

P09_9_17_Purpose_of_Religion_vscript (July 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 Pt. I

What is the meaning of religion?

Religion is defined as:

- The belief in and worship of a supernatural or superhuman controlling power, especially a personal God or gods. (They continue to argue the validity of science versus religion.)
- It refers to a particular system of faith and worship. (Many people are adherents of the world's great religions, while many others hold to their traditional, indigenous systems of belief.)
- It is a pursuit or interest to which someone ascribes supreme importance. (Many people in the West pursue consumerism as a religion.)

In this video lesson, we want to explore the subject of religion as it relates to the belief and worship of a supernatural or superhuman controlling power, especially a personal God or gods.

The word religion originates from the Latin '**religio**', meaning **obligation, bond, or reverence**, or the Latin '**religare**' meaning **to bind**. Lets take a moment to consider these ideas.

Obligation:

- An act or course of action to which a person is morally or legally bound.
- A duty or commitment.
- It refers to the condition of being morally or legally bound to do something.
- It indicates a debt of gratitude for a service or favor.
- It also suggests a binding agreement committing a person to a payment or other action.

This notion of religion raises certain questions.

- *What is the act or course of action to which religion morally or legally binds the devotee?*
- *What is it that the devotee must do?*
- *What is the nature of the debt for which gratitude is due?*
- *What is the service or favor that has created this debt?*
- *What is the structure of the agreement that makes religion binding?*

Bond:

- A thing used to tie something or to fasten things together.
- Physical restraint(s) used to hold someone or something prisoner, especially ropes or chains.
- The ability of two or more objects to stick to each other.
- A force or feeling that unites people.

Again, our minds are provoked to ask certain questions.

- *What is the nature of the thing that is used to tie or fasten the devotee to the religion?*
- *Since the bond is not something physical like ropes or chains, what is it?*
- *What is the nature of the force or feeling that allows religion to cause individuals to adhere to the religion.*
- *What is it that elicits feelings of unity among devotees of the same religion?*

Reverence:

- A deep respect for someone or something.
- A gesture indicative of respect.

This again raises a question:

- *To whom is this deep respect due?*
- *How is this reverence and respect shown?*

What is the Purpose of Religion?

- Religion is not an end goal!
- Religion is a means to a greater end!

Unfortunately, many people believe that religion is an end in and of itself, and that once they 'have it' their journey or task is done. They are devoted to the religion rather than being devoted to the purpose of the religion. It is this tendency to be devoted to the religion rather than to its purpose that causes so much division within and between various religions.

- 'I am more devoted to the religion than he or she is!'
- 'Our interpretation of the religion is more correct than their misinterpretation of the religion!'
- 'Our religion is better than their religion!'
- 'Ours is the only true religion!'

All of these expressions are misguided because they all fail to recognize the **purpose** of any and all religions in the life of the individual seeker.

Remember our original definition of religion?

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 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)'.

This is why those who seek power and control of humanity have seized upon religion as an effective tool for deluding the masses of human beings. And this is why it is important to recognize and stress:

Ifa ni ki isin!

Ifa is not a religion!

Ifa ni bawo aiye sise!

Ifa is how the universe works!

Ifa ni iwa ti aiye!

Ifa is the nature of the universe!

The purpose of all religions is to provoke inquiry into the true nature of things and especially into our own true nature.

- We can only perceive expressions of, indications of, suggestions of the presence of a supernatural, All-Powerful Creator God through our observations of the objective reality – the world out there.
- We can however experience the nature of our relationship to this Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omniscient, Sentient Entity through self-inquiry; by peeling back the layers of delusion, escaping the **hypnosis of social conditioning**, and discovering that part of ourselves that is permanent, and eternal, and unchanging; that which remains as a

witness, after all of the ever-changing and impermanent aspects of our sense of self is stripped away. That part of us is referred to as ***Ori Inu*** and ***Iponri***, the God-Force present in every ***Eniyan***.

Religion can offer the devotee a practice to hold onto until they are ready to pursue the journey and the discovery to which religion is pointing. That journey will inevitably cast the religion into a whole new light.

Ifa points us in the direction of discovering the nature of our true Self, that part of us that is our ***Kadara***, our Divine Share of the Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omniscient Sentient Entity, ***Orisun*** – the Divine Source of all things!

To be continued:

Aajiirebi!

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

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

My ***Olódùmarè, Ọ̀rìṣà***, 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!