

**Paradise:**  
**A Source of Inspiration for the Renewal of Social and Economic Structures  
in a Global Society**

by

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*“Oh, threats of Hell and Hopes of Paradise!”<sup>1</sup>*

- Edward Fitzgerald (1809-1883)

It is difficult to contemplate how the age old paradise belief has survived over generations. Today there is the persistent presence of violence, suffering, and death coupled with the challenges that lie before the human and nonhuman inhabitants of the earth, ranging from population growth, hunger, deforestation, industrial pollution and the like. The concept of paradise which is the original abode of the first human, animal and plant species provides a major shift in our understanding of how we are to replicate paradise to bring about a just society. However, considering the fact that there are wide ranges of interpretive interest and results of biblical analysis of the paradise narrative,<sup>2</sup> my analysis of the paradise narrative will hinge on the textual analysis of the biblical text in accordance with the approach appropriate for the genres of the folk literature or narrative which are ‘creation myths’ and ‘etiologies.’<sup>3</sup> I wish to use the methodology of the literary criticism approach<sup>4</sup> by a normative

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<sup>1</sup> These are the words that begin one of the verses of the quote of Edward Fitzgerald 1809-1883. Edward Fitzgerald in *Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 205-208, (206), 26

<sup>2</sup> It is evident that recent scholarship has opened up new perspectives in regards to the concept of Paradise. An example is portrayed in the collections of 15 articles on Paradise in which it is seen as an earthly garden, an allegorically eschatological defined space in the heavens with its second section devoted to contemporizing paradise in late antiquity. *Paradise in Antiquity: Jewish and Christian Views*. Edited by Markus Bockmuehl and Guy G. Stroumsa. New York: Cambridge University, 2010 cf. Harold Bloom, “From J to K or The Uncanniness of the Yahwist” in *The Bible and the Narrative Tradition*, ed. Frank McConnell (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 19-35, (22).

<sup>3</sup> These genres are helpful in recognizing the archetypal or essential value of the paradise narrative. Carol Meyers, *Discovering Eve; Ancient Israelite Women in Context*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 72-94, (80)

reading of the paradise narrative in line with economic sociology research tools of interpretations which takes into account the social and economic issues to highlight structures that will be relevant for building a just global society. However this is not to negate the fact that there may be other approaches which could be used for arriving at the same result. This paper taking into cognizance the paradise narrative will attempt to answer the questions: What is the concept of paradise in Genesis?<sup>5</sup> How can the concept of paradise inform our quest for a just society in this fragile vulnerable world of ours?

### The Origin of the Word Paradise

The word 'Paradise' is an old Persian loan word originally denoting a royal park or an enclosure gardens. It is rarely used in the Old Testament as it is not a Hebrew word but was a concept that flourished among the exiles from the Persian religious worldview alongside other concepts that were incorporated into the religious world of the Old Testament.<sup>6</sup> However, it retained its meaning of a park or an enclosure until the third century B.C.E when it was adopted as a Greek rendering for the word 'garden,' *paradeisos* by the translators of the Septuagint.<sup>7</sup> This alongside the translation by the Vulgate version of the Old Testament influenced the Christian interpretation of Paradise. The term both in Greek and in Latin hints the concept of a generic garden.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, the usage of the proper name for Paradise as

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<sup>4</sup>Mark G. Brett, 'Reading the Bible in the Context of Methodological Pluralism: The Undermining of Ethnic Exclusivism in Genesis,' in *Rethinking Contexts, Rereading Texts: Contributions from the Social Sciences to Biblical Interpretation*, ed. Daniel M. and Carroll R. (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000): 48-78.

<sup>5</sup> Calvin is of the view that Genesis 2:4b-3:24 begins a new section of the history of Moses in regards to the creation narrative due to repetition of some facts from the previous creation narrative of Genesis 1:1-24a. This has received considerable consensus among biblical scholars. However, unlike other scholars Calvin is of the school of thought that affirms the authorship of the pericope to Moses and the unity of the two narrative accounts of the creation story. John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Book of Genesis, vol.1*, transl. John King, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948), 108-109. Although Bloom asserts Calvin "was as strong a reader of J..." to which this pericope is ascribed. Bloom, "From J to K or The Uncanniness of the Yahwist" in *The Bible and the Narrative Tradition*, 19-35, (24), cf., Walter Brueggemann, *An Introduction to the Old Testament: The Canon and Christian Imagination*, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 30

<sup>6</sup> The Hebrew word which is being translated for garden is gan-Eden rather than just as a proper name Eden. This is also found in the Aramaic Targum and the Syriac Peshitta modern translations. Gordon J. Wenham, "Genesis 1-15" in *Word Biblical Commentary*, ed. David A. Hubbard et al (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1987), 1:61, cf., Gary A. Anderson, "The Cosmic Mountain: Eden and its Early Interpreters in Syriac christianity," in *Genesis 1-3 in the History of Exegesis: Intrigue in the Garden*, ed. Gregory Allen Robbins (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1988), 187-224.

<sup>7</sup> This appears in the Old Testament version of the Septuagint in Gen. 3:23 as the 'paradise of delight.' Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis Chapters 1-17*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 161

<sup>8</sup> Anderson, "The Cosmic Mountain: Eden and its Early Interpreters in Syriac Christianity," in *Genesis 1-3 in the History of Exegesis: Intrigue in the Garden*, 187-224, (208-212).

'Eden' and as a location extricates sense of a garden (Gen. 2:8, 10 and 15). It is in this light that this research seeks to evaluate the concept of paradise.

### **Summary of the Concept of Paradise**

In order to comprehend this study it is expedient to take into consideration in summary the developmental stages of the concept of Paradise. Originating from the creation narrative, Paradise conveyed the concept of a beautiful garden notable in Genesis 2 with constituents of good trees, water from four rivers to irrigate the garden, and the lack of threat. This concept was further developed in post-exilic Jewish writings by the exile and post-exilic prophets which also flourished into the Intertestamental period in which the messianic age is depicted as a return of the Paradise. This prototype of the Garden of Eden in Genesis 2 was founded on a mountain with springs of water, which, in the post-exilic period was sometimes identified with Mt. Zion and the Temple in Jerusalem.<sup>9</sup> This anticipated Paradise takes on a realized eschatological sense with the properties of its constituents modified such as the unfailing light, the bread of life and the likes (Isa.51:3ff). In addition, the Intertestamental periods reflected further on the apocalyptic eschatological concept of Paradise as the abode of the just souls, a place of eternal bliss described in terms of earthly pleasures who are awaiting participation in the task of the messiah.<sup>10</sup> In general from this point, Paradise was in Jewish thought hidden from mortals. This apocalyptic eschatological imagery stands out in the New Testament notably in the Apocalypse (Rev.21:11-22). There is the difficulty to differentiate the concept of Paradise and heaven from Paul's epistles (2 Cor. 12) which is also the question posed by the promise of Paradise by Jesus to the thief on the cross (Luk. 23:43). However for the purpose of this research I will maintain the originating concept from the creation narrative.

### **Paradise in the Creation Narrative**

Paradise as signified by the Greek and Vulgate translation of the word 'garden' in the narrative is not call Eden but Eden refers to the region where Paradise is located. The location of this according to the pericope is east of the Mesopotamian plain which is geographically

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<sup>9</sup> Calvin, *Commentaries on the Book of Genesis*, vol.1, 114, cf., Max Engarruñare, 'A Portrait of the Exegete as a Geographer: The Map of Paradise as a Hermeneutical Instrument in Calvin and his Contemporaries' in *The Earthly Paradise: The Garden of Eden from Antiquity to Modernity*, ed. F. Regina Psaki and Charles Hindley et al, (Binghamton, New York: State University of New York, 2002), 215-234.

<sup>10</sup> Bernard J. Bamberger, "Paradise and Hell in Later Jewish Thought" in *Encyclopedia Judaica*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., ed. Fred Skolnik et al (Farmington Hills, USA: Thomas Gale, 2007), 15: 627-629, (627-628).

unattested by scholars as its open question of debate remains problematic.<sup>11</sup> The nature of the biblical paradise which is neither abstract nor invisible but it is a created world of animals, plants and trees, rivers and mountains and the humankind. Paradise was formed from the earthly materials of creation. It is a natural environment as asserted by Calvin 'Again, we infer, that this garden was situated on the earth...placed opposite to Judea, towards the east.'<sup>12</sup> The presence of typical edible and non-edible plants does not seem to be an abstract paradise. The fruitful properties of nature are emphasized greatly both as it relates to humans and non-humans.

### *Economic Paradisiacal Circumstances in the Paradise Narrative*

Paradise, as can be deduced from a normative reading of the creation narrative, is the complete act of God's creation as he spoke to bring the herbs and plant and the animals including the Serpent into existence and made human beings, all creatures of Paradise. This implies God is the sole principal and owner of the garden (Shareholder) and the creatures of Paradise are stakeholders with the humans being the agents or managers responsible for control of the garden's daily operations. This gives the assumption that the garden is dispersedly owned based on the principle of corporate governance<sup>13</sup> in the traditional sense. However, human labour (labour) was considered an obligatory necessity for plant growth and in return the plants were food providers (wage) to sustain human life (Gen. 2:15).

This indicates the divine purpose of humanity that is charged with the responsibility of not only maintaining and preserving the garden but also involved in its intra-creational development.<sup>14</sup> Thus, work a part of economic development<sup>15</sup> was part of the divine economy from the very beginning. This shows that idleness was not to be part of a human being's life. It must be understood that the concept of humankind's economic development was that in lined with the rhythm of nature and as such does not require as much precision in time keeping as in industrial civilization.

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<sup>11</sup> Jeffrey Howard Tigay, "Paradise" in *Encyclopedia Judaica*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., ed. Fred Skolnik et al (Farmington Hills, USA: Thomas Gale, 2007), 15: 623-627, (623-624).

<sup>12</sup> Calvin, *Commentaries on the Book of Genesis*, vol.1, 114.

<sup>13</sup> Ruth V. Aguilera, 'Corporate Governance' in *International Encyclopedia of Economic Sociology*, ed. Jens Beckert and Milan Zafirovski, (London: Routledge, 2006), 120-124 (121, 124).

<sup>14</sup> Terence E. Fretheim, "The Book of Genesis" in *The New Interpreter's Bible*, ed. Leander E. Keck et al, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994), 1: 319-674, (349),

<sup>15</sup> Ha-Joon Chang, 'Economic Development,' in *International Encyclopedia of Economic Sociology*, ed. Jens Beckert and Milan Zafirovski, (London: Routledge, 2006), 176-181, (180-181) cf., Barry Gordon, *The Economic Problem in Biblical and Patristic Thought* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1989), 1-3; Brueggemann, 'Genesis' in *Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*, ed. James Luther Mays et al, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), 46

God as portrayed in the Paradise narrative is a risk-bearing principal shareholder who is interested in maximizing His investment as such He monitors the humans to avoid shirking and working towards enhancing their interest.<sup>16</sup> To do this He devoted a lot of effort defining His incentive as the owner of the garden and that of the Humans (managers). This was made clear from the beginning in God allotting to Himself the prerogative of only two trees and apportioning all the others to humans hence the prohibition (Gen. 2:16-17). This prohibition according to Pelham was the central reality to which the woman perceived that by eating the forbidden fruit she would be able to understand the world which so far was obscure to her.<sup>17</sup> I disagree with Pelham on the ground that the world of the woman was not hinged on eating the forbidden fruit in order to understand. Nevertheless I concur with Brueggemann who is of the view that, 'The destiny of the human creation is to live in God's world, with God's other creatures, on God's terms.'<sup>18</sup> The humans had to rely on information they received from God in order to understand the world created by Him.

The choice to eat of the fruit of the tree was based on their rational selection which economically I presuppose was based on calculating what course of action best serves their interest. This was heavily influence by the alleged trickery of the Serpent (3:13) being one of the stakeholders of Paradise. Interdependency was exhibited among the creatures in Paradise for their sustenance and survival. The Serpent being a creature of Paradise enjoined this interdependency with other stakeholders in the garden. It was due to the importance of this interdependence among stakeholders in the garden coupled with the tendency on human part not to be conscious of the diverse identities of the stakeholders, that the Serpent as a shrewd economic agent and an opportunist took advantage of the situation to create a break in the principal-agent relationship that exist between God and humans. This is due to the fact that managers are sometimes altruistic<sup>19</sup> in their relationship with stakeholders which befits the interdependency in this primordial situation. On the other hand, principals or owners are concerned about the survival of the firm (God sending them out and protecting the garden as well as the way to the tree of life).

### *Social Paradisiacal Circumstances in the Paradise Narrative*

The paradisiacal social structures that can be gleaned from the text are that which exist between the principal (God) and the agent or manager (man) and that existing between the managers in respect to that among humans and that among humans and nonhumans. In

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<sup>16</sup> Chang, 'Economic Development,' in *International Encyclopedia of Economic Sociology*, 180.

<sup>17</sup> Abigail Pelham, "On Knowing and Not Knowing: In the Garden of Eden with Bertie Wooster" *Biblical Interpretation*, vol. XX No. 4-5 (2012), pp. 363-388 (375).

<sup>18</sup> Walter Brueggemann, 'Genesis' in *Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*, 40.

<sup>19</sup> Aguilera, 'Corporate Governance' in *International Encyclopedia of Economic Sociology*, 122

the first instance, God's relationship to humans is one of benefactor, a relationship which, according to the narrative, humans were surely aware of, since God had communicated directly with them. Consequently, Paradise was an initial area of social interaction and interdependency demonstrated among the creatures for their sustenance and survival. This was also exhibited in the humans' naming the animals. The Serpent being a creature of Paradise and a stakeholder partook of this interdependency with other stakeholders in the garden. The discussion between the woman and the Serpent was also another display of social interaction.

The importance of this interdependence among stakeholders in the garden cannot be overemphasized. It was due to this interdependency that the Serpent took due advantage to rupture the principal-agent relationship that exist between God and humans resulting in the collapse of the social interaction and order in Paradise. The choice of eating the forbidden fruit as such affect the preferences of humans creating the inevitable tension between pleasure and moral obligation, or in other words between what they ought to and what they believe they ought to do.<sup>20</sup> This breakdown in relationship consequent upon the prohibition of God's command also brought about the breakdown of relationships with God, with each other and with the created order.

The creation of the woman out of the rib of the man as in 2:21 symbolises the complimentary roles in order to fulfil their respective vocations. This does not justify the assumption that women are inferior to the men neither does it points to the fact that they are identically the same.<sup>21</sup> This is against the norm for a model social relationship that privilege men and legitimate patriarchy based upon for 'female subordination,'<sup>22</sup> which has given rise to the 'natural cultural assumptions'<sup>23</sup> underlying the reading of the text. In which also, relations between men and women was no longer to be wholly rational based on complimentary roles, but was marked by tension and a struggle for dominance. This complimentary role between the man and the woman entails companionship. The design of God was apart from companionship include the purpose of progeny.

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<sup>20</sup> Fretheim, "The Book of Genesis" in *The New Interpreter's Bible*, 1:352.

<sup>21</sup> Anthony and Miriam Hanson, *A commentary on the Book of Genesis*, (Madras: The Christian Literature Society, 1963), 40

<sup>22</sup> Although taking the two accounts together, a contrast is noticeable in 1:26-28 and 2:21-22 which has generated ongoing interpretive engagement both by feminist and biblical theologians in general. Brueggemann, *An Introduction to the Old Testament: The Canon and Christian Imagination*, 37

<sup>23</sup> Pelham, "On Knowing and Not Knowing: In the Garden of Eden with Bertie Wooster" *Biblical Interpretation*, 373

## The Relevance of the Concept of Paradise for a Global Society

Paradise and hopes of paradise on this earth were persistent longings evident in the writings of Christian theologians of Late Antiquity. This is notable in Calvin's map published in his commentary on Genesis which traced the location of Paradise to somewhere outside of Babylon in present day Iraq. This also was the position reflected in the writings of Late Antiquity Christian scholars that paradise was in this world.<sup>24</sup> The garden of paradise was made from this cosmos and its material blessings were such that the earth held all the essential traces of paradise. Calvin is of the view that Paradise is still within reach of humanity but it is inaccessible due to Satan's enslavement of the human race.<sup>25</sup> This has spurred men and women especially of the Reformed tradition over the years to create natural environments that epitomize the natural and cultural environment of the biblical paradise which is optimistically being anticipated in the eschaton (end-time). There is no doubt that the creation narrative overtime has provided the basic framework for understanding society and its 'raison d'être' or foundational formulations of elemental reality that are to be regularly reiterated in liturgical form in order to reinforce claims of legitimacy for ordering society.<sup>26</sup> The concept of Paradise as a paradigm for ordering society cannot be overemphasized as it provides answers and clues to the economic and social hostilities which characterise the shape of our global world today.

Present day chaos is shown in untold adversity of suffering from conditions of life characterised by high infant mortality rate, inadequate shelter and water supply, little or no access to schools, racism, unsettled refugees, organized crimes, drug trafficking, arms black marketers, financial crimes and fraud amounting to trillions embezzled by its leaders, by disease, death and threat to life. Embedded in these situations are international oppressive structures such as imperialism and the war-like and economic interests of great nations which undermine and diminish the inner strength of our global society. These structures are dehumanizing as they are not meant to serve all of humanity but are utilized by a few to perpetuate injustice. Thus it is imperative that collective and concerted action are needed for radical changes to be effected in regards to the basic constituents of the Paradise imagery as

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<sup>24</sup> A comprehensive historical study of theological positions on paradise is cited by Jean Delumeau in his *History of Paradise: The Garden of Eden in Myth and Tradition* (New York: Continuum Press, 1995), 3-38, which also notes early Christian ideas of paradise as this life. Some thought paradise had been destroyed by the flood. Others saw it as a metaphor of the spiritual journey toward God. The prevailing view, advocated by Ambrose and Augustine, among others, held that paradise was both a real place on the earth and in the church and a metaphor of inner spiritual life.

<sup>25</sup> Calvin, *Commentaries on the Book of Genesis*, vol. 1, 114, cf., Engarruñare, 'A Portrait of the Exegete as a Geographer: The Map of Paradise as a Hermeneutical Instrument in Calvin and his Contemporaries,' in *The Earthly Paradise: The Garden of Eden from Antiquity to Modernity*, 215-234.

<sup>26</sup> Brueggemann, *An Introduction to the Old Testament: The Canon and Christian Imagination*, 29

they affect life, freedom, food, a place to call home, a family, harmonious relationships, and a stable natural environment. Fitzgerald's chat with the Caliph Omar Ben Adalaziz "that it was necessary to make a hell of this world to enjoy paradise in the next"<sup>27</sup> consequently reinforced the need for this research paper. Therefore the creation narrative for the Reformed tradition should function as founding statements providing the parameter for a just society based on its endorsement, legitimization and ordering of certain modes of economic and social structures. The desire for paradise is just as strong today as it were when it was first penned down in the first chapters of Genesis. This desire was enshrined in the writings of antiquity including those we attempt to do in this paper.

### **Economic and Social Inspirations for the Renewal of a Global Society**

I wish to comment that we are many millenniums far from the context of the paradise narrative and the context of our time and its challenges makes it only possible for us to make certain allusions. The paradise created by God was intended from the beginning to give humanity the opportunity for intra-creational development which is open to various possibilities. While it is notable that in paradise God spoke to bring the herbs and plant into existence,<sup>28</sup> today the situation requires the aid of human labour as in seed storage, plant nurseries, and so on. Paradise today should be understood as an environment whose constituents in terms of natural elements, cultural valued elements and social elements are the repertoire of the Garden of Eden as described in the Old Testament or the paradise envisioned. Although this representation may not be same for other religions who share the world with us as they may have their own unique imagery of the concept of Paradise, it is possible to define clearly the areas of convergence and common concern in regards to the properties or constituents of the envisioned Paradise, as it relates particularly to economic, social and political problems in order to achieve a just society. These basic properties or constituents are life, family, harmonious relationships, food, a place call home, freedom, and a stable fruitful natural environment.

In the paradise narrative human survival depended largely on that which is outside them such as what the trees produced. But this is a far cry from what is necessary for human survival today. The existential challenges we face today differ from what the first humans experienced and the innocence of the first humans has given way to a complicated way of life. However, this should offer us the opportunity to various possibilities of modelling our society to be a repertoire of the paradisiacal circumstances. The biblical imagery of Paradise had all the basic universal constituent preferences of humans' which is water, shelter, the

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<sup>27</sup> William Beckford 1759-1844 in *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 38 (19)

<sup>28</sup> The process of human labour yielding to the present day exploits in the agriculture sector started even from the time of Calvin. Calvin, *Commentaries on the Book of Genesis*, vol. 1, 108-109.



abundance of resources and the lack of threats. This implies that Paradise can be replicated irrespective of the shifting scene of competing, conflicting, and changing national systems amidst economic, social and political ideologies that are responsible for the present tensions and conflicts which characterise the global landscape, considering human provisions for daily living are met, shelter provided, all threat to human and non-human creatures eliminated and structures that enhance global cultural exchange.

The task of cultivating the garden was entrusted to humankind as an act of employment. The pattern of the paradise economy in the traditional sense was that of corporate governance<sup>29</sup> in which there was the distribution of rights and responsibility between God and humans. Economically it can be said that in this corporate governance, God being the shareholder, His take among the trees in terms of shareholder returns was just two out of all the trees to which humans attempted to 'appropriate' to themselves. On the other hand humans' labour incentives with regard to the trees could be seen as both short and long terms returns in view of the yielding seasons of the trees. Here we can say that God's interest as shareholder does not oppose that of the stakeholders<sup>30</sup> which should have being the reason for conflict in corporate governance in terms of distributional issues (wages). This economic structure in the paradise account tends not to favour the concept of governing or ruling with authority as recognised in neoclassical economic studies.<sup>31</sup> Idleness and laziness was not a culture of the garden life. This labour was to be carried out with passion. On the contrary, in our context people are forced to take up careers which they may not be passionate about centred on economic structures that do not encourage corporate governance which assumes that firms are dispersedly owned<sup>32</sup> thereby promoting stewardship. Calvin opines 'let everyone regard himself as the steward of God in all things which God requires to be preserved.'<sup>33</sup>

This economic system is reinforced by a strong social democracy which takes into account the roles played by the shareholders and the stakeholders and as such it is conceptualized as the shareholders are under obligation to monitor the stakeholders in order to avoid shirking and their working towards their interest.<sup>34</sup> The shareholders view of corporate governance is described in terms of social relations as actor centred institutionalism. In the case of the stakeholders view of corporate governance, significant contribution exist in regards the role of the employees thereby creating an ethics of work to which significantly is portrayed in the Paradise imagery as an act of labour. Thus, corporate governance is best conceptualized when there is the interplay between the shareholders and

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<sup>29</sup> Aguilera, 'Corporate Governance' in *International Encyclopedia of Economic Sociology*, 120

<sup>30</sup> Aguilera, 'Corporate Governance' in *International Encyclopedia of Economic Sociology*, 122

<sup>31</sup> Aguilera, 'Corporate Governance' in *International Encyclopedia of Economic Sociology*, 120

<sup>32</sup> Aguilera, 'Corporate Governance' in *International Encyclopedia of Economic Sociology*, 121

<sup>33</sup> Calvin, *Commentaries on the Book of Genesis*, vol.1, 125.

<sup>34</sup> Aguilera, 'Corporate Governance' in *International Encyclopedia of Economic Sociology*, 124

the stakeholders in achieving the desired outcome of the institution.<sup>35</sup> In corporate governance, institutions including labour markets, financial markets, product markets, capital markets, education and training, and so on, are not viewed as self-standing but rather as complementary to each other and mutually reinforcing the corporate governance outcomes.<sup>36</sup> These however are made possible by variables in the corporate governance equation like degree of state intervention, employee influence and economy openness. Subsequently, to be able to achieve a just society in our contemporary context with economic and social structures there is need for corporate transparency, corporate accountability, corporate social responsibility within and the dynamics of corporate governance<sup>37</sup> in view of ethical orientations for just business practices formulated from various concepts of morality with intra-generational and inter-generational equity.

The economic system in the paradise narrative was reinforced by a strong social interaction both among humans and non-humans. There was the unique characteristic of interdependency relationship. The design of humanity is captured by Calvin thus "The commencement, therefore, involves a general principle, that man was formed to be a social animal"<sup>38</sup> in view of the fact that "solitude is not good."<sup>39</sup> This also implies that the economic system of our world today, in order to duplicate Paradise must be reinforced by a strong social global democratic structure<sup>40</sup> whereby all bounds to freedom resulting in the pain of separation and recognition of differences are eradicated. As captured by Leith citing Niebuhr 'Man's capacity for justice makes democracy possible; but man's inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary.'<sup>41</sup> Paradise in the biblical imagery was a place of covenanted human community of solidarity, trust, and well-being. The garden exists as a context for the human community.<sup>42</sup> However, there is need to coordinate and organize society through values. Where there are set values to govern society, laws are also formulated to instil these values. This set value implies the positive use of law, wherein certain limits are recognised as being in the best interests of human life and well-being to which a transgression of such command could lead to moral evil. These values are seen as essential to humans which need

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<sup>35</sup> Aguilera, 'Corporate Governance' in *International Encyclopedia of Economic Sociology*, 122

<sup>36</sup> Aguilera, 'Corporate Governance' in *International Encyclopedia of Economic Sociology*, 123

<sup>37</sup> Aguilera, 'Corporate Governance' in *International Encyclopedia of Economic Sociology*, 124

<sup>38</sup> Calvin, *Commentaries on the Book of Genesis*, vol.1, 128.

<sup>39</sup> Calvin, *Commentaries on the Book of Genesis*, vol.1, 128

<sup>40</sup> Aguilera, 'Corporate Governance' in *International Encyclopedia of Economic Sociology*, 124

<sup>41</sup> Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness: A Vindication of Democracy and a Critique of its Traditional Defence* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1944), p. xi cited by John H. Leith, *Introduction to the Reformed Tradition*, (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981), 217

<sup>42</sup> Brueggemann, 'Genesis' in *Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*, 47 .

to be cultivated. They cannot be reformulated in terms of utility and costs<sup>43</sup> as they are not cost effective.

## Conclusion

The Calvinist mode in which Paradise is perceived to be located somewhere hidden in the earth provides the inspiration that this world is a viable location for salvation, or at least, its beginning provides us with the impetus to re-make worldly institutions to restore God's original Paradise mirrored in the biblical Paradise imagery of Genesis. This study postulates that in order to attain a just society with economic and social structures based on a duplicate concept of the imagery of the biblical paradise in our age, permanent proactive measures must be taken at all levels of society to incorporate the economic structure of corporate governance and the social structure of a strong social democracy. This does not negate the acknowledgment of how complex our society has turned into, but it connotes the urgency in eliminating the unjust structures in order to achieving a just society.

These measures cuts across; the limitation or eradication of the use of arms and military might in addressing grievances against unjust structures of society; removal of factors and traits that leads to discriminatory treatments such as racism, immigrant-discrimination and denial of access to adequate standard of living conditions and the elimination of restrictions, and in resolving societal breakdown of law and order; the setting up of structures that will encourage our common habitable earth such as negotiation of intergovernmental trade agreements among nations; encouragement of trade and investment across the globe and exploration of possibilities of economic collaboration among nations.

This study have proposed by enquiry into the area of corporate governance being the hub of economic sociology to be the viable economic structure which also incorporates strong social democratic structures as the viable avenue of achieving parallel model of Paradise. This is not to negate that there could be other economic sociology structures which could be used at arriving at the same result but this presents lesser tension and conflict. A parallel paradise is discernable and it invites us to understand the function of the concept of Paradise as founding statements providing the parameter for a just society. In conclusion, the actualization of the basic universal constituents of Paradise, water, life, family, harmonious relationships, food, a place called home, freedom, lack of threat and a stable fruitful natural environment will concretize the well-liked growing concept of the world as a global village. This is a common task which awaits us and challenges us all, we are without excuses or vacillation.

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<sup>43</sup> Thomas Beschorner, 'Social Responsibility of Firms' in *International Encyclopedia of Economic Sociology*, ed. Jens Beckert and Milan Zafirovski, (London: Routledge,2006), 620-624, (622)