement shall you be paid your full recompense. Only those saved from the fire and admitted into the garden will attain the object of life (Qur'an 3:185)

The 'end' or 'last' in Islamic eschatology may be the death of each individual human life or end of the world or human existence.⁶ This is referred to as Doomsday⁷ which will feature a major earthquake that will destroy the whole world (Glorious Qur'an 99:1 – 8). But this final catastrophe will be preceded by the *ashrat as-sa'ah* (Signs of Doomsday, also known as *alamat as-sa'ah*). Some of these *ashrat as-sa'ah* are mentioned in the Glorious Qur'an while others occur in the *hadith* (sayings of

Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him). They are further divided into *al-ashrat al-kubra* and *al-ashrat as-sugra*, i.e. major and minor signs.

The major signs mentioned in the Glorious Qur'an include Ya'juj and Ma'juj (Gog and Magog, Qur'an 18:83 – 99; 21:95 – 97), *dabat al-ard* (the earth beast Qur'an 27:82) and the controversial *nuzul* of 'Isa Ibn Maryam (the descent of Jesus peace be upon him Qur'an 3:55; 4:157; 4:159; 43:61).

Vice Chancellor sir, my main contribution in this regard is the debunking of the myth of *nuzul* or the Second Coming of 'Isa (Jesus). I find it queer that a section of Muslims still believe in the *nuzul*. In my doctorate thesis entitled *A Study of the Islamic Doctrine of Eschatology*, I anchored my demystification of the *nuzul* of 'Isa on ten points. Three of these are reiterated here for brevity:

1. The vital verse (43:61) often used by the *nuzul* camp only refers to 'Isa's messengership or personality as one of the signs of Doomsday and not to any *nuzul*;
2. Reference to 'Isa in the Qur'an as a sign of Doomsday is metaphorical and should be interpreted as the victory of good over evil towards the end of time and
3. The likely *nuzul* of 'Isa is paradoxical because it sharply and irreconcilably contradicts a fundamental tenet of Islam, namely, that Muhammad is the seal of all prophets (*khatam annabiyyin* 33:40).⁸

The minor signs mentioned in the Glorious Qur'an are two, namely, the smoke (*ad-dukhan*, Qur'an 44:10) and the eclipse (*al-kusuf*, Qur'an 54:1 and 81:1). Unlike the Glorious Qur'an, however, the *hadith* has been more forthcoming on the issue of *ashrat as-sa'ah*. Apart from mentioning all the major and minor omens mentioned in the Glorious Qur'an, it went further to add a large number of '*alamat as-sa'ah*.

These additional prophetic prognostications include (but are not limited to) the following:

1. The rising of the sun from the West;
2. The coming of ad-Dajjal (the Anti-Christ);⁹

3. The coming of al-Mahdi (The Guided Messiah)¹⁰
4. Clash between two large Muslim groups;¹¹
5. The disappearance of knowledge;
6. The lifting of the Qur'an
7. The frequent occurrence of earthquakes;
8. Increase in bloodshed and killings;
9. The construction of sky-scrappers;
10. The worsening of socio-economic conditions;
11. The emergence of hostilities between children and their parents;
12. Men would obey their wives and disobey their mothers;¹²
13. Moral decadence would rise to its peak;
14. Bribery and corruption would become the order of the day;
15. Politicians would deceive the electorate;
16. Impostors would lead men;
17. Oppression would be widespread;
18. Rise in the number of divorces;
19. Forty women would vie to marry only one man;
20. Promiscuity would be the order of the day;
21. Materialism would becloud piety;
22. Men and women would dress alike;
23. Men would have sex with men and women would have sex with women¹³
24. Justice would be for sale and
25. The voices of hypocrites would rise even inside mosques.¹⁴

Yet eschatological beliefs are not restricted to Islam. It is found in Christian doctrine of the parousia¹⁵ (or the expected Second Coming of Jesus, Mathew 24; Daniel 12:4; Isaiah 45:23; Acts 3:19) and the proximity of the end of Time (1 Peter 4:5 & 7; James 5:8; Hebrew 10:25). Jewish apocalyptic eschatology also holds the belief in a Messiah.¹⁶

Hindu eschatology posits a general destruction at the end of the final age¹⁷ while the idea of Karma in Bhudism alludes to automatic retributive justice after death.¹⁸ The Zoroastrian Bridge of Chinvat and the balance of Rashnu Razista equally cement the idea of belief in a future life.¹⁹ The Andaman Islanders, the Mintiras of Malaca, the Australians and the Indian tribes believe that sinners are held accountable beyond

the grave while the Teutons and Mexicans hold that cowardice debars from paradise while courage is a virtue which earns reward.²⁰

The Greek believe in the return of the pure souls to earth after ten thousand years while the ancient Egyptian doctrine of Ra contains a Book of the Gates and judgement in the Hall of Osiris.²¹ The practice of burying servants with kings in Yorubaland and in Dahomey signify a staunch faith in eschatology.²² However, this practice has since become a myth as witnessed in the Abobaku hoax in Ile Ife, State of Osun, Nigeria, in August 2015.²³

As the hilarious story goes, a certain man had been the King's closest aide, relishing the attendant paraphernalia of royalty. He was known by the title 'Abobaku', meaning, 'the man who will die with the king'. He had probably thought that the king would live forever. Then the unexpected happened. Fearing that he might become a sacrificial lamb as he must accompany the King on the journey of no return, Abobaku, who had enjoyed the patronage, largesse, pomp and pageantry with the king, took to his heels.

Of course in reality there is no aide or title by that name or inference in Ile Ife in modern times. It might have existed in ancient times. The *Sarun*, the head aide at the Ife palace who is always with the King, was indeed by the late Ooni, Oba Okunade Sijuade's side at the point of death and burial. But he is still alive as no tradition now requires a chief to die with the King in Ile Ife or any other city.²⁴

We may now take a look at the eschatologist.

The Eschatologist:

The eschatologist specializes in matters connected with the five last things I mentioned above: death, resurrection, judgement, heaven and hell. In short, he is a specialist in matters relating to eschatology. He counsels adherents of his faith on the need to be conscious of the possibility of death, the ephemeral nature of life, the value of leading a frugal life, the essence of piety, the benefits accruing to ascetism and the evil of corruption. But he must not stop there. In order to make his research useful to society, he must domesticate his eschatological thoughts and reveal his apocalyptic visions on the excesses of his society.

My Humble Contribution as an Eschatologist:

Vice Chancellor Sir, an inaugural lecture is a window created for the lecturer to share his contributions with colleagues in the academic community as well as the general public (what we call ‘town’ and ‘gown’). Permit me, therefore, to Nigerianize eschatology by taking our audience in this auditorium today through the rough lanes of life experiences of self-destructive tendencies in Nigeria.

In my pensive mood, I chose my contributions to the society as an eschatologist. I decided to use the little knowledge which Almighty Allah gave me to guard against corruption, extravagance, injustice, bad governance and tyranny, all of which lead man to different types of punishments on the Day of Judgement. Apart from academic articles in reputable local and international journals on the subject of eschatology, I founded a Muslim human rights organization known as the Muslim Rights Concern (MURIC) which I have been using to fight the above-mentioned evils in society. I thank Almighty Allah that MURIC has become an household name in Nigeria today and *aluta continua*.

As I mentioned earlier, there are several ways by which Nigerians destroy themselves and lay the foundation for their entry into hell fire. But space and time will not permit me to delve into all of them. I will therefore eschatologize corruption in Nigeria as a case study.

Eschatology and Corruption in Nigeria:

One major area where Nigerians are retarding their own progress and destroying their future is corruption. It pervades all fields of human endeavour in the country: the political class, the military, the police, the judiciary, the education sector, businessmen and women, artisans, etc. Corruption has grown into such a cankerworm that every system decays at its touch. It has become a gangrene that must be burned out with hot iron and a cancerous tumor in the anatomy which must be cut off from the rest of the body in order to save the latter.

A few examples may be necessary here. Joshua Dariye allegedly diverted N1.2 billion ecological fund.²⁵ N5 billion was found in the bank account of an army general’s thirty years old daughter.²⁶ Olisa Metuh allegedly took two million dollars

out of \$2.1billion arms fund. He reportedly gave the money in cash to Miss Nnenna Ararume for private investment.²⁷

Twenty three thousand (23,000) ghost workers were recently discovered in the Nigerian civil service while a single civil servant among them was found collecting the salaries of twenty people.²⁸

The case of Diepreye Alamieyeseigha is an interesting study in executive materialism and myopism. *The Punch* newspaper of Wednesday, 23rd November 2005 published Alamieyeseigha's corruption offences which read *inter alia*:

Owning a multi-million US dollar refinery in Equador, purchasing two properties in London at 2.79 million British pounds, buying three properties in Ikoyi and Allen Avenue, Ikeja at N850 million, laundering state funds through six companies, acquisition of N1 billion shares in Bond Bank and acquiring Chelsea Hotels, Abuja, at N1.5 billion²⁹

Alamieyesiegha has foreign bank accounts in Cyprus, Denmark, the Bahamas, the United States of America and more than three bank accounts in Britain alone.

Nigerian senators demanded gratification to the tune of fifty four million naira (N54m) from Mallam Nasir El-Rufai as a condition for ratifying his ministerial appointment in 2003.³⁰ To pass the budget of the Ministry of Education, they also demanded fifty five million naira. Senator Adighije later admitted being part of the committee of senate on education that took bribe from Fabian Osuji, former Minister of Education.³¹ Surprisingly, however, nobody was arrested. None was prosecuted. Nobody was jailed. It was impunity *nulli secundus*.

For an objective appraisal, we must appreciate President Muhammadu Buhari's current war against corruption as politicians, army generals and even judges who fall foul of bribery and corruption are now being held accountable through arrest, detention and imprisonment. It had never happened before under civil rule. This is a real 'change'.

The army is also guilty of corrupt practices in this country. Sanni Abacha, the totalitarian military ruler stole N400 billion, stashing them away in more than one hundred and thirty foreign banks.³² Soldiers stole one billion naira military pension in 2002³³ while twenty three million naira disappeared from the drug unit of the

Nigerian army Small Scale Drug Manufacturing Unit in 2005.³⁴ Recently, former Chief of Defence Staff, Air Chief Marshal Alex Badeh (rtd) allegedly stole N558.2 million every month from the Nigerian Air Force funds.³⁵

A luggage containing N4.2 million which was forgotten by a passenger at the Muritala Muhammad International Airport was handed over to the police by a good Samaritan. But the money had disappeared from police custody the next day when the owner came to collect it!³⁶ Marked money had to be used to trap corrupt policemen at the Trinity Police Station, Olodi-Apapa, Lagos in September 2003.³⁷ The Kwara State Police Command also nabbed eight police officers for extortion in July of the same year.³⁸ A former Inspector General of Police, Sunday Ehindero, admitted that there were armed robbers in the Nigerian Police Force.³⁹

This has brought both distrust and contempt for the police among ordinary Nigerians. Bayo Obasoyin, who was once abducted by fake policemen, says:

“If I see a snake, I won’t move, but if I see police uniform, I will run like I never did. In fact, ever since then, if I see policemen on television, I always switch it off”.⁴⁰

Yet Nigerians do not need to develop such pathological hatred for their police force for two major reasons. Firstly, the police force is not the only institution engrossed in corruption. We are all involved. What we need is a change of mindset, the mind of an eschatologist with the apocalyptic fear of *al-Akhirah*: that it is not the possibility of being caught and being jailed for corruption alone that matters, but the fear of everlasting torture in hell fire.

Secondly, the Nigerian police should not be blamed for all these in view of its limitations and challenges. These include poor remuneration, lack of motivation, inadequate equipment and understaffing. Former Inspector General of Police, Ogbonna Onovo once complained that the police could not stop armed robbery.

The police is paid N7,000.00. To glorify our efforts, it was increased to N21,000.00. I make bold to say that no family can survive on this for a month. We are saying N21,000.00 for somebody who is going to die. Where will the morale come

from? We do not have enough communication gadgets to track our operations and monitor the roads; vehicles for patrol are not enough, and even where we have the vehicles what about fuelling because there have been times that those vehicles cannot go out because of fuel.⁴¹

Rasheed Okunola attributes upsurge in crime to inadequate number of policemen. He affirms that there are only 205 policemen to every 100,000 Nigerians with just 1,300 police stations in the country.⁴² Nigeria had 310,177 policemen by the year 2007⁴³ and there has been no mass recruitment since then until late 2016 when President Buhari ordered the recruitment of 10,000 policemen.⁴⁴ This will push the figure to 320,177 at the end of the recruitment exercise.

Vice Chancellor Sir, I find the number of the proposed recruitment grossly inadequate. After all, the United Nations (UN) recommends one policeman for every four hundred and forty eight (448) civilians.⁴⁵ Interestingly, the National Population Commission in conjunction with the National Bureau of Statistics released Nigeria's new population estimate in December 2016. According to the two authoritative bodies, Nigeria's population is now 193.3 million.⁴⁶

If this new population figure is anything to go by and if we should abide by the UN's global best practices of one policeman for every 448 Nigerians, I make bold to say this country should not have less than 431,473 policemen.

Neither is the Nigerian judiciary without blemish. Some Nigerian judges are currently on trial for receiving bribe.⁴⁷ The residences of some high profile judges seem to have become *bureau de change* as huge sums of foreign currencies were found there by operatives of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC).

Whereas we have brilliant, hardworking and dedicated lawyers as Senior Advocates of Nigeria and heads of tertiary institutions, some black sheep among Nigerian lawyers were caught writing examination for law students at the Nigerian Law School in 2016. Speaking in Port Harcourt during the 56th Annual General

Conference of the Nigerian Bar Association, the Director of the Nigerian Law School, Olanrewaju Onadeko lamented:

Some lawyers were caught sitting as surrogates for students at the Nigerian Law School. In other words, they were caught writing examinations for other students at the school.⁴⁸

The Nigerian business class is an unmitigated disaster. They are adept at giving kick-backs, inflating contracts and abandoning projects. Walter Wagbatsoma, a billionaire businessman who had been arrested in the United Kingdom for money laundering was convicted in absentia in a Lagos High Court on Friday 13th January, 2017 for fuel subsidy fraud.⁴⁹

Corruption manifests in the education sector in form of examination malpractice, admission fraud, sexual harrassment and the manipulation of projects by school authorities. Miss Chika Amsy Charles was sentenced to 90 years imprisonment in 2007 for admission fraud. According to *Premium Times*:

Ms. Charles was found guilty of swindling three young Nigerians to the tune of N5.6 million under the guise of helping them secure admission into Enugu State University of Science and Technology, through her unregistered NGO called “Bold and Dynamic Gender Initiative.”⁵⁰

Abdul Yahaya bagged nine years imprisonment for fraudulently collecting two million naira under the pretext of securing admission for the complainant’s son at the Future University, Cairo.⁵¹ The Federal University of Technology, Akure, is currently being investigated for corrupt practices.⁵²

It was in realization of this dire situation that President Muhammadu Buhari said on May 6th 2015 just before he was inaugurated as president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria that we must kill corruption before it kills Nigeria.⁵³ Lai Olurode identifies corruption and poor leadership as the major variables that have destroyed Nigeria and retarded her growth.⁵⁴ Bolaji Akinyemi laments the way corruption has turned Nigeria into a pariah state.⁵⁵

It is interesting to note that Transparency International ranked Nigeria the most corrupt country in year 2000, second most corrupt country in 2003 and third most corrupt in 2004.⁵⁶ In a discussion prior to the anti-corruption summit held in Britain in May 2016, British Prime Minister David Cameron told Queen Elizabeth II that Nigeria was fantastically corrupt.

We've got some leaders of some fantastically corrupt countries coming to Britain... Nigeria and Afghanistan, possibly the two most corrupt countries in the world.⁵⁷

January 2017 ranking of Nigeria has shown significant departure from this alarming status. According to the 2015 Corruption Perceptions Index reported by Transparency International in January 2017, the current war against corruption has moved Nigeria to 136 least corrupt nation out of 175 countries.⁵⁸

The effect of corruption on a nation is better imagined than experienced. Corruption inhibits economic progress. It goes hand in hand with conflict such that peace and the attendant stability will be kept at bay in any corrupt society. In addition to this, there can be no equal right and justice in a corruption-ridden society. No wonder, therefore, that Nigeria's economy is in comatose. Its roads are death traps suitable only for suicide drivers. The public hospitals are glorified public mortuaries. Power generation is suffering from epilepsy while the education sector is in the intensive care unit.

Islam and Corruption:

The eschatologist reflects on this tragic scenario and soliloquizes, 'My God, what have they done with Nigeria?'

But he soon finds solace in the punishment awaiting corrupt Nigerians in *Al-Akhirah*. Allah warns that those who consume the tax-payers' money for no just cause will be thrown into hell fire *yawm al-Qiyamah* (on the Day of Resurrection):

"Oh you who believe, do not consume your properties wrongfully among you. But let there be traffic and trade among you with mutual goodwill. Also do not kill yourselves for verily indeed Allah

is very merciful to you. If anyone does this in rancor and injustice, he will be cast into the fire. (Qur'an 4:29-30)

In the same vein the Qur'an warns that Muslims should avoid illegal and unjust consumption of wealth belonging to others:

Do not consume your property among yourselves for vanity.
Neither should you use such as bait for the judges in order to
wrongfully and knowingly eat up other people's property.
(Qur'an 2:188)

The apocalyptic expectation for corrupt people after death is frightening. The Qur'an compares them to unbelievers and threatens them with severe castigation:

They take usury and collect bribe. They devour people's money
unfairly. Verily indeed we have prepared a grievous punishment
for unbelievers. (Qur'an 4:161)

In order to eliminate corruption and fraud, Prophet Muhammad (SAW) made landmark declarations which make it clear that a Muslim who cheats people by misappropriating public property or public money, who cheats in an examination, engages in 419, sells goods above the normal price or involves himself in any dishonest act is no longer a Muslim.

The issue of corruption and its eschatological implication is considered very important by every committed Muslim. Just last year, on July 27, 2015, Muhammad Fathi compiled fifteen *hadiths* on corruption.⁵⁹

However, only six of those fifteen *hadiths* have direct connection with bribery and corruption and the remaining nine are mere allusions. In summary, those *hadiths* contain serious warning against bribery, they affirm that public service is a great responsibility, that leadership is about service to the people, authority is a trust and finally, public property is Allah's property and anyone who pilfers it will enter the fire of hell.

The first among the six *hadiths* which have direct bearing on corruption reveals that Allah rains curses on both the giver and the taker of bribe:

‘Abdullah bin `Amr (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Messenger of Allah said: "The curse of Allah is upon the one who offers a bribe and the one who takes it." (Ahmad, Ibn Majah, also authenticated by Al-Albani)

My next choice among the six anti-corruption *hadiths* illustrates Prophet Muhammad’s strong disdain for bribery and corruption. It is the story of Ibn Lutbiyyah of the tribe of `Azd.

Ibn Lutbiyyah was sent out to collect tax. He came back after several weeks with two parcels and said, “The first parcel is for the state. It contains the tax collected by me. The second parcel is for me. It contains gifts given to me by the citizens. The prophet rebuked him, “Why don’t you sit down in your father’s house and see if anyone will bring gifts to you? By (Allah) in Whose Hand is the life of Muhammad, if any one of you takes anything (wrongfully,) he will bring it on the Day of Resurrection, carrying it on his head...”

In the third *hadith*, we learn that any public official who steals the common wealth and uses it to purchase or build personal properties will appear on the Day of Judgement carrying the stolen money or property on his head:

Adi ibn `Umairah (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Messenger of Allah said, "Whosoever among you is appointed by me to a position and he conceals from us (anything as small as) a needle or more, he is acting unfaithfully and will bring it on the Day of Resurrection". Upon hearing this, a black man from Al-Ansar stood up and said: "O Messenger of Allah, take back from me your assignment." The Prophet asked, "What happened to you?" The man replied: "I have heard you saying such and such." The Prophet said, "I say that (again) now: Whosoever from you is

appointed by me to a position, he should bring everything (of its revenues), big or small. (Then,) what he is given therefrom, he may take. What he is disallowed to take, he should avoid." (Muslim)

Gifts presented to holders of public office convey hidden messages. More often than not, it is an attempt at taking undue advantage. In the fourth anti-corruption *hadith*, the Prophet exhibits his unmitigated allergy for public officials who receive gratifications.

Abu Humaid As-sa`idi (May Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Gifts offered to public servants are ill-gotten gains (*ghulul*)." (authenticated by Al-Albani)

Prophet Muhammad's message in the fifth *hadith* is that public office holders should be satisfied with their salaries and allowances.

Buraidah ibn Al-Husaib (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said: "When we appoint someone to a (public) post and provide him with an allowance, anything he takes beyond that is an ill-gotten gain. (Abu Dawud and authenticated by Al-Albani)

The sixth and last anti-corruption *hadith* identifies public property as Allah's property and attests that those who steal it will go to hell.

Khaulah bint `Amir (May Allah be pleased with her) reported that the Messenger of Allah said, "Some men abuse Allah's Property (that is, public money and funds). They will go to Hell on the Day of Resurrection". (Al- Bukhari)

The above *hadiths* confirm the Prophet's aversion for abuse of office. Yet many Muslim faithfuls are givers and takers of bribe today in spite of these stern warnings from the Prophet.

The Fate of Corrupt Leaders in al-Akhirah:

Vice Chancellor Sir, it is natural for the eschatologisation of corruption in Nigeria to lead us to the fate of corrupt leaders in *al-Akhirah*. They will account for every kobo they stole from the poor masses. Greater punishment awaits corrupt leaders

because while every corrupt person will be held accountable for his or her dishonest dealings, the Glorious Qur'an affirms that leaders will receive double punishment because their followers will seek to extenuate their own offences by hanging their iniquities on the necks of their leaders:

The Day that their faces will turn upside down in the fire. They will say, "Woe unto us! If only we had obeyed Allah and the messenger." Again they (i.e. the followers) will say, "Our Lord, we obeyed our leaders (who were corrupt and so we became corrupt) and they misled us. Our Lord, give them double punishment and curse them grievously" (Qur'an 33:66-68)

Whereas Nigerians are in the habit of defending corrupt people of their tribe, religion or political party, there will be no room for such frivolity *yawm al-Qiyamah*. A thief is a thief on the Day of Judgement whether he is a Muslim or a Christian, whether he is Yoruba or Hausa, whether he belongs to political party 'A' or party 'B'. He robbed Nigerians when he was on earth. He did not think of his fellow Muslims when he stole. He did not steal for the sake of his kinsmen. Neither did he steal for his political party. He just had the noun 'thief' and the verb 'to steal'.

Allah will ask him to judge himself. His book of records will be opened for him:

We have tied every man's record to his neck. We shall bring out a scroll for him on the Day of Judgement and he will see it spread open. (Then he will be told) Read your record, sufficient indeed are you today to judge yourself (Qur'an 17:13 – 14).

This is a critical and helpless stage where man cannot employ the services of the best lawyer in the land to defend him in Allah's court. Neither will he be able to bribe the judge or jump bail. There is even no bail in Allah's court. Money will be useless on that day. The powerful shall be humbled and the wealthy shall tremble. Did they think Doomsday was still far away? Or did they assume that it will never come? The Glorious Qur'an responds by telling them that Doomsday is indeed very close:

They see it (Doomsday) as far off but We see it as near. The Day that the sky will be like molten brass and the mountains will be like wool. No friend will (have the time to) ask about a friend though they will be seeing each other. The sinner's preoccupation will be how he could save himself from the penalty of that Day (perhaps by sacrificing) his

children, his wife and his brother (Qur'an 70:6 – 12).

Eschatological postulates are capable of changing the world to a better one. Thanatophobia alone is enough as a lesson.⁶⁰ According to Ajijola (1978), the denial of life after death makes all other beliefs meaningless and “destroys the very sanction of pious living”⁶¹ According to Ameer Ali (1974), belief in life after death is necessary as a spiritual sanction.⁶² Muhajir (1974) is of the opinion that without belief in *al-Akhirah* morality may become irrelevant, wickedness may become widespread while rulers grow autocratic and feudalistic.⁶³

Impact of my Contributions:

Vice Chancellor Sir, nothing can be more fulfilling than an effort which yields results. Like I said earlier, I founded MURIC to use it as a tool to fight injustice, stigmatization, corruption and bad governance, all of which inhibit positive eschatological prospects for man. The establishment of MURIC and its effective advocacy swung the pendulum in the way the press, civil societies and Nigerians in general treated Muslims. From a marginalized section of the country in terms of contribution to the national narrative, Nigerian Muslims became mainstream discussants.

Whereas M. K. O. Abiola who won the June 12 presidential election in 1993 was a Muslim, no Islamic organization was ready to stick out its neck in his defense when the freest, fairest and most peaceful election was criminally annulled by the military until MURIC was established one year later (1994).

Although I have always hated injustice and had always stood on the side of the oppressed, that illegal, unlawful, unconstitutional and criminal annulment was the turning point in my life. I led students of my Arabic school in Ibadan in a rebellion against the school management in 1969 even as a junior student. I also led Nigerian students in Al-Azhar University, Cairo, in a revolt against oppressors who were fellow Nigerians. That revolt nearly led to my deportation from Cairo in 1977.

MURIC was able to put pressure on the military regime and the organization started getting a breakthrough in the media as far back as 1995. Our first publication appeared in the *Nigerian Tribune* of 28th January of that year. In that first press statement, we asked the military dictator, General Sani Abacha (rtd):

...To set all political detainees and human rights activists free and hand over to a democratically elected civilian administration without

further delay...and to disband the constitutional conference immediately as it constitutes further drain on the tax payers' money.⁶⁴

More publications followed as MURIC complemented the struggle of the Campaign for Democracy (CD) and we gradually became targets of the totalitarian regime. Before the creation of MURIC, I participated in the activities of the CD alongside Dr. Beko Ransome Kuti, Femi Falana and Odion Akhaine who was the secretary of the CD at that time.

I can say that I did my training in human rights in the CD. I learnt how to beat the security agents at the game, how to resist teargas attack, how to disguise, how to detect if I am being followed etc. I partook in the civil disobedience of the time. The policemen fired live bullets at us while we threw stones at them. Many of our comrades paid the supreme sacrifice for democracy. I never thought that I would survive and I did not care. I had long decided that it was better to be a free man in my grave than to live as a puppet and a slave. To Allah alone be the glory that I and some of our comrades who confronted the military are alive today.

I was actually responsible for translating the CD's anti-military leaflets into Arabic and these were taken to Northern Nigeria for circulation. I was also in charge of the distribution of the English version of CD leaflets in Ojo-Igando axis. Let me amuse you with this little escapade which occurred at Iyana Iba.

A hilarious scenario played itself out one day as I got the CD papers ready for circulation and headed towards Iyana Iba to board a bus to Dr. Ransome Kuti's house. My wife may not forgive me if she hears this but I took the precaution to stuff the top of the papers with ladies' underwears just to ward off intruders. I picked those dirty underwears from a public dustbin inside Iba estate. A young boy who was a neighbour's son respectfully collected the bag containing the 'contraband' materials. He walked ahead of me.

Suddenly a mobile policeman left his colleagues at Iyana Iba junction and stopped the little boy. "Wetting you carry?" He shouted at him. Not wanting to put the innocent boy in trouble, I shouted from behind, "It is mine. He only helped me to carry it." I sprang forward, snatched the bag from the boy and whispered to him to disappear quickly.

The gun-toting policeman ordered me to open the bag. My heart jumped to my mouth but I didn't show it. I quickly obeyed. He dipped his hand inside the bag and brought out a dirty female pant. He hissed and bent down again. This time he came up with

a lady's dirty brazier. He was furious. "Get out of here before I change my mind!" He screamed at me. I was more than happy that my little trick had worked. But that is not to say that I always evaded arrests. I have just been lucky a couple of times.

The State Security Services (SSS) grilled me from morning till evening in September 2001 at their state headquarters in Shangisha, Lagos. I had the feeling that I would spend the night in their cell. Then suddenly one officer came in to inform the director that students from the Lagos State University had arrived in loaded buses demanding to see me immediately. They insisted that they would not leave without me. The SSS boss frowned and said, "Dr. Akintola, we have to allow you to go. We don't want trouble with LASU students". I appreciate our students for this uncommon gesture of solidarity.

I had another close shave with men of the SSS in the State of Osun in 2007 when MURIC organized a programme aimed at sensitizing Muslims in the state. The venue was invaded by the SSS but although I managed to walk past them in disguise, they gave my car a hot chase around the streets of Ile Ife. I didn't really care about myself. My main concern on that day was how to get my wife out of danger because she was in the car with me and the children might suffer neglect if both of us were arrested together. But we managed to escape because for me, Ile Ife is *terra cognita*. I knew all the streets of the city like the back of my hands.

Let me now mention a few examples of the impact of MURIC's contributions on the lives of Nigerians. The People's Democratic Party (PDP) planned to hold its national convention on 20th July, 2013 during Ramadan. Top insiders of the party who were Muslims hinted us at MURIC's secretariat. We condemned this insensitivity and the PDP quickly apologized and postponed its national convention till after Ramadan.⁶⁵

As far back as October 2013 MURIC asked the Federal Government to adopt social security schemes for unemployed Nigerians. The October 14, 2013 edition of the *Daily Trust* said *inter alia*:

A social security system that every jobless Nigerian receives a token amount capable of feeding them should be adopted by the Federal Government, a group, Muslim Rights Concern (MURIC) said yesterday. The group said further, "The youths are angry because they are hungry. These youths now vent their spleen on fellow Nigerians through kidnapping, armed robbery and bokoharamism".⁶⁶

Without being immodest, we can claim that the adoption of this scheme by the current Federal Government in January 2017 whereby the N-Power scheme pays N30,000 monthly to graduates while one million unemployed Nigerians are given a token sum of N5,000 each in nine states as a pilot scheme is a direct impact of MURIC's socio-economic advocacy.⁶⁷

Earlier in August 2013, MURIC advocated for the extension of women's maternity leave to six months instead of three. According to the *Punch* newspaper of 11th August 2013, MURIC anchored this demand on:

We consider the three months maternity leave as inadequate and unrealistic in view of ...the stipulation in Qur'an 2:233 that new born babies should be strictly placed on breastmilk diet for the first six months ... and recommendations coming from medical experts confirming same.⁶⁸

My joy knew no bounds therefore when the Lagos State Government announced in July 2014 that it was extending women's maternity leave from three to six months. As the first state to adopt this humane measure, this action proves that Lagos is walking its talk about being the center of excellence in Nigeria.⁶⁹

In the last week of November 2014 during the reign of ex-President Goodluck Jonathan, the Federal Government removed Arabic Ajami from the new N100 notes and reportedly inserted the Jewish symbol. MURIC screamed to high heaven and Aso Rock reacted within 24 hours to deny the allegation.⁷⁰

The former president also asked me to visit Aso Rock in order to tender apology. He may get the apology tomorrow. The *Daily Independent* of 26th November, 2014 captured the mood succinctly:

President Goodluck Jonathan has demanded an apology from the Muslim Rights Concern (MURIC) for accusing him of being anti-Muslim in his administration's policies while promoting Zionism and Israeli interests.⁷¹

Quoting the presidency, the newspaper continued:

We invite Prof. Akintola to visit the Presidential Villa and see for himself that there are no foreign security operatives on the premises and that the only security operatives in the Villa are Nigerians.⁷²

Though it was designed to criticize my activities and those of MURIC, the joint press conference held by Nigeria's Nobel Laureate, Wole Soyinka and foremost lawyer and human rights activist, Femi Falana on Sunday, 26th June 2016 speaks volumes in the area of the impact of my contributions to society.⁷³ The two highly revered activists lambasted me personally and when MURIC reacted the next day, the Nigerian media went agog with headlines like "MURIC Carpets Soyinka", "Soyinka Goofed – MURIC"⁷⁴

MURIC has also been involved in impromptu interventions to save the country from crisis. I will give just two examples. When Asari Dokubo threatened in 2014 that Nigeria would go up in flames if Jonathan did not win the 2015 presidential election, we confronted Jonathan and asked him to tell Nigerians if Asari Dokubo was speaking for the presidency or if he had the latter's tacit approval. We also asked the security agencies to call him to order. Asari Dokubo was invited by the SSS the following day.⁷⁵

In the second example, the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) fixed examinations during Jum'ah prayer in August 2015. Muslim youths throughout the country became agitated and our office was inundated with mails and calls. As usual we calmed nerves, issued a press statement and WAEC quickly reviewed its examination time table. Only those who know the extent of damage to lives and properties which previous religious riots had caused will appreciate this intervention. WAEC had nearly plunged the country into crisis of unimaginable proportion. But Nigeria lives on.⁷⁶

Just as I was preparing this Inaugural Lecture, on 24th January 2017, a certain Pastor Johnson Suleman incited his church congregation to kill Fulanis, linking the herdsmen phenomenon with Islam. We took him up and asked him to separate criminals from their tribes and religion. He immediately retracted his statement, explaining that he did not ask Christians to kill Muslims. This is an intervention that came just when we were going to press and in the nick of time too.⁷⁷

ALKHATIMAH (CONCLUSION):

Vice Chancellor Sir, the apocalyptic scenario painted above cannot but elicit fear in the hearts of believers. It is my hope, however, that Nigerians will have a change of mindset and stop their propensity for self-destruction before it is too late. In the meantime the eschatologist continues to wonder: "What have Nigerians done to their country?"

It is sad that Nigerians have allowed Africa's rich culture to metamorphose into a culture of waste. We waste our wealth on trivial things. We consume everything and leave nothing for the future. We praise the thieves among us and award them titles in the churches and the mosques. Our extravagance knows no bounds so much so that we lost our national norms and values. Our marriage ceremonies are the loudest and most expensive in the world. We bury our loved ones and 'bury' our money with them. We must slaughter many cows after the death of parents who die of kwashiorkor, whose rooms leaked in more than twenty one places and who never had any shoes to wear in their life time.

We advertise their death in the newspapers, on radio and television 'for a life well spent'. We become obsessed with uniform clothes or 'aso ebi' that we even go out of our way to borrow in order to get them. We sing, dance and make merry to celebrate the death of our loved ones as if their death means good riddance to bad rubbish. To cap the edifice, although we fail to spend money on our parents, we

spray this hard-earned money at parties and dance on our parents' graves. Are we not a nation of pretenders?

Parents hire impersonators who write their children's examinations. We idolize indolence and demonize diligence and integrity. We treat the few honest ones among us like lepers and call them fools. Whereas nations of the West make progress through orderliness and decorum, we have sent common sense packing through the borders. We use religion to oppress our fellow citizens. We must preach everywhere: inside commercial vehicles and inside classrooms.

We must use religion to disturb the peace in every neighbourhood. We hold *tahajjud* and vigil nights where we shout to high heaven as if our 'God' needs hearing aids. Yet we fail to blame ourselves when drivers who could not sleep in the night due to our noisy vigil sleep on the wheel later in the day and die in road accidents or when students fail examinations because our noisy *tahajjud* would not allow them to study at night.

Our expressways where we expect to spend one hour journeying from one city to another have become nightmares as religious zealots block the roads for hours. Weddings are known to have been conducted by phone on the express road because the groom or the bride was trapped in the endless traffic gridlock. Accident victims have also died in the heavy traffic when ambulances conveying them to the hospital are forced to remain stagnant for hours. This is apart from the economic implication of man-hour losses and the threat to life arising from constant attacks by traffic hoodlums. What is wrong with us as a people?

Whereas even the United States Army approved the use of *hijab* for American female Muslim soldiers in December 2016,⁷⁸ we would rather desecrate church choir garment by wearing it to school than allow female Muslim students in our schools to use *hijab*. Whereas there was a time the police used to kill our students during demonstrations, now the students turn the gun on themselves and waste fellow students' lives in the name of cultism.

We go to Makkah just to acquire golden teeth. We sponsor political thugs, girlfriends and prostitutes to Makkah with government's money. Although *hajj* is compulsory only once in a lifetime, we turn Makkah into our backyard and go twice a year (*hajj* and 'Umrah).

As if this is not enough, we kill in the name of religion. Whereas the Qur'an condemns bloodshed and the killing of innocent people (Qur'an 5:32; 5:161) Boko Haram has killed thousands of Christians and Muslims. Whereas Islam commands all mankind to seek education (Qur'an 96:1-5), Boko Haram forbids education for females. Boko Haram kidnapped our girls and forcefully converted them whereas the Qur'an says there is no compulsion in Islam (Qur'an 2:256). The Qur'an forbids forceful marriage of women (4:19) but Boko Haram forced our girls into marriage. Many of the girls who have returned are either pregnant or have become nursing mothers. Some of them are HIV positive.⁷⁹ The eschatologist cannot help lamenting, "My God, what have they done?"

The state of the Nigerian nation today is enough to make us express remorse for our excesses. The economy is in shambles. Unemployment rate at the end of the second quarter in August 31, 2016 was 13.3%.⁸⁰

Naira is in a free fall. As at 15th January, 2017, naira exchanges officially at N305 to \$1. It is N490 to \$1 in the black market.⁸¹ According to the National Bureau of Statistics, inflation rate in Nigeria rose to 18.55% in the last week of December 2016, the highest in eleven years.⁸² Nigeria's present galloping inflation came with the first recession in twenty five years.

Parents no longer ask their children if they are satisfied with the food given to them. Few Nigerians buy new clothes. They simply go for second hand materials, including underwears, shoes and belts. New cars are out of the question for ordinary Nigerians. They have been relying on imported used cars for more than two decades.

But Nigerians brought all these upon themselves and they should be asking, like Robert Lewis who dropped the first atomic bomb on Nagasaki, "My God, what have we done?"

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. *Hajj* sponsorship should be stopped by both the Federal and State Governments.
2. Corrupt public officials should be jailed and banned from holding public office.

3. Nigerians should desist from defending corrupt public officers on the basis of religion, ethnicity or political affiliation.
4. The Federal Government should recruit at least 100,000 more policemen before the end of 2019 in order to meet global best practices.
5. Religious organizations should stop indiscriminate award of chieftaincy titles.
6. Noisy mosques and churches should be shut down for at least six months and they should only be reopened after a well publicized undertaking written and signed by them.
7. Religious centers which allow their activities to spill to the expressways should be fined huge amounts of money and sealed up until they can guarantee free movement of traffic.
8. The Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA) should compel every Nigerian pilgrim to pay a minimum of N50,000 to the organization before embarking on *hajj* or *Umrah*.
9. Local governments in the country should introduce 'cow tax' to be charged per number of cows slaughtered at funerals, weddings, house-warmings, chieftaincy title events and 'freedom' parties, etc. Money realized from the 'cow tax' should be used to fund primary schools in the local governments.
10. State governments should enforce the relevant law against preaching inside commercial vehicles.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

I thank Allah the Powerful, the King of Kings, Master of all masters, Judge of all judges; Allah the Omni-potent, the Omni-science, Allah the Greatest, of the Greatest, of the Greatest...

Let me begin by thanking our amiable and very resourceful Vice Chancellor, Prof. Olanrewaju Fagbohun, the University Management and the whole university community for supporting me in my preparations for this Inaugural Lecture. I thank my Dean in the Faculty of Arts, Prof. Leke Fakoya, for his immense support. My colleagues in the Faculty of Arts and in the Department of Religions showered me with affection. I thank you all. I am tempted to single out two professors in the University, Prof. Alozie of the Department of Philosophy whom I fondly refer to as the Assistant Deputy *Igbakeji* Chief Imam of the 'Lagos State University Multi-Religious Central Mosque' because of his liberal disposition and Prof. Olagunju, the

Dean of the Postgraduate School, who calls me the Chief Chaplain of LASU Chapel of Light. I thank the Lagos State University Multimedia Centre, Dr. Mrs. Amoo, Mrs. Kemi Akinrile and the rest of the multimedia team.

Three colleagues also stand out in LASU Library. Mr. John Ogungbeni of the E-Library was very supportive. He spent his time and energy to get relevant online materials for this Inaugural Lecture. Ditto for Mrs. O. Makinde, the Reference Librarian. She searched for materials for me and introduced some good reference books. It was also from the library that the real encouragement and inspiration to deliver my Inaugural Lecture came. My good friend, Mr. Adigun, has been the only person on campus who always asked when my Inaugural lecture would come up. He always encouraged me by topping his question with Jimmy Cliff's "You can get it if you really want..."

Before I go on, I must appreciate the man who set my feet on the path of this eschatological excursion, the man who supervised my Ph. D thesis, Prof. Yasir Quadri. His impact on my life has been tremendous. I suffered for three years under another supervisor without being allowed to submit even the synopsis before Prof. Quadri came to my rescue. Prof. Quadri appears to have the midas touch. Everything he touches turns into gold. He was the same man who supervised Prof. Ishaq Oloyede, the current Registrar of JAMB and Secretary General, Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA).

If wishes were horses, beggars would ride. But it cannot be so. My mother, Princess Aderin of Isaba, Ikole Ekiti, I will always pray for you even though I never knew you. You brought me into the world and left me to the travails of life at the tender age of three. Now I understand what they mean when they say love is blind. Loving you is just natural to me even when I never really had any vision of you.

I wished my father, Alhaji (Chief) Alimi Akintola, were here today but that is just wishful thinking as he passed away a few weeks ago. He was the best and greatest father that ever lived. As the Baale of Bolorunduro-Ife, he was upgraded to the status of a king by the Ooni of Ife but he declined and requested that I, his first son, should be crowned king instead. I nearly fainted when he told me that I should be king. I am not a royal material. I am an aluta man. Jihad is my life.

My junior brother, His Royal Highness, Oba Dhikrullahi Olagbaju Akintola, the Olu-Ibeji of Bolorunduro-Ife, I pay tributes to you. I thank you publicly today for accepting my offer to occupy our highly cherished throne many years ago. I thank you for your unconditional love and for submitting yourself to me even though you are the king. May your reign be long and peaceful. Aamiin. I thank my siblings who reside here in Lagos, Mrs. Omolara Oyewole, Mr. Muzamil Akinloye Akintola and Mrs. Samiat Amuda for their love and support.

I salute the courage of members of the executive of the Muslim Rights Concern (MURIC) and the entire members throughout the country who have stood by me through several escapades, escaping death on many occasions by the skin of their teeth, risking their lives to protect me and sheltering me from harassment especially by overzealous security agents. I appreciate the supportive role of friends of MURIC, particularly that of our leader, Dr. Muiz Banire.

I remember and cherish my Da'wah team in Telly Da'wah Embassy. They manifested untainted loyalty and unfettered readiness to serve come rain, come sunshine. I thank you for never failing to turn up in my residence for the regular monthly prayers for your 'Ambassador' as you all fondly call me. I love you all. To the staff and students of Telly Dawah Academy, I thank you for your support and I charge you to keep the flag flying.

I thank members of the Residents Association of the Frontline Zone, Victory Estate, Iba, for reposing confidence in me as Chairman of the association. I thank you for the great respect you have for me. In the same vein, I appreciate the affection shown me by the Egbe Ilosiwaju Omo Yoruba of Iba, Lagos State where I also serve as Chairman. I thank you for ignoring my faults and for treating me like a king. I thank the leaders and members of different Islamic organizations here present. Thank you for your concern particularly for my safety in recent times.

To my children, I don't know how to thank you. I can only ask you to forgive 'Daddy' because I often rob you of my time due to my several engagements and incessant trips. Those present here today include Mubarak who just finished his masters programme at the University of Ilorin, Mrs. Najeebat Abiodun 'Senior Baby' who is currently pursuing her Ph.D programme, is my first daughter. She and her loving husband, Mr. Qasim Abiodun, have four wonderful kids (three boys and

a girl: Abdul Aleem, Abdul Kareem, Abdul Azeem and ‘Aishah). I remove all breakables from sight when they come visiting.

Mrs. Ganiyat Adesanya is my second daughter. She graduated from LASU. Miss Jihad Akintola (Jii-Jii) is a medical student. Mujahid Akintola is a student of computer engineering. Kaokab is also an undergraduate. My ‘Princess’, Zaynab, my ‘Baby Boy’, Ameer and my ‘Baby Prince’, Labeeb are the joy of my life. ‘G. B.’ Abdul Aleem is my first grandson. You can see that not only do we have a football team, we have the referee and linesmen as well.

My in-laws, Mr. Qasim Abiodun is my first son. He is everything to me and has never disappointed me. He is Senior Baby’s husband but I call him my ‘Running Mate’ because he is the one taking care of the apple of my eye. My heart is always out there with them. Mr. Abdul Wasiu Kolapo Adesanya is Ganiyat’s (my second daughter) husband.

I must now go to the main menu after the first and second courses. My Queen, my confidant, my counselor, my medical doctor, the love of my life, the engine in my body without whom the rest is empty, the best wife in the world, Aminat Omobolanle Akintola, nee Anisere, I thank you. The worst day of my life was the day I found her in a pool of blood after she had been shot by assassins who came into our house at 1.20 am. She took that bullet for my sake but my solace lies in the fact that two of the criminals did not return the way they came and they failed woefully in their satanic mission. Thank you my darling. Thank you for believing all my lies. Thank you for covering up for me whenever necessary. Thank you for being my Amazon. Thank you for never testing me for once when I boast. Thank you for everything.

Mr. Vice Chancellor, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, this is my story.

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