

# History Without the Humbug

*Countering the re-writing of history*

## THE *TRULY* GREATEST AFRICANS OF ALL TIME

by **Shaun Willcock**

The purpose of these articles is to counter the deliberate re-writing of history with those stubborn things called facts, and that wonderful thing called truth. “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil” (Isaiah 5:20)

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*Great:* Of persons: eminent in point of attainments or achievement; exhibiting signal excellence in some important work. In recent use, often with an implication of more or less loftiness and integrity of character. Lofty, magnanimous, noble. (The Oxford Universal Dictionary)

In 2004 the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) aired – and then pulled – a programme called “The Greatest South Africans.” It was a programme in which viewers were asked to vote for the 100 greatest South Africans of all time. “The people” got all excited. Nominations poured in. Predictably, considering that the SABC is the voice of the ANC government, former South African president, Nelson Mandela, was declared to be the greatest South African of all time. In fact, they didn’t even wait for the voting to be over: even before voting started, the advertising for the “contest” showed profiles of different people, with Mandela’s unmistakable profile above them all. It was very evident that as far as the organisers were concerned, his victory was a foregone conclusion. And sure enough, he was declared to be “the greatest” by far.

But what exactly is it that makes Mandela great? Nothing. Nothing whatsoever. He is portrayed by the fawning media as the greatest South African, indeed the greatest African, ever; but – why? He has done none of the things which make a man great. He does not display “integrity of character”, he is not “magnanimous” or “noble”. He helped to establish the armed wing of the terrorist ANC. He was justly imprisoned for life for extremely serious crimes. He was released 27 years later and went on to become SA’s first black (and first Communist) president. He did not create a reconciled nation. He did not heal the rifts between black and white. He uttered many very racist, anti-white statements. He enthusiastically supported the world’s worst criminals, thugs, dictators and Marxist madmen. His worshippers cannot see that, in truth, “the Emperor has no clothes”! Even if we ignore his personal character, etc., and look only at his achievements, he is not “eminent in point of attainments or achievement; exhibiting signal excellence in some important work” (see dictionary definition above). He achieved nothing of any lasting value, nothing of excellence. He is merely the creation of worldwide media hype. “The Mandela magic” is really the Mandela myth. The man is real, but his supposed greatness is not. It doesn’t exist.

Anyway, as the results started pouring in, the organisers became decidedly uneasy with what they were seeing. Although the No.1 slot was a foregone conclusion given the way Mandela has been artificially turned into the continent’s icon, it was found that the public had voted for just too many

“undesirable” South Africans to fill up the other 99 slots! There were apartheid-era politicians coming in the top 100 (Gasp! Shock! Horror!)? And some of them were far more popular than various Communist/terrorist “leaders of the liberation struggle” (translation: the terrorist revolution)! This would never do, the SABC powers-that-be decided; it was embarrassing. So – the programme was cancelled! Typical Marxist tactics: they allowed an “election”, but when the results were not to their liking, they declared the election “null and void”, and declared that they would possibly hold the “election” again – *when* they could be assured that the results *would* be to their liking (this last point, of course, was not stated openly)! The judicious use of fraud, the careful rigging of the results, would doubtless ensure the “right” outcome at a later date.

So for the present, the programme was scrapped. We could care less. It was nothing but an attempt to whitewash Mandela and other “struggle” heroes yet again, to have yet another opportunity to sing their praises, extol their supposed virtues, and build up their images to even greater heights in the minds of a gullible public.

Not to be outdone, *New African* magazine, going beyond the idea of “the Greatest *South Africans* of All Time”, conducted a poll to find “the Greatest *Africans* of All Time.” The results were published in their issue of August-September 2004 – and they were horrifying. All kinds of wicked, murderous dictators, tyrants and thugs made the list!

Readers voted Zimbabwe’s evil Communist dictator and tyrant, Robert Mugabe, the man who has utterly ruined once-prosperous, once-peaceful Zimbabwe, as the third greatest African of all time!

Kwame Nkrumah, the first black president of Ghana, was also chosen as one of the greatest Africans of all time. Yet this evil man was a brutal dictator who ruined his country. Patrice Lumumba of the Congo was chosen too. Yet this man, so renowned a terrorist that the Soviet Union even named their main terrorist training facility after him, was responsible for the deaths of thousands at the hands of the Simba terrorists. Julius Nyerere of Tanzania was another who was chosen. Yet this evil Socialist brought immense ruin to his country as well. Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia was chosen – a Socialist dictator who also ruined his country, one of the richest in Africa before he destroyed it. Samora Machel of Mozambique was chosen, a Marxist who hated Christianity passionately, who closed down, confiscated or destroyed thousands of church buildings, put hundreds of thousands of people in concentration camps, had tens of thousands executed, and turned his country into the second-poorest on earth. A man who once dared God (“if He existed”) to strike him dead, and then triumphantly declared that God did not exist as he was still alive.

South Africa’s former president, F.W. de Klerk, came in at No.50; yet this man handed his mighty and beautiful country over to Nelson Mandela and his Communist-controlled terror organisation, the ANC. What is great about him? And what makes Desmond Tutu, the Anglican archbishop of Cape Town, deserve to be placed at No.99? He too should not be anywhere on the list at all, for he was (deservedly) Public Enemy No.1 in SA in the 1980s, as he called for international sanctions against SA, thus reducing millions of his fellow-blacks to poverty. He is a Bible-denying, Christ-denying wolf in sheep’s clothing.

As for Winnie Mandela, a convicted kidnapper, child abuser and thief (not to mention the many crimes she got away with in the past, as the wife of Nelson Mandela and a leading female terrorist in South Africa, who made the infamous statement, “With our matches and our necklaces we will liberate this country!”), she was voted the “most popular woman in Africa.”

Revealing abysmal ignorance of African and world history, some of those nominated included black *Americans* such as Malcolm X (a racist thug), Mohammed Ali (a man who made millions beating other men to pulp), Michael Jackson (a filthy sexual pervert Rock star), Bill Cosby (nothing but a sometimes off-colour comedian), and Louis Farrakhan (another racist thug). Aside from the fact that none of these men deserves a place in *any* list of “greats” *anywhere*, the fact is that *none* of them were or are *Africans*! Nor is Brazilian footballer Pele – but he made it onto the list as well.

The poll appeared to shock the editors of *New African*. They pointed out that although they had asked readers to vote for the greatest Africans of *all time*, over 95% of the nominations were from the post-Colonial era. And they asked, “Have people forgotten Africa’s history?”

Sadly, although it may be that many have indeed forgotten Africa’s history, there are many, many other Africans who actually *think highly of* the brutal post-Colonial black thugs, tyrants and dictators who have disgraced one African country after another over the past 40 years or so. These wicked rulers are *heroes* to vast numbers of black Africans, for no other reason than this: they are viewed as men who “liberated” their countries from white rule. And because of this, “the people” will excuse their horrendous crimes, their massacres of innocent civilians, their torturing of political opponents, their milking of their own countries. It speaks volumes about Africa and Africans.

So then: *who should* be on a list of the greatest Africans of all time? There are many; but tragically, they will never be accepted, by the wicked, as truly great souls.

Here are just some of the Africans who could truly be called great. Some of them great in a worldly sense, because they achieved great things; as the dictionary defines it, they were “eminent in point of attainments or achievement; exhibiting signal excellence in some important work”. And others, while not great in the world’s eyes, yet certainly beloved of the Lord, good and faithful servants of His, who shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven: men who were *truly* great in the highest sense of the word: eminent in point of *spiritual* attainments or achievement; exhibiting signal excellence in the most important work of all – Gospel work, and living for Christ and for the extension of His kingdom; people of integrity, magnanimous and truly noble.

Let us first consider those who were great in a worldly sense. There is only space to consider a mere handful of men. Many more could be named, and women too.

South Africa’s Jan Smuts was one of the greatest Africans of all time. Not a Christian, indeed an advocate of world government and deeply involved in the creation of the League of Nations (forerunner to the diabolical United Nations); but great in that he was eminent in point of attainments and achievement. He put South Africa on the world map, he was a great statesman (not like the media-created fake “statesman” Nelson Mandela), and a true gentleman at the same time.

Although it would make liberals, Reds, and their fellow-travellers livid with rage, former South African State President P.W. Botha deserves to be included, at least among the greatest South Africans. For he was eminent in point of attainments and achievement, and exhibited signal excellence in an important work. Under his leadership, South Africa made great strides in dismantling the apartheid legislation – *but* Botha was adamant that Communist terrorist organisations such as the ANC, SA Communist Party and others should *not* be unbanned. “*Die Groot Krokodil*” (Afrikaans for “the Big Crocodile”), as he was known to friend and foe alike, took a bold, giant leap; but he would not go further and hand SA over to Marxist murderers. In this he was perfectly right, he had the best interests of SA’s citizens at heart. But for this he was betrayed by members of his own party.

Another man who deserves to be listed among the greatest South Africans was Dr Chris Barnard, the first man in the world to ever perform a heart transplant. He was not a moral man, he was in fact a very promiscuous and immoral man, but he was great in that he *did* something great, something that altered history, something that saved lives, something that revolutionised the world of medicine. He was eminent in point of attainments and achievement, and exhibited signal excellence in an important medical work.

Rhodesia’s prime minister, Ian Smith, stands among the greatest Africans ever. A true gentleman, a man of deep convictions, a man of great courage, who led his tiny country through its most turbulent years as Marxist terrorists waged a horrifying guerilla war against it, and as the whole world turned its back on Rhodesia and isolated it completely. Today, despite constant vilification in the Zimbabwean media, and threats against him, Ian Smith, although a frail octogenarian, continues to live in Zimbabwe – the nightmare country that was once his beloved Rhodesia – doing whatever

he can to help his suffering people.

Compared with these men (and others could be named), what have today's African Marxist tyrants and dictators achieved that could truly be called "great"? What have the likes of Mandela, Mbeki, Mugabe, Machel, Nujoma, Kaunda, Amin, Kenyatta, Arap Moi, Nyerere, Nkrumah, and so many other African leaders actually done that would make them *great*? Nothing whatsoever.

Now let us consider just a few of those Africans who were great because they served the Lord, out of love for Him. So many could be named, but we must confine this list to just a very few. Many of them spent their lives in the Lord's service as missionaries, seeking, amidst great hardships and sufferings, to bring the Gospel to African people, and who (even if they were not all born here) made the Dark Continent their home, loved it, lived in it, and often laid down their very lives for Africa. They were true Africans, and they were the greatest Africans of all.

The Ethiopian eunuch, a high-ranking official serving Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, should definitely be on the list (Acts 8:26-39). This man was converted when he heard Philip preach the Gospel to him, and then he was baptized; after which he continued on his journey home to Ethiopia, a new Christian, the very first to take the Gospel to his African homeland, the beginning of the fulfilment of that wonderful prophecy, that "Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God" (Psa.68:31), and thus the firstfruits of an African harvest of souls through the centuries that followed, down to this very day.

What about the Queen of Sheba? The Lord Jesus Christ said of her that "she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon" (Matt.12:42). A truly wise and noble woman, who travelled from her African home to learn from the man of God who was the wisest man who ever lived. Was she converted to the true God after she came and heard about Him from the lips of Solomon? Perhaps we cannot say for certain, although from her words to Solomon it appears that she may indeed have been (1 Kings 10:9). O if only modern-day African rulers would go to the One who is "greater than Solomon" (Matt.12:42), the Lord Jesus Christ, to hear His wisdom and learn from Him, and to be saved from their sins! How different Africa would be then! How great Africa's rulers would be then!

Among the number of the heroes of the faith we would have to place, at the very top of the list, the great David Livingstone, the missionary-explorer from Scotland who sacrificed his energy, health, family and his very life to open up Africa for the Gospel, and to abolish the diabolical slave trade. He laboured unceasingly in this continent, finally dying on his knees in prayer; and his faithful African servants, who loved him so much, buried his heart under a tree in the heart of Africa itself, and then carried his body, at great risk to themselves, over 1500 miles to the east African coast, so that it could be shipped back to Britain for burial. His tombstone in Westminster Abbey says: "Brought by faithful hands over land and sea, here rests David Livingstone: missionary, traveller, philanthropist, born March 19, 1813, at Blantyre, Lanarkshire, died May 1, 1873, at Chitambo's village, Ulala. For 30 years his life was spent in an unwearied effort to evangelize the native races, to explore the undiscovered secrets, to abolish the desolating slave trade, of central Africa, where with his last words he wrote, 'All I can add in my solitude, is, may heaven's rich blessing come down on every one, American, English, or Turk, who will help to heal this open sore of the world.'"

So revered is his memory in Africa, that two towns are named after him, Livingstone in Zambia, and Livingstonia in Malawi; with Blantyre in Malawi being named after his birthplace in far-away Scotland. Although other names from Colonial times were changed when Zambia ceased to come under Britain, they did not change the name of the town of Livingstone.

Of him it has been written, movingly and truthfully:

He needs no epitaph to guard a name  
Which men shall praise while worthy work is done.  
He lived and died for good – be that his fame;  
Let marble crumble: this is LIVING STONE.

Then there is Livingstone's father-in-law, Robert Moffat. This faithful servant of the Lord came

out to Africa, and served his whole life in Africa, in Bechuanaland (present-day Botswana) and in what is present-day Zimbabwe, becoming the first man to ever translate the whole Bible into an African language (Tswana). He also wrote the first hymn in Tswana, and translated many other hymns into Tswana. He befriended the tyrant King Mzilikazi of the Matabele (Ndebele), and was the first to ever preach the Gospel to the Matabele people. When eventually Mzilikazi allowed him to begin Gospel work among the Matabele, Moffat led a band of missionaries, including his son John Smith Moffat, to begin the work. They suffered terrible hardships for over twenty years and without a single convert; and yet, when advised to stop the work, they replied: “The sword can blot out the Matabele, the Gospel alone can save them.” And in time, the Lord saved many Matabele as a result of their faithful labours. A great man indeed, surely deserving of a place in any list of the greatest Africans of all time.

One of the converts of the Moffat mission to the Matabele was a man named Makhazo Mkala, who was put to death because he was “a follower of the Book”, thus becoming the first Ndebele Christian martyr, laying down his life for Christ and His Gospel. One of Africa’s great sons indeed!

And there have been so many others: great men, great African servants of the Lord Jesus Christ. There was Kenneth Fraser, missionary to the Sudan and medical doctor, who in addition to pioneering Gospel preaching in the Sudan, also established the very first school and hospital in Moruland in Sudan. There was Ezra Lawiri, a Sudanese Christian who translated the Bible into the Moru language and was killed in an ambush.

There was John Boyana Radasi, a Fingo from South Africa who established a mission work among the Matabele tribe of what is now known as Zimbabwe; a man of wisdom, humility and self-denial, who amidst many difficulties spent his life in the preaching of the Gospel.

“And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of” so many others (Heb.11:32), “who through faith” (v.33) did great exploits. These were the greatest of all Africans, little noticed by the world, but known to God, beloved of Him, who lived and often died for the people of the Dark Continent. In them, truly, were the words of the Lord Jesus fulfilled: “whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant” (Matt.20:26,27). This – *this* – is true greatness, and the world knows it not. But what of that? The Lord sees all, *He* knows, and these faithful Christians, “of whom the world was not worthy” (Heb.11:38), entered into the glories of heaven when they died, to be received by the Lord they had loved and served so well, and to hear His wonderful words: “Well done, thou good and faithful servant! Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!” (see Matt.25:21).

The evil men of this world have their wicked heroes; but they, like them, will pass into a Christless eternity. What will become of their “hero status” then? What, then, will it matter to have been one of the “great men” of the earth, when throughout the endless ages of eternity, they shall suffer the vengeance of eternal fire?

Let every true Christian be inspired by the lives of the great African Christians! Inspired to follow their example, and to love and serve the Lord Jesus Christ as faithfully as they did. O how desperately Africa still needs great men and women, Christians who would willingly sacrifice their own lives just to see one precious African man or woman converted to Christ! This Dark Continent – this continent of witchcraft, Romanism, Islam and Communism – still needs to hear the glad tidings of salvation, it still so desperately needs to hear of the only One who can save sinners, the only One who can *truly* set free the African, the European, the Asian, the American! “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed”! (Jn.8:36). This, and this alone, is true freedom. This is not the “freedom” of the diabolical doctrine of “liberation theology”, this is not the “freedom” which terrorists promise to those they claim to “liberate”. This is freedom from sin, from Satan, from hell! *This* is the freedom which needs to be proclaimed with boldness across the length and breadth of this Dark Continent! To that end, may the Lord raise up many truly great Africans, who would preach Christ to their lost African brothers and sisters, that they might be

saved!  
Amen, and Amen!

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