

THE FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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INTRODUCTION

Nigeria, in many ramifications, is a pluralistic society. To be specific, there is religious pluralism in the country as there are adherents of Islam, Christianity, African Traditional Religion and several others like Buddhism, Hinduism and Bahaism among others. There is also ethnic pluralism, there are Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, Edo, Igala and several others, all of them belonging to a common nationality that is known as Nigeria. Apart from this, each of this tribe has its own culture. All these differences make life interesting and challenging to the various religious groups. When it comes to the issue of national development, People tend to bury their cultural differences and work together as a team in order to develop the country regardless of cultural and religious differences.

The question to be answered is, how can the pillars of Islam contribute to national development in Nigeria? Put differently, how can the pillars of Islam affect national development in Nigeria. In this regard, the paper tends to demonstrate the fact that the five pillars of Islam are resources for national development in Nigeria. It also shows that each of the pillars has theological foundations that are necessary for the development of the society.

However, it should be noted that the five pillars of Islam have been recognized as part of Islamic worship. Worship in Islam is primarily a recognition of divine presence and the fact that human beings are His hand-work and that God places man on the surface of the

earth for a purpose, which is principally to worship Him. In line with this assertion, the Holy Qur'án says, "I have not created the man and jin but to worship Me".¹

Besides the foregoing, the paper will show the effect of the pillars on inter-faith relationship in Nigeria. Nigeria, as already indicated has several religious groups and cultural differences. It is against this background that the paper demonstrates how the pillars of Islam can assist in the development of Nigeria knowing fully well that the pillars also have a kind of pluralistic implications for mankind. It does not stop with Muslims only, as they affect the society as a whole.

THE PILLARS AS ISLAMIC MODE OF WORSHIP: A

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

There are five fundamental principles of Islam otherwise known as Pillars of Islam. Each of them is discussed below:

***IMAN* OR FAITH**

The first pillar constitutes faith known as "Iman". The faith or belief in one God is also called Tawhid because it deals with Unity of God or Oneness of God. As we have five pillars of Islam, so also we have six articles of faith. They are: Belief in one God, Belief in Angels, Belief in His Books, Belief in Prophets, Belief in the last day, and Belief in predestination. These articles of faith are very important because they form the cornerstone of Islam. In fact, they mark the great difference between Islam and other religions. In Islam, God cannot be seen even though He sees man. God is omnipotent because He does everything. He creates man, animals, Heaven and Earth and everything in them. He is indeed supreme in all things. He is Omnipresent because He is everywhere. The first pillar is to witness that; *Ashadu an la illha illa ilahu wa ashadu ana Muhammadan rasulu ilahi* – (I bear

witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah).²

The first sentence of the “Shahadah” signifies the belief in the Oneness of Allah. It is the key to Islamic Faith. Believe in the Oneness of Allah and His attributes is called ‘Tawhid’. The effect of belief in God is that one who believes that there is no God but Allah undoubtedly knows that there is no harm or benefits except through Him. All Authorities and power belong only to him. He grants mercy and prosperity. He is the owner of life and death, this belief creates in a man’s heart courage and bravery because he will have no fear of any power and will not be subjected to anyone but to the cherisher of the universe. Similarly, this belief creates in man humility because he knows that there is no power or distinction except from Allah. He cannot show pride over others because he realizes that there is no distinction between man and man except through good actions. This faith also creates in man the will-power for he is not dismayed by misfortune nor despair. He knows that the power of Allah is above all powers. He who believes in the supreme authority of Allah will be free action because he is sure that his creator knows everything. He is nearer to him than himself. The belief in the existence of Allah and His oneness obliges one to act according to His laws and orders, and he will hasten to do good services and actions for the benefit of all human kinds.

The second sentence of the Shahadah, that is to “bear witness that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah”, signifies the belief in the finality and universality of the Prophethood of Muhammad. According to the Holy Qur’án, Prophethood is a free gift of Allah, not the result of anything done on the part of man. That is to say, no man can rise to the dignity of prophethood by his own efforts. It is Allah who raises someone to that dignity when He intends it.

The basic belief in Islam is the belief in Allah – His existence, His unity and His perfection. Muslims must believe in the existence of Allah. Allah exists with His own being. Everything other than Him came into being through His creation. He Himself, His attributes and His deeds are unique. He does not have a companion in existence. He does not have likeness in any respect (Q. 17:111 and Q. 112:1-4). These are six articles of faith³.

AS-SALAT OR PRAYER

This is the second pillar of Islam. *As-salat means* canonical prayer offered by Muslims. Any Muslim who fails to observe his prayers and has no reasonable excuse is committing a grave offence and a shameful heinous sin. It is compulsory for every qualified able-bodied Muslim whether female or male, because the only reason why human beings are created is that God should be worshiped⁴. as noted earlier.

The significance of prayer is that it destroys the satanic tendencies in human beings. It gives spiritual light to the soul and discourages man from shameful and unjust deeds. (Q. 29:45). It strengthens the belief in the Existence of God and transmits this belief into the innermost recesses of man's heart. It also enlivens the belief and makes it constructive in the practical course of life. Prayer teaches equality of human beings. This is possible because Muslims of all ranks, colours and creeds stand shoulder to shoulder in mosques or other praying grounds during congregational prayers before God. The king could stand with the poorest among his subjects. The rich man in an expensive opulently dressed could sit next to a beggar in tattered dresses. This establishes brotherhood and love among Muslims. Prayers also help to establish solid unity among Muslims⁵. Five times in the day, people in the locality meet together for prayers. Thus in a community meet once in the week for the *Jumaat*, assemble together twice in the year for *Idul-fitr* and *Idul-adha* prayers. In addition, Muslims all over the world gather together twice in a year at Makka for annual pilgrimage

and lesser pilgrimage. During such daily, weekly or annual meetings, Muslims get to know more of one another.

The obligation prayers include subh (at dawn), suhr (early noon), asr (late afternoon), Maghrib (sunset) and Isha (early night)⁶. Apart from obligatory prayers, there are other special prayers which include Salatu Juma'ah, Idul-Adha, Salatu- Istisqa⁷, etc

ZAKAT OR ISLAMIC TAX

Zakat literally means “to purify, to develop and cause to grow”⁸. But in Shariah term, it is an obligatory to be giving to the poor. It is the third pillar of Islam and placed just after Salat in the order of importance. Zakat is the right of God from a Muslim’s wealth. The true Muslims are those who pay their Zakat dues regularly. Prophet Muhammad said that “Islam is built on five pillars; the acknowledgement that there is no god but Allah and Muhammad as the messenger of Allah, the performance of prayer; the giving of Zakat, the fasting in the months of Ramadan and the performance of pilgrimage”⁹.

Those who are to be given Zakat include: the poor, the needy and those who are employed to collect them and for those whose hearts are to be won over and for the ransoming of slaves and those in debt and in the way of Allah, and for the wayfarer: that is a duty enjoined by Allah; and Allah is All-knowing, All-wise.¹⁰

According to the verse, there are eight categories of recipients of zakat. They are: the poor (people who are destitute that do not have sufficient for their living); the needy (people who are extremely helpless, the Zakat Collectors (officials appointed to collect zakat); over winning of Hearts to Islam (those people that have been recently converted to Islam). In addition. Zakat can be used for ransoming of slaves and helping debtors who are unable to pay off their debts. It can also be used for propagation of Islam and can be given to the wayfarer, who is in need of help.

The significance of Zakat is that it purifies one’s wealth as it promotes the welfare of the receivers. It checks hatred, poverty and criminal acts within the micro community and a

wider society¹¹. By transfer of Zakat from the rich, the society, in turn, encourages production, trade and economic prosperity, thereby promoting national development.

SAWN (FASTING)

Fasting in Islam means abstaining from eating, drinking, smoking, gratifying sex desires from dawn till sunset in all days of the month of Ramadan¹². Fasting during Ramadan was enjoined on the Muslims in the second year of Hijrah. It is the fourth pillar of Islam.

Importance of Fasting

The importance of fasting cannot be over-emphasized in that Revelation of the Qur'an came to prophet during the period particularly on one night of Ramadan, a night of centralizing the service of humanity (Laylatul-Qadr). As a divinely-sent blessing, it become pleasurable to live ever within limits appointed by God, thus, renewing life of the faithful and advancing them by degrees of nearness to God. It is a way of giving discipline to Muslims by giving up what lawfully and rightfully belongs to them for the welfare and happiness of others¹³.

HAJJ - PILGRIMAGE

Pilgrimage to Makka is the fifth and the last pillar of Islam. By making it last, Islam expects every intending pilgrim to have satisfactorily fulfilled all the conditions attached to the preceding four pillars.

A Muslim who neither prays regularly nor fasts honestly during the month of Ramadan is not spiritually equipped to go on pilgrimage to Makka. The same thing applies to someone who does not pay Zakat, though he is wealthy enough to do so. Apart from being spiritually qualified to go to Makka; an intending pilgrim must be financially and physically healthy before embarking on the journey to the holy land. He should leave sufficient money

for his wives, children, brothers, sisters and parents and in fact, all those who depend on him for subsistence.

It is quite un-Islamic to neglect one's responsibility to one's dependants and make them suffer because one is going to Makka. After adequate provision for dependants, the intending pilgrim should pay his transport fare to and from Makka. After this, he should take along some money to purchase what he needs in Saudi Arabia.

THE FIVE PILLARS AS A CATALYST FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

The Shadadah-Iman

The whole of the religion of Islam is briefly summed up in the two short sentences: *La ilaha ill-Allah*, that is, there is no god but Allah or, nothing deserves to be made an object of love and worship except Allah and *Muhammad-un rasulullah i.e.* Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. It is simply by bearing witness to the truth of these two simple propositions that a man enters the fold of Islam. The first part of the creed is the constant theme of the Qur'an and a faith in the Unity of God, in the fact that there is no god except Allah, is repeatedly mentioned as the basic principle of Islam¹⁴.

Islam stands for direct relationship between man and God. Between God and believer, there is no mediation. Allah is nearer to man than anything else. The Prophet has transmitted to mankind the final word of God, and after such transmission, there is to be no other interpreter or mediator. Man is now in the presence of God alone in life and death. From birth to death, man is being watched by God, whom nothing escapes. Alone in the presence of God, what can man do but surrender himself to His mercy. Such surrender is true faith, and faith is the relationship between man and God. It is the cardinal principle of the creed of

Islam and the recitation of the affirmation of faith epitomized in the formula of kalimat shahaddah¹⁵.

The acknowledgement of God as Creator makes it not only necessary in acknowledging our selves only but also makes us open to others and aspire to the ideal in the fear of God and love of men¹⁶. If religion has any unifying role in human society, it must be from this common perspective. All these will lead to development in society. Despite the multi-ethnic, multilingual and secular nature of Nigeria each “tribe” has a strong community life, in which all strive not only for their individual welfare but also for the welfare of others. This awareness and compassionate concern for one another in the traditional Nigerian life cannot be over-looked. This universal ideology of true Nigerians on interdependence springs from a perpetual desire to eschew extremism, discourage intolerance, arrogance, promote discipline, foster sublimation, minimize crime, reduce tension and, on the whole, humanize relations¹⁷ in order to bring national development. This is to forge national development. Religion is about human relationship both among one another and with God. This is a form of existence that considers, with humility and honesty, the pluralistic nature of our world. The unifying function of religion will only be credible if the various religions will generate such human interest and values that can lead to common goal, common involvement and common welfare, irrespective of petty religious differences which are historically conditioned and primarily man-made.

The second aspect of *Shahadah* takes Muhammad as Apostle or Messenger of Allah. Not only because he was the instrument of the production of the Qur’án but also because, as a Prophet he transformed his society, which was a discussion society where people always fought one another. This type of enmity existed for example, between one tribe and the other like Aws and Khasraj¹⁸. Muhammad actually united them and brought peace among them.

Also, all the isolated societies were united, so that, when adhan is called by mu'adhin and this aspect of Prophet Muhammad transformed the society, we are witness to it and that also should happen in our own society. So that the name of Muhammad ashadu ana Muhammadan Rasulu-lahi, in that respect is a transforming name from society that we have an example set by him.

It should be noted that the first example of the practicability of the Qur'an is the prophet himself. The prophet's examples have become our guides for the development of our nation. Examples can be multiplied in Medina constitutions drafted by Prophet Muhammad. Also, Treaty of Hudabiyyah all geared towards national development.

In the case of the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah as a recipe for national development, it should be recalled that one indisputable fact is that the relationship between the Muslims and the non-Muslims was initially never cordial. In order to bring peace with a view to working together for national survival and development, Prophet Muhammad, through divine inspiration, announced to his followers the plan to visit Makka at least for pilgrimage. In 628 CE, the Prophet led about one thousand four hundred companions on a pilgrimage to Makka. Despite the explicit peace mission of the prophet and his companions, the Makkans on receiving the news that the pilgrims had approached the vicinity of Makkah offered an armed resistance¹⁹. To avert any collision with the Makkans, a new route was followed by the Muslims. When the Makkans heard of this, they quickly returned to Makka in order to defend it against what they considered Muslims' invasion from the South²⁰. At last, the she-camel which the Prophet rode halted at Hudabiyyah, a location which is a few kilometers from the city of Makka. At this place, emissaries from both parties were dispatched, which ended in what later became the treaty of Hudaibiyyah²¹. The same method can be adopted to achieve National development by settling all communal conflicts between Ife and Modakeke

in Osun State of Nigeria and religious crisis at Plateau State and Kaduna State of Nigeria. Curently, everything has died down for peace.

SALAT - PRAYER

Islam prescribes practical ordinances through which the various precepts and values could be effectively translated into action. One of these ordinances is salat (the ritual prayer). The salat is a means of remembering God and His commandments.

The five daily prayers therefore, are distributed so evenly throughout the day that they have the effect of generating the remembrance of Allah regularly from morning to night.

Moreover, the salat, according to the Qur'án, “keeps one away from indecency and evil²². By bowing and prostrating before Allah, the worshipper demonstrates his or her submission to the divine will. He is therefore, required to make sincere and sustained efforts to bring his lower desire under control in order that he may obey the commandments of Allah in relation to other human beings. The total effect of salat, therefore, is that it keeps Muslims in constant communion with Allah and trains them regularly to obey Allah's commandments. It is really the first step in the onward progress of man, and yet, it is also his highest spiritual ascent. It helps man to realize the Divine in him, and that realization not only urges him to do disinterested service for humanity but also makes him attain the highest degree of moral and spiritual perfection. It is also the means of leveling all differences of ranks and the means of bringing about cohesion and unity among men which is the necessary basis of living civilization and development. The place of prayer in the self-development of man is given such a prominence in Islam that in the call to prayer, the words “come to prayer” are immediately followed by the words “come to success”, thus showing that self-development is attained through prayer. In other words, God is a living force in the life of a man, and prayer is the means by which it is sought to achieve this great end, there have been men who,

through prayers, have realized the great truth of the divine existence within their hearts and have laid down their lives for the good of humanity and development of the society. There was a moral force which not only brought about a complete change in their own lives but also enabled them to transform the lives of other people and change the histories of other people for better through the practical development they can see in their immediate environment²³.

Prayer is a unifying factor of human race. The five daily congregational prayers are used, among other things, to carry into practice the theoretical lessons of equality and fraternity for which Islam stands; and however much Islam may have preached in words, the equality of man and the fraternity of the community of Islam, all this would have remained a dead-letter had it not been translated into the everyday life of man through the institution of five daily congregational prayers.

How do you know that God loves people when they do not see the practical development in their society. This phenomenon has motivated those Islamic movements to embark on such projects for national development of the society. On the whole, prayer invites Allah's blessing on every member of the society. It transforms the neglected race of the Arabs into the most distinguished nation which his story can show to have turned an idle and inefficient people into the most zealous and untiring workers for the progress of humanity in all phases of its advancement²⁴.

ZAKAT – ISLAMIC TAX

It is an annual charge on property which remain in the possession of a person for a whole year, when its value reaches a certain limit called Nisab²⁵. Zakat is another practical ordinance in Islam through which the various values could be translated into action leading to

the development of the society. From the economic point of view, zakat is a compulsory tax levied on the members of the Muslim community so as to take the surplus money from the comparatively well to do members of the society and give it to the destitute and needy²⁵. Zakat, therefore, acts not only as a leveling influence but also as a means of developing higher sentiments of man the sentiments of love and sympathy towards his fellowman and above all national development of the society²⁶.

It should be noted that in any parts of Islamic world today, Zakat is the main source of income for building mosque and other physical developments which the citizens of the area can see as part of national development of the area. The awareness that we do not owe ourselves and we do not owe all the property on everything we have, but that God is the one who allots those things to us, as a trust, the Zakat is therefore taken as an expression of gratitude to Allah – the possessor of all things visible and invisible.

Zakat, in order to achieve its desired goal of national development, may be used in defence and propagation of Islam. Expansion of Islam includes welfare expansion. There is the need to strive in taking the message of the Qur'án to distant corners of the world. With all these, it will be seen that the institution of Zakat, while trying to ameliorate the condition of the poor, has also in view the defence and advancement of the Muslim society as a whole.

SAUM - FASTING

The psychological aspect of fasting is that it is a discipline through which one can develop one's will power²⁷. It is when man exerts his will against animal instincts that he realizes his higher nature. The exercise of fasting makes one more appreciative of the gifts that God has bestowed, which are otherwise generally taken for granted²⁸.

The theological interpretation of fasting to national development, therefore, is that it helps us to see that God did not create all human beings in the same way. There are some of them created rich. Some are created poor, while some are created lame or blind. But in any way God has created mankind, they are all meant to show his sovereignty. Therefore, that same people are cut away because of war or because of epidemics does not mean that God is cruel. It only shows the sovereignty of God. The people of God want to participate in the pain and sorrow of those people, and therefore, fasting is a way of pleading to God in order to pour out His bounties, abundance. The people of God are therefore, expected to give part of their riches to the less-privileged people, more importantly, fasting aims to accommodate those less fortunate people so as to be independent. They can contribute to the development of the society. In this way, knowing that people are hungry or starving is not enough, but it shall extend to establishing an organization that will meet the need of these less privileged people and make them to develop themselves and their own society.

HAJJ - PILGRIMAGE

The last of the practical ordinances of Islam is Hajj. It is not a mere physical ritual but it is an emotional experience. The spirit of Muslim brotherhood is physically demonstrated when one notices that no other institution in the world has the wonderful influence of the Hajj in leveling all distinctions of race, colour and rank.²⁹

Considering the theological importance of Hajj further, one observes that the State of Ihram in which the pilgrim performs rites of Hajj is a practical demonstration of the severing connection with the material things of this world. This is demonstrated by noticing both millionaires and the pauper is put on only two unsewn pieces of white cloth and are thus placed on equal footing before their Lord. The Tawaf is also a demonstration of the love of God. The true love of God requires that one should endeavour always to give up one's selfish

interests where they clash with the Divine commandment in the same way as one would be prepared to abandon the pursuit of an interest in order to avoid offending a loved one³⁰.

THE PILLAR IN INTER-FAITH RELATION

The Shahaddah

In the concept of God, Islam and Christianity have scriptural backings that make them imperative to respect one another in matters relating to God. In other words, in the two religions, the oneness of God is emphasized. The Bible says in Deuteronomy 6:4-5, ‘Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord, and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your might’. Again, the Qu’ran Sura 2:256 says “There is no God but He, the Living, the Everlasting...” However, it is observable that the most important aspect of any religion, is belief in God, who is the creator and the supreme ruler of heaven and earth.

In Islam, there is also a rigid and uncompromising form of monotheism. According to Islam, God does not make use of any intermediaries. To refer to God as two or three in Islam is to commit a grave sin.

Despite these various forms and systems of approaching God, the fact still remains that the Supreme Being is a Universal phenomenon. He is the unmoved mover, the first cause and the uncaused cause. All the religions perceive God as the Creator of Heaven and Earth. God is similarly conceived in all religions whatever may be the system of approach.

Al-Salat

Prayer, according to Islam, is a spiritual communion of a Muslim with his Creator five times a day. It is the out-pouring of the heart to God. It is a communion with God when the worshipper sometimes feels as if he is talking to another man. To the Christians, prayer is

the raising of the mind to God. It is a conversation with God and a dialogue which becomes a sharing in the eternal communication of word of God with the father in the holy spirit.

Another practical example was when people of different religions instructed to pray for the country Nigeria during the transition period into democracy. They responded to the call, and the prayer was answered.

Series of revival programmes and crusades are witnessed from time to time in our stadia. These revival programmes normally Muslims, Christians and adherents of the indigenous religion come together. This shows that there is interaction of religions in our community, and when these religions interact, we normally witness peace, solidarity and co-fraternity rather than religious acrimony. This will eventually lead to national development because salat is a phenomenon of inviting Allah's blessings on every member of the society.

Az-zakat

Zakat, an act of spending out of what God has given to the people in a society, shows that the realization of Divine in man leads to the service of the society. In the case of interfaith relation, when zakat is collected, it can be spent on charitable objects of national value beneficial to the people in the society. In this regard, zakat can be used for welfare expansion by establishing zakat house where individual practising and committed Muslims would pay their zakat. Part of this can be used in building schools for public use, and another part can also be used to purchase instructional materials for such schools.

Zakat can also be used to build orphanages and social welfare centres for the use of the society. It can also be used to help the poor students in learning institutions in term of scholarships and business. Houses can be built for the blind and deaf to teach them some crafts. Proceeds from zakat can also be spent on free primary education like Universal Basic

Education (U.B.E.) and secondary education because such schemes will be of great benefit to the society and the populace irrespective of their religious inclination.

In addition to the above, zakat, in order to fulfil its inter-faith relation, should be spent in all establishments which are either totally devoted to charitable purposes such as hospitals, homes for the poor disabled and old people, the orphanage or to do service of national development, namely scientific research centres and welfare centres. By the nature of the above, they fulfil the purpose to which the proceeds of Zakat are dedicated.

Saum

Fasting, in interfaith relation, is a general command of God to mankind which must be obeyed by Muslims to discipline their lives in this confused world where merely thinks selfishly of himself alone. It is through this discipline that the true equality of human race is displayed in Islam. A rich Muslim, while fasting, realizes the hardship of the unfortunate or less fortunate people who are not in a position to get even one meal a day. One thing to realize in fasting is that of divine gain. By voluntarily abstaining from food and water, the suppression of sexual desires and keeping away from any form of moral degradation, man's soul attains victory over his flesh; thus, he begins to understand his duties to God and towards his fellow beings.

Fasting is not merely an act of asceticism to draw man away from the world. On the contrary, it brings him closer to the understanding of his human society and the problems of the individuals forming that society. In this regard, it is a practical democracy in Islam. The King and his servants, the rich and the poor, without any social distinction, are commanded to abstain from food and drink and other means of pleasure during the hours of fasting.

Hajj

Hajj has made practicable what could have seemed impossible, namely that all people, whatever class or country they belong to should speak one language and wear one dress. All men are equal by birth and by death. They come into life in the same way and pass out of it in the same way. However, Hajj is the only occasion in which they are taught to live in one way, act in one way and feel in one way. This kind of Islamic brotherhood is an occasion to come together and plan for the development of the society. This is because their spiritual desire to meet God has been met by performing pilgrimage. Hajj therefore, is not merely the visit to places of importance or the performance of the same rites, it is an occasion for the unification of purpose and the consolidation of efforts towards the common good, not only of Muslims but also of society at large. For example, the carrying out of consultations among the Muslims and the drawing up of joint plans in the scientific, cultural, economic or political spheres during pilgrimage is a great benefit when it comes to the issues of inter faith relation. When these people return to their country, they can use those ideas by forming political parties and selling the same to adherents of other faiths in their country.

Conclusion

From the foregoing, it is noted that Islam is indeed indispensable to national development for it offers solutions to the various problems of nation state. Its precepts and measures are geared towards national development. These are translated into action through the practical exercise of salat, zakat, saum, and Hajj with shahaddah as the foundation.

We also noticed that the structure of society in Nigeria does not permit the full translation of the attitude of antagonism into practical realization. The mutual and reciprocal dealings go to show that in Nigeria, whatever may be the official attitude of the adherents of the three religions namely Islam, Christianity and traditional religion in practical terms, it is

not possible to keep them apart from one another. Although Muslims and Christians may be “poles apart” on some matters, differences must be “repressed” to maintain “peace” in a multi-religious family-compound like Nigeria. Nigeria provides a reasonable controlled “laboratory” to examine the differential impact of the world religions on a single nationality. Many Nigerians who spent long hours in Church or Mosque affairs and a high percentage of their income contributing to the growth of their Churches or Mosques, would not think of voting during the country’s general election on the basis of their religious or political movement to further the interest of their religious community. An example can be multiplied if the one considers the year 2003 general elections in Nigeria. In Osun State of Nigeria where the governor voted into power is a Christian and his deputy is also a Christian. Yet Muslims and Christians and other faith, voted for them to win the 2003 gubernatorial election in the state. That is the level of tolerance of Muslims when it comes into inter-faith relation.

In conclusion, the five pillars of Islam should be seen beyond an act of worship. It is the expression of Divine reality, the Unity of God and of mankind regardless of their colour, culture, religion and nationality.

ENDNOTES

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