

P10\_10\_17\_Purpose\_of\_Religion\_Pt2\_vscript (August 2022)

Greetings: **Oriire fun owo!** (Good Tidings to you!)

I pray that you are feeling awake, aware, and elevated in mind, body, and spirit wherever you are, and whatever may be happening around you!

**Àṣẹ! Àṣẹ! Àṣẹ o!**

I am *Baba Umar, Oluranse Emese*, (Voice of the Emese), Member of the **Isoro** Traditional Council of Chiefs, **Olúwo** of the House of Umar, **and Babaláwo** of **Ile Awo Òrìṣà**. This **Ile** (Spiritual House), our website, and these video lessons are sanctioned by the **Isoro** Traditional Council of Chiefs in **Ile-Ife, Nigeria**.

**Opo Ire** (abundant blessings) to our **Egbé**, our online community of Subscribers that's growing daily. Thank you for joining us for another lesson in our Video Blog Series. Remember, as a member of our **Egbé** you can support each other's spiritual journey by posting your questions and uplifting comments in the comment section below. You can also email me using the link in the description section below.

If you are new to these video lessons, we invite you to click the links below to become a **Subscriber** and member of our **Egbé**. Also, click the **Notification** button to stay up to date, and **share** this resource with your family, friends, associates, and anyone who you feel may benefit from this wisdom.

Homage to The One Who Sends, and to those who are sent!  
Homage to **Òrìṣà** and **Egun!**

Our topic in this video is: The Purpose of Religion, Part II

In Part I of this series of Posts, I stated:

*"Religion is defined as the belief in and worship of a supernatural or superhuman controlling power, especially a personal God or gods. The purpose of any and all religions is to point the devotees in the direction of realizing the nature of this supernatural or superhuman controlling power, especially a personal God or gods. And to understand how we are connected and bound to this 'God(s)'. "*

You might find it helpful to reread Part I to recall some of the other things that were stated.

Another important thing to remember about religion is that it is a **system of belief** and can be:

- **Cultural** (indicative of an entire culture or society),
- **Institutional** (adhered to by members of a certain group within or between certain cultures), or
- **Personal** (an individual set of practices that is unique to a particular person).

The important thing is that regardless of the nature or expanse of the religion, it is nonetheless, a **system of belief**. The key word here being **'belief'**. Many people would choose to argue this next point but neither science nor religion can categorically state what is **'The Absolute Truth'** about:

- the nature of Creation,
- the existence and nature of a Creator,
- our place in Creation or
- our relationship to the Creative Force(s) that accounts for existence.

**Truth** is defined as,

- The quality or state of being true (he had to accept the truth of her accusation).
- That which is true or in accordance with fact or reality (he found out the truth about her).
- A fact or belief that is accepted as true (the emergence of scientific truths).

Therefore, regarding religion, the fundamental question is not *'What is The Truth?'* but *'What do you **choose** to believe or accept as The Truth?'*

And that is the reason I stated that,

- *"The purpose of all religions is to point the devotees in the direction of realizing the nature of this supernatural or superhuman controlling power, especially a personal God or gods. And to understand how we are connected to, bound to, this 'God(s)'"*
- And *"The purpose of any and all religions is to provoke inquiry into the **true** nature of things and especially into our own **true** nature." **Not just inquiry, but Self-Inquiry!***

In the **Ifa** Spiritual Tradition we say, 'In the beginning there was nothing but the **Àṣẹ**, the Black Energetic Material of the darkness from which all things come, the Realm of Infinite Possibility. And the first thing to emerge from this Realm of Infinite Possibility was sentience, that is, the **Àṣẹ** became **Self-Aware**. We call this sentient nature of the **Àṣẹ**, **Olódùmarè**.

And in realizing that the **Àṣẹ** was the all-pervading reality, **Olódùmarè** determined the idea of experiencing the fullness of the Realm of Infinite Possibility, the fullness of Itself. That determined idea provoked the Creative impulse, which we call **Olofi-dumare**, the creative aspect of the **Àṣẹ**.

We, you and I, are manifestations of that creative impulse and all that has been created, is created from, of, and within the **Àṣẹ**, because there is nothing else, nothing exists 'outside' the **Àṣẹ**. Nothing is separate or apart from the **Àṣẹ**! It is the All-Pervading, All-Inclusive Realm of Infinite Possibility.

It is this understanding that establishes the notions of:

- **interrelatedness** (allied by nature, origin, or kinship),
- **interconnectedness** (to be meaningfully or complexly related or joined), and
- **interdependence** (two or more things whose functions or purpose is incomplete without each other).

These notions underlie *Ifa* and all indigenous spiritual traditions. Every microbe, every insect, every plant, every tree, every four-legged, and every two-legged, including we humans are from and of the same material (*Àṣẹ*) and of the same **Source** (*Orisun, Oro*, the *Àṣẹ*) and our purpose for being is dependent one upon the other.

It should be clear then, that in the historical evolution of the world's religions, some very important understandings have been lost. Hence, we see so much hatred, prejudice, avarice, divisiveness, bigotry, and ruthlessness in the world today, and the destruction, devastation, of all aspects of environment and the creatures of Mother Earth. All while the religions of the world and their devotees claim to have and preach '**The Truth**'.

These ideas are for your reflection. You may choose to believe them as '**truth**', or you may choose to consider their significance as metaphors and analogies. The ability **to choose** what you believe to be true is one of your greatest gifts, and no one should try to constrain your choice. I am herein offering you food for thought!

- *What is it about you and me that we experience as permanent, and eternal, and unchanging?*
- *What is it that remains as a witness after all the ever-changing and impermanent aspects of our sense of self is stripped away?*

From day to day, month to month, and year to year we look in the mirror and see changes in our bodies. Yet when we say or think 'I', the 'I' feels the same, unchanging. Our experiences accumulate, our memory of some aspects of our lives change, our beliefs change, our goals change, our relationships with people change, our food, clothing, and activity preferences change. Yet, throughout all these changes, there is that aspect of ourselves that we experience as unchanging, the 'I'.

- You are not your body – it is constantly changing!
- You are not your mind – it is constantly changing!
- You are not your thoughts or emotions – they too are constantly changing.
- You are not your religion – it too is subject to change!

*So, who or what is that unchanging aspect of yourself?*

Every creature comes into the world with the same name, 'I', that identifies us as members of a **singularity**:

- the state, fact, quality, or condition of being singular,
- of and from a single source, a single source with infinite values (or expressions).

Every creature, regardless of its degree of sentience, has this sense of 'I', even within the forming of groups or communities, we maintain the sense of 'I/me'. It is 'I' who accepts to consider myself and part of 'us', a member of 'we'. I do that!

For you and me, that sense of 'I', and our level of sentience compels us to seek a knowledge and understanding of the nature of creation, the nature of the Creative Force and Source underlying creation, and our nature and place within the Universal Community of Created Things.

It is this wisdom that a religion should be pointing us towards. Unless we are completely blinded or overcome by the **Hypnosis of Social Conditioning**, we each have a sense that there is more than one aspect or experience of 'I'.

- There is the experience of 'I' as an identity that is separate from all of the other 'I's in our world.
- But, when we turn down the volume of the world and turn up the volume of our 'inner silence' we become aware of a unifying sense of 'I', one that connects us to everyone and everything else in the Universal Community of Created Things.

The world (the *l'oja*) pulls us to pay attention to and to believe that the **conditioned 'I'**, the **'I' identity** to which we have been conditioned, is our only and 'true' self. **Silent self-inquiry** enables us to realize, to experience the unconditioned 'I', the eternal, primordial, pervasive self that is rooted in and one with the Sentience of the First, the One, the Original, the Eternal, the Creator, the Source, the All-Powerful, Omnipresent **'I Am, That I Am!'**

Yes, religion can be a profoundly useful launching pad for this journey of remembrance. But first we must realize and remember the purpose of religion and that religion is not an end in and of itself. 'Having' religion is not enough, just like having a goal is not enough unless you pursue that goal with patient perseverance and determined action.

To be continued!

***Aajiirebi!***

May the Unblemished Cloth of **Òrúnmìlà**  
Continue to cloth us with the Wisdom  
Of the Here and the Hereafter!  
**Àṣẹ! Àṣẹ! Àṣẹ o!**

***Ki Olódùmarè, Òrìṣà, ati Egun fifun e ni  
Itona, Imoye, ati Opo Ire!***

My *Olódùmarè*, *Òrìṣà*, and *Egun* bestow on you  
Guidance, Wisdom, and Abundant Blessings!

***Ifokanbale!*** Peace of Mind from *Olódùmarè!*

***Ajolo Ajobo!*** We go out together; We return together!

***Àṣẹ! Àṣẹ! Àṣẹ o!***