

ETHIOPIANISM: A SYMBOL OF LIBERATION THEOLOGY VIS-À-VIS NIGERIAN SITUATION

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Abstract

Our efforts in this research work have been geared towards examining the relevance of Ethiopianism in emancipation of the oppressed politically, religiously, and culturally. It is an ideology, which best expressed the union between African philosophy and nationalism with the Bible as a base. Findings showed that Nigeria needed this liberation theology in her contemporary security challenges. The objective of this research work was to present a way forward for Nigeria to handle the insecurity that is threatening the corporate existence of Nigeria. The paper used the word Ethiopianism and liberation theology interchangeably. Methods of approach were historical and phenomenological approaches.

Keywords: Ethiopianism, theology, symbol, culture, religion, black, white

Introduction

This research work is not intended to be a full presentation on the topic of Ethiopianism. Rather, it is an introduction to the subject. It is intended to describe the liberation movements from the historical, biblical and phenomenological perspectives. The Ethiopianism growth happens in the local congregation and hence to the countries concerned such as Ethiopia, South Africa (Zionist movement), and other African countries. In this 21st century, a new spirit of excitement is being felt among various ethnic groups such as the Niger Delta militants (MOSOP-Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People, MEND- Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta etc.), separatist nationalists, ethnic nationalists and cultural nationalists among others. Therefore, the aim of this research work is to unravel the casual factors of these agitations, religious bigotry, and security challenges in Nigeria. In the scripture, Nehemiah's behaviour as a leader was guided by principles of service rather than by opportunism (Neh. 5: 16). This work uses Ethiopianism and liberation theology alternately.

Conceptual framework

According to Ejizu (1986), "symbolism is the basis of human communication" (p. 1). It is an act of making symbols. For Turner (1967), "a symbol is a thing regarded by general consent as naturally typifying or representing or recalling, something by possession of analogous qualities or by association in fact or thought" (p. 19). Symbol from these definitions means something standing for another by reason of relationship, association or convention. It connects the known with the unknown. This can be viewed via sensory and/or ideological poles. In West Africa, Ethiopianism became fundamentally racial (Falk, 1997). The basic underlying thought was the conversion of Africa and the establishment of a Christian theocracy that would embrace all of Africa. Ethiopianism incited Negro racialism and gave the educated Africans a hope that they thought would be fulfilled someday.

As regards the political interpretation of the work of Christ in essentially socio-political terms. According to Milne (1993), this springs partly from the radical theology of the early 1960s. A sharp reaction to the notion of a God 'out there', objective to the world and known through revelation, ushered in a God 'down here', immersed in the human process and encountered in the stuff of everyday existence. More immediately the movement was fathered by developments in the World Council of churches, whose growing concern to interpret the church's mission in socio-political terms crystallized at Uppsala in 1968. Here the goal of mission was stated as "humanization" rather than evangelization;

with modifications, that remains the council's position. A primary source is, however, simply the social and cultural realities, particularly in the third world, the entrenched poverty, injustice, economic dependence, and the apparent failure of the churches to confront these problems.

A key to this theological approach is the Marxist term, praxis, which asserts the inseparability of theory and practice. Theological statements are inescapably ideological, reflecting a theologian's socio-political commitment. Theology in this case must begin with the sociological reality, the present socio-political involvement of the church and the Christian theologian, interpreted with the tools of the social sciences; out of this analysis of praxis there develops a new standard for understanding scripture and the church's tradition.

Political theology, more particularly liberation theology (a related but essentially third world movement), are still evolving and already appear to have modified certain emphases. Liberation theologians can be heard as an echo of James, calling the church to express its faith in 'works' relevant to today's neighbour (James 2). Nevertheless, one cannot help asking whether many of these political and liberation theologians themselves fall into this very danger of enculturating the gospel by their uncritical acceptance of Marxist categories for restating the Christian message.

Black theology is more thoroughly and explicitly political than African theology is. James Cone claims God solely for the black experience (Parratt, 1991). Cone's mistake is that he has taken Black theology out of the framework of the theology of liberation, thereby making his own situation (being black in America) and his own movement (liberation from white racism) the ultimate criterion for all theology. By doing this, Cone makes of a contextual theology a regional theology, which is not same thing at all. Cone is certainly right in claiming that the only Christian expression of theology in the United States (and for that matter in South Africa) is Black Theology, in as much as the gospel is a gospel of liberation, in our case black liberation to begin with.

Indeed, Black Theology is a theology of liberation in the situation of blackness for blacks, it is the only legitimate way of theologizing-but only within the framework of the theology of liberation. Black theology therefore, finds itself in intention and theological methodology, and certainly in its passion for liberation, not only alongside African Theology, but also alongside the expressions of Liberation Theology in Latin America and Asia.

Unless one knows that one is oppressed, unless one knows the oppressor, one cannot be liberated. This process of identification has to do with (re-) education of the people and the discovery of one's own negative involvement leading to positive engagement. Within the black situation solidarity with the oppressed becomes active engagement for liberation, leading to the transformation of oppressing and inhuman structures.

Black Theology knows that the biblical message of God's liberation has historical as well as eschatological dimensions. It does not only rest upon the historical event of the Exodus, but it points also to the future, the future of Yahweh which he has made also the future of his people. Black Theology realized that New Testament eschatology is a call to arms, a summons not to be content with the existing situation of oppression, but to take sides with the oppressed and the poor and subsequently for the new humanity and the new world (Romans 6:4, 12:2).

To Nmah (2012), the origin of "Ethiopian mythology" can be traced back to history and the Bible. The successful military resistance of the Ethiopian empire against the Italian colonial occupation in AD 1896 is said to have impressed Africans, and especially the blacks in South Africa. It brought stirring of hope among Africans who thought that perhaps, in a similar manner, the whites in South Africa would be challenged with devastating defeat at the hands of those Africans whom they had for long oppressed.

The Ethiopian movement seeks to find the premise and actual beginning of an African church in the scriptures, especially in Psalm 68: 31 and Acts 8: 26-39. It seeks also to find further support in the Bible as it traces the origin of its divine election, which as legend claims came to be more than 2,500 years ago from the celebrated love affair between King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba.

The “Abyssinia ideology” of the “Ethiopians” shared also by the “Zionists” is said to be in essence an attempt to give to the independent churches an ancient Apostolic success and a charter linking their church with the Bible-which speaks of “Ethiopians”- and with a Christian church which it is hoped will yet arise, throughout the African continent. Ethiopianist theology is the ideology behind the views of prominent particularly in the political arena. Ethiopianist Theology is based on Psalm 68: 31, which says, “Ethiopia, will quickly stretch out her hands to God”. It builds on the concept of Africa for the Africans. Kato (1976) avers that this theology stands for (1) radical recapture of the lost land, (2) radical withdrawal of whiteness from all African institutions (including white God, white Jesus); (3) joint action of local African anti-colonial movements of liberation, (4) unconditional recognition and radical affirmatism of blackness through black prophethood, and (5) pursuit of a biblical religion which will save man from material and spiritual bondages.

Black power is, says Cone, complete emancipation of black people from white oppression by whatever means necessary (Cone, 1969). Black power says “no” to oppression and “yes” to the dignity and worth of black people. Cone sees also Black Power as “the courage to be” the black person’s attempt to affirm his being, to be recognized as a thou instead of an it. Black Power says that blacks prefer to die rather than live as slaves, for “to be human” is to find something worth dying for. When the black man rebels at the risk of death, he forces white society to look at him, to recognize him, to take his being into account, to admit that he is.

To understand what God is doing in the world, according to Cone, one has to know what Black Power is doing, for Black, even in its most radical expression, is not the antithesis of Christianity, but rather God’s central message to twenty first century America. “Black rebellion,” Cone affirms, “is a manifestation of God himself involved in the present-day affairs of men for the purposes of liberating a people.

Research Objectives

The objectives of this research work include:

- To develop a knowledge and appreciation of liberation theology (Ethiopianism).
- To x-ray the effects of insecurity in Nigeria as regards economic, education, spiritual, moral and social life of the Nigerians.
- To galvanize the consciousness of Ethiopianism as apt for the remedies to the insecurity in Nigeria.
- To examine also the factors that engender the thriving of Banditry, religious bigotry or bickering, Fulani herdsmen attacks, poor political leadership, poverty, separatist nationalism and ethnic nationalism.
- To appraise Ethiopianism and colonialism.
- To x-ray also culture conflict and crisis as depicted in some African novels.

Significance of the Study

The importance of this research work basically stems from the fact that it addresses the factors that threatened the collective existence of Nigeria, and offers a valid and insightful resource related extant materials for further studies on security challenges in Nigeria. It will also add intellectual values for further cultural, political, religious, sociological and anthropological scholars especially church historiographers who can consult such documents in order to gain useful insight on the topic.

Literature Review and Hypotheses

Ethiopianism

The word “Ethiopianism” has a long history. It is an ideological movement which has behind it Ethiopia as a symbol for Africa (Onwubiko, 1991). As a symbol of liberation theology, Ethiopia has a message in three directions: politically, culturally and religiously. It is an ideology which best expresses the union between African philosophy and nationalism with the Bible as a base.

Politically, according to Onwubiko (1991), Ethiopia was the only African country which never came under the control of any European colonial power and did enjoy diplomatic recognition and status the world over. It is not surprise that African nationalism had often to look up to Ethiopianism for inspiration. Therefore, for many African nationalists, Ethiopianism best expressed their political goals and aspirations.

Another source of political pride was the factor of the long standing Ethiopian monarchy, which claimed descent from King Solomon. Ego Kaskeline cited Onwubiko (1991) wrote:

Ethiopia is one of the oldest kingdoms on earth. According to tradition, the Queen of Sheba, who visited King Solomon, was an Ethiopian princess. From their union was born a son, Menelik, who is the legendary ancestor of the Ethiopian kings. The then emperor, therefore, uses the title “Lion of Judah”. Actually, if the queen’s visit took place, she came from a country in Southern Arabia which recent archaeological findings have proved to be the Sheba of the Bible (p. 101).

i. Culture: Culturally speaking, it found favour with the Black people in America and West Indies as embodying a “Liberatory promise” and it became a slogan for Negro aspirations. In this context being a ‘Negro’ and an African became, in a sense, synonymous and each looked towards Ethiopia as a symbol of a land in which the African lived and will live in freedom in a truly African cultural ambient native to the African society. In the early nineteenth century when the negro anti-slavery movement was beginning in America, Ethiopianism was there associated with the idea of liberty freedom and liberation.

The era between 1611 and the publication of *Equiano’s Travels*, 1789, marks the period of the organised development of Ethiopianism as a movement. Equiano’s book was concerned with altering the Europeans on the extent of the evils of slavery, with presenting the rich African cultural heritage to the English reading public so as to disprove their theory of African cultural ‘*tabula rasa*’ by linking the African and Israelites as having similar institutions, customs and cultural practices. He depicted the African communalism showing its cultural importance within the community context. What Equiano represents in Ethiopianism is that he laid the foundation on which the later “African writers”- Ethiopianists- built; the exploration and exposition of a culture with its own integrity and values (Onwubiko, 1991).

ii. Religion: Biblically and religiously, Ethiopianism presented as explicit proof of the inclusion of Africa in the original and divine plan of God for the world. Strictly speaking it derived its strength from it; even in the areas of politics and culture just mentioned. The origin of Ethiopianism both as an African movement and an ideology is based on Psalm 68: 31-33, which mentions two African countries namely Egypt and Ethiopia thus: “Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon strength out her hands onto God”.

This indicates that by the time of the Psalmist Egypt and Ethiopia were known as powerful kingdoms. As regards that, the concept of Ethiopianism had a deep scriptural and religious connotation. Ethiopia had such a religious significance that Africans described the independent African churches which emerged at the end of the nineteenth century as “Ethiopian churches”.

According to Onwubiko (1991), scriptural bases of origins of Ethiopianism, 1560-1789, the Geneva Bible which appeared in 1560 used “Ethiopia” to translate “The Moryans” used by the Great Bible of

1541, in translating Psalm 68: 31 as follows, then shall the princes come out of Egypt the *Moryans* land shall soon stretch out her hand to God.

The two terms are connected by identifying Ethiopia as the land of the Black race. The appearance in 1611 of the King James version of the Bible marks, however, the origin of Ethiopianism because it used “Ethiopia” as we have seen in that text. Since it was the version used by missionaries in the “New World”, the Africans-the Black people-reading it began to pride themselves as Ethiopians. Its inclusion in the Bible itself gave it a sort of divine origin and it became, a symbol of hope and linked...with the expressions of faith in the survival and the development of the African.

In reactions against religious colonialism as exemplified and propagated by Black theology as “...a theology of Black liberation” whose goal is to present “the black condition in the light of God’s revelation in Jesus Christ so that the black community can see that the gospel is commensurate with the achievement of black humanity”. Ethiopianism is still a forerunner. It will not be forgotten that “Black theology” is a theology of “blackness”, that is, of Moryans.

This attempt at black or African Christianity, even, in its homegrown counterparts as exemplified in Kimbanguism, understood as “an African religion-authentically African and authentically Christian,” has its antecedent in Ethiopianism. There are a lot of literatures on all these movements and a common feature among them is the approach given to African culture and its presentation to the world from the lens of contact, conflict and crisis. And this is a very strong force in the formation of modern African Thought and Philosophy.

iii. Ethiopianism and Colonialism: Ethiopianism has been strong reference point on the issue of the link between colonialism and Evangelisation of Africa. Efforts have not been lacking to go beyond the 18th century attempt to spread, in the name of the gospel, a type of religious colonialism in Africa. Therefore, Ethiopianism was the term used to describe the Ethiopian church movement, that is, the establishment and operation of Christian religion according to “African ideals, methods and objectives, by and for Africans”. The fact that Ethiopia had a long history and an ancient Coptic Christianity which is not directly associated with Western Christianity was capitalized for nationalist propaganda. Exploited was also the case of the Ethiopian Eunuch, who was reading the text of Isaiah (Acts 8:26-40). It showed African contacts; with original Christianity and traditional connection with the original home of Christianity-Jerusalem. But “Ethiopia’s closer connection with the ancient Mediterranean world started with its conversion to Christianity, apparently introduced by Frumentius (380). A native of Phoenicia, he is called *Abba Salama* (Father of peace) in Ethiopian literature. While a slave at the king’s court at Aksum, he gained the king’s favour and started propagating Christianity. Later he was consecrated first Bishop of Ethiopia by St. Athanasius of Alexandria”. This ancient origin of the Ethiopian Christianity expressed the hope of the possible survival of a non-colonial Christianity in the African culture.

Although Ethiopianism does not have one connotation, from the struggle against colonialism to cultural affirmations, it was later applied to the African and independent native churches in South Africa about the 1890s. But historians say that as an African religious movement, Ethiopianism started in the Transvaal by M.M. Mokone and J.G. Xaba about 1893, as “Ethiopian church”. It was not surprising that to the South African whites, Ethiopianism, as a movement, whether inside or outside the church, “was nothing less than a pan-African conspiracy under the guise of religion”. An intelligence report on the movement stated among other things, that evidence was “constantly coming to hand that the Ethiopian movement continues to extend, not as a religious one, but a secret political organization”

The use of the word, “Ethiopianism” is striking because it brings out the case of ‘nationalism’ within the church organization whose interest is not Christian but politico-cultural movement. It must be noted here that African Liberation Movements: culturally, politically, and theologically are more of a continuation of Ethiopianism, than a new start. This is especially true of South Africa because today, it is in South Africa that most of the aims of the Ethiopians are only now being achieved. As can be seen

from this short sketch of Ethiopianism, it will not be false to claim that most philosophical and ideological movements which have African origins or African cultural base, are but aspects of the development of Ethiopianism. Whether one thinks in terms of *Aime Cesaire's Negritude* and its philosophical systematization and diffusion by Leopold Sedar Senghor, as an "awareness, defence, and development of African cultural values," or if one considers Pan-Africanism with its various slants, till it got its homegrown emphasis in Nkrumah's philosophical "consciencism", based on African sense of solidarity and unity, or even, if one carefully studies the development of Julius Nyerere's Ujama, as an African socialism based on African concept of "familihood" and "brotherhood", Ethiopianism finds a place.

President Julius Nyerere's policy of Ujamma in Tanzania and President Kaunda's Humanism in Zambia both have their theological supporters. More recently the Canaan Banana has given his enthusiastic, if uncritical, support to the Zimbabwean socialist revolution, which he sees as a manifestation of the kingdom of God. It is in South African "Black Theology" that Christian theology has become a voice of protest against the ruling government. South African writers usually distinguish between "Black Theology", meaning the political theology of black South Africans, and 'African Theology', by which they mean what we having so far called 'cultural theology'. The two chief concerns of theology in Africa are, therefore, on the one hand its relationship to political power, and on the other its relationship to African culture.

iv. Culture contact, conflict and crisis as depicted in some African novels

The theme of conflict and crisis dominate many African novels treating the subject of African culture contact with Europeans. The slave trade and its experience provide, for many, the point of departure or arrival as they write about African culture. This is an old approach begun with the publication of *Equiano's Travels*. First published in 1789, the book was concerned with matters affecting African culture, six of which are:

- i. To show that Africa had an indigenous system of government, of maintaining law and order;
- ii. That Africa had an indigenous culture to be proud of, a culture of happy people, of "a nation of dancers, musicians, and poets;
- iii. That the concept of Supreme Being was not introduced into Africa through contact with Christianity. "As to religion", he affirmed, "the natives believed that there is one Creator of all;
- iv. That children were educated within the culture to be morally truthful, and he could not forget to tell us that "my mother never suffer to tell a lie;
- v. That Africa and the Jews had similar customs and practices and that nature was generous to us such that "our land is uncommonly rich and fruitful, and produces all kinds of vegetables in great abundance... All our industry is exerted to improve those blessings of nature... Everyone contributes something to the common stock, and as we are unacquainted with idleness we have no beggars";
- vi. Finally, Equiano wanted to expose the extent of the damage done to African culture by the Slave Trade.

Later writers have developed some of these themes in greater details. Generally, African Novels are culture bound, though some are fictitious. But they are not fictions that are neutral to African culture.

To Obiechina (1975) in his book, *culture, tradition and society in West African novel*, tells us that,

The English speaking African with his background of British education and his pragmatic outlook, side steps the pitfall. He regards his cultural heritage as needing no apology, and no idealization. All that he wishes is that traditional life and culture should be portrayed with fidelity (p. 11).

As a result then,

The novelists were driven in the direction of cultural affirmation, towards expressing and affirming the past of the ex-colonial people validating their autochthonous values (especially

so far as these survive into the present), often at the expense of the received new values. The novels have, in other words, a strong impulse of cultural nationalism in them (p.12).

But specifically West African novels are not liberation-oriented, because the West African situation does not demand of “liberation as espoused and implied in many other parts of Africa. It is not out of place then to ask another question: in which direction are they indicating and how far is that direction going to lead to a genuine West African cultural life? The first of these novels and one that leads the others and perhaps the most celebrated, *Things Fall Apart*, says it best (Achebe, 1972). Other books authored by Achebe include, *Arrow of God; Girls at war, and other stories; morning yet on creation day essays; there was a country: a personal history of Biafra etc.*

Another current gives the impression that African traditional religion is more powerful than Christianity. This is the current of African writers series that pays attention to the anthropological details. Onuora Nzekwu’s thesis, as contained in *i* is typical. The hero of the book, Patrick Ikenga, despite all his efforts to be a Catholic priest, ended up being a priest of his family deity. The book shows also the force of tradition and its obliging effects on a child, especially, when committed to it through its parents. He maintained that the impunity and scorn with which Christianity treated traditional sacred objects and rituals accounts, in part for why “Christianity has developed only fibrous roots in its adherents”. His other book, *Wand of Noble Wood*, is an exposition of the practical effects of traditional religious beliefs on the life of people which neither Western education nor Christianity are yet able to counteract.

Ethiopianism and Nigerian Situation

Nigeria needs Ethiopianism or liberation theology in the face of insecurity, corruption, ethnicity, Fulani herdsmen attacks, maladministration, low standard of education, religious barrenness and bankruptcy, terrorism (or insurgency) among other security challenges. The causes of the above security challenges include: influence of public opinion, control of the media, the issue of national identity through religious affiliation, separatist nationalism, poor political leadership, ethnic national identities, and poverty. In attempting to explain what national security is not, Holmes (2015) posits that national security is not something that merely affects the well-being of people, but rather security must involve “their safety, their security, and their freedoms” (p. 20).

Imenda (2017) citing Busher says,

Anxieties about and suspicion of “counter terrorism” also derive from the abuses of power carried out in the name of public order and counter terrorism within some contemporary regions. In spite of the criticisms of contemporary domestic counter-terrorism in domestic Western states, excesses are being applied in Nigeria (p. 39).

As a manifestation of conflict, security challenges are rooted in both historical circumstances of the people and their current conditions of living and survival in Nigeria. Insecurity in Nigeria is a call to Ethiopianism in Nigeria. Students are being kidnapped and schools destroyed more especially in the northern Nigeria. At this time, we may not know the implications of these incessant attacks on the education sector until in the future. There is much maladministration from the local councils to the federal levels characterized by corruption and ethnicity. We need modern liberation theology or Ethiopianism to deliver Nigeria from this mess. There are much agitations in the country consequent upon maladministration, unemployment and injustice.

Many Nigerians are not happy because of economic hardships and threats from Fulani herdsmen. Many people are uprooted from their various communities mainly as a result of Fulani herdsmen and farmers clashes and hence they became refugees in their fatherland aka “internally displaced persons”. This is prominent in Benue, Kaduna, Plateau, Zamfara among other states of Nigeria. These internally displaced persons are living in a horrible, pitiable and hopeless situation. This in turn gives room for more famine in Nigeria. Foodstuffs are not within the reach of the masses. Economic activities are being disrupted. Many of the Nigerian leaders travel to overseas from medical treatment in negligence of

Nigerian health institution. Those citizens who could not make it to overseas' hospitals for treatment will resort to faith clinic or poorly and ill-equipped hospitals for treatment. Since corona virus pandemic in 2019, Nigeria has not been able to produce covid-19 vaccines, but solely depends on advanced countries for assistance. The call for Ethiopianism in Nigeria is apt in order to emancipate the people from further hardships. Exodus experience too can be applied in this situation.

The theology of liberation (the gospel of liberation), like any theology is about God and God's love are, ultimately, its only theme (Rowland, 2007). Action is needed in this context and it is the life of all. It is the praxis-based epistemology of liberation theology. Jesus said, "if you continue in my word then you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth and the truth will set you free (John 8: 31-32).

That practice, truth and freedom are inseparable axiomatic for liberation theology or Ethiopianism (or Ethiopic theology). The defining characteristic of liberation theology is that it is a lived praxis in solidarity with the poor and the oppressed. It is defined as theology, and not simply as an ethically or pragmatic stance, in that the key question concerns the living of a specifically Christian life and the story of the Bible is brought into dialogue with the story of life, the story of Nigeria. Freedom is the goal towards which practice is oriented. In this committed and value-laden practice, truth will be made manifest; the true character of the ideologically distorted structures of this country called Nigeria will be unmasked; and, for the truth of God's fullness of life for all humanity, men, women and children will live and die. It is a practical theology.

In the scripture, during Nehemiah's major effort to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, he confronted a socio-economic crisis that had deep moral implications (Neh. 5: 1-19). Before work of building the wall could proceed, problems that had long been simmering had to be dealt with. Among the classes affected by the crisis were (1) the landless, who were short of food (Neh. 5: 2); (2) the landowners, who were compelled to mortgage their properties (Neh. 5: 3); and (3) those forced to borrow money at exorbitant interest rates and sell their children into slavery (Neh. 5: 4-5).

If the leaders themselves used extortion, their underlings often proved even more oppressive (cf. Mtt. 18: 21-25; 20: 25-28). Those in high positions, as in Nigeria, are in danger of abusing their subordinates if they forget that they themselves are servants of a superior "Master in heaven" (Col. 4: 1; cf. Gen. 39: 9; 2Cor. 5: 11). Nehemiah's behaviour as a leader was guided by principles of service rather than opportunism (Neh. 5: 16).

Recommendations

In the light of the lessons learnt from Ethiopianism, the following recommendations are put forward as the contributions of this research work. There is need for re-orientation on values that centres on God and society. Ethnic or individual values and interests should be shunned and values that build our nation should be pursued.

Communiqué issued by the churches at the end of their conferences, workshops, seminars and synods that touches on societal ills such as terrorism, injustice, insurgency, wars, peace, poverty and enthronement of mediocrities in political system should be given wider circulation. They could be published in national newspaper instead of limiting it to only churches' publications.

The federal government of Nigeria should aim at restructuring the country so as to ensure peace and equity. Nigerian government should ensure security for all states of the federation in order to avert the symptom of internally displaced persons and the like. Justice and not coercion or violent threats are the true pillars of peace.

Government should use the methodology of the carrot and stick approach in handling a volatile situation. Education institutions should be adequately protected from the bandits and terrorists in order to enable peaceful learning environment for the students of Nigeria. Ethiopianism (or Ethiopic

Theology) or liberation theology is very essential in this contemporary Nigeria for justice, peaceful co-existence, development and tolerance to reign.

Electronic voting for free and fair election should be adopted while conducting elections in the country. It is also important that government of Nigeria should monitor the manufacturers and importers of arms so as to check-mate their excesses in production, importation and sales of these arms.

Methodology

This research work adopted the use of primary and secondary sources to obtain data. The primary sources involves oral interviews whereas the secondary sources involve the use of extant materials such as books, journals, artefacts, diaries, private and public brochures, homilies, archives, archaeological data and so on. The work is also based on phenomenological approaches.

Conclusion

In sum, this study presents, “Ethiopianism: a symbol of liberation theology vis-à-vis Nigerian situation” on the level of security challenges, their effects on the spiritual, economic, intellectual, political and social-moral standards of the people. Furthermore, as pointed out in this paper, the churches have to work in synergy with government at all levels to ensure the application of Ethiopianism in order to enhance their strategies using modern techniques for peace, freedom, economic growth, quality leadership, political advancement and to improve standard of education.

When Abraham Lincoln was criticized for being too courteous to his enemies and reminded that it was his duty to destroy them, he gave the great answer, “Do I not destroy my enemies when I make them my friends?” Even if a man be utterly mistaken, we must never regard him as enemy to be destroyed, but as a strayed friend to be recovered by love. In Ethiopianism, we seek peace and freedom for the oppressed knowing that peace is the climate of freedom and economic growth.

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