

ROLE OF AFRICAN UNION IN ADDRESSING GLOBAL CHALLENGES THROUGH THE LENS OF GENESIS (11:1-9): THEOLOGICAL AND SOCIO-POLITICAL INSIGHTS

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Abstract

This interdisciplinary paper analyses the African Union's (AU) role in addressing global challenges and examines the AU's efforts to foster unity and cooperation among African nations. Drawing upon political science, international relations, and environmental studies, the research investigates the effectiveness of the AU's initiatives in promoting a unified African voice on the global stage. It explores how regional integration has shaped policy coordination, resource allocation, and diplomatic efforts in tackling transnational problems. Uniquely, this analysis incorporates a biblical perspective, drawing parallels between the AU's aspirations for unity and the biblical narrative of the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11:1-9. The paper adopts an interdisciplinary approach and employs the politico-theological framework for the development of the ideas in the research. While acknowledging that AU's regional integration project has made significant strides, it observes that it still faces considerable obstacles in translating this unity into effective solutions for climate change, pandemics, and migration, which are among the global challenges plaguing Africa. Integrating secular and biblical viewpoints, this study offers a holistic understanding of the complexities involved in building a united African response to global challenges.

Keywords

African Union, Climate Change, Pandemic, Migration, Cooperation.

Resumo

Este artigo interdisciplinar analisa o papel da União Africana (UA) na resposta aos desafios globais e examina os esforços da UA para fomentar a unidade e a cooperação entre as nações africanas. Baseando-se na ciência política, nas relações internacionais e nos estudos ambientais, a investigação analisa a eficácia das iniciativas da UA na promoção de uma voz africana unificada na cena mundial. Explora a forma como a integração regional moldou a coordenação de políticas, a alocação de recursos e os esforços diplomáticos na resolução de problemas transnacionais. De forma singular, esta análise incorpora uma perspectiva bíblica, estabelecendo paralelos entre as aspirações de unidade da UA e a narrativa bíblica da Torre de Babel em Génesis 11:1-9. O artigo adota uma abordagem interdisciplinar e recorre ao quadro político-teológico para o desenvolvimento das ideias na investigação. Embora



reconheça que o projeto de integração regional da UA tenha feito avanços significativos, observa que este ainda enfrenta obstáculos consideráveis na tradução desta unidade em soluções eficazes para as alterações climáticas, as pandemias e a migração, que se encontram entre os desafios globais que assolam África. Integrando pontos de vista seculares e bíblicos, este estudo oferece uma compreensão holística das complexidades envolvidas na construção de uma resposta africana unida aos desafios globais.

Palavras-chave

União Africana, Alterações Climáticas, Pandemia, Migração, Cooperação.

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Introduction

In an increasingly interconnected world, the challenges of climate change, pandemics, and migration transcend national boundaries, demanding coordinated and unified responses from regional and global actors. The African Union (AU), as the premier continental body representing African states, has arisen as an apt and handy force in addressing these issues through collective action and regional integration (Kanu et al., 2025). However, the effectiveness of these efforts and the AU's role in shaping global responses to these crises remain subjects of intense scrutiny and debate. The AU's ambitious initiatives, such as the Great Green Wall, the African Adaptation Initiative, and the African Medical Supplies Platform, reflect a concerted effort to harness regional unity for global impact (African Union, 2022; United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification [UNCCD], 2022). These initiatives aim to tackle pressing issues like environmental degradation, health emergencies, and migration, highlighting the AU's commitment to promoting a cohesive and proactive African voice on the international stage.

Yet, despite these advancements, the AU's journey is fraught with challenges in translating regional unity into effective and sustainable solutions (African Union Commission, 2015; African Union, 2020). To deepen an understanding of the AU's role and the complexities of its regional integration efforts, this paper draws on an interdisciplinary approach that merges insights from political science, international relations, environmental studies, and biblical scholarship. In particular, the narrative of the Tower of Babel in Gen 11:1-9 provides a compelling allegory for the AU's efforts. This biblical account, depicting humanity's determination to build a towering edifice and the subsequent divine intervention that disrupts their unity, mirrors the AU's own struggle to



harness collective action amidst diverse national interests and external pressures (Wenham, 1987).

Gen 11:1-9 portrays the unity of language and purpose among the people of Babel as a source of both strength and potential hubris, resulting in a dramatic divine intervention that scatters humanity across the globe. This narrative offers a rich metaphor for understanding the AU's approach to addressing global challenges: the aspirations for unity and collaboration resonate with the AU's endeavours to create a unified African response to environmental, health, and migration issues. At the same time, it underscores the inherent risks of overreaching ambition without adequate consideration of practical limitations and external factors. This study provides a holistic examination of the AU's strategies and challenges in fostering regional cooperation by integrating this biblical perspective with contemporary political and environmental analysis. It aims to elucidate how the AU can leverage its collective strength while navigating the complexities of implementing effective solutions to global challenges. Through this interdisciplinary lens, the paper seeks to offer valuable insights and recommendations for enhancing the AU's efficacy in addressing these critical issues, contributing to a more unified and resilient African response to global crises.

Methodology

The methodology adopted for this paper is the interdisciplinary approach, which can enrich research because of its emphasis on using multiple fields of ideas, inquiry, and methods of research. It is about the involvement of two or more academic, scientific, or artistic disciplines to research, which would mean taking a holistic approach, combining multiple disciplines to achieve one common purpose, and in this case, it is a combination of politics and scripture. This is based on the understanding that for researchers addressing important questions and issues, one set of methods for analyzing and understanding is probably not sufficient on its own (ASU 2024). The interdisciplinary approach is required to overcome the problem that "disciplines may perform a selector role determining what is included and excluded in both the framing of research and its execution" (Tribe, 2006, p. 366). It also increases the flexibility and ability of researchers to address theoretical and methodological biases that are implicit in disciplinary research. It is therefore in the hands of the skilled researcher to integrate various disciplines in recognition of respective merits and shortcomings (Jamal et al., 2001; Tribe, 2007).

Interdisciplinary research has to bridge different worldviews (ontology), understanding of knowledge (epistemology), and methodologies, exacerbated by discipline-specific discourses. An overarching ontology that enables one to overcome and capitalise on heterogeneities is required (Easton 2010). The interdisciplinary approach is based on the Igwebuike philosophical principle, which holds unity as the highest good in all things. It, therefore, requires the drawing of methods from different disciplines and merging them together to produce cognitive advancement, that is, examining or solving a theme, problem, issue, or experience (Kanu 2016, 2020).



Theoretical Framework

In order to enable a political interpretation of scripture for modern political reality, the theoretical framework for this research establishes a relationship between God and politics at various levels, enabling a political interpretation of scripture for contemporary political reality (Ivan 1969; Cavanaugh 2003; Pilani, 2024). This approach liberates scripture from being confined solely to divine parameters and rediscovers its political dimensions. Horsley (2000) and Kanu and Paul (2024) emphasise that studying the Bible inherently carries political implications. Walzer (2014) argues that there is no contradiction between God and politics, describing the Bible as both a religious and political book. Sihombing (2022) supports this view, noting that political matters are indeed addressed in the Bible. Other scholars, while acknowledging the autonomy of political rulers, assert that their power is limited and must recognise God's eternal governance (Schwartz and Kalman 2016; Kanu 2016; Fleming 2017; Walzer 2018). This perspective sees politics as a means through which God implements His plans for His people, with God as the true King and human rulers seeking divine guidance (Kanu 2020; Martínez 2018; Brueggemann 2009).

Grudem (2018) emphasises God's role in ruling over the destinies of kings and nations, citing several biblical passages to support this claim. These passages from Psalms, Proverbs, and Daniel underscore the belief that God's authority extends over all earthly rulers and nations. Punt (2007 & 2014) and Barr (1980) argue that the New Testament is inherently a political document, which has been obscured by centuries of spiritualisation. The political nature of scripture is further illustrated through Christ's life and involvement in the political society of His time, engaging with an oppressed nation under Roman rule (Punt 2017; Globalchristians 2024). This historical context provides a basis for deriving political discourses from scripture, demonstrating how religious texts can be interpreted and applied to contemporary political realities.

African Union and Global Challenges

In this subunit, the paper sets out to illustrate the proactive measures the AU has undertaken regarding the three global challenges, namely climate change, pandemics, and migration.

AU and Climate Change

Climate change signifies one of the most pressing global challenges of our time, with particularly severe implications for the African continent. The African Union (AU) has, however, emerged as a key player in addressing climate change, recognising its severe implications for the continent. The AU's Agenda 2063 acknowledges climate change as a key challenge and outlines strategies for sustainable development and climate resilience (African Union Commission, 2015). In 2015, the AU launched the African Adaptation Initiative (AAI) to enhance action on adaptation, address loss and damage, and increase



climate finance (African Union, 2020). The AU has demonstrated practical action through its support for initiatives like the Great Green Wall, which aims to create green and productive landscapes across North Africa, the Sahel, and the Horn of Africa. The AU has played a vital role in coordinating efforts across member states and securing international funding for this project (United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification [UNCCD], 2022). Furthermore, the AU has been actively involved in global climate negotiations, advocating for increased climate finance for adaptation in Africa and recognition of the continent's special needs at forums like COP26 (African Union, 2021).

In 2022, the AU adopted its Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan, a 10-year strategy that marks a significant step in Africa's approach to climate action (African Union, 2022). This strategy is particularly crucial given Africa's disproportionate vulnerability to climate impacts despite contributing less than 4% of global greenhouse gas emissions (UNFCCC, 2021). The strategy is built on four strategic intervention axes and addresses key sectors such as food systems, ecosystems, energy, and urban areas, aligning with international agreements like the Paris Agreement and UN Sustainable Development Goals (African Union, 2022; UNFCCC, 2015). The AU's approach emphasises African-led and African-owned solutions while recognising the need for international support in finance, technology transfer, and capacity building (African Union, 2022; Addaney et al., 2021). This stance was evident at COP27, where African countries advocated for their special circumstances to be considered in global climate policies (UNFCCC, 2022). The AU's proactive engagement in global climate negotiations aims to strengthen Africa's position and attract targeted support (Benkenstein et al., 2020; European Commission, 2022).

Pandemics

The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the critical importance of coordinated responses to global health crises, with the African Union (AU) playing a pivotal role in managing the pandemic's impact across the continent. In February 2020, the AU swiftly established the Africa Task Force for Novel Coronavirus (AFTCOR) to coordinate the continent's COVID-19 response, sharing information, coordinating resources, and developing continent-wide strategies (Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention [Africa CDC], 2020). The AU's Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) has been at the forefront of the pandemic response. A strategic initiative was the establishment of the African Medical Supplies Platform (AMSP), a single online marketplace to enable the supply of COVID-19-related critical medical equipment in Africa (African Union, 2020). This platform addressed significant supply chain challenges and helped mitigate shortages of critical equipment such as personal protective equipment (PPE), diagnostic tests, and ventilators.

In August 2020, the AU launched the COVID-19 Vaccine Development and Access Strategy, aiming to vaccinate at least 60% of the African population. Through this strategy, the African Vaccine Acquisition Task Team (AVATT) was established, which secured 670 million vaccine doses for the continent, supplementing the COVAX facility



(African Union, 2021). This coordinated effort demonstrated the AU's capacity for swift action and its commitment to a unified approach in combating the pandemic. The AU's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly through the Africa CDC and AVATT, has been crucial in navigating the challenges posed by the health crisis. Their efforts not only facilitated the distribution of medical supplies and vaccines but also demonstrated the importance of regional cooperation and solidarity in addressing global health emergencies.

Migration

Migration, both within Africa and from Africa to other continents, presents complex challenges and opportunities. The African Union (AU) has taken a comprehensive approach to address the complex challenges of migration, both within Africa and from Africa to other continents. The AU adopted the Migration Policy Framework for Africa (MPFA) in 2006, revising it in 2018 to align with current migration trends and dynamics. This framework provides guidance to AU Member States and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in migration management (African Union, 2018). A practical example of the AU's efforts is the Joint Labor Migration Program (JLMP), launched in 2015 to facilitate the free movement of workers and advance regional integration and development in Africa (International Labour Organisation [ILO], 2020).

The AU has also focused on addressing forced displacement. In 2019, it declared the "Year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement in Africa," aiming to raise awareness and promote concrete actions to address forced displacement on the continent (African Union, 2019). Furthermore, the AU has been actively involved in implementing the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) in Africa. The AU Commission, in collaboration with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), has been supporting member states in developing national action plans to implement the GCM (IOM, 2021).

The AU's efforts extend to balancing the benefits of migration, such as economic growth and cultural exchange, with the need to address issues like irregular migration and human trafficking. The Joint Labour Migration Program (JLMP) aims to harmonise labour migration policies among member states, promote the rights of migrant workers, and enhance economic opportunities through increased mobility (International Labour Organisation [ILO], 2020). The AU's support for the GCM underscores its commitment to promoting safe and regular migration while addressing irregular migration and its associated risks. While the AU has demonstrated significant leadership in addressing these global challenges, the scale and complexity of migration issues require continued efforts.



An exegesis of Gen (11:1-9)

Historical and Cultural Context of Gen (11:1-9)

The narrative of Gen 11:1-9 is designed against the backdrop of the ancient Mesopotamian religious and cultural setting. The Mesopotamian worldview was heavily influenced by polytheism, as evidenced by the prevalence of various gods and goddesses in Sumerian, Akkadian, and Babylonian mythologies (Heidel, 1963). The Mesopotamian pantheon included deities such as Enlil, Marduk, and Ishtar, who were believed to have control over various aspects of the natural and social world (Lambert, 1965). In Mesopotamian mythology, the construction of cities and the establishment of human civilisation were often attributed to the direct intervention and guidance of the gods (Jacobsen, 1976). The building of temples and ziggurats, which were massive stepped towers, was seen as a means of honouring the gods and maintaining a connection between the human and divine realms (Frankfort, 1948).

The ancient Near East, particularly Mesopotamia, was characterised by the emergence of large urban centres and the development of city-states (Liverani, 2006). These cities, such as Uruk, Nippur, and Babylon, served as hubs of economic, political, and cultural activity, often vying for dominance and resources (Postgate, 1992). The construction of monumental structures, like the tower described in Gen 11, was a common feature of these urban centres, which served as symbols of power, prestige, and the centralisation of authority (Oppenheim, 1964).

Among scholars, it is popularly noted that there is a relationship between Chapters 1-10 of Genesis and Gen 11:1-9. The story of the Tower of Babel in Gen 11:1-9 follows the Flood narrative in chapters 6-9, which describes the destruction of humanity due to its increasing wickedness and the subsequent preservation of Noah and his family (Wenham, 1987). The aftermath of the Flood is then recounted in Gen 10, known as the "Table of Nations," which outlines the repopulation and dispersal of humanity across the globe (Hamilton, 1990). The Table of Nations in Gen 10 provides a genealogical and geographical framework for understanding the origins of various peoples and their relationship to one another (Mathews, 1996). This background information sets the stage for the events described in Gen 11:1-9, where the unity of language and the subsequent dispersion of humanity are central themes (Wenham, 1987).

Content analysis of Gen 11:1-9

The Unity of Language and People (Gen 11:1)

The opening verse of the pericope establishes the initial state of unity among the people, describing them as having "one language (*śāpāh* 'eḥāt) and the same words" (Gen 11:1). This unity of language is presented as a positive attribute, as it would have facilitated effective communication and collaboration among the people (Hamilton, 1990). This description of linguistic unity is significant, as it suggests that the people believed their collective strength would enable them to overcome various life challenges, such as



dispersal and marginalisation (Wenham, 1987). The motif of human unity and collective construction projects is found in other ancient Near Eastern traditions, such as the Mesopotamian *Atrahasis* Epic (Lambert, 1965; Heidel, 1963). These parallels indicate that the biblical authors were drawing on common cultural tropes to establish the narrative's context and the significance of the people's unity.

The Building of the City and Tower (Gen 11:2-4)

The narrative progresses by describing how the people "journeyed" (*nāsa'*) from the east and "settled" (*yāšab*) in the land of Shinar (Gen 11:2). This movement and relocation suggest that the people were seeking to establish a new home and community, perhaps in response to some form of life challenge or adversity (Wenham, 1987). The people then decide to "build a city and a tower" (Gen 11:4). The Hebrew term for "build" (*bānā'*) implies a deliberate and collective construction project, underscoring the unity of purpose among the people (Hamilton, 1990). The text reveals the people's motivation for this building project: "let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth" (Gen 11:4). The desire to "make a name" (*'āšē' šēm*) suggests a quest for recognition, power, and security, while the fear of being "scattered abroad" (*pen-nāpûš*) indicates a desire to overcome the challenges of dispersal and marginalisation (Mathews, 1996).

The motif of collective human construction projects, such as the building of cities and monumental structures, is found in other ancient Near Eastern traditions, particularly Mesopotamian myths and legends (Lambert, 1965; Heidel, 1963). This suggests that the biblical authors were drawing on common cultural tropes to establish the narrative's context and significance. Thus, the people's collective efforts to build a city and tower reflect their belief in the power of unity to overcome life's challenges.

Yahweh's Intervention and Judgment (Gen 11:5-7)

The plot reaches its climactic point as the text shifts to focus on Yahweh's perspective. The text states that "Yahweh came down to see the city and the tower that the children of man had built" (Gen 11:5). The use of the verb "came down" (*yāred*) suggests a direct divine intervention and engagement with the human situation (Hamilton, 1990). Yahweh then expresses concern about the unity and ambition of the people, stating, "Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them" (Gen 11:6). The repetition of the phrase "one people" (*'am 'eḥāṭ*) and "one language" (*šāpā' 'eḥāṭ*) emphasises the potential threat that Yahweh perceives in the people's unity (Wenham, 1987).

In response to the people's unity and ambition, Yahweh declares, "Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech" (Gen 11:7). The use of the verb "confuse" (*bālal*) suggests a deliberate disruption of the



people's collective efforts, undermining their ability to communicate and work together effectively (Mathews, 1996). The climactic divine intervention in Gen 11:5-7 highlights the tension between human unity and divine sovereignty. While the people's collective efforts to overcome challenges through unity are presented as admirable, the text ultimately suggests that unchecked human ambition and pride can be perceived as a threat to Yahweh's authority (Sternberg, 1985; Westermann, 1984). The disruption of human unity serves as a divine judgment on the people's self-importance and their attempt to achieve their goals without acknowledging the limits of their capabilities.

The Dispersal of Humanity (Gen 11:8)

In v. 8, the account reaches its falling action: as a result of Yahweh's intervention, "the Lord dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city" (Gen 11:8). The use of the verb "dispersed" (*pus*) highlights the disruption of the people's collective efforts, as they are forced to abandon their ambitious building project (Wenham, 1987). The text further emphasises the consequences of Yahweh's intervention, noting that the people were "scattered over the face of all the earth." The repetition of the root (*pūs/nāpaš*), meaning "to scatter" or "to disperse," underscores the divine disruption of the people's unity and their subsequent dispersal across the globe (Hamilton, 1990). The disruption of the people's unity and their subsequent dispersal serve to emphasise Yahweh's ultimate control over the human condition, including the diversity of languages and the geographical distribution of humanity (Mathews, 1996).

The Resolution: The Name "Babel" (Gen 11:9)

The narrative concludes with an etiological explanation for the name "Babel" (*bābel*). The text states, "Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused (*bālal*) the language of all the earth. And from there the Lord dispersed them over the face of all the earth." The name "Babel" (*bābel*) is derived from the Hebrew verb (*bālal*), meaning "to confuse" or "to mix" (Hamilton, 1990). This linguistic connection serves to explain the divine disruption of the people's unity, as Yahweh "confused" (*bālal*) their language, leading to their subsequent "dispersal" across the earth. The etiological explanation of the name "Babel" in Gen 11:9 underscores the central theological message of the passage. The text emphasises Yahweh's ultimate control over the human condition, including the diversity of languages and the geographical distribution of humanity (Mathews, 1996). The disruption of the people's unity and the resulting dispersal serve as a divine judgment on their self-importance and their attempt to overcome life's challenges through their own collective efforts, without acknowledging the limits of their capabilities and the primacy of Yahweh's authority (Sternberg, 1985; Westermann, 1984).



Synthesis of the Analysis of Gen 4:1-9

The passage offers an analysis of unity's role in overcoming challenges, presenting it as both a strength and a potential threat to divine authority. The initial description of people sharing "one language and the same words" (Gen 11:1) establishes unity as a positive attribute, facilitating effective communication and collaboration (Hamilton, 1990; Wenham, 1987). This unity is further emphasised through the collective decision to "build a city and a tower" (Gen 11:4), reflecting their belief in unity's power to overcome life's challenges (Mathews, 1996). The motif of collective human construction projects is presented as a common cultural trope in ancient Near Eastern traditions, suggesting that biblical authors drew on shared narratives to establish the context and significance of the people's unity (Lambert, 1965; Heidel, 1963).

However, the passage also highlights the tension between human unity and divine sovereignty. Yahweh's intervention, described as "coming down to see the city and the tower" (Gen 11:5), suggests a direct confrontation with human ambition and an attempt to achieve goals without acknowledging their limitations (Hamilton, 1990; Sternberg, 1985; Westermann, 1984). Yahweh's concern about the people's unity and their potential to achieve anything they propose (Gen 11:6) underscores the perceived threat to divine authority. Consequently, Yahweh's decision to "confuse their language" (Gen 11:7) and "disperse them over the face of all the earth" (Gen 11:8) serves as a divine judgment on human hubris (Mathews, 1996; Wenham, 1987; Hamilton, 1990).

The passage concludes with an etiological explanation of the name "Babel," derived from the Hebrew verb "*Bālal*," meaning "to confuse" (Gen 11:9). This reinforces the central theological message of Yahweh's ultimate control over the human condition, including language diversity and geographical distribution (Mathews, 1996). The disruption of unity and the subsequent failure to overcome challenges serve as a cautionary tale, highlighting the limits of human ambition and the necessity of acknowledging divine sovereignty.

African Union and Global Challenges: Lessons from Gen 11:1-9

The story of the Tower of Babel in Gen 11:1-9 provides a profound narrative on human unity, ambition, and the complexities of managing collective endeavours. This biblical account serves as a valuable lens through which we can examine the role of the African Union (AU) in addressing contemporary global challenges, such as climate change, pandemics, and migration. The unity depicted in Gen 11 and its subsequent disruption by divine intervention offer insights into how collective efforts can both strengthen and complicate efforts to tackle global issues.

The narrative of Gen 11:1-9 begins with humanity united by a single language and purpose, embarking on a monumental project – the construction of a city and tower. This unity allows for coordinated action and ambitious goals, which parallels the AU's approach to combating climate change. Just as the people in Babel worked together towards a common objective, the AU has spearheaded collective efforts to address climate change



through initiatives like the Great Green Wall and the African Adaptation Initiative. These programs embody the spirit of unified action seen in Gen 11, aiming to combat environmental degradation and enhance resilience. However, the disruption of Babel's unity serves as a cautionary tale. The AU's initiatives must avoid pitfalls akin to the Babel narrative, where overreach or lack of coordination could undermine their effectiveness. The story underscores the importance of balancing collective ambition with practical constraints and external factors, such as international support and climate finance, to avoid the fragmentation of efforts that could impede progress.

In the Babel narrative, unity facilitates the ambitious construction project but is ultimately disrupted, highlighting the potential pitfalls of unrestrained collective action. In the context of pandemics, particularly COVID-19, the AU's response demonstrates the power of regional solidarity and coordinated efforts. The establishment of the Africa Task Force for Novel Coronavirus (AFTCOR) and the African Medical Supplies Platform (AMSP) mirrors the collaborative spirit seen in Gen 11, as these initiatives pooled resources and strategies to address the pandemic's challenges across the continent. The AU's role in managing the pandemic also reflects the need for a coordinated approach to overcome crises. Just as the Babel narrative shows the consequences of unchecked unity, the AU's experience emphasises the importance of maintaining solidarity while adapting strategies to address emerging issues. The pandemic response highlights how effective coordination can leverage collective strengths while managing the risks of disruption or failure.

The Tower of Babel narrative's focus on dispersion following the disruption of unity offers a compelling analogy for understanding migration challenges. The AU's approach to migration, through frameworks like the Migration Policy Framework for Africa (MPFA) and the Joint Labour Migration Program (JLMP), reflects an effort to manage the complexities of human movement and integration, much like the attempt to unify and control dispersal in Babel. The Babel story underscores the inherent challenges in managing large-scale migration and the need for effective governance. The AU's efforts to harmonise migration policies and address forced displacement echo the narrative's themes of managing unity and diversity. The AU's initiatives aim to balance the benefits of migration with the need to address irregular migration and human trafficking, highlighting the necessity of adapting strategies to the realities of human mobility and external factors.

Questions to Enhance the Role of AU in Addressing Global Challenges

Based on the analysis of the African Union's (AU) role in addressing global challenges and the insights drawn from the biblical narrative of Gen 11:1-9, the following questions could be raised to enhance the AU's effectiveness:

- i. *Enhance Coordination and Integration:* Shouldn't AU strengthen coordination mechanisms among member states to ensure that collective efforts, such as those in climate change initiatives, pandemics, and migration management, are well-coordinated and aligned? Just as the unity in Gen 11 was a source of strength, encouraging deeper integration and collaboration can help avoid fragmented or redundant efforts.



- ii. *Balance Ambition with Practical Constraints:* While the AU's ambitious projects, like the Great Green Wall and the African Medical Supplies Platform, are commendable, there needs to be a realistic assessment of resources and potential challenges. Shouldn't the AU develop clear, phased plans that account for external support, technological capabilities, and financial limitations to avoid overreach, as illustrated by the Tower of Babel narrative?
- iii. *Promote Inclusive Decision-Making:* Shouldn't the AU ensure that its decision-making processes are inclusive and take into account the diverse perspectives and needs of all member states? This will help in promoting a sense of ownership and commitment to collective goals, reducing the risk of disunity or disengagement.
- iv. *Strengthen International Partnerships:* Shouldn't the AU continue to build and strengthen partnerships with international organisations, governments, and NGOs? Given the global nature of challenges like climate change and pandemics, securing international support and cooperation is crucial. The AU's advocacy for climate finance and equitable vaccine distribution should be intensified to ensure sustained support.
- v. *Adapt and Innovate in Response to Emerging Challenges:* Shouldn't the AU remain flexible and adaptive, continuously assessing and refining its strategies in response to new developments? Learning from the COVID-19 pandemic, the AU should invest in research and development, enhance early warning systems, and build resilient infrastructure to respond to future crises effectively.
- vi. *Promote Regional Solutions with Global Impact:* Shouldn't the AU focus on developing regional solutions that have the potential to influence global policies and practices? By positioning Africa as a leader in areas such as sustainable development and climate adaptation, the AU can ensure that the continent's unique challenges and perspectives are integral to global decision-making processes.

Conclusion

The African Union has demonstrated considerable progress in promoting unity and collective action among its member states to address global challenges such as climate change, pandemics, and migration. By drawing parallels with the biblical narrative of Gen 11:1-9, this study underscores both the potential and the challenges of such unity. The Tower of Babel highlights the power of collective ambition, while also warning of the risks associated with overreach and the need for divine guidance.

The AU's initiatives, like the Great Green Wall and the African Medical Supplies Platform, reflect a strong commitment to unified action, but they also reveal the complexities of maintaining cohesion and effectiveness in the face of diverse national interests and global pressures. Moving forward, the AU must balance its ambitions with practical constraints, ensure inclusive and participatory decision-making, and strengthen international partnerships to overcome these challenges.



The implementation of the recommendations can enhance AU's capacity to address the critical issues facing the continent and contribute more effectively to global solutions. The lessons from Gen 11:1-9 provide a valuable framework for understanding the importance of unity, the need for careful planning and execution, and the essential role of external support in achieving collective goals. Through these efforts, the AU can continue to build a resilient and unified African response to the pressing challenges of our time.

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