

THESIS ABSTRACT

Master of Arts Missiology

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Theological Seminary

Title: PERCEPTION OF PURITY IN ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY AND ITS
MISSIOLOGICAL IMPLICATION IN SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
CHURCH, IJEBU-ODE, NIGERIA

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Human-beings are social in nature which makes them to interact in one way or the other. God, the Creator created them in His own image. Consequently, human-being are *Imago Dei*, who are to interact with one another. God has also interacted with human in varying and diverse ways as the Biblical accounts have made us to understand. This paper then seeks to study the understanding of people of different religion persuasion through their perception of purity. The emphasis is to elucidate the perception of purity in both Christianity and Islam in Ijebu-Ode in other to find a more successful way of reaching the Muslims.

The qualitative research approach is employed which uses phenomenological research design through interviews and discussions with a focus group. The sample of this study was purposively selected. The participants are eight (8) in number. Four (4)

of them are Christians with Sunni Muslim background. The remaining four (4) are typical Christians from the three major groups of Christian in Ijebu-Ode. The Christianity in Ijebu-Ode is grouped into Orthodox, Pentecostal and African Initiated Churches.

Moreover, the participants are selected from Seventh-day Adventist Church, Baptist Church, Cherubim and Seraphim Church, and Redeemed Christian Church of God. The participants from Seventh-day Adventist Church and Baptist Church are considered as the orthodox group. The other participants from Cherubim and Seraphim Church, and the Redeemed Christian Church of God are regarded as African Initiated Churches and Pentecostal groups respectively.

It was discovered that many Christians in Ijebu-Ode are not aware of the purity perception of their Muslim neighbors. Muslims uphold purity as a way to win God's favor and so they practice it daily. In contrast, majority of Christians in Ijebu-Ode considered upholding purity practice as specified in the Bible especially the Old Testament as outdated and needless, since Christ has died for their sins. The grace that Christ has made available is regarded as nullification of physical purity practices. This stance of Christians offend the Muslims. Therefore, it has become a herculean task for Christians to reach them with the Gospel of Christ.

Meanwhile, the Seventh-day Adventist Church who still uphold purity practice are not known to the Muslims to be different from every other Christian. However, the Seventh-day Adventist Church members engage in purity not as a way to gain God's favor, nor as a ritual, but simply for some benefits those purity practices offer. The findings of this study presents a mission opportunity to Muslims by Seventh-day Adventist Church. The mission to Muslim by them can be a rewarding endeavor only if they will become "all thing to all people" (1 Cor 9: 19-23) in other to draw them to Christ.

In conclusion, upholding purity as recorded in the Bible can reduce the relationship gap between Muslims and Christians as they interact with one another. Consequently a winsome relationship can be established with the Muslims in their daily interactions. Nevertheless, the Muslim worldview about purity must also be addressed as they accept the gospel as it is in Christ.

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A thesis

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Master of Arts in Missiology

by

Fasaanu Abiodun Peter

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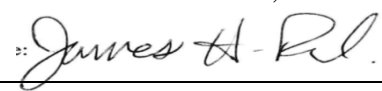
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I dedicate this study to the Lord God Almighty, the Initiator and Propagator of
Every good thing. It is as well dedicated to West-Central Africa Division
Of Seventh-day Adventist Church (WAD) for the vision
Of sending me here for Missiological studies. It is
Likewise dedicated to all who love
The Lord Jesus Christ.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Ijebu-Ode is a very prominent town in Yoruba land and most especially in Ijebu land. The Yoruba people of Nigeria, who occupy the Western part of the country is known to be one united people. Yoruba is a tribe with conglomeration of people speaking Yoruba language.¹ For instance, Ijebu is one of the sub-sets of the tribe speaking Ijebu dialect.²

Moreover, Yoruba of which Ijebu forms a significant part are bound together by a common language.³ Also, apart from their geographical location, they see themselves as one common people by their history, culture and mythology.⁴ As a matter of fact, all Yoruba peoples believe that their ancestral home is Ile-Ife.⁵ Therefore, all Yoruba peoples trace their origin to Ile-Ife.

¹ J. D. Fage & R. A. Oliver, *Papers in African Prehistory* (London & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 324.

² James L. Gibbs, Jr., *Peoples of Africa* (New York: Holt, Rinehalt and Winston, Inc., 1965), 549.

³ James L. Gibbs, Jr., 527.

⁴ James L. Gibbs, Jr., 547.

⁵ J. D. Fage & R. A. Oliver, *Papers in African Prehistory*, 303.

More also, the traditional territory of Yoruba people of Nigeria extends to the Eastern parts of the Republic of Benin.⁶ Their extensive land covers almost all of the Western parts of Nigeria reaching to River Niger. So, Yoruba occupies an extensive land of 30,403square miles.⁷ In spite of their extensive territory with many distinct peoples, they are known to be linguistically, historically, socially, and culturally united.⁸

Furthermore, there may be a little variation among them as one moves from one area to the other, but their oneness remains intact.⁹ Just as it is common to every human being to be one in essence, but still have some distinctive features which differentiate them from one another.¹⁰ For instance, until eighteenth century, when Islam and Christianity gained prominence among the Yoruba people, they remained one in religions outlook and moral injunctions.¹¹

However, today, Yoruba people have become divided through the religions they embrace. The most prominent among the prevalent religions among them are Islam, Christianity and African Traditional Religions. Therefore, the introduction of Islam and Christianity make the differences more apparent among the people. The differences here are more theological, ideological and sociological. The aspect of the

⁶ Daryll Forde, *The Yoruba Speaking Peoples of South-Western Nigeria* (London: International African Institute, 1962), 1.

⁷ W. A. Perkins & Jasper H. Stanbridge, *Nigeria. A Descriptive Geography*, 3rd ed. (Ibadan, Benin, Kano, Lagos, Owerri, Zaria: University Press Limited, 1980), 79.

⁸ James L. Gibbs, Jr., *Peoples of Africa*, 547.

⁹ James L. Gibbs, Jr. , 547.

¹⁰ Mahmoud Ayoub, *A Muslim View of Christianity* (Maryknoll, New York.: Orbis Book, 2007), 9.

¹¹ E. A. Ayandele; A. E. Afigbo; R. J. Coavin and J. D. Omer-Cooper, *The Growth of African Civilization. The Making of Modern Africa Vol 2: The Late Nineteenth Century to the Present Day*. (Singapore: Longman Group Limited, 1971), 145.

differences that is focused here is the perception of purity between the adherents of Islam and Christianity.

Consequently, a Yoruba Muslim finds it difficult to associate with a Yoruba Christian. This is based on the belief that Christians eat pork and therefore they are considered ritually unclean by the Muslims. So, Muslims in Ijebu-Ode consider it inappropriate to attend Christian gatherings like campaigns or worship in church auditoriums where Christian women are gathered without the veil.

Therefore, to the Muslims in Yoruba land in general and Ijebu-Ode in particular, Christians are unclean sets of people. Every Christian is considered unclean as far as purity is concerned. Many Christians too consider abstaining from meats like pork as a religious bigotry.

Similarly, the difference between Muslims and Christians in Ijebu-Ode because of their perception of purity seems to be only a hindrance to the spread of the gospel, but it has also brought separation to the people known to be united in the past. Also, the Muslims believe Christians eat pork and other supposedly unclean animals. Consequently, the Muslims in Ijebu-Ode see Christians in their environs as ones who don't follow God's way.

Furthermore, when the Christians engage the Muslims in discussion of God's word, the latter don't hesitate to instruct the former to first go and talk to one another. Muslims in Ijebu-Ode feel that all Christians are the same regardless of their Christian denominations. Some pastors too don't hesitate to lecture Muslims that all animals are clean and so good for food.¹² Though there are members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ijebu-Ode,¹³ the Ijebu-Ode people seem to see them as other Christians too.

¹² Fasaanu Abiodun P., Clean and Unclean Animals, April 12, 2005.

¹³ Communication Department, Ogun Conference, "Centenary Celebration of Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Nigeria," 2014.

Statement of Problem

The majority of Christians in Ijebu-Ode in general and Seventh-day Adventist Church in particular appear to have little or no understanding of Islamic idea of purity. Similarly, many Christians in Ijebu-Ode seem not to know what constitutes true Christian purity. Muslims, too, find it difficult to understand the kind of purity Christians practice.¹⁴ All these have made Muslims and Christians relate to each other at a considerable distance.

Therefore, the lack of understanding of what constitutes true purity among the adherents of these two religions seems to have hindered the spread of the gospel. Also, the opposing understanding of purity among Muslims and Christians has hampered mutual understanding among the relatively united Yoruba people of Ijebu-Ode. Consequently, the adherents of both Islam and Christianity are more or less practicing a distant relationship, though they are neighbors. Yet, Christians have been enjoined to become everything to all people (1 Corinthians 9: 20-21)

In conclusion, the Christians lackadaisical attitude towards biblical purity seems to offend Muslims. Even the Seventh-day Adventist Church who seems to uphold biblical purity are regarded as unclean like the other Christians. Therefore, this study sets to provide the right understanding of effects of lifestyle patterned after purity which will encourage friendship with Muslims and so lead them to Christ. Christians in Ijebu-Ode seem to lack a better way to approach Muslims through their inclination towards purity in all forms, so this study seeks to provide a more effective way of reaching Muslims by bringing the principles of purity into a comprehensible perspective.

¹⁴ Bernard Lewis and Bunfzie Ellis Churchill, *Islam, The Religion and the People* (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Boston Public Library, 2009), 2.

Purpose of the Study

The majority of Christians in general and Seventh-day Adventist Church members in Ijebu-Ode in particular are least aware of the barriers the different perceptions of purity have created between them and Muslims. Consequently, the reason for the ruptured meaningful interactions between Muslims and Christians is not known to both. Therefore, this research is carried out purposely for the following reasons:

1. To highlight the practical ways and steps to understand Muslim and Christian perception of purity in order to identify the differences among them.
2. To pin-point the practical probable Christian approaches to Muslims through their understanding of purity as depicted in their religious life and in the daily ordinary activities.

Similarly, this research is embarked upon to bring to the limelight the sociological setting of Ijebu-Ode from its inception until the advent of Islam and Christianity. This work is done purposely to educate the people on ways to live peacefully and understandingly with one's neighbor. Therefore, this research will aid the right understanding of the social-cultural setting of people in relating to their perception of reality which can be deciphered in their religion.¹⁵

Justification/Significance of Study

Muslims sociological and ideological concerns¹⁶ in Ijebu-Ode don't allow them to mingle with Christians. And there is no any indication that Christians are addressing these concerns. One of the probable indications that Christians have not

¹⁵ Paul G. Hiebert, *Cultural Anthropology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1983), 371.

¹⁶ Don Little, *Effective Discipling in Muslim Communities: Scripture, History, and Seasoned Practices* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 114.

addressed such is in their attitude towards each other as purity matter suggests. The observable sociological barrier among Muslims and Christians in the area seems to suggest that these concerns are not attended to. Even the Seventh-day Adventist Church is not exempted from this error.

In addition, these two religions have equal shares in Ijebu-Ode teeming population, but they are like two parallel lines which cannot meet. The fact that Christians read the Bible and yet seem not understand Islamic concept of purity has made Christianity to be branded as a mere Western culture¹⁷ by the Muslim in this area. The Muslim in turn build their theology on Qur'an, Hadith and Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad.¹⁸ Therefore, this research will become necessary to highlight the true meaning of purity in the religious texts of the two faiths.

In the same vein, this paper enumerates what constitutes purity in each religion. It was observed that while many of the available and assessed literatures highlighted perception of purity in both religions, the resultant effects of the differences on the spread of the gospel is not addressed. This is why this research work becomes necessary. This study suggests the practical ways of approaching Muslims in matters concerning purity.

Limitation

Access to some Muslim figures in Ijebu-Ode is difficult because of the existing sociological barriers between Christians and Muslims. Therefore, the available Muslims Background Believer who are Christians in both Seventh-day Adventist Church and Redeemed Christian Church of God were contacted. So, the interviews are done among the former Muslims who are now Christians domiciled in

¹⁷ Charles A. Davies, *Making Disciples Accross Cultures (Missional Principles for a Diverse World)* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 21.

¹⁸ John L. Allen, *World Geography (Student Atlas Of)* (Iowa: McGraw, 2008), 273.

the two afore-mentioned churches above because of the misgiving among the Muslims and Christians in the area. The former Muslims in this study are of Sunni sect of Muslim background.

Moreover, some interviews were done through phone call because of the associated sociocultural events in the area that have made many people not to grant an interview to a stranger. Accessing some people too has some restrictions or simply difficult because of the sociological barriers. Hence, some interviews were possible through phone calls only.

Furthermore, there are many and varying actions regarding this research which are capital intensive. Yet, the work was done based on the availability and accessibility of funds, though frantic effort was made to source for fund. Sometimes too, the fact that people are aware that the researcher is sourcing data from them for academic purposes may influence the kind of information they provide. However, the research participants were duly informed of the purpose of the research so as to secure their maximum cooperation.¹⁹

Delimitation

Ijebu-Ode is a vast area with many Christian denominational churches and Muslims with many Mosques. Therefore, this research work covered only selected areas in the town. The selected areas that are covered are areas with teeming population of Muslim and also those areas with conspicuous Christian population. This work covers issues on purity as it affects the two religions under consideration that, is Islam and Christianity.

¹⁹ Edgar J. Elliston, *Introduction to Missiological Research Design* (Pasadena, California: William Carey Library, 2011), 128.

However, only the Sunni group of Muslims is considered here for the following reasons: they are the largest group of Muslim²⁰ and it is the dominant Islamic sect in Ijebu-Ode. Also, the Sunni are the earliest Muslims to reach Ijebu-Ode and they have influenced the socio-cultural settings of Ijebu-Ode than any other sect of Muslims that may be available. This is indicated in the socio-religious annual celebration called Ojude Oba which is usually done on the second day of Idel Fitr festival.²¹

Research Questions

This research work asked the following notable questions:

1. What is the Muslim and Christian understanding of purity?
2. How can a Muslim or a Christian attain purity?
3. Will the understanding of purity affect Muslim and Christian relationship?

This research proposal is aimed at finding answers to all these questions. This was done in order to discover the perception of purity in Islam and Christianity. This enhances the ability to know if there is a difference in their perception of purity and its implication on the spread of the gospel, especially in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Ijebu-Ode.

Reflexivity

The very first time the idea of perception of purity came to my mind was in the year 2005. I went to Akure City Mall in Akure, the Ondo State Capital in Nigeria to typeset a particular document in one of the shops there. I met a lady in the shop who I later knew to be a Muslim. The lady was the typist who attended to me. While

²⁰ Bernard Lewis and Bunfzie Ellis Churchill, *Islam, The Religion and the People*, 71.

²¹ Oladiti A. A, "Ijebu-Ode's Ojude Oba Festival: Cultural and Spiritual," *Sage Journals*, 2009, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi>.

typing the document I gave to her, she give me a kind of suspicious look as she put the corner of her eyes on the paper before her. She asked if I was a Christian because the information on the paper before her had informed her of my identity.

Moreover, the paper contained the announcement for the Seventh-day Adventist Churches in that city and its suburbs. I was to print it as instructed by my district pastor. The information suggested its source. It was then not a surprise that she quickly identified which religion had the paper. This also suggests to her that the bearer of that document may be a religious leader.

Furthermore, my answer to her that I was not only a Christian, but also a pastor gave her the opportunity to begin a theological discussion. Her first question was: “Is it good to eat pork?”²² I said no. She did not expect my answer. She then asked: “Is this your own idea or where exactly did you get this answer?” I said, my answer is from the Bible. “If your answer is from the Bible, then you must show where exactly it is in the Bible”, she demanded. According to her, “That was the first time a Christian would tell her that pork is not good for food.”²³ She then requested for the Bible passage that prohibits eating of pork.

In addition, she expressed her confusion that she is a co-tenant with a pastor who has told her that the Bible does not condemn the eating of pork. She asserted that her co-tenant pastor used to eat pork. And that she has challenged that pastor on this. But the pastor only castigated her that she is under bondage of the Old Testament laws because Christ has nailed them all to the cross. Beside, “whatever Christ has cleansed, He has charged that nobody should call such unclean”. The pastor said.

Consequently, the lady was surprised to hear that the death of Christ has legalized the consumption of unclean animals. She asked if there is a passage in the

²² Fasaanu Abiodun P., Clean and Unclean Animals.

²³ Fasaanu Abiodun P.

Bible that buttressed such an idea, since her co-tenant pastor said so emphatically. Then I told her that truly such a passage is in the Bible specifically in chapter 10 of the book of Acts.

Consequently, my assertion that the book of Acts 10 said something about what God has cleansed, confused her the more. She then said that this is her reason for not wanting to do anything with Christians. In her words, “They are doing abominable things and yet their Bible supports them.”²⁴

So, I picked up my Bible and read to her from the book of Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14: 3-21. She was so surprised that there are passages like these in the Bible. However, she was still not satisfied. And so she asked for more clarification on the book of Acts, chapter 10. At this point we had to read the entire chapter, so she can have a clear understanding of what the passage is talking about. After the reading, she agreed that the place is not talking about meat.

Meanwhile, before meeting her on that fateful day, her impression about every Christian is that they are all ceremonially unclean. It was on that basis that she vowed never to have any dealing with any of them. She reached this conclusion because of her interaction with a pastor who was not only eating pork but also defend the act of eating it, even from the Bible. Her impression only changed a little that day because she stated that many other things are disgusting to her in Christian’s behavior.

Moreover, one of the annoying things to her is seeing Christian women going to church with their heads uncovered. Such an act is too difficult for her to understand. I have also pastored in various Ijebu towns and villages. I have observed that they are always skeptical when it comes to relationships with Christians. The reason is not farfetched: they have seen Christians eating all kinds of meat and living

²⁴ Fasaanu Abiodun P.

without being conscious of their purity. These are too difficult for them to comprehend. Hence, they regard Christians as infidels²⁵ because any attempt to the concept of purity with Christians, grace is usually their defense.

Furthermore, the Christian idea of grace has made Muslims not only to view them as unclean but also as people who are licensed to approach God anyhow they want, regardless of what they wear, eat or do²⁶. Consequently, the Muslims in Ijebu-Ode area, stay away from Christian evangelistic campaigns. This is partly because the Muslims find it difficult to comprehend Christians' kind of freedom.²⁷ They form an opinion that Christians should not bother preaching to Muslims.

In conclusion, the Muslims feel they don't need the Christians' message rather, that Christians should preach to themselves first before preaching to any Muslim. This is the general situation of things, for at least seven different times I have personally conducted public evangelism in the area. Therefore, to clarify the true biblical concept of purity and its implications on mission, are among other reasons for choosing this topic.

Methodology

This research make use of qualitative research approach since it deals with the social-cultural and spiritual dimensions²⁸ of the Ijebu-Ode people. Ijebu-Ode is a growing city owing to its close proximity to Lagos, the Nigeria commercial

²⁵ Rev Wayne Perryman, *Unveiling the Whole Truth* (Washington: Book Publisher Network, 2008), 77.

²⁶ Bernard Lewis and Bunfzie Ellis Churchill, *Islam, The Religion and the People*, 2.

²⁷ James P. Dretke, *A Christian Approach to Muslims: Reflections from West Africa* (Pasadena, California: William Carey Library, 1979), 99.

²⁸ Edgar J. Elliston, *Introduction to Missiological Research Design*, 74.

headquarter.²⁹ This research utilizes phenomenological research design. A brief history of Ijebu-Ode will also be presented.

Research Setting

The city of Ijebu-Ode is situated in the midst of Ijebu land which occupies the South-Central parts of Western Nigeria.³⁰ Ijebu-Ode the site of this study is one of the prominent cities in Yoruba land. Therefore, it is a religious center as emblems of gods can even be seen in its various parts.³¹ It is a home to Islam, Christianity and African Traditional Religions. In fact, by 1933 the Seventh-day Adventist Church has registered her presence there.³²

Research Approach and Design

This study utilized qualitative research approach. It made use of phenomenological research design. Phenomenological research design aids the discovering of people lived experience and the missiological implication of such in their community.³³ Qualitative research is handy in deciphering the meaning the participants give to their experience in perception of purity both in Islam and Christianity.³⁴

²⁹ Oladiti A. A, "Ijebu-Ode's Ojude Oba Festival: Cultural and Spiritual."

³⁰ Kayode Olusola & Funmilola Oyesiku, "The Traditional Musical Instruments of the Egbe People of Ijebu-Ode: The Ulale Ensemble," *Academia.Edu*, n.d.

³¹ J. D. Fage & R. A. Oliver, *Papers in African Prehistory*, 304.

³² Communication Department, Ogun Conference, "Centenary Celebration of Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Nigeria."

³³ Sharan B. Merriam & Elizabeth J. Tisdell, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, A Wiley Brand, 2016), 6.

³⁴ Sharan B. Merriam & Elizabeth J. Tisdell, 26.

Population and Sampling

Ijebu-Ode a city of 620,000 inhabitants³⁵ is dominated with the presence of Sunni sect of Muslim³⁶ and Christians of various denominations. The Christian denominations in Ijebu-Ode can be conveniently divided into various groups which are Orthodox, Pentecostal and African Initiated Churches. The Sunni Muslims are the dominant and earliest group of Muslim in Ijebu-Ode. Both the Islam and Christianity are popular religions in Ijebu-Ode.

This study made use of purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling is preferred because it aids the researcher to particularly enquire a specific group of people who are best informed in the subject matter of this study which is purity.³⁷ Eight (8) individuals are selected to participate in this study. Four (4) of them are former Sunni Muslims, while the remaining four (4) are typical Christians from Seventh-day Adventist Church, Cherubim and Seraphim Church, Baptist Church, and Redeemed Christian Church of God. The Focus Group of six members is selected as participants too.

Selection Criteria

The Sunni Muslim is the dominant earliest Islamic sect in Ijebu-Ode.³⁸ The Sunni Muslim is selected purposely to discover how her presence has influenced purity perception in Ijebu-Ode. The selected Christian participants who are from Seventh-day Adventist Church, Baptist Church, Cherubim and Seraphim Church, and

³⁵ Oladiti A. A, "Ijebu-Ode's Ojude Oba Festival: Cultural and Spiritual."

³⁶ Nurudeen Oladipupo Agbabiaka, "Determining The Identity of Allah and The Missiological Implications for Christians" (Kenya, Adventist University of Africa, 2013), 29.

³⁷ Sharan B. Merriam & Elizabeth J. Tisdell, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, 66.

³⁸ Nurudeen Oladipupo Agbabiaka, "Determining The Identity of Allah and The Missiological Implications for Christians," 29.

Redeemed Christian Church of God represent the Orthodox, African Initiated Churches and Pentecostal groups of Christian in Ijebu-Ode.

Data Collection

This study used oral interviews to source for data from the participants. The interview were done majorly in face to face manner, while those who could not be accessed physically were contacted through phone call. Interview is handy to a qualitative research because its data which is descriptive in nature is obtained in words.³⁹ The interview questions are structured towards discovering what purity means to the participants.

Data Analysis

The data analysis of this research was done manually in thematic way. Its data is read through and coded thematically. The transcripts and field notes are maintained and kept confidentially.⁴⁰ All the findings from the analysis are reported accordingly. The findings are generated from the coded data and are arranged thematically.

Trustworthiness/ Validation

The relevant questions were asked purposely to source for data. The result of this study was compared with its test to cross check its validity.⁴¹ Likewise, all the participating individuals are those who most can be learnt from in matters regarding

³⁹ John W. Creswell, *Educational Research*, 4th ed. (Boston: Pearson, 2012), 39.

⁴⁰ John W. Creswell, *Research Design*, 4th ed. (London: Sage, n.d.), 39.

⁴¹ Edgar J. Elliston, *Introduction to Missiological Research Design*, 57.

purity. This also ensures its validity.⁴² Focus group and observation were also used to further ensure reliability and validity.⁴³

Ethical Consideration

Participation in this research work in all its stages was made voluntary. The participants' decision to participate or disengage in this research even after they have consented was not in any way enforced. Therefore, the consent of every participating individual was sought and secured before getting involved in this study.⁴⁴

More also, every piece of information concerning the participating individuals is treated confidentially and only for the research purpose. The identity of the participants was secured in anonymity by the use of alphabet for names or by using fictitious names. The researcher also ensured that the harmful information was not obtained from the research participants.

Furthermore, the researcher built and maintained integrity with all the participating individuals in all his relationship with them so as not to endanger the future research.⁴⁵ The school ethical review committee, Adventist University of Africa Institutional Scientific Ethics Review Committee (AUA-ISERC)'s permission was sought and secured before embarking on this study.⁴⁶

⁴² Sharan B. Merriam & Elizabeth J. Tisdell, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, 51.

⁴³ Edgar J. Elliston, *Introduction to Missiological Research Design*, 57.

⁴⁴ Edgar J. Elliston, 128.

⁴⁵ Edgar J. Elliston, 128.

⁴⁶ Irving Seidma, *Interviewing as Qualitative Researcher*, 4th ed. (New York & London: Teachers College Press, 2013), 61.

Definition of Terms

Allah: Muslim's name for God.⁴⁷

Baptism: The Christian ritual act of immersing someone in the water which is symbolic of new birth.⁴⁸

Christians: The people who believe in Christ.

Christianity: The religion of believers in Christ.

Hadith: The collections of the sayings and deeds of Prophet Muhammad.⁴⁹

Hajj: The pilgrimage to Mecca that is required of every Muslim as parts of the pillar of faith in Islam.⁵⁰

Hallal: Something that is lawful.⁵¹

Haram: Something that is not lawful that is forbidden.⁵²

Hijab: The common veil used by Muslim women for covering.⁵³

Ile-Ife: It is the cradle of the Yoruba people of which Ijebu-Ode forms a part.⁵⁴

Islam: Act or state of submission.⁵⁵

Kosher: A clean meat.⁵⁶

⁴⁷ James P. Eckman, *Exploring Church History (A Guide to History, World Religions and Ethics)* (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 2004), 179.

⁴⁸ L. Berkhof & L. Loius, *The History of Christian Doctrines* (Pennsylvania, USA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2002), 59.

⁴⁹ John L. Allen, *World Geography (Student Atlas Of)*.

⁵⁰ Venetia Porter, *Hajj: Journey to the Heart of Islam* (38, Russell Square, London: Pontish Museum Press, 2012), 20.

⁵¹ Bernard Lewis and Bunfzie Ellis Churchill, *Islam, The Religion and the People*, 202.

⁵² Bernard Lewis and Bunfzie Ellis Churchill, *Islam, The Religion and the People*.

⁵³ Bernard Lewis and Bunfzie Ellis Churchill, 38.

⁵⁴ Daryll Forde, *The Yoruba Speaking Peoples of South-Western Nigeria*, 35.

⁵⁵ James P. Eckman, *Exploring Church History (A Guide to History, World Religions and Ethics)*, 179.

⁵⁶ Joshua Strahan, "Did Jesus Nullify the Torah and Declare Nonkosher Foods Clean? Towards a Better Reading of Mark 7:19a," n.d., 3.

Muslim: Those who follow the faith called Islam; one who submits.⁵⁷

Qahat: Some of the texts found at Qumran and it is written in Aramaic⁵⁸.

Qur'an: The Muslim sacred book.⁵⁹

Purity: Keeping oneself pure.⁶⁰

Sharia: Muslim holy law.⁶¹

Shia: An Islamic sect who are partisan of Ali, the Prophet Muhammad's cousin and son-in law.⁶²

Sufi: An Islamic mystical, aesthetic and ethical sect.⁶³

Sunni: An orthodox Islamic sect.⁶⁴

Wudu: A ritualistic washing of hands, face and legs before participating in prayer.⁶⁵

⁵⁷ Bernard Lewis and Bunfzie Ellis Churchill, *Islam, The Religion and the People*, 9.

⁵⁸ Elisha Uusimaki, "In Search of Virtue: Ancestral Inheritance in the Testament of Qahat (4Q542)," *Aarhus University, School of Culture and Society, Biblical Interpretation*, 1, no. 29 (2021): 206.

⁵⁹ John L. Allen, *World Geography (Student Atlas Of)*, 273.

⁶⁰ Brian Ridolfi, "What Does The Bible Say About....." *The Ultimate Bible Answer*. (Chattanooga, Tennessee: AMG Publishers, 2005), 847–48.

⁶¹ Marshall G. S. Hodson, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1977), 369.

⁶² James P. Eckman, *Exploring Church History (A Guide to History, World Religions and Ethics)*, 182.

⁶³ Bernard Lewis and Bunfzie Ellis Churchill, *Islam, The Religion and the People*, 78.

⁶⁴ Abraham Sarker, *Understanding My Muslim People* (Newberg, Oregon: Barclay Press, 2004), 33.

⁶⁵ Mustafa Abdul Rahman, "Ritual and Rationality in Islam: A Case Study on Nail Polish," *Islamic Law and Society* 27, no. 3 (2020): 240–84.

Chapter Overview

Chapter one of this research work is the introductory aspects. This chapter covers, among others, the background to the study, the research problem, the research questions, and a synopsis of the methodology.

Chapter two is all about the theological/biblical foundation of purity. Chapter Three is basically about reviewing of available and accessible literature on purity perception among Islam and Christianity. Chapter four explains the methodology of this research work in details. And in this chapter, the targeted population for the sampling of data is explained with all clarity.

Moreover, the process of collecting data with its analysis is stated in chapter four. Chapter five is the report of the findings after it has been clearly analyzed. Chapter six which is the concluding chapter is the summary of the whole research coupled with the researcher's recommendations on purity perception in Islam and Christianity and its implications on reaching out to Sunni Muslims in the affected area—Ijebu-Ode.

In conclusion, the research instruments for ensuring accurate and ethical information will be carefully recorded in the appendix of this work. Valuable information regarding the researcher will be supplied too at the appendix section of this work. The comprehensive records of all the kinds of literature used will certainly be meticulously stated in form of a bibliography at the end of this research work.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL/THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION OF PURITY

Purity is defined as “abstaining from what can defile”.¹ The Hebrew word for defile-“tahmeh” also means unclean or polluted.² Purity then could mean God’s prescription in approaching Him which may have effect in what one eat, his or her demeanor and even the hygienic condition. Purity also suggests that the believer or the worshipper remembers that the God he or she is approaching is a holy God; God who is spotless in purity and transcendent in perfection.³ And since God is holy, it is not a surprise that He expects holiness which must translate to holy living from all who must approach Him.⁴

More also, God expectation of holiness from all who delight in approaching Him is not limited to just a particular area of their life. By this it means that the holiness that must proceed from those who worship God and submit to His authority is not only in the solemnities of His altar, but also in matters of their daily activities.⁵ The purity of those who approach God is so important for the major reasons: that they may approach Him without danger and that the blessing with Him can be assessed

¹ “New Bible Dictionary,” in *Purity* (Leicester, England & Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2000).

² Jay P. Green Sr, *The New Englishman’s Hebrew Concordance* (Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1984), 475.

³ J B Williams, F.S.A, *Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible*, Complete and Unabridged (Hendrickson Publishers, 1991), 127.

⁴ Andrew E & John H, *A Survey of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2009), 129–30.

⁵ J B Williams, F.S.A, *Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible*, 129.

too.⁶The specifications of how to approach Him are generally stated in the Bible, but they are more specifically stated in the book of Leviticus than all others.

Bible

The Bible indicates that God made a covenant with His people called Israel.⁷ Having made a covenant with them, holiness was the attribute expected to distinguish them.⁸Holiness emanates from God only.⁹ It is God's intention to have people who are holy, so they can have fellowship with Him.¹⁰

Therefore, God gave the law regarding holiness in the Bible,¹¹ so that His people can be guided on how to approach Him.¹² Hence, the idea of being ritually pure or otherwise is seen throughout the Bible.¹³ The Bible contains sixty-six books. The first thirty-nine books of the Bible is refers to as the Old Testament.

Old Testament

Old Testament has lots of passages that are either talking about purity, holiness or the need for God's people to live a distinctive life as the kingdom of

⁶ Andrew E & John H, *A Survey of the Old Testament*, 129–30.

⁷ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*. (Maryknoll, New York.: Orbis Book, 1991), 34.

⁸ G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academy, 2008), 876.

⁹ Elisha Uusimaki, "In Search of Virtue: Ancestral Inheritance in the Testament of Qahat (4Q542)," 17.

¹⁰ Stanley N. Cundry, *Five Views on Sanctification* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1987), 31.

¹¹ Andrew E & John H, *A Survey of the Old Testament*, 125.

¹² John E. Hartley, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 4 (Nashville, Dallas, Mexico City, Rio De Janeiro, Beijing: Thomas Nelson, 1992), 144.

¹³ Thomas McElwain, "Islam in the Bible," www.al-islam.org/islam-bible-thomas-mcelwain/purity, July 16, 2024.

priests -Exodus 19:5-6.¹⁴ Also, it is evidently clear that the distinction between clean and unclean animals actually predates the writing of the Bible as pointed out in Noah's choice of animals when he was to enter the ark -Genesis 7:2.¹⁵ Meanwhile, Moses who wrote the first few books of the Bible lived around 1300-1200 BC.¹⁶

However, the book of Leviticus seems to have the details of all regulations regarding purity more than any other book in the Old Testament. It appears as the instructional manual on holiness.¹⁷ All the regulations regarding purification are recorded in the book of Leviticus.

Purity in the Old Testament

The Old Testament is loaded with regulations for ritual purity. The laws of ritual purity are well specified in the book of Leviticus, most especially its chapter 11-15.¹⁸ In fact, the book is actually a manual on purity.¹⁹ The law of ritual purity touches every aspect of the Israelites daily life²⁰ including what they serve on their table.²¹ The law of ritual purity distinguishes Israelites from their neighbors and also serve the purpose of guiding them in approaching Yahweh.²²

Clean and Unclean Animals: Leviticus 11. The law of ritual purity also affects the kinds of flesh food the Israelites can and cannot eat or even touch. This

¹⁴ G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 876.

¹⁵ Ephraim Radner, *Leviticus* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Brazos Press, 2008), 143.

¹⁶ Dewey M. Beeke, "Moses and the Ten Commandment" (www.britannica, n.d.).

¹⁷ Andrew E & John H, *A Survey of the Old Testament*, 129.

¹⁸ John E. Hartley, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 4:141.

¹⁹ Tokunboh Adeyemo, *Africa Bible Commentary* (Nairobi, Kenya: WordAlive, 2006), 147.

²⁰ Andrew E & John H, *A Survey of the Old Testament*, 131.

²¹ J B Williams, F.S.A, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, 129.

²² John E. Hartley, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 4:144.

chapter specifies the criteria for identifying clean and unclean animals. Animals considered unclean are not to be eaten; even a mere touching of their carcasses defiles them. The regulations on this are not limited to land animals alone; aquatic creatures and even insects are under consideration, too.

Moreover, the criteria for identifying clean and unclean animals are clearly stated in Leviticus 11: 1-23. Animals that chew curd and are cloven footed are considered clean and so safe for food. Meanwhile, animals that are not chewing curd nor cloven footed are termed unclean. Also, some animals are cloven footed, but are not chewing curd. Or some are chewing curd but are not cloven footed. They are all termed unclean and unsafe for food.

Furthermore, the identification of aquatic animals like fish is based on fins and scales. Any fish without fins and scales is unclean and so not good for eating. But fishes with fins and scales are ceremonially clean and therefore safe for food. Also, all birds of prey are considered unclean and so not good for food. Some flying insects like locust and grasshopper are termed clean and safe for food. But most of the creeping creatures are considered unclean.

Table 1. Leviticus 11: 1-47

Clean Animal	Unclean Animals
Cow	Camel
Goat	Rock Hyrax
Sheep	Hare
Gazelle	Swine
Antelope	Lion
Deer	Hyena
Wild Goat	Tiger
Grasshopper	Vulture
Locust	Raven
	Owl
	Stork
	Hawk
	All flying insects that creep on their four legs.

Note: the criteria for identifying clean and unclean creatures for food are also clearly stated in Deuteronomy 14: 1-21, alongside Leviticus 11:1-47.

More also, eating of unclean animals or creatures is considered an abomination. Though, the distinction of animals as clean and unclean seems peculiar to Israelites, but from all indication it predates them. In fact, the fact that Noah was instructed by God that his selection of animals should include clean and unclean ones indicates that distinguishing animals thus is associated with creation.²³

Uncleanness and Defilement. Uncleanness and defilement can hinder a person access to sacred things, hence, whoever becomes unclean or defiled is prohibited from approaching the sanctuary. Hence, everything that can defile or makes unclean automatically makes the victim unfit to approach God's sacred items until he or she is reconcile with Him.²⁴ Both uncleanness and defilement nullify one's opportunity of approaching sacred objects. However, only the uncleanness is contagious while defilement is not.²⁵

More also, often defilements does not imply the moral short coming of the defiled person.²⁶ Though, uncleanness symbolizes sin but it is not a threatening matter because it could also occur in a normal day to day activities or in the biological functions of the body.²⁷ Here are some uncleanness and defilement causing happenstances- death, blood from child birth, menstrual blood, urine, feces, carcasses of animals, and semen emission. Sometimes, some of these defilements or uncleanness may come naturally, yet, they make their victim unclean and defiled.

²³ Ephraim Radner, *Leviticus*, 109.

²⁴ Tremper Longman 111 & David E. Garland, *The Expositors Bible Commentary*, Revised, n.d., 689.

²⁵ Tokunboh Adeyemo, *Africa Bible Commentary*, 147.

²⁶ Francis D. Nichol, *The Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary, The Holy Bible with Exegetical and Expository Comment in Seven Volumes*, vol. 1 (Hagerston: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1978), 758.

²⁷ John E. Hartley, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 4:143.

Natural Defilement. There are some natural happenstances that are biological and yet they are considered defilements. Once such occurred, the victim is considered unclean.

The Blood of the Child Birth: Leviticus 12. The blood flow from a reproductive organ of a woman during child birth is considered a defilement, though nothing is inherently sinful or unclean in the loss of blood.²⁸ However, only the mother is considered defiled during child birth and so the baby is not inclusive.²⁹ And so because of the considerable loss of blood following the process of child birth, the mother is not permitted to come and join other in the worship at the sanctuary until a certain number of day³⁰ depending on the sex of the baby.

Moreover, the mother after the birth of her child will be considered unclean until seven days. The seven days here is considered the days of her customary impurity, if her baby is a male child. But, if the child is a female, the day of the mother's impurity is two weeks. The mother can only come for purification in the temple after thirty three days sixty six days for a male and female child respectively.

Death. Death as a negation of wholeness³¹ is another thing that can defile. Hence, if anyone touch the carcasses of both the clean and unclean animals such becomes unclean (Leviticus 11: 30-31, 39-40). And so, the high priest is expected not to come near the dead body of even human being because of the consecration of the anointing oil of God on him (Leviticus 21: 10-12, 1-3). And since death is view as something short of perfection, it is considered as a defilement.³²

²⁸ Tremper Longman 111 & David E. Garland, *The Expositors Bible Commentary*, 689.

²⁹ Tokunboh Adeyemo, *Africa Bible Commentary*, 149.

³⁰ Fred H. Wight, *Manners and Customs of Bible Lands* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1977), 109.

³¹ Tokunboh Adeyemo, *Africa Bible Commentary*, 153.

³² Tokunboh Adeyemo, 153.

Urine and Feces. Urine and feces are regarded as indecent things God must not see amidst His people. God instructed the Israelites to keep away their indecent things and that He must not see them when He comes to their camp (Deuteronomy 23:12-13). Here, it appears that God was not only looking for a ritually clean people to fellowship with Him,³³ but also, those who will be physically or hygienically fit as the passage above indicated. This He does, so they can enjoy His presence and blessings³⁴ as they observe personal cleanness.³⁵ Therefore, they were instructed to have a designated place to ease themselves whenever nature calls for it and cover it up thereafter.

Furthermore, the instruction given here is predicated on the warning that God might turn away from them, if He should see anything unclean in their camp. It is quite obvious here that the unclean refers to in Deuteronomy 23:12-14 is the indecent things He instructed them to cover up. This is not out of order because God is holy and so He is much more concerned about the holiness of His people.³⁶ And in the case of the biblical passage above holiness connotes cleanness. After all, His people are a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.³⁷ Hence, they must be set apart unto Him.³⁸

Natural Discharge: Leviticus 15. Blood discharge and semen emission are some of the natural defilements that Leviticus 15 addresses.

³³ Stanley N. Cundry, *Five Views on Sanctification*, 31.

³⁴ Andrew E & John H, *A Survey of the Old Testament*, 125.

³⁵ Leo R. Dolson /J. Robert Spangler, *Healthy, Happy, Holy* (Washington, U S A: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1975), 33.

³⁶ William V. Crockett & James G. Sigounto, *Through No Fault of Their Own* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1991), 15.

³⁷ G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 876.

³⁸ Edward E. Hindson & Woodrow Micheal Knoll--General Editors, *The KJV Parallel Bible Commentary* (Nashvile. Atlanta. London. Vancouver: Thomas Nelson Publisher, 1994), 2462.

Semen Emission. Leviticus 15:1-8 addresses the semen discharge of which the man who is defiled as a result of this will only remain unclean until evening. However, this apply after he has bathed with water (Leviticus 15: 18). Even though, the uncleanness here is not described as a life threatened one,³⁹ but whatever or whoever comes in contact with the victim is also considered as unclean (Leviticus 15:1-11).

Menstrual Blood. Another natural discharge that is considered in the Bible as unclean is the blood discharge of a woman. Though nothing may be inherently unclean in such monthly biological function of woman menstrual blood flow, just like an occasional nose bleed,⁴⁰ but anyone who lies with her at that time of customary impurity is considered unclean (Leviticus 15: 33). However, this customary blood discharge of a woman may flow beyond her usual duration of experiencing it. When such happens, she shall be considered unclean all the days of her discharge, just like her customary impurity (Leviticus 15: 25).

Similarly, the abnormal blood discharge of a woman apart from her monthly menstrual period may not be her fault, yet the law of ritual purity must still be applied. After all, anything imperfect is considered ritually unclean and so unfit for holy service as far as priestly ritual law of purity is concerned.⁴¹ And since anyone who is thus unclean is not permitted to enter the temple, whoever she touches or touches her also becomes unclean.

Other Defilement. Other defilement aside the natural discharge or defilement is the sin of the thought which can manifest in word and deed.⁴² While Jesus purity

³⁹ Fred H. Wight, *Manners and Customs of Bible Lands*, 109.

⁴⁰ Tremper Longman 111 & David E. Garland, *The Expositors Bible Commentary*, 689.

⁴¹ Tokunboh Adeyemo, *Africa Bible Commentary*, 153.

⁴² Gregory Mellena, "When Are Thoughts Sinful?" 58, no. 2 (2023): 1.

teachings emphasized the purity of the heart, the elders' teaching uphold the purity of the tradition.⁴³ Hence, the teaching of Jesus on purity was at variance with the Pharisees'.

However, Jews in their writings believe that purity engenders holiness.⁴⁴ Therefore, the moral worth of any character is measured by the intention behind it.⁴⁵ Sinful thought then should not be underestimated because of its potential to cause harm.⁴⁶ Then, the condition of being guilty even right in the thought is considered a defilement that must be cleansed.⁴⁷ Hence, purity in the true sense of it also entails freedom from guilt or evil.⁴⁸

Leprosy: Leviticus 13. The thirteenth chapter of the book of Leviticus deals with leprosy; its identification in various forms and regulations on how its victim should then be handled. Nevertheless, all the diseases mentioned in verses 1-69 of this chapter are not all leprosy, but some certain kinds of skin diseases.⁴⁹ Even the Hebrew word—"sara'ath" translated to be "leprosy" does not necessarily mean leprosy in the modern medical term.⁵⁰

⁴³ Joshua Strahan, "Did Jesus Nullify the Torah and Declare Nonkosher Foods Clean? Towards a Better Reading of Mark 7:19a," 19.

⁴⁴ Elisha Uusimaki, "In Search of Virtue: Ancestral Inheritance in the Testament of Qahat (4Q542)," 16.

⁴⁵ Qiao, Chuandai, "Kierkegaard on Self, Ethics, and Religion: Purity or Despair," *A Journal of Theology* 61, no. 3 (September 2022).

⁴⁶ Gregory Mellena, "When Are Thoughts Sinful?," 2.

⁴⁷ Katharina Von Kellenbach, "Guilt and the Transformation of Christian-Jewish Relations," *Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations*, 15, no. 1 (2020): 1–21.

⁴⁸ Sol Steinmetz (Editor), "Random House Webster's Unabridged Dictionary" (New York: Charles M. Levine (Random House), 1999), 1569.

⁴⁹ Francis D. Nichol, *The Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary, The Holy Bible with Exegetical and Expository Comment in Seven Volumes*, 1:761.

⁵⁰ *Tanak: A New Translation of the Holy Scripture According to the Traditional Hebrew Text* (New York, Philadelphia & Jerusalem: The Jewish Publication, 1985), 171.

Therefore, leprosy as stated in Leviticus 13 could mean all forms of contagious skin diseases. And some of these skin diseases could be mildew or fungus infections. The priest observation and description of such disease based on its spread on the wall of the house, garments and even skin of a victim.⁵¹ At least seven forms of skin disease named as leprosy are identified in Leviticus 13: 3-46. They could be enumerated as leprous sore (verse 3), leprosy (verses 4-8), old leprosy (verses 9-11), leprous sore out of the boil (verses 18-22), leprous sore out of burns (verses 24-27), scaly leprosy (verses 29-30, 35-36) and leprosy on the bald head (verses 41-46).

Rituals for Purification

Many kinds of rituals for purification are enumerated in the Old Testament and most especially in the book of Leviticus. They range from purification for initiating covenantal relationship with God, to maintaining the same relationship. Some ritual for purification seems to emphasis cleanness, so that the worshippers can approach the holy God without danger.⁵² Approaching God with all cleanness is so important because He must not see indecent things among His people (Deuteronomy 23:11-14). Therefore, rituals for purification are put in place to make approaching God possible and easy.

Moreover, God initiated covenantal relationship with His people solely on His merciful righteousness and unfailing love.⁵³ Hence, ritual purifications in some forms seem to make reconciling with God possible.⁵⁴ However, some rituals may simply be a reminder of God's covenant with His people which they perpetuate in their

⁵¹ Francis D. Nichol, *The Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary, The Holy Bible with Exegetical and Expository Comment in Seven Volumes*, 1:763.

⁵² John E. Hartley, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 4:141.

⁵³ Donald G. Bloesch, *The Christian Life and Salvation* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1967), 41.

⁵⁴ Tokunboh Adeyemo, *Africa Bible Commentary*, 152.

generation as relationship with God is being maintained.⁵⁵ While the ritual purification then help to establish a standard of holiness that is appropriate for God's people,⁵⁶ it ends up becoming their custom which distinguishes them from others.⁵⁷

The Law of Ritual Purification: Leviticus 11-15

The law of ritual purification ranges from abstinence from unclean meats or flesh and every defilement to isolation of leprous person and separation from ritually unclean things and person and purification of those who have become ritually unclean.⁵⁸ Chapter eleven of Leviticus deals with identification of clean and unclean animals and the regulations regarding their flesh and their carcasses. The ritual purification of a woman who just gives birth is treated in chapter twelve of Leviticus.

Furthermore, all the regulations surrounding the leprous person and modality of identifying a leper and purification of the victim are stated in chapters thirteen and fourteen of the book of Leviticus. The fifteenth chapter of the book of Leviticus explains the regulations of defilement and uncleanness resulting from menstrual blood, blood flow other than menstruation and semen emission. However, since there is a close connection between physical and moral nature,⁵⁹ all the law of ritual purification prove to be a blessing.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ Fred H. Wight, *Manners and Customs of Bible Lands*, 109.

⁵⁶ Andrew E & John H, *A Survey of the Old Testament*, 125.

⁵⁷ G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 876.

⁵⁸ Tokunboh Adeyemo, *Africa Bible Commentary*, 147.

⁵⁹ Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods* (Michigan, U S A: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2001), 43.

⁶⁰ Leo R. Dolson /J. Robert Spangler, *Healthy, Happy, Holy*, 30.

Purification Processes

Purification process becomes necessary when a believer is defiled through contact with semen, blood from menstrual cycle and mother's postpartum blood, and eaten or touching of unclean animals and their carcasses.⁶¹ So, ritual purity was an essential practice of ancient Israel⁶² where Christianity take root.⁶³ While Christian act of performing ritual is not what make them pure,⁶⁴ yet, He is so gracious to accept them with open arms;⁶⁵ so, it is still considered a necessity for its benefits.⁶⁶ Besides, dirt is not even good for one's hygiene.⁶⁷

Purification Process in Old Testament

There is a purification process known as washing in the Old Testament because approaching God necessitate that since He dwells among His people.⁶⁸ It is actually the presence of God that engenders the need for purity since people must not approach Him with their impurity.⁶⁹ Ritual washing for whoever has become the defiled was one of the major purification processes as recorded in the Old Testament.⁷⁰

⁶¹ Tremper Longman 111 & David E. Garland, *The Expositors Bible Commentary*, 689.

⁶² John E. Hartley, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 4:141.

⁶³ Williston Walker, *A History of the Christian Church*, 4th ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1985), 105.

⁶⁴ Abraham Sarker, *Understanding My Muslim People*, 181.

⁶⁵ Martin Goldsmith, *What About Other Faiths* (London: Hodder & Stoughton Ltd, 2008), 13.

⁶⁶ Leo R. Dolson /J. Robert Spangler, *Healthy, Happy, Holy*, 32–36.

⁶⁷ Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger* (London & New York: Routledge, 1966), 1.

⁶⁸ Andrew E & John H, *A Survey of the Old Testament*, 125.

⁶⁹ Joel B.Green- General Editor, *Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academics, 2011), 703.

⁷⁰ Rinaldo Ronzani, *Christian Initiation: Baptism and Confirmation* (Nairobi, Kenya: Pauline Publications Africa, 2007), 22.

Interestingly, washing for purification in the Old Testament normally takes place in a flowing water.⁷¹ Washing is also accompanied by foot washing most especially for the priest. Apart from this, the Israelites are to distinguish themselves from every other people by their keen observation of ritual purity which entails circumcision, Sabbath observance and abstinence from certain meat considered unclean.⁷² Therefore, purity is paramount in Israel⁷³ as indicated in the Old Testament.

More also, a woman who is undergoing her customary monthly menstrual cycle must do washing to be cleansed of her impurity. She is just to wash herself in clean water- Leviticus 15:1-16, 18. A nursing mother too undergoes purification ritual for seven or fourteen days depending on the sex of her baby all because of the postpartum blood.⁷⁴

Meanwhile, only the mother becomes unclean because of the parturition blood and the child remains unaffected.⁷⁵ Abstaining from sanctuary is parts of the purification rituals until the expiration of her seclusion expires which 33 days and 66 days if her child is a boy or girl respectively-Leviticus 12:1-5.⁷⁶

Furthermore, the believer with leprosy also undergo ritual purification before he or she could be reintegrated to the society, after being socially separated from it for

⁷¹ Williston Walker, *A History of the Christian Church*, 105.

⁷² Robert Knapp, *The Dawn of Christianity* (London: Profile Books Ltd, 2017), 2–8.

⁷³ Brooke, George J., “Purity, Holiness, and Identity in Judaism and Christianity,” *Journal of the Study of the Old Testament* 39, no. 5 (2015): 160–61.

⁷⁴ Tremper Longman 111 & David E. Garland, *The Expositors Bible Commentary*, 689.

⁷⁵ Francis D. Nichol, *The Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary, The Holy Bible with Exegetical and Expository Comment in Seven Volumes*, 1:761.

⁷⁶ Fred H. Wight, *Manners and Customs of Bible Lands*, 110.

a period of time.⁷⁷ While the leprosy automatically seclude the victim, but, it should be stated that the term leprosy is just a description of many varying skin diseases.⁷⁸ Though contracting leprosy is not an indication of sin in the Old Testament, but, its true meaning is a destruction or corruption of human life.⁷⁹

However, purification is needed with the sole aim of reintegrating the victim to the society only after he or she has been declared clean by the priest after a careful observation.⁸⁰ The purification process of leprosy also involves a washing of the items affected and the observation of them for seven days before they could be pronounced clean or unclean- Leviticus 13:1-59.

Circumcision

Circumcision is actually the removal of the prepuce of a male.⁸¹ Circumcision is not a mere spiritual purification; it is actually the sign of God's covenant with Abraham which all his descendants must do after him (Genesis 17).⁸² Circumcision then seems to indicate the willingness to obey God from one's heart (Deuteronomy 10:16; 30:6).⁸³ It is highly esteemed in Israel because of its significance to Israel covenantal relationship with God. It is expected of every male child of Hebrew to do it. This ritual is done on the eight day after birth (Leviticus 12:3).

More also, any Israel who refuses to do circumcision risk losing his or her identity as God's covenant people (Genesis 17:14). It is so important that even Jesus

⁷⁷ Tokunboh Adeyemo, *Africa Bible Commentary*, 152.

⁷⁸ Tremper Longman 111 & David E. Garland, *The Expositors Bible Commentary*, 763.

⁷⁹ Ephraim Radner, *Leviticus*, 136.

⁸⁰ Tokunboh Adeyemo, *Africa Bible Commentary*, 152.

⁸¹ Sol Steinmetz (Editor), "Random House Webster's Unabridged Dictionary," 375.

⁸² Fred H. Wight, *Manners and Customs of Bible Lands*, 109.

⁸³ Thomas McElwain, "Islam in the Bible."

Christ did it.⁸⁴ In fact, the one who circumcises sees it as a seal of perfection and sanctification.⁸⁵ And there is no indication that the Bible suggests the male child of the believers not to be circumcised.⁸⁶ Even Moses who was delaying or remained obstinate of doing it for his son was rebuked by God (Exodus 4:19-25).

Hand Washing

Hand washing is one of the purification rituals God commanded Moses that the priests must do (Leviticus 8:6). This is important because priests are set apart for a special service of God.⁸⁷ It is easy to understand this because the holiness of God's people is paramount to Him⁸⁸. And so, purity of God's people has a direct bearing on how they live daily.⁸⁹ Consequently, only the clean person can approach God without danger. It is then not out of order that purity rite of even hand and foot washing remains a vital parts of the priest while approaching God.⁹⁰

Other Purification Rituals

Apart from the purification ritual solely for the priests as stated above and the circumcision, there are other ones. The purification ritual for the nursing mother, the woman whose blood flow passed the customary impurity days, the leper and the man whose semen emits. Unless purification ritual is done for these affected people, it is outlaw for them to approach sacred gathering (Leviticus 15: 31-33). Even the

⁸⁴ Fred H. Wight, *Manners and Customs of Bible Lands*, 109.

⁸⁵ Fred H. Wight, 109.

⁸⁶ Thomas McElwain, "Islam in the Bible."

⁸⁷ Stanley N. Cundry, *Five Views on Sanctification*, 62.

⁸⁸ Thomas McElwain, "Islam in the Bible."

⁸⁹ Ephraim Radner, *Leviticus*, 135.

⁹⁰ John E. Hartley, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 4:141.

customary uncleanness in the case of a woman who is menstruating and the occasional involuntary emission of semen from a man confirm them all unclean until evening. This applies even after they have been washed with water (Leviticus 15:1-16 and 18).

More also, the purification ritual must be done for a woman in Israel after the birth of a male and female child. The mother of a female child will do her purification after 33 days of her baby (Leviticus 12:1-4). But, if the child is a female her mother will observe her purification ritual 66 days after the birth of her baby (Leviticus 12: 1-5).⁹¹ A lamb of the first year for burnt offering, and a young pigeon or a turtle dove for a sin

The New Testament

The last twenty-seven books of the Bible are collectively called New Testament. The New Testament too addresses ritual purity, but it seems to have assumed different form from that of the Old Testament. Purity seems to mean holiness in the New Testament and holiness simply connotes participating in God's nature.⁹²

More also, rituals are the way people express their religious beliefs,⁹³ but, the rituals in New Testament are no longer as practiced in the Old Testament. In fact, it is believed among many Christians that the ministry of Christ has nullified the ritual practices of the Old Testament,⁹⁴ since Christ is the end of the law and so He is a way of salvation.⁹⁵

⁹¹ Fred H. Wight, *Manners and Customs of Bible Lands*, 110.

⁹² Elisha Uusimaki, "In Search of Virtue: Ancestral Inheritance in the Testament of Qahat (4Q542)," 20.

⁹³ Paul G. Hiebert, *Cultural Anthropology*, 372.

⁹⁴ D. A. Carson; R. T. France; J. A. Motyer & G. J. Wenham, *New Bible Commentary* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 1994), 137.

⁹⁵ Anders Nygren, *Commentary on Romans* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1949), 379.

In addition, the emphasis on ritual purification seems minimal. But purity in New Testament seems to address sensual pollution than the regular purity as stated in the Old Testament.⁹⁶ Also, some Pauline passages like Colossians 2:11 in the New Testament have been used to buttress the nullification of the Old Testament ritual purifications in the New Testament dispensation. This Thomas McElwain asserted as “misunderstanding of Paul’s concept.”⁹⁷ Nevertheless, the change in ritual purification between Old Testament and New Testament is quite obvious.⁹⁸

Purity in New Testament

Just as holiness is emphasized in the Old Testament, so it is in the New Testament. The idea of holiness is embedded in separation- being distinct from others.⁹⁹ Therefore, God expects that His own people will be distinct from the other nations of the world, majorly by living a holy life in similitude of that of their Father in heaven.

Purification in New Testament

The ceremonial laws regarding purification rituals seem not to dominate the New Testament as seen in the Old Testament. But it is highly probable that some of the ceremonial laws remained valid until the earthly ministry of Jesus. For instance, the cleansing of the ten lepers in Luke 17:11-19 by Jesus Christ was done by Him, yet He directed them to show themselves to the priest. The idea of showing oneself to the

⁹⁶ “New Bible Dictionary,” 991.

⁹⁷ Thomas McElwain, “Islam in the Bible.”

⁹⁸ William MacDonald, *Believer’s Bible Commentary* (Nashville. Atlanta. London. Vancouver: Thomas Nelson Publisher, 1989), 2462.

⁹⁹ G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 876.

priest after one has been cleansed from leprosy resonates with regulations regarding the cleansing of lepers as recorded in Leviticus 14:1-32.

Moreover, circumcision as significant as it is seems not to be a purification ritual in the New Testament era. In fact, in the Jerusalem council, it was done away with; all because it has become an insurmountable stumbling block in the way of Gentiles who are willing to accept Christ.¹⁰⁰ Even though, there is also no one word from any New Testament biblical passage that prohibit the children of believers from being circumcised¹⁰¹, but emphasis seems not be on it.

Similarly, emphasis is no longer laid on some ceremonial laws in the New Testament as much as purity is concerned, but that they are still in vogue can also not be controverted. Apostle Paul talked about circumcision that it has lost its significance as much as maintaining a closer relationship with God is concerned by reiterating that “in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor un-circumcision avails anything, but faith working through love”-Galatians 5:6. But he sometime encouraged Timothy to be circumcised and he himself did purification ritual in resonance with the counsel of some church leaders (Acts 21:15-25).

More also, the concept of clean and unclean animals continue to be in operation even in the New Testament. This is even more obvious in Peter persistent response of not eating the unclean animals, though the voice was coming from heaven in his vision (Acts 10:13-14). Just as Peter refused to eat unclean animals even in his vision, there is also no any indication in the entire New Testament that Jesus ever

¹⁰⁰ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission.*, 54.

¹⁰¹ Thomas McElwain, “Islam in the Bible.”

declared the non-kosher meats as clean foods.¹⁰² And the identification of clean and unclean animals is an Old Testament purity code matter.¹⁰³

Furthermore, some passages in the New Testament seem to have been understood to mean the nullification of many if not all the Old Testament purity codes, since they are symbols and shadow and never the reality.¹⁰⁴ Passages such as Colossians 2:16-“let no one judge you in food or drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon”, Acts 10:9-28 and Mark 7:19b are some often used texts in emphasizing nullification of all ritual for purification in all their forms.¹⁰⁵ But Joshua Strahan considered the use of Mark 7:19b in favor of nullification of purity code on food as “a misreading”,¹⁰⁶ while Thomas McElwain declared the use of Acts 10:9-28 to justify “dietary purity” as “unjustifiable”.¹⁰⁷

Purification Process in New Testament

Baptism is the purification ritual in the New Testament. Baptism involves actual immersion of the victim in water.¹⁰⁸ While washing dominates the Old Testament era, Baptism remains the kind of washing for purification in the New Testament. Washing in New Testament which is Baptism is associated with confession.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰² Joshua Strahan, “Did Jesus Nullify the Torah and Declare Nonkosher Foods Clean? Towards a Better Reading of Mark 7:19a,” 9.

¹⁰³ Thomas McElwain, “Islam in the Bible.”

¹⁰⁴ Edward E. Hindson & Woodrow Micheal Knoll--General Editors, *The KJV Parallel Bible Commentary*, 2462.

¹⁰⁵ William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary*, 2005.

¹⁰⁶ Joshua Strahan, “Did Jesus Nullify the Torah and Declare Nonkosher Foods Clean? Towards a Better Reading of Mark 7:19a,” 2.

¹⁰⁷ Thomas McElwain, “Islam in the Bible.”

¹⁰⁸ Andrew Welburn, *The Beginnings Of Christianity* (Edinburgh: Floris Books, 2004), 129.

¹⁰⁹ Williston Walker, *A History of the Christian Church*, 107.

More also, purity which may manifest in morality as indicated in the New Testament is Christocentric.¹¹⁰ Therefore, though Baptism indicates God's cleansing from past sins through forgiveness,¹¹¹ yet, only God sanctifies and enables believers to do good works.¹¹² Nevertheless, some church has refrained from doing Baptism.¹¹³ However, Christ enjoins believers to do it as He also did it.¹¹⁴

In the same vein, Baptism has a close relationship with new birth.¹¹⁵ It is an evidence of a believer's willingness of acceptance of redemption and salvation provided by Christ.¹¹⁶ It also indicates believer's commitment to Christ and His church, since it is an initiation rite to join Him through His congregation.¹¹⁷ Baptism then is an entry point to the church even from its earliest time.¹¹⁸

Furthermore, Baptism symbolically cleanses from impurity as one of the deadly sins,¹¹⁹ just the way water cleanses from dirt and so it is used for purifying the unclean person.¹²⁰ In fact, there are many allusions to water Baptism in the Bible as it prefigured salvation- Zechariah 13:1; 14: 8-9; Ezekiel 36: 24-28; 1 Peter 3: 20; John

¹¹⁰ Qiao, Chuandai, "Kierkegaard on Self, Ethics, and Religion: Purity or Despair."

¹¹¹ Williston Walker, *A History of the Christian Church*, 111.

¹¹² Stanley N. Cundry, *Five Views on Sanctification*, 31.

¹¹³ William H. Harrison, *Frequently Asked Questions in Christian Theology* (London & New York: Continuum, 2008), 135.

¹¹⁴ William H. Harrison, 134.

¹¹⁵ L. Berkhof & L. Loius, *The History of Christian Doctrines*, 59.

¹¹⁶ Raoul Dederen (Editor), *Handbook of Seventh-Day Adventist Theology* (Hagerston: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2000), 781.

¹¹⁷ William H. Harrison, *Frequently Asked Questions in Christian Theology*, 134–35.

¹¹⁸ Rinaldo Ronzani, *Christian Initiation: Baptism and Confirmation*, 41.

¹¹⁹ Joel B.Green- General Editor, *Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics*, 717.

¹²⁰ Rinaldo Ronzani, *Christian Initiation: Baptism and Confirmation*, 22.

13; 2 Kings 5:1-14.¹²¹ Though Christian believes salvation is by grace,¹²² hence, Baptism only signifies the believer's turning point of life to Jesus Christ.¹²³

In conclusion, Baptism as a washing symbolizing forgiveness seems to have replaced the earlier ritual washing of the Old Testament. So, Baptism is an initiation rite to the church and it also symbolically cleanses from impurities. Beside Christ urge His followers to do it as it also indicates a turning point in believer's life.

Holiness and Purification

The emphasis on purity in the New Testament essentially means freedom from sensual pollution and most especially in the sexual life.¹²⁴ However, this does not mean that sexual activity in and of itself defiles. After all, Hebrews 13:4 stated that "marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge." The singular act of abstaining from fornication is weaved into sanctification, holiness, honor and cleanness as 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7 seems to indicate. So the persistent insistence on holiness by Apostle Paul to the Thessalonians in the passage above shows that his view on this is theological.

Paradigm Shift on Purification

Some purification rituals are no longer relevant in the New Testament and so were excluded from the certain ritual the new converts to Christ must do. As the Christian church grow unprecedentedly through the influx of Gentiles, the Christian leaders have no option than to change some rules, idea and customs.

¹²¹ Rinaldo Ronzani, 41.

¹²² The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Church, *Seventh - day Adventist Manual*, 18th ed. (Hagerstown, Maryland: The Secretariat, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Church, 2010), 163.

¹²³ Rinaldo Ronzani, *Christian Initiation: Baptism and Confirmation*, 27.

¹²⁴ "New Bible Dictionary," 991.

More also, as the need for a shift in paradigm becomes evident,¹²⁵ the church leaders in their Jerusalem council made some adjustments on some ritual laws (Acts 15:28-29 and 19-20). For instance, circumcision was excluded from the ceremonial laws. This action was taken because circumcision is not the requirement for conversion¹²⁶ and not because it is bad.

However, the instruction that the new believers should abstain from meat strangled to death and some unwholesome meat is essentially the ceremonially law of Leviticus 11, though with some modification. In actual sense, purity means the same thing in both Old Testament and New Testament. Purity then is simply the state of heart that one is completely devoted to God.¹²⁷ Yet, in the New Testament, the teaching of Christ and the descent of Christ and the descent of the Holy Spirit have transformed the meaning of purity into moral and spiritual aspects.¹²⁸

In addition, little or no emphasis is laid on the physical aspect of the ceremonial law in the New Testament. In fact, the circumcision of the believers' children still continues, only the circumcision of the new believers is exempted.¹²⁹ This is just because it has become an insurmountable impediment in the path of Gentiles conversion.¹³⁰

More also, Christ touched a leper in a bid to heal him (Matthew 8: 2-4) and there is no indication that Christ passed through any purification process. Hence,

¹²⁵ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission.*, 54.

¹²⁶ Thomas McElwain, "Islam in the Bible."

¹²⁷ "New Bible Dictionary," 991.

¹²⁸ "New Bible Dictionary," 991.

¹²⁹ Thomas McElwain, "Islam in the Bible."

¹³⁰ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission.*, 64.

Christ as the end of the law (Romans 10:4) did not come to disrupt nor discredit the law of purification. He only ends the law as a means of salvation.¹³¹

Baptism

Baptism as a rite that signifies the beginning of a new life¹³² is described as the answering of good conscience towards God- 1 Peter 3:21. Therefore, baptism is not the washing away of filth from the body (1 Peter 3:21). Even Jesus did not oppose baptism as a kind of ablution; He too was baptized by John (Matthew 3:13-17). This may be because of its basis in the Torah. After all, baptism stands as the ablution of the entire body.¹³³ Hence in the rite of baptism, the participant becomes symbolically washed and is considered sanctified.¹³⁴

More also, baptism is commanded by Christ as one of the rites of conversion (Mark 16:16). So the rite of complete washing of Old Testament (Exodus 29:4 and 30:18-32) survives and thrives also in the New Testament with some events alluding to it as what has metamorphosed to baptism in the New Testament (1 Peter 3:20-22 and 1 Corinthians 10:1-4). Jesus emphasis on baptism both in practice and in statement shows that He was not at variance with the ritual laws that symbolizes purity but against the Pharisees self-made purity laws.¹³⁵

¹³¹ Anders Nygren, *Commentary on Romans*, 379.

¹³² L. Berkhof & L. Loius, *The History of Christian Doctrines*, 59.

¹³³ Thomas McElwain, "Islam in the Bible."

¹³⁴ Katharina Von Kellenbach, "Guilt and the Transformation of Christian-Jewish Relations," 1-20.

¹³⁵ Joshua Strahan, "Did Jesus Nullify the Torah and Declare Nonkosher Foods Clean? Towards a Better Reading of Mark 7:19a," 19.

Protestant Perspective on Purity

The purification processes outlined majorly in Leviticus 11-15 are solemn ordinances needed, if Israelites are to safely approach God. It is a token of cleansing themselves from all sinful pollution, that they might be wholly holy unto the Lord.¹³⁶ Only the holy people can have fellowship with the Lord.¹³⁷ And to approach God, they must devote themselves entirely unto the Lord, even if this calls for denial of self of some necessities as indicated in Exodus 19 and 1Corinthians 7:5.¹³⁸

Moreover, even though, obeying the ritual laws is not what brings righteousness,¹³⁹ but all the purification rituals regulations suggests God must be worshipped with reverence and holiness. Hence, the spotless character of God, His unequal holiness and transcendental perfection must be in the mind of all who approach Him.¹⁴⁰ Though, He initiated relationship with His creatures solely because of His steadfast love and merciful righteousness,¹⁴¹ but His sacred and great name must be kept fresh in those who approach Him.¹⁴²

In addition, purity laws are actually symbolic¹⁴³ but they are designed to benefit human.¹⁴⁴ And so the restriction on some certain meat which may lead to some agitations should rather be considered on the basis of His wisdom, law and will,

¹³⁶ J B Williams, F.S.A, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, 97.

¹³⁷ Stanley N. Cundry, *Five Views on Sanctification*, 31.

¹³⁸ J B Williams, F.S.A, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, 97.

¹³⁹ Adolf Koberle DD, *The Quest for Holiness* (Minnesota: Augsburg Publishing House, 1938), 194.

¹⁴⁰ J B Williams, F.S.A, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, 127.

¹⁴¹ Donald G. Bloesch, *The Christian Life and Salvation*, 41.

¹⁴² J B Williams, F.S.A, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, 127.

¹⁴³ Tokunboh Adeyemo, *Africa Bible Commentary*, 159.

¹⁴⁴ John E. Hartley, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 4:141.

that must be adhered to.¹⁴⁵ God expects His people to be holy as He is¹⁴⁶ and so His people should submit to His authority, even if such affect what they put on their table.¹⁴⁷ Since Jewish religious laws are shadows of Christ, William MacDonald opines that “now that the Lord Jesus has come” they should be done away with.¹⁴⁸ But Thomas McElivain differs on this.¹⁴⁹

Seventh-day Adventist Church Perspective on Purity

The command regarding abstinence from certain kinds of meats which are classified as unclean is born out of God’s love. Hence, the creatures listed as unclean in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14 are hygienically unfit as food for human.¹⁵⁰ After all, the original diet assigned to man in the beginning has no meat; it was all plants yielding seed.¹⁵¹ Also, the restriction of the mother not to enter the sanctuary after child birth is considered as God’s way of showing tender care to the mother¹⁵² after the attending stress of pregnancy period.

Moreover, the defilements mentioned in Leviticus 15 are not all implying moral transgression. Some occur in natural course of life. For instance, woman in her customary time of separation, or an emission of semen from man while asleep are all

¹⁴⁵ J B Williams, F.S.A, *Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible*, 129.

¹⁴⁶ Andrew E & John H, *A Survey of the Old Testament*, 131.

¹⁴⁷ J B Williams, F.S.A, *Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible*, 129.

¹⁴⁸ William MacDonald, *Believer’s Bible Commentary*, 2005.

¹⁴⁹ Thomas McElwain, “Islam in the Bible.”

¹⁵⁰ Francis D. Nichol, *The Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary, The Holy Bible with Exegetical and Expository Comment in Seven Volumes*, 1:753.

¹⁵¹ Raoul Dederen (Editor), *Handbook of Seventh-Day Adventist Theology*, 423.

¹⁵² Francis D. Nichol, *The Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary, The Holy Bible with Exegetical and Expository Comment in Seven Volumes*, 1:758.

defilement which do not result in sin (Leviticus 15:19).¹⁵³ Also, the ritual regulations given by God regarding all these defilements actually carried some benefits.¹⁵⁴ In all these rituals God simply emphasized His interest in their personal health, neatness, His holiness and the need for being mindful of the sacredness of the holy things, all because they are named with God.¹⁵⁵

In addition, the ceremonial laws are introduced with the major purpose of pointing to future redemption.¹⁵⁶ Therefore, God's direction on all the ritual laws is simply His interest in making difference between sacred and mundane, clean and unclean, purity and defilement because all that defiles is abomination to Him.¹⁵⁷ Hence, approaching God requires cleanness, holiness, modesty and humility. He also requires His worshippers to discard everything that will make them less sensitive to the prompting of His Spirit.¹⁵⁸

Furthermore, God has also made approaching Him possible and easier through the purification rituals. For instance, baptism purification ritual symbolizes the one who is being baptized willingness to become one with Christ,¹⁵⁹ while the feet washing represent cleansing from sin and also a union with Christ.¹⁶⁰ It is then expected of those who approach God to discard every uncleanness; even the

¹⁵³ Francis D. Nichol, 1:758.

¹⁵⁴ Raoul Dederen (Editor), *Handbook of Seventh - day Adventist Theology*, 773.

¹⁵⁵ Francis D. Nichol, *The Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary, The Holy Bible with Exegetical and Expository Comment in Seven Volumes*, 1:758.

¹⁵⁶ Raoul Dederen (Editor), *Handbook of Seventh - day Adventist Theology*, 457.

¹⁵⁷ Francis D. Nichol, *The Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary, The Holy Bible with Exegetical and Expository Comment in Seven Volumes*, 1:770.

¹⁵⁸ Francis D. Nichol, 1:770.

¹⁵⁹ Raoul Dederen (Editor), *Handbook of Seventh-Day Adventist Theology*, 583.

¹⁶⁰ Angel Manuel Rodriguez (Editor), *Message, Mission, and Unity of the Church* (Silver Spring, Maryland: Biblical Research Institute, 2013), 215.

uncleanness that may not necessarily be a “sin” must be done away with, just because God detests it.¹⁶¹

Ellen G. White Perspective on Purity

God’s command as specified in Leviticus 11-15 is born out of His love and mercy for His creatures. And the design of God in Leviticus 11 about what to eat or not to eat is basically a regulation to protect those He loves.¹⁶² Therefore, whatever God in His wisdom is not willing to give to His people can be believed that that is simply not good for them. Whatever, He deemed fit to give to them must then be for their benefits.¹⁶³

More also, the purification rite for a woman after the child birth is considered a blessing to her for having enough rest for her lots of hard work and the stressful experience of child birth. The days of rest to be enjoyed by the nursing mother also include a period of isolation from the sanctuary, so that she could better regain strength.¹⁶⁴ Therefore, the regulations of God to Israel have a profound blessings because if their principles are lived out in all their daily affairs their health would be preserved.¹⁶⁵

In addition, the law of God is considered as His will¹⁶⁶, hence, His regulations regarding abstinence from unclean or indecent things are expected to be kept because

¹⁶¹ Francis D. Nichol, *The Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary, The Holy Bible with Exegetical and Expository Comment in Seven Volumes*, 1:758.

¹⁶² Francis D. Nichol, 1:753.

¹⁶³ Ronald L. Numbers, *The Prophet of Health: A Study of Ellen G. White* (New York, Hagerstown, San Francisco, London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1976), 163.

¹⁶⁴ Francis D. Nichol, *The Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary, The Holy Bible with Exegetical and Expository Comment in Seven Volumes*, 1:758.

¹⁶⁵ Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Nampa, Idaho, Oshawa, Ontario, Canada: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1942), 277.

¹⁶⁶ Woodrow W. Whidden, *Ellen White on Salvation* (Berrien Spring, Michigan: Review & Herald Catalogue Service, 1944), 38.

He as a holy God has nothing to do with impurity.¹⁶⁷ God's instructions are actually the manifestation of His character of love.¹⁶⁸ And so, since there is a close connection between the physical and moral nature¹⁶⁹, God gave rules that will make those who approach Him be in good mental and physical health.¹⁷⁰ Living in conformity with those regulations cannot but bring mental improvement which in turn enhance soul sanctification.¹⁷¹

Summary

The idea of purity dominates the Bible. It indicates the separateness of God's people from those who refuse to have a cordial relationship with Him.¹⁷² This will not only make them distinct as His people,¹⁷³ it will also guide them on how best to approach God.¹⁷⁴ Even though, the ritual purifications are symbolic of ideal relationship with God which is covenantal in nature,¹⁷⁵ but adhering to them closely¹⁷⁶ can help to improve one's health¹⁷⁷ in the twenty-first century, as it was in the antiquity.¹⁷⁸

¹⁶⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, 279.

¹⁶⁸ Woodrow W. Whidden, *Ellen White on Salvation*, 38.

¹⁶⁹ Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 43.

¹⁷⁰ Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, 276.

¹⁷¹ Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 45.

¹⁷² Stephen K. Sherwood, *Berit Olam. Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Studies in Hebrew Narrative and Poetry* (Collegeville, Minnesota: Micheal Glazier Book, 2002), 64.

¹⁷³ G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 876.

¹⁷⁴ John E. Hartley, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 4:144.

¹⁷⁵ Tokunboh Adeyemo, *Africa Bible Commentary*, 147.

¹⁷⁶ John E. Hartley, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 4:145.

¹⁷⁷ Leo R. Dolson /J. Robert Spangler, *Healthy, Happy, Holy*, 34.

¹⁷⁸ John E. Hartley, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 4:145.

However, ritual purification in and of itself brings no righteousness,¹⁷⁹ but its significance of making believers to realize the enormity of sin cannot be overemphasized.¹⁸⁰ Therefore, the Lord God Almighty, who alone can purify the heart¹⁸¹ instituted the ritual purity that His people might reflect His holiness in whatever they do.¹⁸² And so, the Old Testament and New Testament are not at variant with each other on ritual purification. Nevertheless, there seems to be a modification of ritual purity in the New Testament, while some ritual purification rites become obsolete as they meet Christ.¹⁸³

Similarly, regulations on clean and unclean foods remain intact. So, some New Testament passages used in favor of nullification of such regulations are actually the misreading of the Scripture.¹⁸⁴ Some of such texts are Acts 10, Mark 7:19b Colossians 2:11-16 among many other similar Pauline texts. However, these texts can be consistently used in favor of purity codes.¹⁸⁵

¹⁷⁹ Adolf Koberle DD, *The Quest for Holiness*, 194.

¹⁸⁰ William V. Crockett & James G. Sigounto, *Through No Fault of Their Own*, 14.

¹⁸¹ Brian Ridolfi, "What Does The Bible Say About....." *The Ultimate Bible Answer.*, 847.

¹⁸² Andrew E & John H, *A Survey of the Old Testament*, 131.

¹⁸³ Anders Nygren, *Commentary on Romans*, 379.

¹⁸⁴ Joshua Strahan, "Did Jesus Nullify the Torah and Declare Nonkosher Foods Clean? Towards a Better Reading of Mark 7:19a," 2.

¹⁸⁵ Thomas McElwain, "Islam in the Bible."

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW OF PURITY IN ISLAM

Definition and Meaning of Purity

Purity is defined as “the state of being pure”.¹ It is also defined as the “freedom from guilt or evil; innocence”.² And the Hebrew word for defile- “tahmeh” also means unclean or polluted.³ Meanwhile, the Hebrew word for purification, that’s “toh-horah” could also mean purify or cleansing.⁴ But the Hebrew word for pure- “tah-hehr”, simply means purged or clean.⁵ However, in Islam, ritual purity and impurity are known as “taharat” and “najasat”⁶ respectively. In Islam and Christianity, purity seems to bring the idea that God is holy and so those who approach Him are expected to be holy too.⁷

Historical Context: Purity

Christianity and Islam as some of the major world religions have their history in a common ancestor that is Abraham and so they are known as Abrahamic

¹ Sol Steinmetz (Editor), “Random House Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary,” 1569.

² David Palmer (General Editor), “Merriam Webster’s Deluxe Dictionary” (New York: Reader’s Digest Association, 1998), 1488.

³ Jay P. Green Sr, *The New Englishman’s Hebrew Concordance*, 475.

⁴ Jay P. Green Sr, 475.

⁵ J B Williams, F.S.A, *Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible*, 97.

⁶ Sayyid Ali Hussaini Sistani, “Taharat & Najasat: Ritual Purity & Impurity,” www.al-islam.org/code-practice-muslims-west-sayyid-ali-hussaini-sistani/taharat-najasat-ritual-purity-impurity, 2024 1995.

⁷ Edward E. Hindson & Woodrow Micheal Knoll--General Editors, *The KJV Parallel Bible Commentary*, 2462.

religions.⁸ And since people live within a particular culturally defined context,⁹ then the idea of purity must start within a specific history.

History of Islam

Islam is a religion founded by an Arabian prophet called Muhammad, who lived in 570CE-632CE.¹⁰ The Islamic idea of purity can be traced back to its root in the religion of Abraham.¹¹ As a matter of fact, Abraham is highly revered in Islam as the worshipper of true God.¹² Therefore, the Muslims can understand whatever a Christian says as far as purity is concerned.¹³ Prophet Muhammad's relationship was cordial to the descendants of Abraham, the Jews at the initial stage of Islam.¹⁴ He even refers to both Jews and Christians as the people of the Book.¹⁵

Moreover, the aim of Prophet Muhammad at the launch of Islam is to create a universal monotheistic religion that will encompass Jews and Christians.¹⁶ And so, he regarded the Jews and Christians as hanif. Muslims too were known as hanif at the time.¹⁷ In fact, Jerusalem, the historical city of both Jews and Christians was the

⁸ Jerome D. Fellman, Arthur Getis and Judith Getis, *Human Geography* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2007), 157.

⁹ Richly H. Crapo, *Cultural Anthropology: Understanding Ourselves and Others* (New York: McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2002), 266.

¹⁰ Gorden R. Doss, *Introduction to Adventist Mission* (Silver Spring, Maryland: Institute of World Mission, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Church, 2018), 287.

¹¹ Bernard Lewis and Bunfzie Ellis Churchill, *Islam, The Religion and the People*, 2.

¹² Jerry Rassamni, *From Jihad to Jesus* (Chattanooga, Tennessee: Living Ink Books, 2006), 68.

¹³ Bernard Lewis and Bunfzie Ellis Churchill, *Islam, The Religion and the People*, 2.

¹⁴ Jerry Rassamni, *From Jihad to Jesus*, 70.

¹⁵ Mahmoud Ayoub, *A Muslim View of Christianity*, 173.

¹⁶ Jerry Rassamni, *From Jihad to Jesus*, 70.

¹⁷ Jerry Rassamni, 70.

Muslims direction of prayer in the Islam developmental stage.¹⁸ However, the influential Jews rejected Islam and its prophet. Hence, the Jews, known initially in Islam as people of the Book were later regarded as unclean that's "najas".¹⁹

Furthermore, Prophet Muhammad refers to Jews and Christians as people with universal religion, that's hanif.²⁰ But in a short while, they are been branded as najasah.²¹ And najasah has a root word called najas which means impurity, uncleanness or filth.²² However, some minority Muslim among Shia group of Islam consider Christians and Jews as ritually pure to enter Mosque. Yet, many Muslims considered them as polytheists and so impure to enter Muslim place of worship.²³

Purity in Islam in Its Inception

Purity in Islam in its earliest stage assumed essentially the kind of purity found among Jews. In fact, Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians were considered as pure as Muslims too.²⁴ Hence, many of the ritual purifications of the Jews are incorporated into Qur'an and therefore become Muslim ways of life.²⁵ Almost all what can cause defilement among Jews are essentially what the Muslims are aware of.²⁶ Therefore,

¹⁸ Jerry Rassamni, 46.

¹⁹ Varrichio, Aaron, "The Purity of Non-Muslim in Shi'a Jurisprudence.," *Journal of Shi'a Islamic Study* 3, no. 2 (2010): 167–85.

²⁰ Jerry Rassamni, *From Jihad to Jesus*, 70.

²¹ Varrichio, Aaron, "The Purity of Non-Muslim in Shi'a Jurisprudence.," 167–85.

²² Varrichio, Aaron, 167–85.

²³ Varrichio, Aaron, 167–85.

²⁴ Khan, Mir Baiz, "Taharah: Principle of Purity in Ismaili" 4, no. 59 (2020): 515–39.

²⁵ Jerry Rassamni, *From Jihad to Jesus*, 68.

²⁶ Ibrahim Ahmad Abdulkadir, "Halal Concept," *International Journal of Halal Research* 4, no. 2 (2022): 97–104.

right from its earlier time, Islam prohibits eating of almost all unclean animals identified in Leviticus 11.²⁷

Outside Influence on Islamic Purity

Islam was greatly influenced by many and varied outside sources.²⁸ Prominent among its influencers are Jews, Christians and the Sabians.²⁹ Hence, the purity code of the Bible is closer in many respects to that of the Islam.³⁰ Even though, Islam today has its own unique cultural values and religious expressions,³¹ but the influence of other religions on it cannot be overemphasized. Such can be seen in some of its practices. For instance, the Muslim act of engaging in five time daily ritual prayers was actually culled from the Sabeans' culture of praying seven times in a day.³²

Similarly, the Islamic practices on food and drinks regulations make it compatible with the Jews.³³ Islam as one of the universal religions and its claim of applicability to all humanity³⁴ are seen also in Christianity. And in spite of all these influences on Islam, it remains the fastest growing religion in the world, in this twenty-first century.³⁵

²⁷ Gordon R. Doss, *Introduction to Adventist Mission*, 291.

²⁸ Jerry Rassamni, *From Jihad to Jesus*, 68.

²⁹ Jerry Rassamni, 71.

³⁰ Thomas McElwain, "Islam in the Bible."

³¹ Jerome D. Fellman, Arthur Getis and Judith Getis, *Human Geography*, 160.

³² Jerry Rassamni, *From Jihad to Jesus*, 70.

³³ Bernard Lewis and Bunfzie Ellis Churchill, *Islam, The Religion and the People*, 2.

³⁴ Jerome D. Fellman, Arthur Getis and Judith Getis, *Human Geography*, 157.

³⁵ James P. Eckman, *Exploring Church History (A Guide to History, World Religions and Ethics)*, 182.

Muslim Interactions with Other Religions: Purity

Essentially, Islam has a common root with Judaism and Christianity, though, they all have different value system.³⁶ Regardless of their common root, adherents of other religions are considered by Muslim as Kafir - unbeliever.³⁷ They regard others as najis - ritually impure.³⁸ Even though, this view is not universal among the Muslims as Sayyid and Hussaini pointed out, that “the Jews, the Christians and Zoroastrians -the Ahlil kitab are ritually pure”,³⁹ but Qur’an seems to point in opposite direction. In fact, Qur’an 9:8 confirms all non-Muslims to be ritually impure and so unfit to enter the Mosque.⁴⁰

Therefore, Muslims see Islam as a truth and a law⁴¹ and so are bewildered by Christians’ range of freedom,⁴² since Islam has no concept of grace by faith as taught by Christians.⁴³ However, the Muslims don’t reject the Gospel outrightly, but they see it as their duty to call all people to the unity of faith which will be inclusive of Jews, Christians and Muslims.⁴⁴ This they considered necessary because of their understanding of oneness of God.⁴⁵

³⁶ Bernard Lewis and Bunzlie Ellis Churchill, *Islam, The Religion and the People*, 2.

³⁷ Varrichio, Aaron, “The Purity of Non-Muslim in Shi’a Jurisprudence.,” 167–85.

³⁸ Varrichio, Aaron, 167–85.

³⁹ Sayyid Ali Hussaini Sistani, “Taharat & Najasat: Ritual Purity & Impurity.”

⁴⁰ Varrichio, Aaron, “The Purity of Non-Muslim in Shi’a Jurisprudence.,” 167–85.

⁴¹ Frithjof Schuon, *Understanding Islam* (Baltimore, Maryland USA: Penguin Books Inc, 1972), 13.

⁴² James P. Dretke, *A Christian Approach to Muslims: Reflections from West Africa*, 99.

⁴³ Abraham Sarker, *Understanding My Muslim People*, 226.

⁴⁴ Mahmoud Ayoub, *A Muslim View of Christianity*, 3.

⁴⁵ Mahmoud Ayoub, 3.

Purity in the History of Christianity

First and foremost, the idea of purity is considered in Christianity as a necessity all because God is holy.⁴⁶ Therefore, the purity of all who believe in God is necessary.⁴⁷ And since God is interested in being holy, just and fair,⁴⁸ those who will have fellowship with Him are expected to be holy.⁴⁹ Then, how to attain the purity for approaching God is well stated in the Bible. In fact, the book of Leviticus is called “the manual on holiness”⁵⁰ by Andrew E. John because of its discussion on purity.

Moreover, ritual purification seems to have started with Abraham, when God initiated a covenantal relationship with him.⁵¹ However, the long list of animals and their distinction from each other as clean and unclean that was given to Noah, seem to indicate that purification is tied to creation.⁵² In essence, purification predates Christianity. The details of ritual purification are also well stated in the Bible.

Early Church: The First 300 Years

The first few centuries of the Christian church after the ascension of Christ were marked with some noticeable changes. Firstly, there was a paradigm shift in its theology.⁵³ The shift in paradigm becomes necessary in order to accommodate the new believers who were joining the church.⁵⁴ Therefore, one of the major changes in

⁴⁶ Stephen K. Sherwood, *Berit Olam. Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Studies in Hebrew Narrative and Poetry*, 64.

⁴⁷ Andrew E & John H, *A Survey of the Old Testament*, 125.

⁴⁸ William V. Crockett & James G. Sigounto, *Through No Fault of Their Own*, 15.

⁴⁹ Stanley N. Cundry, *Five Views on Sanctification*, 31.

⁵⁰ Andrew E & John H, *A Survey of the Old Testament*, 125.

⁵¹ Fred H. Wight, *Manners and Customs of Bible Lands*, 109.

⁵² Ephraim Radner, *Leviticus*, 143.

⁵³ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission.*, 24.

⁵⁴ David J. Bosch, 54–56.

their ritual purity is to nullify circumcision as a condition of conversion to Christianity. This change becomes necessary because circumcision is never the condition for receiving pardon of sin.⁵⁵ Though, holiness was emphasized in this time period, but it was no longer based on ritual purification.⁵⁶

Purity in the Twenty-First Century

The twenty-first century Christianity seems to have assumed a different status, since they now exhibit a new status which suggests they have forgotten some of their old ritual forms or have disdained them.⁵⁷ They are expected to express their religious beliefs in rituals that are in tandem with it.⁵⁸

However, the Christianity of the twenty-first century seem to have abandoned all its ritual regulations. In fact, apart from baptism and a foot washing exercise during Holy Communion Service, no ritual purifications of Old Testament survive in the twenty-first century Christian churches. These are minimally practiced only in some established churches.⁵⁹

More also, all the Old Testament ritual purifications are now been regarded as obsolete since Christ which they symbolized has come and so must be done away with.⁶⁰ Some Paul's writings like Colossians 2:11-16 have been used to buttress this supposition. Thomas McElwain even asserted that Paul's statements "can be

⁵⁵ Thomas McElwain, "Islam in the Bible."

⁵⁶ G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 876.

⁵⁷ Richly H. Crapo, *Cultural Anthropology: Understanding Ourselves and Others*, 266.

⁵⁸ Paul G. Hiebert, *Cultural Anthropology*, 372.

⁵⁹ Thomas McElwain, "Islam in the Bible."

⁶⁰ Richard R. Melick, Jr, *The New American Commentary: Philippians, Colossians, Philemon*, vol. 32 (Nashville, Tennessee: B & H Publishing Group, 1991), 2462.

understood consistently to favor purity as well.”⁶¹ It is even obvious that the often quoted Bible passage such as Mark 7:19b in favor of ritual purity nullification is actually a misreading of the Scripture.⁶²

Muslim’s Worldview on Purity

Muslims are not only considering their religion - Islam as one of the major world religions,⁶³ but they also claim that its teaching is the last universal message to the people on earth.⁶⁴ Islam gives importance to purity in all its laws.⁶⁵ Therefore, some of its laws are upheld with practices that are subjected to rigors and intense discipline.⁶⁶

Moreover, the practice in Islam is based on the presupposition that Islam is the supreme religion, hence, everyone in the world must be convinced to accept its tenets of faith.⁶⁷ This is considered necessary on the basis of an assumption that holiness can only be attained through rigors of not forgetting always the present condition one is made of.⁶⁸ Muslims hold an assumption that salvation is found in the knowledge of God, but unfortunately human are known for forgetfulness.⁶⁹

⁶¹ Thomas McElwain, “Islam in the Bible.”

⁶² Joshua Strahan, “Did Jesus Nullify the Torah and Declare Nonkosher Foods Clean? Towards a Better Reading of Mark 7:19a,” 8.

⁶³ Jerome D. Fellman, Arthur Getis and Judith Getis, *Human Geography*, 157.

⁶⁴ Mahmoud Ayoub, *A Muslim View of Christianity*, 45.

⁶⁵ Maghen Ze’ev, *Virtues of the Flesh-Passion and Purity in Early Islamic Jurisprudence* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 13.

⁶⁶ James P. Eckman, *Exploring Church History (A Guide to History, World Religions and Ethics)*, 179.

⁶⁷ Abraham Sarker, *Understanding My Muslim People*, 217.

⁶⁸ Maghen Ze’ev, *Virtues of the Flesh-Passion and Purity in Early Islamic Jurisprudence*, 32.

⁶⁹ Bruce L. Bauer (Editor), *Faith Development in Context: Presenting Christ in Creative Ways* (Berrien Springs, Michigan: Department of World Mission, Andrew University, 2005), 168.

The Prophet of Islam

Muhammad is known to be the Prophet of Islam. In fact, he is many things to Islam.⁷⁰ The profound statement of faith in Islam – Shahada, is centered on Allah and Muhammad.⁷¹ Even though a prominent regard is given to Ibrahim (Abraham) in Islam as recorded in the Qur’an⁷² and Jesus (Isa) as the Word and Spirit of Allah,⁷³ but none assumed the exalted place Muhammad occupied in Islam.⁷⁴ However, there is no indication that he is seen as divine,⁷⁵ though perfection is apportioned to him.⁷⁶ He remains the founder of Islam.⁷⁷

The Holy Books of Islam

Qur’an is the holy book of Islam⁷⁸ and so its doctrine and practices are centered on it.⁷⁹ It is believed by the Muslims that it was handed over to Muhammad.⁸⁰ Consequently, Qur’an is considered not just as a good book, but also a revealed Scripture of divine origin.⁸¹ Therefore, the theology and philosophy of Islam

⁷⁰ Abraham Sarker, *Understanding My Muslim People*, 33.

⁷¹ Frithjof Schuon, *Understanding Islam*, 16.

⁷² Jerry Rassamni, *From Jihad to Jesus*, 70.

⁷³ Suleyman Romain, *The Blessed Feast 'Eid Al-Adha* (Sandy Hooks, VA, United States of America: Suleyman Publishing, 2010), 110.

⁷⁴ Abraham Sarker, *Understanding My Muslim People*, 33.

⁷⁵ Abraham Sarker, 33.

⁷⁶ Frithjof Schuon, *Understanding Islam*, 16.

⁷⁷ Gordon R. Doss, *Introduction to Adventist Mission*, 287.

⁷⁸ Gordon R. Doss, 287.

⁷⁹ John L. Allen, *World Geography (Student Atlas Of)*, 27.

⁸⁰ James P. Eckman, *Exploring Church History (A Guide to History, World Religions and Ethics)*, 183.

⁸¹ Mahmoud Ayoub, *A Muslim View of Christianity*, 47.

are built on Qur'an, since it is regarded as the word of Allah.⁸² In essence, Qur'an is the worldview of Muslims⁸³ and so it is regarded as the chief of all speeches.⁸⁴ Hence, its teachings are introduced earlier enough to Muslims children who in turn are shaped by them⁸⁵ in behavior and reasoning.⁸⁶

In addition, Muslims believe that 104 books were given by Allah, but only four of them are considered most important.⁸⁷ Qur'an, apart from being revered as God's revelation, it is regarded as law.⁸⁸ Other books of importance are the Torah, the law book received by Moses, the Psalm which was given to David and the Gospel which was given to Jesus.⁸⁹ One more important book which is not among the 104 books is the Hadith. Hadith is the record of sayings and deeds of Prophet Muhammad⁹⁰ and it is considered a revelation.⁹¹

Moreover, Islam is known as a religion which regulates all the activities of its adherents.⁹² The regulations in Islam are essentially derived from Qur'an.⁹³ Qur'an in

⁸² Jerry Rassamni, *From Jihad to Jesus*, 63.

⁸³ Mahmoud Ayoub, *A Muslim View of Christianity*, 187.

⁸⁴ Bruce L. Bauer (Editor), *Faith Development in Context: Presenting Christ in Creative Ways*, 161.

⁸⁵ Kim C.S. Caleb, *Cultural Anthropology from a Christian Perspective* (Eldoret: Utafiti Foundation, 2019), 23–41.

⁸⁶ Paul G. Hiebert, *Cultural Anthropology*, 372.

⁸⁷ James P. Eckman, *Exploring Church History (A Guide to History, World Religions and Ethics)*, 183.

⁸⁸ Abdullah Saeed, *Interpreting the Qur'an: Towards a Contemporary Approach* (London & New York: Routledge, 2006), 29.

⁸⁹ James P. Eckman, *Exploring Church History (A Guide to History, World Religions and Ethics)*, 183.

⁹⁰ Bernard Lewis and Bunfzie Ellis Churchill, *Islam, The Religion and the People*, 26.

⁹¹ Abdullah Saeed, *Interpreting the Qur'an: Towards a Contemporary Approach*, 29.

⁹² James P. Eckman, *Exploring Church History (A Guide to History, World Religions and Ethics)*, 180.

⁹³ Bernard Lewis and Bunfzie Ellis Churchill, *Islam, The Religion and the People*, 26.

turn profoundly influences the Hadith and the Islamic laws which are collectively known as Sharia.⁹⁴ Qur'an, Hadith and Sharia aid the importance Islam ascribed to prescribed purity above other religion.⁹⁵ Therefore, argument on ritual purity or its laws is of great importance to Muslim jurists.⁹⁶

Islamic Belief

Islam beliefs are divided into six distinctive forms which are known as articles of faith. These beliefs are expressed as followed:

1. Belief in Oneness of God
2. Belief in angels
3. Belief in prophets
4. Belief in Holy Books
5. Belief in Last Day Judgment
6. Belief in God's foreknowledge.⁹⁷

More also, the Islamic faith is expressed or practiced in five different ways. They are otherwise known as pillars of faith.⁹⁸ They are as followed:

1. Shahada: the creed or confession of faith
2. Salat: the daily ritual prayer
3. Sawm: the annual obligatory fasting
4. Zakat: the almsgiving

⁹⁴ Rafi Ahmad Fidai, *Concise History of Muslim World Vol 3* (New Delhi (India): Nusrat Ali Nasri for Kitab B havan, 2004), 41.

⁹⁵ Maghen Ze'ev, *Virtues of the Flesh-Passion and Purity in Early Islamic Jurisprudence*, 13.

⁹⁶ Mustafa Abdul Rahman, "Ritual and Rationality in Islam: A Case Study on Nail Polish," 240–84.

⁹⁷ Gorden R. Doss, *Introduction to Adventist Mission*, 290–91.

⁹⁸ Gorden R. Doss, 291.

5. Hajj: the act of engaging in a religious visit to Mecca which is called the pilgrimage.⁹⁹

Missiological Implications of Beliefs in Islam

In Islam the concept of God existence is prominent. In fact, Muslims believe that Islam is the only acceptable religion with God.¹⁰⁰ Since, the Muslims already have the concept of God's existence like Christian though with different orientation, engaging them in discussing this concept is no longer difficult.¹⁰¹ Establishing relationship with them may no longer be difficult, even though their religion is considered difficult,¹⁰² it only calls for Christians understanding of their concept of God.¹⁰³

More also, Muslims believe in prophets, and prominent among the 124,000 Allah's sent prophets¹⁰⁴ they believe that Jesus holds a conspicuous place; while all other prophets need God's forgiveness, only Jesus was exempted from that all because He among others is considered sinless.¹⁰⁵ Besides, Abraham is also considered a prophet in Islam and this same Abraham is regarded as a true worshipper of God.¹⁰⁶ Christians then in general and Seventh-day Adventist Church in particular

⁹⁹ Abraham Sarker, *Understanding My Muslim People*, 170.

¹⁰⁰ Bruce L. Bauer (Editor), *Faith Development in Context: Presenting Christ in Creative Ways*, 163.

¹⁰¹ Sherwood G. Lingenfelter & Marvin K. Mayers, *Ministering Cross-Culturally. An Incarnational Model for Personal Relationships*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academy, 2003), 57.

¹⁰² James P. Eckman, *Exploring Church History (A Guide to History, World Religions and Ethics)*, 187.

¹⁰³ Sherwood G. Lingenfelter & Marvin K. Mayers, *Ministering Cross-Culturally. An Incarnational Model for Personal Relationships*, 57–58.

¹⁰⁴ James P. Eckman, *Exploring Church History (A Guide to History, World Religions and Ethics)*, 184.

¹⁰⁵ Suleyman Romain, *The Blessed Feast 'Eid Al-Adha*, 52.

¹⁰⁶ Jerry Rassamni, *From Jihad to Jesus*, 70.

can use the reference given to Jesus and Abraham to engage them in discussion regarding faith in relating to purity.

Furthermore, Muslims believe prayer so much and even refers to the act of praying as the highest form of worshipping God.¹⁰⁷ Prayer even stands as one of their practices of faith¹⁰⁸ and they do it five times in a day as a practice. Instead of a physical and direct witnessing to them which may not be fruitful,¹⁰⁹ Christians can commit them to prayer and even pray for and with them where possible.

Moreover, Muslims believe in the sacred books of God which are 104 in number but the most important among them are four.¹¹⁰ The three of the most important religious books are found in the Bible, while the fourth is the Qur'an. Qur'an is considered the most sacred book by the Muslim and Islam ideologies are built on it.¹¹¹ Therefore, giving respect to Qur'an and having a knowledge of it could help reach the mind of Muslims with the gospel.

Purification in Islam

In Islam, purity simply means tahara.¹¹² The sacred law and the Muslim way of life that help them ensure they are purified is also called tahara.¹¹³ To ensure ritual purification among the Muslims, Islam is heavily loaded with lots of rituals designed

¹⁰⁷ Jadidi, Ali; Khatiban, Mahnat; Oshvandi, Khodayar; Khodavesi, Masoud; Maghsoudi, Zahra; Razavi, Mohammadreza., "Transcendence, The Most Important Spiritual Need of Muslim Older Adult: A Content Analysis Study.," *Journal of Religion & Health*, 61, no. 2 (2022): 1529–47.

¹⁰⁸ Abraham Sarker, *Understanding My Muslim People*, 170.

¹⁰⁹ Bruce L. Bauer (Editor), *Faith Development in Context: Presenting Christ in Creative Ways*, 31.

¹¹⁰ James P. Eckman, *Exploring Church History (A Guide to History, World Religions and Ethics)*, 183.

¹¹¹ Abdel Salam Sidahmed and Anoushriavan Ehteshami, *Islamic Fundamentalism* (Colorado and Oxford: Westview Press Inc, 1996), 2–23.

¹¹² Sayyid Ali Hussaini Sistani, "Taharat & Najasat: Ritual Purity & Impurity."

¹¹³ Maghen Ze'ev, *Virtues of the Flesh-Passion and Purity in Early Islamic Jurisprudence*, 7.

for purification.¹¹⁴ In fact, the network of ritual purification processes in Islam are intricately connected to its theology of prayer.¹¹⁵

Moreover, it is believed by Muslims that unless one is ritually clean, his or her prayer is abomination (Qur'an 2: 222).¹¹⁶ Prayer is also understood to be the best form of worship.¹¹⁷ Therefore, unless one's prayer is accepted, even the other good deeds of a worshipper become unacceptable by Allah.¹¹⁸

As a matter of fact, great importance is attached to purification in Islam, not just for its spiritual benefits, but also for its health benefits too.¹¹⁹ Since, they must engage in ritual washing in their daily compulsory prayer, it helps them to maintain hygienic condition¹²⁰ and this also boost their happiness and so enhance their wellbeing.¹²¹

Major and Minor Impurities

Purification simply means act of purifying¹²² and in Islam it is believed to have spiritual and physical perspectives which manifest in the rituals that accompany

¹¹⁴ Mustafa Abdul Rahman, "Ritual and Rationality in Islam: A Case Study on Nail Polish," 240–84.

¹¹⁵ Maghen Ze'ev, *Virtues of the Flesh-Passion and Purity in Early Islamic Jurisprudence*, 7.

¹¹⁶ Abraham Sarker, *Understanding My Muslim People*, 176.

¹¹⁷ Heidari M; Borujeni M G; Abyaneh S K; Rezaei P, "The Effect of Spiritual Care on Perceived Stress and Mental Health among the Elderlies Living in Nursing Home," *Journal of Religion and Health* 4, no. 58 (2019): 1328–39.

¹¹⁸ Heidari M; Borujeni M G; Abyaneh S K; Rezaei P, 1328–39.

¹¹⁹ Jadidi, Ali; Khatiban, Mahnat; Oshvandi, Khodayar; Khodavesi, Masoud; Maghsoudi, Zahra; Razavi, Mohammadreza., "Transcendence, The Most Important Spiritual Need of Muslim Older Adult: A Content Analysis Study."

¹²⁰ Maghen Ze'ev, *Virtues of the Flesh-Passion and Purity in Early Islamic Jurisprudence*, 12.

¹²¹ Jadidi, Ali; Khatiban, Mahnat; Oshvandi, Khodayar; Khodavesi, Masoud; Maghsoudi, Zahra; Razavi, Mohammadreza., "Transcendence, The Most Important Spiritual Need of Muslim Older Adult: A Content Analysis Study."

¹²² David Palmer (General Editor), "Merriam Webster's Deluxe Dictionary," 1488.

it.¹²³ Either physically or spiritually, impurity is the state of not being pure.¹²⁴ Muslims believe that one must attain ritual purity which is not limited to mere removal of physical impurity, but also, the evil thoughts and superfluous things from the mind.¹²⁵ Ritual purity is known as *tahara* in Islam and to be ritually impure is refers to as *najasa*.¹²⁶ In fact, meat from unclean animal is considered as haram-that is prohibited¹²⁷ and such can defile a believer because they are impure.

In the same vein, *najasa* seems to emphasize only the physical impurities like semen, urine, sweat, saliva, blood from menstrual cycle and postpartum and alcohol and they are more or less external impurities.¹²⁸ Contact with all these renders the victim ritually impure¹²⁹ and such impurities are considered as major impurities. In contrast, there are impurities which are initiated through mere daily activities which can cause defilement. The act of sleeping why praying, evacuating feces and urine, intoxicating with alcohol, touching of one's genitalia, releasing of wind from anus and sexual intercourse can defile. They are regarded as minor impurity.¹³⁰

Interestingly, God desires purity¹³¹ because He is pure.¹³² Therefore, Muslims will try to maintain ritual purity, not just of their body, but also of clothes and

¹²³ Frederick Mathewson Denny, *An Introduction to Islam*, 4th ed. (London & New York: Routledge, 2011), 169.

¹²⁴ David Ministries Foundation, "Complete Christian Dictionary for Home, School and Office" (Geneva: Oasis International Ltd, 2002), 339.

¹²⁵ sunna.com, "Purity in Hadith," October 10, 2024.

¹²⁶ Sayyid Ali Hussaini Sistani, "Taharat & Najasat: Ritual Purity & Impurity."

¹²⁷ Abdullah Saeed, *Interpreting the Qur'an: Towards a Contemporary Approach*, 9.

¹²⁸ Frederick Mathewson Denny, *An Introduction to Islam*, 169.

¹²⁹ Thomas McElwain, "Islam in the Bible."

¹³⁰ Frederick Mathewson Denny, *An Introduction to Islam*, 169.

¹³¹ Abraham Sarker, *Understanding My Muslim People*, 180.

¹³² sunna.com, "Purity in Hadith," October 10, 2024.

everything they come in contact with.¹³³ Once, the ritual purity is violated in one way or the other, Muslims will engage in some purification processes in order to attain ritual purity.¹³⁴ The purification process a Muslim must engage in is determined by the kind of impurity he or she contacted.

Purification Processes in Islam

There are two major purification processes in Islam which are wudu and ghusl.¹³⁵ The two processes are engaged in by Muslims to achieve or maintain purity. Apart from wudu and ghusl, Muslims' concept of purity also encompasses circumcision, abstinence from unclean meats and food and drink and they emphasize giving of alms.¹³⁶

Wudu

This is known as ablution and it is a regulated washing in Islam to cleanse from minor impurities.¹³⁷ Wudu can also be done with a clean soil or dust where water is not available and such ablution is known as tayammum.¹³⁸ Wudu is done daily in order to participate in the daily ritual prayer and also in *Jummat*-Friday prayer.¹³⁹ Since Allah only accepts the prayer of those who are ritually pure¹⁴⁰,

¹³³ Sayyid Ali Hussaini Sistani, "Taharat & Najasat: Ritual Purity & Impurity."

¹³⁴ Abraham Sarker, *Understanding My Muslim People*, 177.

¹³⁵ sunna.com, "Purity in Hadith," October 10, 2024.

¹³⁶ Thomas McElwain, "Islam in the Bible."

¹³⁷ Frederick Mathewson Denny, *An Introduction to Islam*, 172.

¹³⁸ Frederick Mathewson Denny, 174.

¹³⁹ Bernard Lewis and Bunzlie Ellis Churchill, *Islam, The Religion and the People*, 31.

¹⁴⁰ Abraham Sarker, *Understanding My Muslim People*, 176.

Muslims are conscious of ritual purity in their theology.¹⁴¹ In fact, prayers are preceded with purification in Islam,¹⁴² otherwise it wouldn't be acceptable to Allah.¹⁴³

Ghusl

Ghusl is a full ritual bathing of the whole body in a prescribed regulated manner with more time order than that of the wudu.¹⁴⁴ Ghusl is used to remove major ritual impurities¹⁴⁵ and is performed less frequently.¹⁴⁶ Therefore, in Islam anyone who is self-polluting is considered immoral and even ungodly.¹⁴⁷ Consequently, the ritual purity of non-Muslims is questionable and so are considered impure and are not permitted to approach the Mosque.¹⁴⁸ While the law of ritual purity in Islam is built on the idea that worshippers should be at ease,¹⁴⁹ yet, the acceptance of non-Muslims especially Jews and Christians to Mosque as ritually pure remains a controverted matter.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴¹ Maghen Ze'ev, *Virtues of the Flesh-Passion and Purity in Early Islamic Jurisprudence*, 12.

¹⁴² Bernard Lewis and Bunzlie Ellis Churchill, *Islam, The Religion and the People*, 31.

¹⁴³ Abraham Sarker, *Understanding My Muslim People*, 180.

¹⁴⁴ Frederick Mathewson Denny, *An Introduction to Islam*, 174.

¹⁴⁵ sunna.com, "Purity in Hadith," October 10, 2024.

¹⁴⁶ Frederick Mathewson Denny, *An Introduction to Islam*, 174.

¹⁴⁷ Arden Mattan D & Rabinovitz Sharon, "Child Sexual Abuse and the Moralization of Purity," *Sharon Journal of Child Sexual Abuse* 29, no. 6 (2020): 697–716.

¹⁴⁸ Varrichio, Aaron, "The Purity of Non-Muslim in Shi'a Jurisprudence."

¹⁴⁹ Mustafa Abdul Rahman, "Ritual and Rationality in Islam: A Case Study on Nail Polish," 240–84.

¹⁵⁰ Varrichio, Aaron, "The Purity of Non-Muslim in Shi'a Jurisprudence.," 167–85.

Circumcision

Circumcision is a process of removing male prepuce¹⁵¹ or the clitoris of a female in part or all.¹⁵² Even though it is not mentioned in the Qur'an, yet, it is considered as a purification rite by Muslims and so it is practiced everywhere among them.¹⁵³ Circumcision is a sign of Abrahamic covenant and so is practiced by the Jews as an emblem of sanctification,¹⁵⁴ but, the Muslims too has been attached to it¹⁵⁵ and even euphemistically refers to it as tahara-purity.¹⁵⁶ Qur'an actually informs the practices in Islam,¹⁵⁷ but, the idea of circumcision in particular and most especially the female circumcision is never found in its texts.¹⁵⁸

Missiological Implications of Islamic Purification Rituals

Muslims attached a special interest to purity¹⁵⁹ and so they find it difficult to understand the way many Christians live with little or no reference to purity.¹⁶⁰ In fact, they are bewildered by the Christian claim to grace as they live without reference to the need for purity.¹⁶¹ Therefore, seeing a Muslim converting to Christianity is

¹⁵¹ Sol Steinmetz (Editor), "Random House Webster,s Unabridged Dictionary" (New York, n.d.), 375.

¹⁵² Frederick Mathewson Denny, *An Introduction to Islam*, 174.

¹⁵³ Frederick Mathewson Denny, 400.

¹⁵⁴ Fred H. Wight, *Manners and Customs of Bible Lands*, 109.

¹⁵⁵ Thomas McElwain, "Islam in the Bible."

¹⁵⁶ Frederick Mathewson Denny, *An Introduction to Islam*, 400.

¹⁵⁷ Bruce L. Bauer (Editor), *Faith Development in Context: Presenting Christ in Creative Ways*, 168.

¹⁵⁸ Frederick Mathewson Denny, *An Introduction to Islam*, 400.

¹⁵⁹ Maghen Ze'ev, *Virtues of the Flesh-Passion and Purity in Early Islamic Jurisprudence*, 13.

¹⁶⁰ Bernard Lewis and Bunfzie Ellis Churchill, *Islam, The Religion and the People*, 2.

¹⁶¹ Abraham Sarker, *Understanding My Muslim People*, 226.

beyond their comprehension.¹⁶² Christians should beware of how they live under grace without being conscious of their purity status and such grace is difficult for Muslims to comprehend. Christians, if not for any other but for the sake of Muslims who least understand the concept of grace can live in consciousness of purity, having Muslims in mind.¹⁶³

In the same vein, God also value how His worshippers appear before Him.¹⁶⁴ So, there are regulations of how people should approach God.¹⁶⁵ Though, the emphasis on some purity regulations may be lacking in the New Testament era, but, the need for purity always seems not to cease at any given time. Hence, Baptism as an initiation to join Christ through His church and a symbol of being cleansed through washing, necessitate the need for practicing purity.¹⁶⁶ While Baptism may serve as spiritual symbol of purity, physical cleanliness may improve believer's hygiene too which in turn can attract to Christ.¹⁶⁷

Christian Worldview on Purity

It is believed in Christianity that God is holy and therefore holiness proceeds from Him.¹⁶⁸ Consequently, all the ritual purifications are considered in Christianity as symbols.¹⁶⁹ Also, ritual purifications are reminder to Christians of God's holiness

¹⁶² James P. Dretke, *A Christian Approach to Muslims: Reflections from West Africa*, 112.

¹⁶³ Don Little, *Effective Discipling in Muslim Communities: Scripture, History, and Seasoned Practices*, 114.

¹⁶⁴ Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, 279.

¹⁶⁵ John E. Hartley, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 4:144.

¹⁶⁶ Williston Walker, *A History of the Christian Church*, 106.

¹⁶⁷ Leo R. Dolson /J. Robert Spangler, *Healthy, Happy, Holy*, 5,33 & 34.

¹⁶⁸ Elisha Uusimaki, "In Search of Virtue: Ancestral Inheritance in the Testament of Qahat (4Q542)," 17.

¹⁶⁹ Tokunboh Adeyemo, *Africa Bible Commentary*, 147.

and the terrible nature of sin.¹⁷⁰ Hence, the ritual purifications are designed to make God's people holy and gain access to God.¹⁷¹ But Christ is understood to be the perfect reality of all the symbolic ritual purification.¹⁷²

Source of Purity in Christianity

God is the source of purity to Christians because He alone can purify the soul.¹⁷³ It is also believed in Christianity that even His covenant relationship with Christians beginning from Israel is simply based on His merciful righteousness and steadfast love.¹⁷⁴ Therefore, even though the ritual purifications have some physical benefits, but the sanctification or purification of God's people depends only on God's merit.¹⁷⁵

More also, it is understood in Christianity that all the ritual purification regulations are symbolic of things to come which are all fulfilled in Christ.¹⁷⁶ So, observance of ritual purity regulations only helps to bring the believers to spiritual awareness and good sense of morality.¹⁷⁷ In other word, as believers participate in ritual purity, they are brought to the reality of their spiritual state and the need to live a holy life.

¹⁷⁰ William V. Crockett & James G. Sigounto, *Through No Fault of Their Own*, 14.

¹⁷¹ John E. Hartley, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 4:143.

¹⁷² D. A. Carson; R. T. France; J. A. Motyer & G. J. Wenham, *New Bible Commentary*, 136.

¹⁷³ Brian Ridolfi, "What Does The Bible Say About....." *The Ultimate Bible Answer.*, 847–48.

¹⁷⁴ Donald G. Bloesch, *The Christian Life and Salvation*, 33.

¹⁷⁵ Adolf Koberle DD, *The Quest for Holiness*, 194.

¹⁷⁶ William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary*, 2005.

¹⁷⁷ John E. Hartley, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 4:146.

Salvation and Purity Regulations

The purity regulations as stated in the Bible are not the source of salvation, yet, impurity of any kind will not be tolerated in God's presence.¹⁷⁸ Therefore, purity, cleanness and holiness are desirable attributes expected among God's covenantal people.¹⁷⁹ After all, Jesus was faithful to all the purity laws of Torah, though His application of them was in conflict with His contemporary religious leaders.¹⁸⁰

Moreover, the salvation of Christian is not tied to ritual purification, but knowledge can lead to belief;¹⁸¹ then, the adequate knowledge about ritual regulations are designed to lead to Christ, since He is the fulfillment of all of them.¹⁸² Also, the purification regulations of a leper is designed in such a way that the victim reunification with his or her family becomes like recovering from death to life; having died socially in the first place.¹⁸³ It is like the victim has been saved from death and brought back to life.

Therefore, in Christianity, salvation is associated with being healed from bodily diseases in the New Testament of the Bible.¹⁸⁴ In fact, the same Greek word "sozen" (to save) is used for Jesus act of healing the blind man and the leper of Mark 10: 52 and Luke 17: 19 respectively.¹⁸⁵ Hence, just the way the uncleanness or

¹⁷⁸ Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, 279.

¹⁷⁹ Elisha Uusimaki, "In Search of Virtue: Ancestral Inheritance in the Testament of Qahat (4Q542)," 20.

¹⁸⁰ Joshua Strahan, "Did Jesus Nullify the Torah and Declare Nonkosher Foods Clean? Towards a Better Reading of Mark 7:19a," 16.

¹⁸¹ Gregory Mellena, "When Are Thoughts Sinful?"

¹⁸² Francis D. Nichol, *The Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary, The Holy Bible with Exegetical and Expository Comment in Seven Volumes*, 1:635.

¹⁸³ Tokunboh Adeyemo, *Africa Bible Commentary*, 147.

¹⁸⁴ Donald G. Bloesch, *The Christian Life and Salvation*, 41.

¹⁸⁵ Donald G. Bloesch, 41.

defilement of a person can be purified,¹⁸⁶ Christ who the ritual regulations foreshadowed can purify or save from sin.¹⁸⁷

Purification in Christianity

Christians believe that the act of purifying starts from having a personal relationship with God and not just a mere outward cleanliness.¹⁸⁸ Nevertheless, approaching God requires cleanliness from His people.¹⁸⁹ In fact, impurity is used metaphorically to mean sin.¹⁹⁰ However, there are certain ritual purification processes for making purification or sanctification possible, so that approaching God without danger is ensured.¹⁹¹

The Benefits of Ritual Purification

It is quite obvious that the holiness of God's covenantal people is connected to the ceremonial laws that regulate their ritual purity, most especially in the first five books of the Bible.¹⁹² Apart from regulating purity, their daily activities are also regulated by the laws regarding ritual purification.¹⁹³ The ritual purification also protects¹⁹⁴ the people of God from possible contagious diseases, especially in the time

¹⁸⁶ D. A. Carson; R. T. France; J. A. Motyer & G. J. Wenham, *New Bible Commentary*, 136.

¹⁸⁷ Richard R. Melick, Jr, *The New American Commentary: Philippians, Colossians, Philemon*, 32:2462.

¹⁸⁸ Abraham Sarker, *Understanding My Muslim People*, 180.

¹⁸⁹ Andrew E & John H, *A Survey of the Old Testament*, 130.

¹⁹⁰ John E. Hartley, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 4:14.

¹⁹¹ Stanley N. Cundry, *Five Views on Sanctification*, 31.

¹⁹² Stanley N. Cundry, 62.

¹⁹³ Andrew E & John H, *A Survey of the Old Testament*, 131.

¹⁹⁴ Francis D. Nichol, *The Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary, The Holy Bible with Exegetical and Expository Comment in Seven Volumes*, 1:753.

when there was no knowledge of the modern medical ideas.¹⁹⁵ It aids in counteracting the outbreak of epidemics.¹⁹⁶ The ritual laws help in appreciating and acknowledging the works of Christ since they all point to Him.¹⁹⁷

Missiological Implications of Muslims' Purity

The concept of being ritually pure or impure dominates the Bible in one way or the other.¹⁹⁸ But the idea that many Christians in the twenty-first century no longer recognize the importance of ritual purity cannot be gainsaid, hence they can eat, touch, and drink anything.¹⁹⁹ Even Muslims seem confused at the Christians supposed freedom of not attaching any importance to ritual purity.²⁰⁰ Meanwhile, a Muslim will try to maintain the ritual purity in all what he or she does in order to avoid impurity which can necessitate purification process.²⁰¹

In addition, most absorbing debates in Islamic theology, rationality and legal reasoning are essentially on ritual laws.²⁰² Hence, Maghen Ze'ev in the article *Virtues of the Flesh: Passion and Purity in Early Islamic Jurisprudence*, asserted that "No other religion has given such importance to prescribed purity as Islam". Therefore, approaching Muslims then requires a clear understanding of purity in Islam which

¹⁹⁵ Tanak: *A New Translation of the Holy Scripture According to the Traditional Hebrew Text*, 171.

¹⁹⁶ Leo R. Dolson /J. Robert Spangler, *Healthy, Happy, Holy*, 33.

¹⁹⁷ William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary*, 2003.

¹⁹⁸ Thomas McElwain, "Islam in the Bible."

¹⁹⁹ Bernard Lewis and Bunfzie Ellis Churchill, *Islam, The Religion and the People*, 2.

²⁰⁰ James P. Dretke, *A Christian Approach to Muslims: Reflections from West Africa*, 99.

²⁰¹ Sayyid Ali Hussaini Sistani, "Taharat & Najasat: Ritual Purity & Impurity."

²⁰² Mustafa Abdul Rahman, "Ritual and Rationality in Islam: A Case Study on Nail Polish," 240-84.

comprises but not limited to how to maintain ritual purity and avoidance of contacting ritual impurity.

Understanding Purity in Islam

First of all, Muslims are aware of the prohibition regarding unclean meats of which pork is one.²⁰³ Also, apart from the Islamic great importance attached to spirituality and spiritual health, physical health is emphasized through the ritual purification. Hence, the Muslims derive meaning in practicing the ritual purifications prescribed in Islam.²⁰⁴ This is simply because Muslims believe that being ritually clean makes prayer and other deeds of faith acceptable before God.²⁰⁵

Moreover, Muslims consider everything ritually pure until it comes to their knowledge that opposite is the case. Here, it means that Muslims regard everything as ritually pure until they are intimated otherwise.²⁰⁶ Purity law in Islam is also linked to heterosexual identity.²⁰⁷ However, certain impurities are classified as major impurities than the other. For instance, a woman in her customary uncleanness (Qur'an 2:222), woman urine and a defilement caused by the licking of dog is a major impurity, but the urine of a child is considered a minor impurity.²⁰⁸

Therefore, in Islam, outward cleanness is of high value. Certain acts can render cleansing ritual of prayer ineffective. The following acts can make the victim's

²⁰³ Ibrahim Ahmad Abdulkadir, "Halal Concept," 97–104.

²⁰⁴ Jadidi, Ali; Khatiban, Mahnat; Oshvandi, Khodayar; Khodavesi, Masoud; Maghsoudi, Zahra; Razavi, Mohammadreza., "Transcendence, The Most Important Spiritual Need of Muslim Older Adult: A Content Analysis Study.," 1529–47.

²⁰⁵ Heidari M; Borujeni M G; Abyaneh S K; Rezaei P, "The Effect of Spiritual Care on Perceived Stress and Mental Health among the Elderlies Living in Nursing Home.," 1328–39.

²⁰⁶ Sayyid Ali Hussaini Sistani, "Taharat & Najasat: Ritual Purity & Impurity."

²⁰⁷ Anteby-Yemini, Lisa, "Negotiating Gender and Religion: Comparative Perspectives from Judaism and Islam," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion (Indiana University)* 39, no. 2 (2023): 187–90.

²⁰⁸ Sayyid Ali Hussaini Sistani, "Taharat & Najasat: Ritual Purity & Impurity."

prayer ritually ineffective — flow of blood, semen emission, vomiting, fallen asleep while praying and touching of one’s genitalia.²⁰⁹ If any of these should happen during purification for prayer, the ablution for prayer will be repeated.²¹⁰

Comparison: Islam versus Christianity

Both Islam and Christianity have the idea of purity and all the ritual around it. In fact, all the rituals of purification and regulations on purity in Islam are found in full or in allusion in the Bible.²¹¹

Islam Common Ground with Christianity

Islam and Christianity essentially trace their root to Abraham.²¹² Also, all the four purity practices in Islam are found in the Bible. Circumcision, ritually pure meats and diets, giving of alms, ablution are four major purity practices in Islam.²¹³ They all have their root in the Bible. Though, there may be a little variation in the kind of ritual purification in Islam and Christianity, but the description of purity in the Bible is almost identical with that of Islam.²¹⁴ For example foot washing is practiced in Christianity, likewise in Islam though in a specific manner in Islam.²¹⁵

²⁰⁹ Abraham Sarker, *Understanding My Muslim People*, 177.

²¹⁰ Abraham Sarker, 177.

²¹¹ Thomas McElwain, “Islam in the Bible.”

²¹² Bernard Lewis and Bunfzie Ellis Churchill, *Islam, The Religion and the People*, 2.

²¹³ Thomas McElwain, “Islam in the Bible.”

²¹⁴ Thomas McElwain.

²¹⁵ Thomas McElwain.

Differences

Muslims understand purification ritual as what to practice to win the favor of God, hence, it is done as a duty owe God.²¹⁶ Therefore, purification ritual is practiced on a specified basis which makes attaining holiness so hard.²¹⁷ So in a way, Islam seems to promote a kind of righteousness by work.²¹⁸ In contrast, majority of Christians believe that ritual purification laws are no longer to be regarded again, since Christ is the fulfillment of all the ritual regulations.²¹⁹

However, Seventh-day Adventist Church as one of the Christian churches holds some purification rituals with high esteem. Some rituals still being practiced among the Seventh-day Adventist Church are baptism, foot washing, and abstinence from unclean animals and alcohol as stated in the book of Leviticus. For instance, Baptism apart from its significance as taught by Seventh-day Adventist Church is also an indication of willingness to identify with the church and it symbolizes cleansing from one's sin.²²⁰

More also, the Seventh-day Adventist Church believes in practicing all the biblical principles that will improve their health and help in maintaining purity in Christ's way.²²¹ Hence foot washing as an emblem of humility and cleansing is practiced as one of their ordinances.²²² They also abstain from alcohol and the eating

²¹⁶ Abraham Sarker, *Understanding My Muslim People*, 180.

²¹⁷ Maghen Ze'ev, *Virtues of the Flesh-Passion and Purity in Early Islamic Jurisprudence*, 30.

²¹⁸ James P. Eckman, *Exploring Church History (A Guide to History, World Religions and Ethics)*, 179.

²¹⁹ D. A. Carson; R. T. France; J. A. Motyer & G. J. Wenham, *New Bible Commentary*, 137.

²²⁰ Raoul Dederen (Editor), *Handbook of Seventh-Day Adventist Theology*, 582–84.

²²¹ The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Church, *Seventh-Day Adventist Manual*, 163.

²²² Raoul Dederen (Editor), *Handbook of Seventh-Day Adventist Theology*, 582.

of unclean meats not as a means of salvation but rather as a way of maintaining their health.²²³ In fact, they hold that practicing such things is doing God's will since it is biblical.²²⁴

Moreover, the view of nullification of ritual purifications has been buttressed by using some biblical passages, such as Mark 7:19 (b)²²⁵ and Pauline text like Colossians 2: 16-17.²²⁶ In fact, John E. Hartley even opined that "the New Testament abolishes the laws of ritual purity."²²⁷ However, the use of Mark 7:19 to advocate for nullification of ritual purity especially in distinguishing clean and unclean animals is considered as "misreading" of Scripture by Joshua Strahan.²²⁸ This assertion is important because to him, Jesus was faithful to the Torah.²²⁹

In addition, the syntactical literal context and the socio-cultural situation of this passage indicates that Jesus never break the dietary rules.²³⁰ Also, Pauline texts used in favor of ritual purity nullification can actually be understood consistently against such stand.²³¹ However, Christians believe they are saved by grace through Christ and so keeping ritual purification law is considered unnecessary.²³² The

²²³ The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Church, *Seventh-Day Adventist Manual*, 163.

²²⁴ Raoul Dederen (Editor), *Handbook of Seventh-Day Adventist Theology*, 679.

²²⁵ Joshua Strahan, "Did Jesus Nullify the Torah and Declare Nonkosher Foods Clean? Towards a Better Reading of Mark 7:19a," 3.

²²⁶ Richard R. Melick, Jr, *The New American Commentary: Philippians, Colossians, Philemon*, 32:249–67.

²²⁷ John E. Hartley, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 4:146.

²²⁸ Joshua Strahan, "Did Jesus Nullify the Torah and Declare Nonkosher Foods Clean? Towards a Better Reading of Mark 7:19a," 15.

²²⁹ Joshua Strahan, 15.

²³⁰ Joshua Strahan, 15.

²³¹ Thomas McElwain, "Islam in the Bible."

²³² Edward E. Hindson & Woodrow Micheal Knoll--General Editors, *The KJV Parallel Bible Commentary*, 2462.

concept of grace without work is difficult for Muslims to comprehend,²³³ therefore, they maintain their rigorous purification rites.²³⁴

Table 2. Some Clean Animals in Christianity and Islam

Christianity	Islam
Goat	Goat
Sheep	Sheep
Cow	Cow
Deer	Deer
Fish (with fins and scales)	Fish
Locust	Camel and Zebra
Clean animals whose blood is drained	Clean animals whose blood is drained

Note: all the animals considered clean and good for consumption in the Christian Bible - Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14 are also regarded as clean and good for food in Islam. Only camel and zebra are considered clean and good for food in Islam but considered unclean and so not meant for food in the Bible.²³⁵

Table 3. Unclean Animals in Christianity and Islam

Unclean Animals in Christianity	Unclean Animals in Islam
Pigs	Pigs
Lion	Lion
Tigers	Tiger
Leopards	Leopards
Dogs	Dogs
Wolves	Wolves
Hyena	Hyena
Rodents	Rodents
Reptiles	Reptiles
Zebra	-
Camel	-
Owl	Owl
Vulture	Vulture
Falcon	Falcon
Animal who died of itself	Animal who died of itself
Blood	Blood
Eagle	Eagle

²³³ Abraham Sarker, *Understanding My Muslim People*, 226.

²³⁴ Maghen Ze'ev, *Virtues of the Flesh-Passion and Purity in Early Islamic Jurisprudence*, 30.

²³⁵ Thomas McElwain, "Islam in the Bible."

Note: almost all the animals the Bible identified as unclean and so not good for food for Christians are also termed unclean in Islam with the exception of zebra and camel.²³⁶ However, Muslims are permitted to eat even the unclean animals if occasion necessitate it- An-Nahl 115-120.

Table 4. What causes uncleanness in Christianity and Islam

Christianity	Islam
Animal carcasses (Leviticus 11)	Urine of a baby
Child birth blood (Leviticus 12)	Hand and other things licked by dog
Woman customary monthly impurity (Leviticus 15)	Woman in their customary impurity (Al-Baqarah 222)
Abnormal blood discharge other than the monthly one (Leviticus 15)	
Semen (Leviticus 15)	Semen (Al-Maidah 6)

Note: Even though all the above stated items can cause uncleanness, but the victim becomes clean as he or she bathes. However, even the sand can be used for cleanness in Islam.²³⁷

Missiological Implications of Purity in Clean and Unclean Meats

Muslims are conscious of ritual purity and so they abstain from meats of some animals like pig and dog that are considered unclean. The Bible too considered these animals and some many others unclean and so they are not suitable for food. This idea of abstinence from unclean animals can be an avenue for Christians to dialogue with Muslims. This kind of dialogue can only be possible, if Christian will be willing to abstain from such unclean food. After all, the Bible also considered them impure and unsuitable for consumption.²³⁸

²³⁶ Bruce L. Bauer (Editor), *Faith Development in Context: Presenting Christ in Creative Ways*, 291.

²³⁷ Sayyid Ali Hussaini Sistani, "Taharat & Najasat: Ritual Purity & Impurity."

²³⁸ Maghen Ze'ev, *Virtues of the Flesh-Passion and Purity in Early Islamic Jurisprudence*, 12.

More also, Muslims attached great importance to purity both morally and physically and so they have regulations for almost every of their daily activity all to maintain purity.²³⁹ Similarly, moral purity and physical purity were essentially the practice of ancient Israel, where Christianity emanates from.²⁴⁰ Therefore, Christians should also emphasize the need for both moral and physical purity, since it is part of their history. The emphasis on purity by Christians needs to include avoidance of things that defile in their daily activity, if any tangible interaction must be made with Muslims.

In addition, cleanliness is emphasized in the Bible and so it needs to be emphasized, if not for anything but for physical purity of Christians. A step like this can engender a closer and redemptive relationship with Muslim who practice ritual washing called ablution after a contact with semen, unclean animals and blood.²⁴¹ In Christianity, Baptism is pointed out as not just the cleansing of the body, but, rather a cleansing from sin defilement which is more or less an ablution of the whole body²⁴² and not just a part of it. Hence, there is a need for Christians to emphasize the significance of cleansing which can enhance a better relationship with Muslims.

Dialogue with Muslim on Purity

Islam has some commonality with Christianity on purity, so, dialoguing with them becomes a necessity.²⁴³ Also, the Bible remains the bedrock of Christianity²⁴⁴

²³⁹ Maghen Ze'ev, 13.

²⁴⁰ John E. Hartley, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 4:14.

²⁴¹ Abraham Sarker, *Understanding My Muslim People*, 176.

²⁴² Thomas McElwain, "Islam in the Bible."

²⁴³ Gorden R. Doss, *Introduction to Adventist Mission*, 286.

²⁴⁴ Harry Reid, *Reformation: The Dangerous Birth of the Modern World* (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 2010), 57.

and in it purity are well specified. The purity described in the Bible is closer to the kind of purity the Muslims practice. Therefore, to engage Muslim in dialogue becomes so important because the Muslims perception of purity becomes an avenue for Christians to dialogue with them. After all tahara — purity is a central aspect of Islamic faith.²⁴⁵ Besides Muslims and Christians each other religious claims.²⁴⁶

Basis of Dialogue

A Muslim always tries to maintain the principle of purity by all means.²⁴⁷ The concept of purity then becomes a good basis for dialoguing with a Muslim.²⁴⁸ Also, the commonality of the same Abrahamic root could as well be used as a basis of dialogue with Muslim. In fact, Christians and Jews are regarded as bearers of Abraham's religion and as a result they are called the "people of the book" by the Muslims.²⁴⁹ The concept of God's holiness and His worshippers are another major basis of dialoguing with Muslim on purity.²⁵⁰ After all, only God is pure and He alone can purify His worshippers.²⁵¹

Summary

The purification rituals were practiced in the Bible time. So the Jews are quite familiar with all the ritual of purification of their time.²⁵² Though, purification ritual

²⁴⁵ Thomas McElwain, "Islam in the Bible."

²⁴⁶ Bernard Lewis and Bunfzie Ellis Churchill, *Islam, The Religion and the People*, 1.

²⁴⁷ Sayyid Ali Hussaini Sistani, "Taharat & Najasat: Ritual Purity & Impurity."

²⁴⁸ Thomas McElwain, "Islam in the Bible."

²⁴⁹ Jerry Rassamni, *From Jihad to Jesus*, 70.

²⁵⁰ Fred H. Wight, *Manners and Customs of Bible Lands*, 109.

²⁵¹ Baba Shah, *What Does the Holy Qur'an Say about the Descent of Isa Al-Masih?*, n.d., 847–48.

²⁵² Fred H. Wight, *Manners and Customs of Bible Lands*, 109.

assumes some modifications,²⁵³ but it was in practice even in the early church. It is observed that Jesus' application of some of the ritual laws were understood by some to mean nullification, but from all indications, Jesus did not nullify the ritual purification laws in the Torah.²⁵⁴ Also, the ritual purification regulations are symbolic and therefore met their fulfillment in Christ.²⁵⁵

Moreover, the fact that the ritual purity met its fulfillment in Christ has been understood for nullification of such ritual purity by many. Even some Pauline texts have been used to buttress such assumption. However, the Pauline passages have been observed that they could be used to basically explain that the ritual purity is perpetual.²⁵⁶ Besides, the benefits the ritual purity provide are timeless.²⁵⁷

More also, all the ritual purification practices or regulations in Islam have their root in the Bible with just a little variation here and there.²⁵⁸ Majority of Christian seem to assume that ritual purity is no longer needed after the death and resurrection of Christ.²⁵⁹ They felt this is not needed under the provision of grace. But Muslims practice purity ritual with all seriousness.²⁶⁰ So, they find it difficult to understand the Christians unbridled freedom²⁶¹ regarding purity ritual and their concept of grace.

²⁵³ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission.*, 56.

²⁵⁴ Joshua Strahan, "Did Jesus Nullify the Torah and Declare Nonkosher Foods Clean? Towards a Better Reading of Mark 7:19a," 16.

²⁵⁵ D. A. Carson; R. T. France; J. A. Motyer & G. J. Wenham, *New Bible Commentary*, 137.

²⁵⁶ Thomas McElwain, "Islam in the Bible."

²⁵⁷ Leo R. Dolson /J. Robert Spangler, *Healthy, Happy, Holy*, 5.

²⁵⁸ Thomas McElwain, "Islam in the Bible."

²⁵⁹ Richard R. Melick, Jr, *The New American Commentary: Philippians, Colossians, Philemon*, 32:2462.

²⁶⁰ Abraham Sarker, *Understanding My Muslim People*, 176.

²⁶¹ James P. Dretke, *A Christian Approach to Muslims: Reflections from West Africa*, 99.

In contrast to many other Christians, Seventh-day Adventist Church upholds all the Bible principles regarding ritual laws and insists they have profound benefits.²⁶² All what the Bible enjoins the believers to abstain from are being taught in Seventh-day Adventist Church that her members should abstain from them. In fact, it stands as one of her fundamental beliefs which is titled Christian Behavior.²⁶³

²⁶² Raoul Dederen (Editor), *Handbook of Seventh-Day Adventist Theology*, 773.

²⁶³ The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Church, *Seventh-Day Adventist Manual*, 163.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

Research Setting

This research work addresses how the perception of purity in Islam has affected the mission of the church in Ijebu-Ode. The problem it address is the difference in purity perception among the two religions under consideration. This chapter will present the sociological, physical, historical and religious condition of Ijebu-Ode metropolis.

The Geographical Location of Ijebu-Ode

The city of Ijebu-Ode is located on longitude $3^{\circ}52^1$ E to $3^{\circ}57^1$ and latitude $6^{\circ}49^1$ N to $6^{\circ}53^1$ N.¹ It is situated in the midst of Ijebu land which occupies the south-central part of the Western Nigeria.² However, the Western Nigeria is refers to as South-West Geopolitical Zone in the annals of Nigeria political regions. Ijebu-Ode covers an area of 114 km².³ It will take a two hours journey by road which 102km to travel from Lagos to Ijebu-Ode through Benin-Sagamu Express road.⁴ Ijebu-Ode is

¹ Researchgate.net/figure, *Location Map of Ijebu-Ode*, n.d., n.d., accessed October 31, 2024.

² Kayode Olusola & Funmilola Oyesiku, "The Traditional Musical Instruments of the Egbe People of Ijebu-Ode: The Ulale Ensemble."

³ Researchgate.net/figure, "Location Map of Ijebu-Ode."

⁴ google.com/search, *Distance between Ijebu-Ode and Lagos*, n.d., n.d., accessed October 31, 2024.

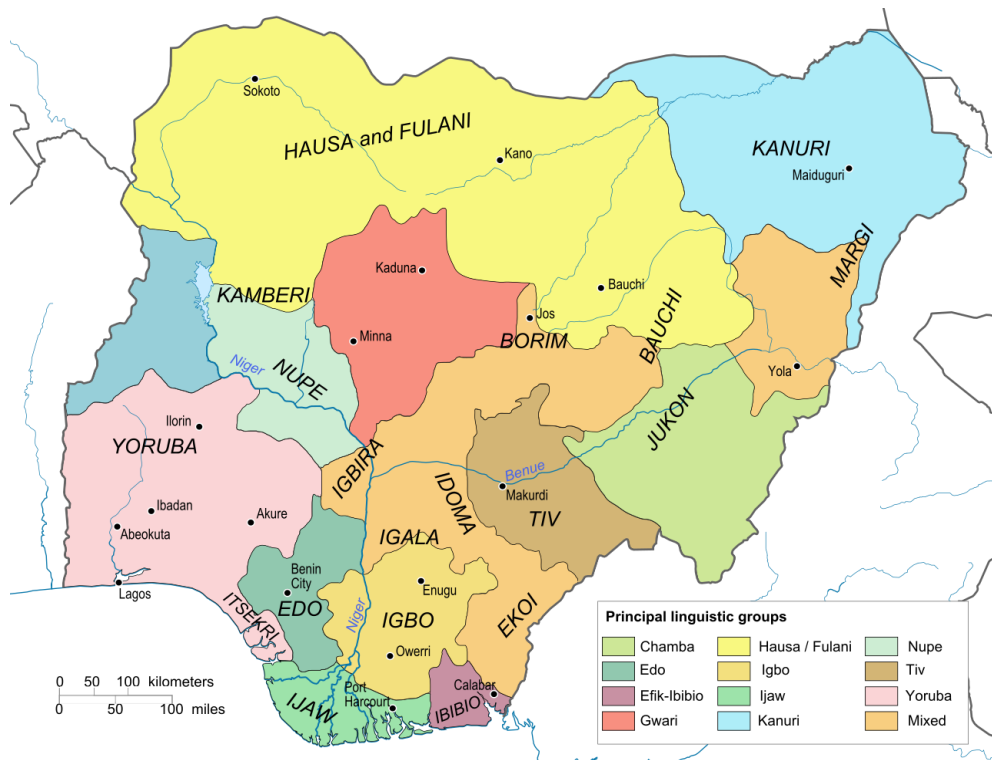


Figure 2. Map of Nigeria Showing Its Major Tribes

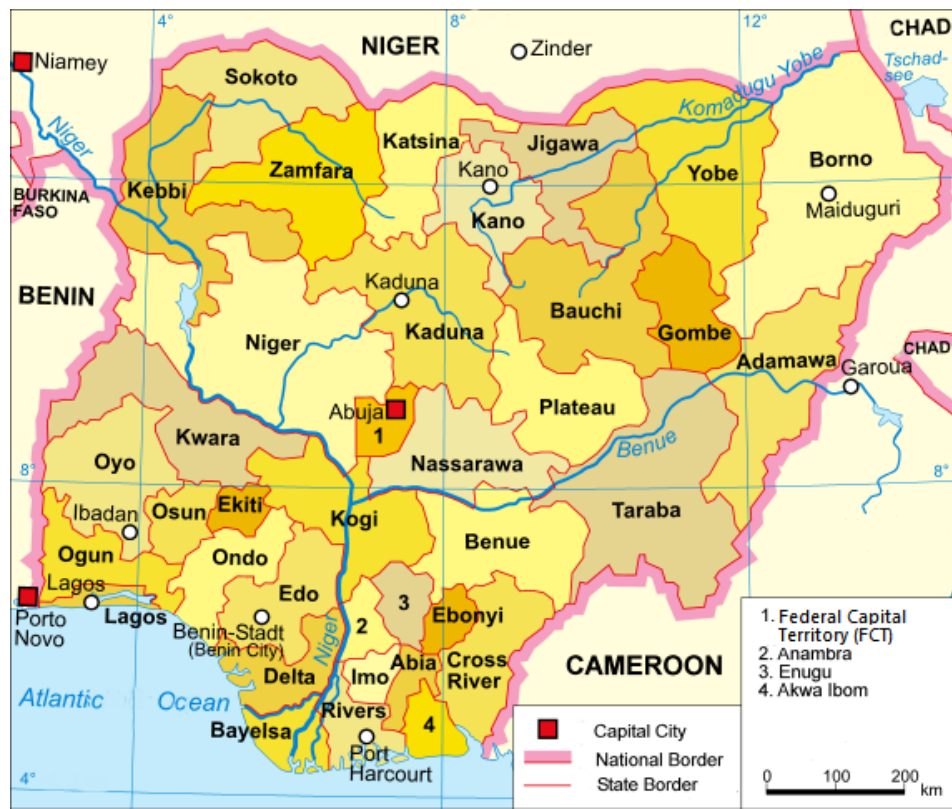


Figure 3. Map of Nigeria showing its political states

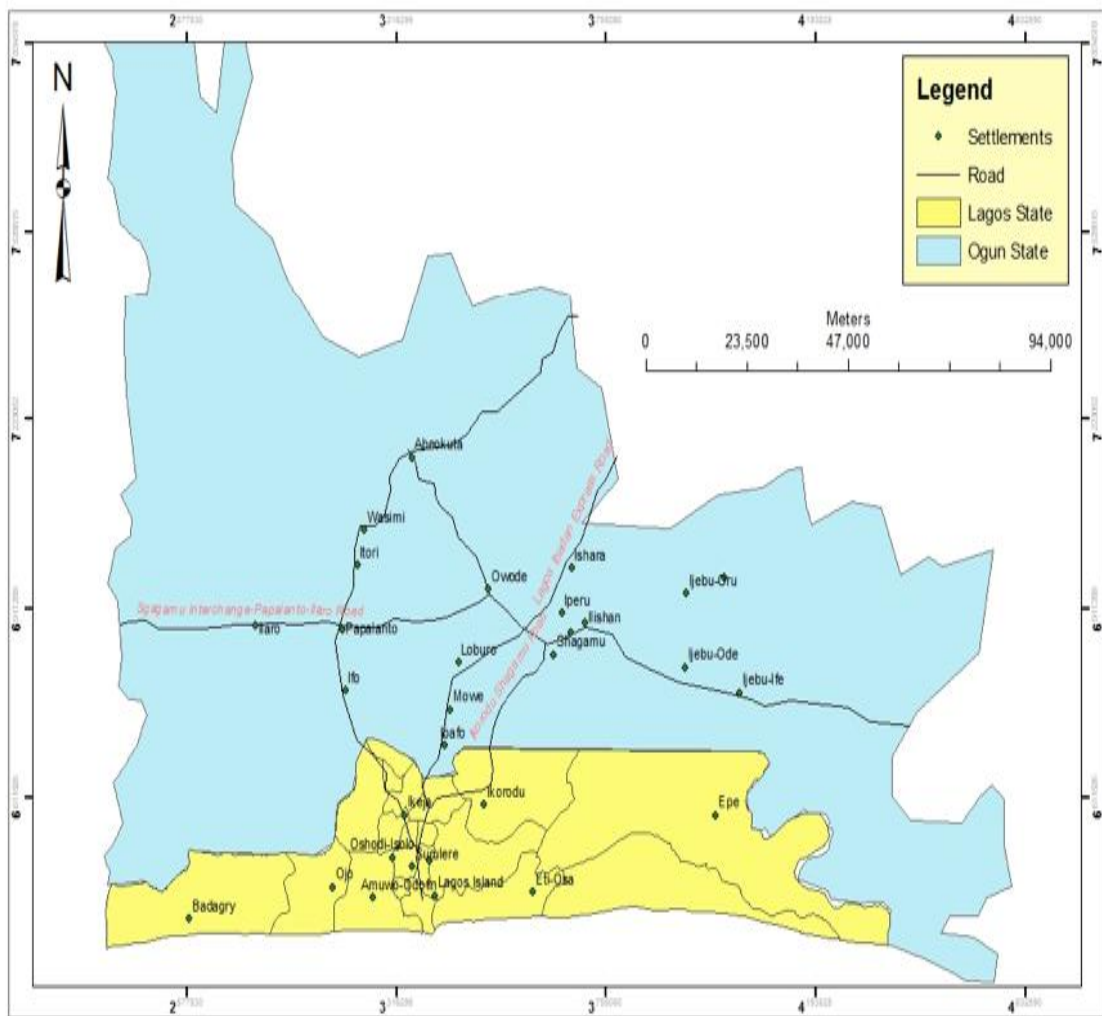


Figure 4. Map of Ogun State showing some of its major towns

Ijebu-Ode and Its People

Ijebu-Ode is one of the prominent Yoruba cities. Yoruba are groups of people who now majorly occupy the South-Western region of Nigeria⁶ a West African country which is naturally a rain forest zone.⁷ The Yoruba people are sub-divided into various dialectical groups which form her tribal divisions.⁸ Even though they are related in various forms and most especially in their history, since they all trace their

⁶ Daryll Forde, *The Yoruba Speaking Peoples of South-Western Nigeria*, 1.

⁷ Lucy Mair, *African Societies* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 152.

⁸ Daryll Forde, *The Yoruba Speaking Peoples of South-Western Nigeria*, 5.

origin to Ile-Ife.⁹ Some of the Yoruba sub-tribal groups are Oyo, Ijebu, Yagba, Jekiri, Okun, Ekiti, Ife, Ijesha, Akoko, Owo, Ondo, Igbomina and Egba.¹⁰

Moreover, Ijebu people are one of the Yoruba sub-tribal groups.¹¹ The Ijebu are situated in what is now known as Ogun State and Epe and Ikorodu Divisions of Lagos State, Nigeria.¹² Ijebu-Ode is a traditional as well as divisional headquarters of the Ijebu people with a well organized government, even prior to the advent of the British people to Nigeria.¹³ So, Ijebu-Ode is one of the pre-British large settlements Yoruba people are known for, since they are the most urbanized people of Africa.¹⁴ Presently, Ijebu-Ode has a growing population of roughly 620,000 people.¹⁵ Its continuous growth in population is owing to its close proximity to Lagos.¹⁶

The History of Ijebu-Ode

The founders of Ijebu-Ode are majorly migrants from Ife and Waddai in Sudan.¹⁷ But, Obanta is believed to be the progenitor of Ijebu people.¹⁸ However, Olu-Iwa from Waddai who was accompanied by Ajebu and Olode while he was

⁹ J. D. Fage & R. A. Oliver, *Papers in African Prehistory*, 303.

¹⁰ Daryll Forde, *The Yoruba Speaking Peoples of South-Western Nigeria*, 5.

¹¹ Ololade M. Ekundayo, "On the Origin History of Ijebu," *Academia.Edu*, n.d.

¹² Daryll Forde, *The Yoruba Speaking Peoples of South-Western Nigeria*, 48.

¹³ Jadesola Taiwo Babalola, "Historical Questions on Identity of Ijebu People in Yoruba Nation: Reconstructing Awujale Claim," n.d.

¹⁴ Daryll Forde, *The Yoruba Speaking Peoples of South-Western Nigeria*, 15.

¹⁵ Oladiti A. A., "Ijebu-Ode's Ojude Oba Festival: Cultural and Spiritual."

¹⁶ Oladiti A. A.

¹⁷ Tunde Oduwobi, "Oral Historical Traditions and Political Integration in Ijebu" (*academia.edu*, n.d.).

¹⁸ Kayode Olusola & Funmilola Oyesiku, "The Traditional Musical Instruments of the Egbe People of Ijebu-Ode: The Ulale Ensemble."

coming to Ijebu-Ode from Ife are recognized as the earlier settlers.¹⁹ Ajebu and Olode are Ife indigene. In fact, the name Ijebu-Ode was a coinage from Ajebu and Olode. Meanwhile, the earliest settlers were the aborigines known as Idoko.²⁰ Therefore from all indication various migrants groups have dominated what is now known as Ijebu land.

More also, Obanta, who is also known as Ogboroganluda took over Ijebu land in the fifteenth century and since became its overlord.²¹ Obanta was a powerful Ife prince and so he became the most revered founder of Ijebu kingdom with its headquarters at Ijebu-Ode.²² Hence, just like every other Yoruba sub-tribal groups, Ijebu also trace their ancestry to Ife.²³ Therefore, Ijebu people are members of Yoruba nation.²⁴ And so, Ijebu-Ode the traditional headquarters of Ijebu land as one of the Yoruba cities indicates semblance with other Yoruba people in its social-political structures.²⁵

The Social-Political Structures of Ijebu-Ode

Ijebu-Ode is headed by Awujale, the title of Obanta as the traditional ruler of the town and since the succeeding kings are addressed as Awujale.²⁶ The governance of Ijebu-Ode is actually the function of Awujale and the council of Osugbo which is

¹⁹ Tunde Oduwobi, "Oral Historical Traditions and Political Integration in Ijebu."

²⁰ Ololade M. Ekundayo, "On the Origin History of Ijebu."

²¹ Jadesola Taiwo Babalola, "Historical Questions on Identity of Ijebu People in Yoruba Nation: Reconstructing Awujale Claim."

²² Tunde Oduwobi, "Oral Historical Traditions and Political Integration in Ijebu."

²³ Daryll Forde, *The Yoruba Speaking Peoples of South-Western Nigeria*, 35.

²⁴ Jadesola Taiwo Babalola, "Historical Questions on Identity of Ijebu People in Yoruba Nation: Reconstructing Awujale Claim."

²⁵ James L. Gibbs, Jr., *Peoples of Africa*, 547.

²⁶ Daryll Forde, *The Yoruba Speaking Peoples of South-Western Nigeria*, 22.

known as Ogboni in many other parts of Yoruba land.²⁷ However, Awujale is assisted by Olisa, and ranks of importance like Lamuren and other members of the community with honorary title.²⁸ The Lamuren are advisers of Awujale.

Similarly, Ijebu-Ode people are known for trading as the city can even boast of large markets which are both modern and traditional.²⁹ And just like every other Yoruba town predating the British government, Ijebu-Ode has few public buildings apart from shrine and the Iledi, the Osugbo meeting house.³⁰ The fact that a society functions as a powerful fusion of physical and moral authority,³¹ makes the Osugbo a political association³² to handle all judicial matters.³³ However, the Ijebu-Ode of twenty-first century now boast of many public buildings such as police station, law court, hospitals, churches and mosques.

In addition, Ijebu-Ode like every other Ijebu town and village is traditionally structured into extended family quarter called Itun which is headed by Oloritun.³⁴ The people of the community are grouped based on their age sect known as Regberegbe and each sect is given a name even by the Awujale.³⁵ And in each family obedience and respect to the senior are enjoined as a kind of family norm.³⁶

²⁷ Jadesola Taiwo Babalola, "Historical Questions on Identity of Ijebu People in Yoruba Nation: Reconstructing Awujale Claim."

²⁸ Daryll Forde, *The Yoruba Speaking Peoples of South-Western Nigeria*, 22.

²⁹ James L. Gibbs, Jr., *Peoples of Africa*, 558.

³⁰ James L. Gibbs, Jr., 555.

³¹ Emile Durkhem, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (New York: The Free Press, 1967), 123.

³² James L. Gibbs, Jr., *Peoples of Africa*, 555.

³³ Daryll Forde, *The Yoruba Speaking Peoples of South-Western Nigeria*, 52.

³⁴ Daryll Forde, 51.

³⁵ Daryll Forde, 52.

³⁶ Lucy Mair, *African Societies*, 153.

Furthermore, Ijebu people are highly social. For instance, Ojude Oba festival is a social-religious festival that is celebrated by the illustrious and renowned sons and daughters of Ijebu.³⁷ It is usually celebrated with pomp and pageantry as many Ijebu indigenes from every work of life come around for this annual celebration. It is a time for Ijebu-Ode indigenes to honor their king.³⁸ It is celebrated the second day of the Muslim Id'el Fitr festival.³⁹

The Religious Interactions in Ijebu-Ode

Ijebu-Ode traced its history to Ife,⁴⁰ the cradle of Yoruba people. Ife is known to be the center of Yoruba religious nature with its 401 gods.⁴¹ Even though, Ebibi or Obinrin Ojowu, Agemo and Eluku are ritualistic festivals peculiar to Ijebu in general and to Ijebu-Ode in particular,⁴² but most of the 401 gods are still being worshipped in one way or the other in Ijebu-Ode.⁴³ Emblems of these gods can even be seen in various parts of the city.

More also, some restrictions on people are also being observed when some ritualistic festivals are celebrated. For instance, it is forbidden for a woman to see Agemo and so during this festival in every part of Ijebu land in the month of July, women are restricted in movement in certain areas. This restriction is still observed

³⁷ Oladiti A. A, "Ijebu-Ode's Ojude Oba Festival: Cultural and Spiritual."

³⁸ Awesu Pelumi, "The History of Ijebu People."

³⁹ Awesu Pelumi.

⁴⁰ Jadesola Taiwo Babalola, "Historical Questions on Identity of Ijebu People in Yoruba Nation: Reconstructing Awujale Claim."

⁴¹ J. D. Fage & R. A. Oliver, *Papers in African Prehistory*, 304.

⁴² Ololade M. Ekundayo, "On the Origin History of Ijebu."

⁴³ J. D. Fage & R. A. Oliver, *Papers in African Prehistory*, 304.

today all over Ijebu land. In fact, a careful announcement is always made all to ensure Ijebu residence abide by this custom.⁴⁴

Moreover, Christianity did not reach Ijebu-Ode until the last decade of the 19th century.⁴⁵ Meanwhile, Islam has gained a foothold, even prior to 1850s.⁴⁶ The Ijebu-Ode of 21st century is now known for various Christian churches, Mosques and even Iledi (meeting house of African Traditional Religion). In fact, some Christian churches have been in Ijebu-Ode for more than a century now. One of such churches is Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Seventh-day Adventist Church, Ijebu-Ode

The Seventh-day Adventist Church reached Nigeria through the missionary effort of Elder D. C. Babcock in 1914.⁴⁷ His mission post was Erunmu, a town in the present day Oyo State. The following year-1915 he moved further inland, precisely to Sao, a town 150 km away from Erunmu. Elder D. C. Babcock even establish a mission station at Sao. He establish a school at Sao in 1916 and this school became the first Adventist school in Nigeria.⁴⁸

Moreover, he got an invitation to come to Ipoti-Ekiti to preach the Advent message while he was still at Sao. Ipoti is about 138km away from Sao. Meanwhile the Advent message continued to gain more followers in Erunmu and Sao as many more also embrace the message at Ipoti. Unfortunately, Elder D. C. Babcock became

⁴⁴ Awesu Pelumi, "The History of Ijebu People."

⁴⁵ James L. Gibbs, Jr., *Peoples of Africa*, 553.

⁴⁶ James L. Gibbs, Jr., 553.

⁴⁷ David O. Babalola, *On Becoming a Conference: The Story of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Yorubaland 1914-2002* (Ibadan: OSB Design, 2006), 14.

⁴⁸ D.T. Agboola, *Seventh-Day Adventist History in West Africa 1888-1988* (Ibadan: Lasob Productions, 2003), 26.

so sick in 1919 that he has to leave Sao and so he left the work to his assistant- E Ashton, as he departed the country to attend to his failing health.⁴⁹

Meanwhile, the people continue to accept the Advent message and so by 1933 Seventh-day Adventist reached Ijebu-Ode through the effort of Pastor J. M. A. Adeoye. Mr Johnson Adekoya Efuntade was praying to God for guidance regarding the true Church of God. This he did because his father was a Muslim of Ahmaddiyya sect, while the mother was a Christian, a member of Aladura Church.

Providentially, Mr Adekoya Efuntade was praying to God for guidance in 1933 and Pastor J. M. A. Adeoye of Seventh-day Adventist Church came to Ijebu-Ode the following day to conduct Bible study with him. The Bible study of that day that was conducted at 57, Fidipote Street, Ita-Alapo, Ijebu-Ode gave rise to S. D. A Church, Ijebu-Ode. This is how Seventh-day Adventist Church reached Ijebu-Ode.

Moreover, needless to say that Mr Adekoya Efuntade became the first convert and many more joined him too. The following year-1934, these new believers in company of their pastor had their first harvest thanksgiving. Some of the notable members are John Oba-Nle Aro and the Okulaja families. The pastor organized evening school for the children in his environ and not less than forty of them were his students. The progress was so rapid that the then Awujale of Ijebu land, Oba Gbelegbuwa II and Chief (Pa) Adebowale promised them a piece of land for their church and school building.

In addition, shortly after this, Pastor J. M. A. Adeoye was transferred to another place without a replacement. This disrupted the progress of the new growing congregation, and so the members scattered. Only Mr Adekoya Efuntade remained. He too left Ijebu-Ode to Ibadan in 1936 and he lived there till 1980. The church started

⁴⁹ D.T. Agboola, 28.

again in Ijebu-Ode in 1968 through the missionary activities of teachers and students of Adventist College of West Africa at Ilishan-Remo which is now Babcock University.⁵⁰

Research Approach and Design

This study utilizes qualitative research approach. The qualitative research approach is chosen because it aids investigating the social-cultural and spiritual dimension of the people under consideration in this study.⁵¹ This research makes use of phenomenological research design, since such helps in deciphering missiological implication as religions are studied in the light of perception of purity.⁵²

More also, qualitative research focuses on the perception and experience of the research participants and the meaning such experience add to their lives.⁵³ Therefore, qualitative approach is useful in understanding the perception of purity among Christians and Muslims in Ijebu-Ode. It helps in discovering the understanding of the interpretation the participants give to their experiences.⁵⁴

In addition, this study makes use of phenomenological research design. Phenomenological research design will not only do the description of the participants lived experiences regarding a phenomenon, but, it will also give the essence of their experience.⁵⁵ Phenomenological research design is also handy in accessing the people's mere experience in their daily existence which is refers to as pre-reflective

⁵⁰ Communication Department, Ogun Conference, "Centenary Celebration of Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Nigeria."

⁵¹ Edgar J. Elliston, *Introduction to Missiological Research Design*, 74.

⁵² Edgar J. Elliston, 7–8.

⁵³ John W. Creswell, *Research Design*, 255.

⁵⁴ Sharan B. Merriam & Elizabeth J. Tisdell, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, 6.

⁵⁵ John W. Creswell, *Research Design*, 42.

experience.⁵⁶ Hence, it is useful in discovering the perception of purity among Christians and Muslims in Ijebu-Ode.

Population and Sampling

Population

Ijebu-Ode, the site of this study is dominated by Sunni sect of Muslims⁵⁷ and Christians of various denominations. However, the Christians who were interviewed are from three different groups of Christians such as orthodox, African Initiated Church group and the Pentecostal group of Christians. The four participants who were interviewed are from Seventh-day Adventist Church, Cherubim and Seraphim Church and Redeemed Christian Church of God. The four selected participating individuals are from the above mentioned churches representing orthodox, African Initiated Churches and the Pentecostal group of churches respectively.

On the other hand, four Muslims background believers were interviewed and the four of them are all Sunni Muslims being the dominant Muslims in Ijebu-Ode. In all eight people were interviewed. Sunni Muslim is the largest sect of Islam polling 85% of the total Muslims in the world. They accept Abu Bakr as the legitimate vingerent of Prophet Muhammad even though, he was not his blood relation. Other major important Islamic sects are Shi'a and Sufi.⁵⁸

In contrast, Shi'a differ mainly from Sunni because they believe that the successor of Prophet Muhammad must be his blood relation. Shi'a amounts to 12% of total Muslims globally. Sufi are just the mystical Muslims who can be found in all the

⁵⁶ Sharan B. Merriam & Elizabeth J. Tisdell, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, 26.

⁵⁷ Nurudeen Oladipupo Agbabiaka, "Determining The Identity of Allah and The Missiological Implications for Christians," 29.

⁵⁸ Bruce L. Bauer (Editor), *Adventist Response to Cross-Cultural Mission*, vol. 1 (Berrien Springs, Michigan: Department of World Mission, Andrew University, 2006), 288.

sects.⁵⁹ So, Sunni is actually the majority of Muslims not only in Ijebu-Ode but also all over the world since they are 85% of the Muslim in the whole world as stated above.

Selection Criteria

The Sunni Muslim is selected for interview because it is the dominant Muslim population in Ijebu-Ode.⁶⁰ This will not only enhance accessibility to them, but it may also provide an opportunity to explore how purity has been practiced since their arrival to the area. In the same vein, Seventh-day Adventist Church members are selected for interview because they seem to uphold the practicing of purity both physically and morally in tandem with the Old Testament and New Testament prescriptions as shown in their Church Manual.⁶¹

Moreover, the other selected Christian churches denominations in this study like Redeemed Christian Church of God, Baptist Church, and Cherubim and Seraphim Church practices regarding purity seem to be in contrast with that of Seventh-day Adventist Church. However, the Cherubim and Seraphim Church practices some rituals of Old Testament sacrificial system but not in resonance with purity practices. This selection from various Christian denominations becomes necessary since many Christian scholars hold the view that following purity practices as stated in the Old Testament is not necessary again.⁶² The selection here aids in deciphering the view of churches in question.

⁵⁹ Bruce L. Bauer (Editor), 1:288.

⁶⁰ Nurudeen Oladipupo Agbabiaka, "Determining The Identity of Allah and The Missiological Implications for Christians," 29.

⁶¹ The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Church, *Seventh-Day Adventist Manual*, 163.

⁶² William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary*, 2005.

More also, only the adults of sound mind were selected for participation in this work, since its focus is to understand the essence of purity.⁶³ This calls for the meaning participants make out of their experience in the subject matter of this study which is purity. Therefore, children who are minors and the people who are not mentally sound are excluded since they wouldn't be able to give adequate information regarding purity.

Sampling

This study made use of the purposeful sampling. The number of participants who were interviewed are eight alongside a Focus Group of six members. Purposeful sampling is preferred because it assists the researcher to intentionally enquire a specific group of who are best informed⁶⁴ and so more is learned from them on purity in Islam and Christianity, the subject matter of the research. Purposeful sampling also aids the sourcing for adequate details of participants lived experience which in turn encourages the in depth understanding of purity, the researcher actual inquiry.⁶⁵

Data Collection Procedure

This study made use of interview. The interview was done with eight people and a focus group of six members. Since interview suggests interacting with the research participants,⁶⁶ it was done face to face and also through phone conversation. Interview was used because of the need for obtaining data in words, since qualitative

⁶³ Sharan B. Merriam & Elizabeth J. Tisdell, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, 66.

⁶⁴ John W. Cresswell & Cheryl N. Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design* (London: Sage Publications Inc., 2018), 148.

⁶⁵ Irving Seidma, *Interviewing as Qualitative Researcher*, 54.

⁶⁶ Robert K. Yin, *Qualitative Research From Start to Finish*, Second (New York & London: The Guilford Press, 2016), 143.

research approach is descriptive in nature.⁶⁷ Also, interview is a useful tool to source for data from participants because it assists in understanding a lived experience.⁶⁸

Therefore, the interview that was conducted here is loaded with open-ended questions⁶⁹ basically for the participants to explain what they know and experience on the subject matter. The qualitative interview was utilized because it has the aim of understanding the research participants in their own terms and in the meaning they make out of their lived experiences.⁷⁰ Also, the participants were also audio recorded purposely to ensure adequate safeguarding of information. Likewise, the recorded audio of the participants is transcribed for easier analysis.

Furthermore, Qualitative interview encourages a two way interaction which allows the research participants to ask question regarding the research main topic.⁷¹ Therefore, all the information from the participants is treasured and reported in the findings of this work. The findings emanating from the participants are all kept confidential. The findings from the participants were used only purposely for the research.

More also, this study utilizes phenomenological research design which deals with the description of participants lived experience that in turn will result in discovering the essence of such experience.⁷² Hence, interview serves the purpose of getting meaning of a research problem and then have a comprehensive knowledge of

⁶⁷ John W. Creswell, *Educational Research*, 39.

⁶⁸ Irving Seidman, *Interviewing as Qualitative Researcher*, 54.

⁶⁹ Edgar J. Elliston, *Introduction to Missiological Research Design*, 145.

⁷⁰ Robert K. Yin, *Qualitative Research From Start to Finish*, 143.

⁷¹ Robert K. Yin, 142.

⁷² John W. Creswell, *Research Design*, 42.

its main phenomenon.⁷³ Also, interview is needed because it will assist in asking questions relating to the participants social-cultural contexts which in turn explain how they understand their world.⁷⁴

Data Analysis

The data analysis of this study was done manually in a thematic way. All the data was read through and coded manually. Therefore, the data of this research work such as transcripts, field notes and images are maintained⁷⁵ and kept confidential. All these are done so that the negative and positive findings can be reported⁷⁶ as accurate as possible. Hermeneutic philosophy is used in interpreting the data of this study, since it provides the framework for interpretative meaning.⁷⁷ Then, the inductive analysis was done to understand purity in its context. Inductive analysis actually aids understanding within a particular context.⁷⁸

Trustworthiness/Validation

In the limitation of this study, the threat to its worthiness and validity has been stated. In addition, all the relevant information regarding this study is not withheld from a relevant body.⁷⁹ Also, to further enhance trustworthiness and validity, other ways of sourcing for data⁸⁰ like focus group and observation was used along side the

⁷³ John W. Creswell, *Educational Research*, 39.

⁷⁴ Sharan B. Merriam & Elizabeth J. Tisdell, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, 6.

⁷⁵ John W. Creswell, *Research Design*, 247.

⁷⁶ Edgar J. Elliston, *Introduction to Missiological Research Design*, 88.

⁷⁷ Sharan B. Merriam & Elizabeth J. Tisdell, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, 28.

⁷⁸ Edgar J. Elliston, *Introduction to Missiological Research Design*, 148.

⁷⁹ Edgar J. Elliston, 82.

⁸⁰ John W. Creswell, *Research Design*, 251.

interview.⁸¹ Focus group deals with group of individuals who are carefully selected based on their knowledge about the research topic and context, for interviewing and observations relating to human activity in a setting.⁸²

Moreover, when the focus group, observation and interview are taken together in a research, they complement each other and so the research effective triangulation is ensured.⁸³ The relevant questions were asked purposely to source for the necessary information to further ensure trustworthiness and validity.⁸⁴ Also, the result of the research test was compared with the test itself to ascertain its validity.⁸⁵ Likewise, the selected participants are the ones from which most can be learned as much as the purity is concerned. It further ensures the validity of this study.⁸⁶

Ethical Consideration

The three guiding principles of ethical issues of research studies such as respect for the participants, concern for their welfare and justice for them were taken into consideration.⁸⁷ These guiding principles inform the ethical considerations that this study take cognisance of. So, the ethical principles of research studies is the watchword of this research.

Consequently, the researcher ensured that the participation in this study is voluntary without any form of compulsion. This was made possible because the

⁸¹ Sharan B. Merriam & Elizabeth J. Tisdell, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, 53.

⁸² Edgar J. Elliston, *Introduction to Missiological Research Design*, 145.

⁸³ Edgar J. Elliston, 146.

⁸⁴ Edgar J. Elliston, 57.

⁸⁵ Edgar J. Elliston, 57.

⁸⁶ Sharan B. Merriam & Elizabeth J. Tisdell, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, 51.

⁸⁷ John W. Cresswell & Cheryl N. Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design*, 151.

consent of the participating individuals was sought and their autonomy was respected. Also, integrity in all the relationship with the participants was built and maintained, so as not to endanger future researches.⁸⁸

More also, the benefits and the probable risk involve in participating in this study were carefully explained to the participants in order to keep them informed and so make an informed decision of participating or not. In the same vein, the interview protocol while interviewing was carefully maintained.⁸⁹ Also, the participants were informed of their right to quit participating in this study, if they so desire.⁹⁰

Similarly, the consent and permission of the school ethical review board that is Institutional Scientific Ethics Review Committee, Adventist University of Africa (AUA-ISERC) was sought and secured before embarking on this study.⁹¹ This was done by submitting its proposal to the board for reviewing, correction, observation and clearance before this research was embarked upon.

At the same time, any attempt to deceive or exploit participants and the collection of harmful information were avoided, since qualitative research requires interview is on its own a moral inquiry.⁹² The identity of all the participating individuals is kept confidential and only for the research purpose. So, names of the participating individuals are kept under anonymity through the use of alphabet or fictitious name.⁹³

⁸⁸ Edgar J. Elliston, *Introduction to Missiological Research Design*, 128.

⁸⁹ John W. Creswell, *Research Design*, 244.

⁹⁰ Edgar J. Elliston, *Introduction to Missiological Research Design*, 128.

⁹¹ Irving Seidma, *Interviewing as Qualitative Researcher*, 61.

⁹² John W. Creswell, *Research Design*, 137.

⁹³ John W. Creswell & Cheryl N. Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design*, 131.

Summary

This chapter provides a critical design on study of perception of purity in Islam and Christianity that was used throughout this study.⁹⁴ Therefore, it states the problem this study addresses, the settings of the study which deals with the site, people and their social-cultural and religious interactions. The procedure for data collection, organization and their analysis are treated in this chapter too. Also, qualitative researchers make enquiry regarding people lived experiences within their social-cultural context⁹⁵ and so all the ethical concerns about this study to ensure validity and trustworthiness are also presented.

⁹⁴ Peter Clough & Carthy Nutbrown, *A Student's Guide to Methodology*, 2nd ed. (London: Sage Publication Limited, 2008), 35.

⁹⁵ Sharan B. Merriam & Elizabeth J. Tisdell, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, 6.

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Data Analysis of Themes on Purity

Interview was used to source for data. Eight participants were interviewed individually alongside a focus group. The participating individuals are denoted by the use of letter P. The demographic detail of the participants is shown in the table below:

Table 5. Demographic Data

Identity	Approximate Age (Years)	Sex	Occupation	Religion Background
P1	53	Male	Business Man	Sunni Muslim
P2	37	Male	Clergy	SDAC
P3	40	Male	Furniture Work	AIC
P4	66	Male	Teaching	Sunni Muslim
P5	49	Female	Teaching	RCCG
P6	57	Female	Teaching	Sunni Muslim
P7	28	Female	Teaching	Baptist
P8	37	Female	Typist	Sunni Muslim

Note:

P- means participant.

SDA- Seventh-day Adventist Church.

AIC- African Initiated Church (Cherubim and Seraphim Church).

RCCG- Redeemed Christian Church of God.

The eight (8) participating individuals are male and female.

The various themes as discovered in the data regarding purity can be stated as followed: cleanliness, defilement, state of mind, effect of perception of purity, personal efforts, and participating individuals.

Cleanliness

All the participating individuals who were Sunni Muslim that is P1, P4, P6 and P8 attached cleanliness to purity and stated cleanliness is important to God. However, P1 emphasized that cleanliness has nothing to do with spirituality,¹ eventhough, cleanliness is essential for prayers to be acceptable.

More also, the four Sunni Muslims certain things can actually defile any human-being. Certain defilement causative things as mentioned by them are menstrual blood, post-partum blood, semen, and certain animals like dog and pig. Mean while, P6 added that cat can also defile, likewise disobedient to parent.² In the same vein, the other participants-P2, P3, P5 and P7 considered defilement as more of spiritual than a mere following of some physical regulations.

Defilement

Nevertheless, defilement is described as having more to do with the mindset than about some sets of rules. Therefore, P2 emphasized that nothing defiles like sin. Though, P2 stated that whatever defiles is impurity and it may cause sickness, but, the New Testament dispensation has rendered defilement irrelevant, once a firm relationship is maintained with Christ.³

State of the Mind

In addition, the participants who are typical Christians that P2, P3, P5 and P7 stated that purity is all about one's mindset. The idea of affirming purity with one

¹ A 53 Years Old Trader, Perception of Purity in Islam and Christianity and Its Missiological Implication in Seventh-day Adventist Church, Ijebu-Ode, Nigeria, March 26, 2025.

² A 57 Years Old Head-Teacher, Perception of Purity in Islam and Christianity and Its Missiological Implication in Seventh-day Adventist Church, Ijebu-Ode, Nigeria, March 26, 2025.

³ A 37 Years Old Clergy, Perception of Purity in Islam and Christianity and Its Missiological Implication in Seventh-day Adventist Church, Ijebu-Ode, Nigeria, March 26, 2025.

activity or the other remained unacceptable to them. Even though, activities such as alcoholism, sexual immorality, backbiting, lying, and idolatry were described as impurities, yet, purity is described as a state of mind rather than avoidance or upholding of specific rules. To participants P2, P3, P5 and P7, nobody can by following certain rules ascertain his or her purity's status. However, P2 opined that “maintaining purity in one's mind can give a sense of being closer to God.”⁴

In contrast, the Sunni Muslim participants that is P1, P4, P6 and P8 believe that purity needs to be visible in choices one make through cleanliness and abstinence from animals God declared impure. Consequently, contact with blood,urine, semen, feces and farthing can defile prayer, even, if the heart of the victim of such is considered pure. In fact, abstinence from animals such as dog and pig is essential for showcasing one's purity.

Effect of Perception of Purity

Moreover, the perception of purity has a profound effect on one's relationship with other people of different view as some of the participant highlighted. All the Sunni Muslim in this study- P1, P4, P6 and P8 with some other participants who are typical Christians- P2 and P5 insist that different perception of purity affect the relationship with one another. Nevertheless, the effect here as they explained is more noticeable in the area of what one eats or drinks.

More also, though people of varying religion persuasion may relate to each other, but, when it comes to sharing food or drink with one another, they become extra careful. This becomes necessary, so as not to mistakenly eat the unclean animal that may be cooked by those who stance is that every animal is clean. In fact, the remaining two participants who are typical Christians- P3 and P7 also stated that

⁴ A 37 Years Old Clergy.

though there is nothing so bad about eating the all kinds of animals, but, one needs to be careful of eating animals such as snake, snail, and dog.

Personal Efforts:

The personal efforts of believers are emphasized in Islam if they want to maintain a closer walk with God. All the participants with Muslim background that is P1, P4, P6 and P8 emphasized that for every step of moving close to God, there is a certain ritual to ensure that. According to them, unless a given ritual is perform, there is no chance of getting to God. In other word, getting to God and being pleasant to Him is essentially a work of rituals. Hence, rituals such as ablution and ritual prayers are handled with utmost importance. P8 even stated that it got to a time she used to be despaired anytime there was a clear indication that she has offended God.

In contrast, the participants who are typical Christians that is P2, P3, P5 and P7 stated that there is really nothing they can do to be pleasant to God. According to them Christ is the only one who can recommend to God. In the same vein, they reiterated that only Christ knows the content of the mind, so salvation has nothing to do with one's personal effort. In fact, P5 even stated that none can determine anyone spiritual state with God by mere observation of the person's physical appearance or action. She insisted that only God can determine and ascertain a person's stand with God and that is not by following or not following certain rules of purity of faith.⁵

In addition, P2 emphasized that though none is saved by personal efforts, but some efforts have some benefits. He stated that some efforts can at last jeopardize one's faith in God. For instance, he insists that anyone who is not abstaining from the unclean animals stated in the Bible may contract a disease. At the end of the day in

⁵ A 49 Years Old Teacher, Perception of Purity in Islam and Christianity and Its Missiological Implication in Seventh-day Adventist Church, Ijebu-Ode, Nigeria, April 25, 2025.

such one's effort to gain healing his or her faith may be lost because whoever is sick will out of necessity seek healing regardless of where it is coming from.⁶

However, all the participants who are of Sunni Muslim background, that is P1, P4, P6 and P8 opined that when they were Muslims, there were things to do to attain purity. Activities such as ablution, ghusl, prayer and obedience to parent are essentially needed to attain to a pure state of mind. Emphatically, all the Sunni Muslim background participants hold the view that they dare not engage in any act of worship unless their purity is ascertained. Also, in the period of impurity such as the woman monthly menstrual circle, emission of semen, touching of carcasses, and contact with dog and post partum blood require a bathing, either a minor bathing called wudu or a major bathing called ghusl to attain purity.

Similarly, one of the participants who is a typical Christian from one of the African Initiated Churches that is Cherubim and Seraphim Church- P4 stated that contact with post partum blood, menstrual blood, and semen defile. Hence, there is a need for the victim of such to attain purity having been defiled. So, the victim must not enter the church or a sacred place until a certain number of days. The victim must stay away for a certain number of days depending on which type of impurity he or she has contacted.⁷

Furthermore, the victim of post partum blood must stay away from the sacred place for forty (40) days, while the victim of blood from menstrual circle and semen take only seven (7) days and a day respectively. After the victim had followed the rule, then the priest will for him or her and declare them and declare them clean.

⁶ A 37 Years Old Clergy, Perception of Purity in Islam and Christianity and Its Missiological Implication in Seventh-day Adventist Church, Ijebu-Ode, Nigeria.

⁷ A 40 Years Old Furniture Worker, Perception of Purity in Islam and Christianity and Its Missiological Implication in Seventh-day Adventist Church, Ijebu-Ode, Nigeria, April 21, 2025.

However, the declaration only comes when the victim of semen had already bath with water.

However, one of the participants who is a typical Christian-P2 explained that all the rules of abstaining from the church because of post partum blood and contact with semen are needless today. He stated that Christians are now in New Testament dispensation and so they don't need to follow such rules. Yet, he advocates for cleanliness and insists that only Christ can make anyone attain purity and never by one's personal efforts.⁸ Other participants too who are typical Christians that is P3, P5 and P7 were also of the opinion that only God can make anyone attain purity and never by any human effort.

Participation of Individuals

Moreover, all the participating individual of this study who have Sunni Muslim background- P1, P4, P6 and P8 stated that while they were Muslims, the idea of being purified seemed to be of one's personal efforts. In fact, one of the participants that is P1 asserted that all the effort to live a holy life being a Muslim is actually a salvation by work. Also, P8 stated that every step to become holy as a Muslim is all about personal effort because it involves doing something to get something.⁹

Nevertheless, the participants who are typical Christians that is P2, P3, P5 and P7 were of the opinion that only God can sanctify. If there is any effort at all, it is just

⁸ A 37 Years Old Clergy, Perception of Purity in Islam and Christianity and Its Missiological Implication in Seventh-day Adventist Church, Ijebu-Ode, Nigeria.

⁹ A 37 Years Old Typist, Perception of Purity in Islam and Christianity and Its Missiological Implication in Seventh-day Adventist Church, Ijebu-Ode, Nigeria, April 18, 2025.

to engage in prayer. According to them, no one becomes holy by his or her effort. However, P2 stated that it takes believing in Jesus to attain holiness.¹⁰

In addition, all the participants with Sunni Muslim background- P1, P4, P6 and P8 stated that there are certain rituals for believers to attain or maintain purity. Ablution, wudu, and ghusl are purification rituals identified by them. In contrast, all of the Christian background participants except one that is P3, P5 and P7 stated that there is no any known rite to attain purification. Only P2 among the typical Christian participants stated that baptism is an essential purification rite.¹¹ Also, the focus group too considered baptism to be a purification ritual.

Findings and Interpretation

This study revealed that profound differences exist between the Muslims and Christians both in their understanding of purity and also in how the duo practice it. The differences among the two religions- Islam and Christianity may not be quite obvious to a mere observer of the adherents of these two religions in Yoruba land in general and in Ijebu-Ode in particular. As this study revealed, they still socialize as neighbors, but with some reservations as they interact.

In the same vein, some of the interactions of the Muslims and Christians in Ijebu-Ode occurred only during social activity or gathering and such do come with the sole aim of making a convert. When Muslims associate with Christians at all, it is done to win them over to Islam. This Christians are not aware of. The following are the findings of this study:

1. A profound difference regarding perception of purity exists between the Muslims and the Christians in Ijebu-Ode.

¹⁰ A 37 Years Old Clergy, Perception of Purity in Islam and Christianity and Its Missiological Implication in Seventh-day Adventist Church, Ijebu-Ode, Nigeria.

¹¹ A 37 Years Old Clergy.

2. The difference in perception of purity among the two religions limits the relationship Christians have with the Muslims and so constrict their influence on the Muslims. Consequently, though the Muslims may associate with Christians in Ijebu-Ode, but such comes with some careful reservation, most especially in the matter of what to eat, drink or abstain from.
3. Many Christians remain offences to Muslims, since, they don't abstain from some things considered as defilements by Muslims. This implies that Christians in Ijebu-Ode are stumbling blocks to some Muslims.
4. The grace concept of Christianity seemed to have been misapplied in Christianity's daily practices and so Muslims find it difficult to understand the Christians idea of grace which could even be applied to nullify what the Muslims considered as necessary precautions in maintaining purity.
5. Many Christians believed that in the New Testament dispensation, there is no any purification ritual to practice. Except a participant- P2 and the focus group who expressed that baptism is a purification ritual, all the participating individuals who are typical Christian that P3, P5 and P7 made no mention of it nor any other ritual.
6. Three of the four participants who are typical Christian hold the view that all animals are good for consumption, but that any preference anyone gives to them is from personal decision. Therefore, they are of the opinion that Christians are free to eat any animal of their choice. However, they stated that some of those unclean animals are not good for food. This stance is not based on a conviction from the Scripture, but, rather on personal preference.

7. The only participant of Christian background who holds the view that abstaining from unclean animals is necessary and so needed to be observed is a member of Seventh-day Adventist Church. Others among the participants who hold this same view are individuals of Sunni Muslim background.
8. In the same vein, the one participant of Christian background who was of the opinion that some animals must not be consumed, only did so on the ground that that is the practice of his church. Even at this such individual did not believe that all the unclean animals as identified in the Bible are all not good for food.
9. It is quite obvious that among all the Christian churches in Ijebu-Ode, only the Seventh-day Adventist Church members can easily relate with Muslim and possibly convince them of the available grace in Christ.
10. Also only the Seventh-day Adventist Church members are by practice and knowledge of purity regulation can have positive influence on the Muslim, most especially in the matters of perception of purity.

Missiological Implications of Perception of Purity

Muslims and Christians believe in God and the need to approach Him with a clean mind. However, the approach of each differs. The differences among the duo seem more conspicuous in their understanding of purity as this study reveals. The understanding of purity among them has some missiological implications which are enumerated below:

1. Almost all the Christians in Ijebu-Ode hold the view that abstaining from certain animals has no any spiritual benefit. This view will make the social gap between Muslims and Christians continue to grow wide. Christians

need to desist from this their view, if not for anything for the sake of the gospel. It is until then a Muslim can give them attention. However, Seventh-day Adventist Church insists that abstaining from all the unclean animals is also a Christian duty, though only Christ can save. Therefore, there is a need for the members of Seventh-day Adventist Church to find a way of engaging Muslims in Ijebu-Ode in discussion regarding what and what not to eat. This becomes necessary because the Muslims already hold the view that all Christians eat just anything and this include unclean animals too.

2. Christians hold the view that only Christ can save and so whatever a believer does means nothing as far as the salvation is concerned. Invariably, the Muslims believe that a believer need to do everything as specified in their Hadith and Qur'an if heaven must be gained. It is also imperative here that only Christ can save but that salvation need not to be interpreted as a licence for doing everything that even the Bible condemns. Otherwise, the non-challant or carefree attitude of many Christians will make difficult to reach Muslims, since they believe and practice it that a lots are to be done about one's salvation.
3. Muslims in Ijebu-Ode find it difficult to eat food prepare by Christians all because of the insinuation that the unclean meat may be parts of the delicacy. This can be an avenue for Seventh-day Adventist Church members among other Christians to socialize with Muslims, since they don't eat those unclean animals. It will not only change the Muslims general perception of Christians, but it will also serve as an opportunity to reach them.

4. However the Seventh-day Adventist Church stand of not eating unclean meats as specified in the Bible and also her belief in Baptism are not in ritualistic point of view. Abstaining from unclean meats is done for its health benefits, while the Baptism is observed because of it symbolizes. Hence, while her members are in the best position to minister to Muslim since their stand can aid them in breaking sociological barrier between them and the Muslims, they are to address the Muslims worldview regarding abstinence from unclean meats and Baptism as a ritual. This is necessary because Muslims approach the duo as rituals and not as symbols.

Summary

All the participants have different opinion regarding the different aspects of purity. While some hold the opinion that certain activities or situation can defile a believer, some other ones hold opposing view. For instance, attaining purity is a personal effort to the participants of SunniMuslim background, but, the Christian background participants insist that only God can purify.

In addition, the different opinion regarding purity among the Muslims and Christians has a profound effect on their relationship, most especially in what one drinks and eat. However, purity is important to the two religions of this study- Islam and Christianity. Therefore, there are rituals one can engage in to maintain purity or attain purity when one becomes defiled.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATION

Summary

Compelling difference exists between the Muslims and Christians perception of purity in Ijebu-Ode. The duo are least aware of the reasons behind their difference in perception of purity. While the Muslims shun associating with Christians on the basis of their different view on purity, the Christians too, also care less about the profound effect of their opposing view of purity on Muslims as a people and also on Islam as a religion.

Similarly, the Christians are not conscious of the effect of their perception of purity on their Muslim neighbor. As a result, the two practice their religions differently. Christians practice of religion seems to be on the basis of faith, while Muslims on the other hand seems to be on what one does. Hence, Christianity emphasizes grace that seems to nullify the practice of purity. In contrast, Islam upholds the practice of its belief that seems to emphasize what one does or does not do.

However, a Christian church- Seventh-day Adventist Church appears to uphold grace and still practice purity that seems closer to Muslims' view of purity. This can have a profound effect on Muslims, not just as neighbors, but, it can also serve as avenue to understand what Christians' idea of grace really means.

In contrast, the Seventh-day Adventist Church considers purification practices or activities as symbols and not as ritual to be done to earn God's favor. The SDA

Church believes that many of these symbolic acts have some benefits. So, those activities are not approached by them in the ritualistic point of view.

In the same vein the Muslims also practice some abstinences like the Seventh-day Adventist Church members. However, the Muslims practice of abstinence is done in a ritualistic point of view. Hence, they engage in those activities of purification purposely to earn a favor of God. In fact, they engage in those activities of purification in a ritualistic manner which make the act appears as salvation by faith.

Conclusion

Many Christians in Ijebu-Ode are not aware of the differences that exist between them and Muslims in matters emanating from perception of purity. Consequently, the Christians are not conscious of the profound effect of their perception of purity on their Muslims neighbor. The idea of Christians perception of purity seems to be based on grace. However, the Muslims who found it difficult to understand the Christian's idea of grace, considered it illogical and irreligious to associate with Christians , most especially in the aspect of sharing foods with them.

In the same vein, the Seventh-day Adventist Church members whose practice of purity among many other Christians seemed closer to that of Muslims are also not aware of the opportunity they have in ministering to Muslims. SDA Church members can have a mission opportunity to Muslims in Ijebu-Ode because their perception of purity distinguished them from other Christians. By practice, SDA Church perception of purity seems compatible with that of Islam, most especially the Sunni Muslim who dominate Ijebu-Ode's Islamic world.

However, the Seventh-day Adventist Church members practice of purity is not in ritualistic way. For instance, they abstain from eating of meat like pork and others in its category not as a ritual to be observed to earn God's favor or avoid His wrath

but simply because of the health benefits it affords. Also, Baptism as one of the purity practices among them is not upheld as a ritual but as symbolic of cleansing which Christ alone can do and as an indication of identifying with Christ through His Church.

More also, the Muslims who associate with Christians only do so on social level and with the sole aim of converting them to Islam. The Christians on the other hand are not aware of the separation their perception of purity has brought between them and the Muslims. Christians are bewildered by Muslims attitude of not being so in close contact with them. This can probably be explained as emanating from the kind of purity Christian practices which is essentially a reflection of their perception of purity. In contrast, Muslim perception of purity differs from that of many Christian.

Meanwhile, Seventh-day Adventist Church members in Ijebu-Ode practice a kind of purity which can foster an influential relationship with Muslims who are their neighbors. As a matter of fact, Muslims value cleanliness and they attach great importance to purity though it is done in a ritualistic point of view. Thus, if Christians understand this, it can aid their relationship in general and their mission to them in particular.

Whereas, the Seventh-day Adventist Church members who also practice purity in a way that can endear them to Muslim have not utilized the opportunity such afford as this study has revealed. Hence, with SDA Church members perception of purity, a successful mission to Muslim is possible. However, a Christian church- Seventh-day Adventist Church appears to uphold grace and still practice purity that seems closer to Muslims practice of purity. This can have a profound effect on Muslims, not just as neighbors, but, it can also serve as avenues to understand what Christians' idea of grace really means and thus address the idea of salvation by work.

Recommendation

A noticeable difference exists between Christians and Muslims in their perception of purity. Even though, the difference among the two religious entities regarding their perception of purity is not quite obvious until a close study is done, yet, the difference is unmistakable. Nevertheless, the idea of Yoruba's oneness of which Ijebu-Ode forms a significant part can be a great advantage for Christians in general and Seventh-day Adventist Church in particular to showcase what grace truly means as believers practice purity. Therefore, the following recommendations are suggested for Christians in their mission:

1. Christians should beware that their Muslim neighbors have little or no understanding of their concept of grace. Therefore, there is a need for Christians to understand what grace truly means. This becomes necessary, since grace has been misunderstood to mean nullification of even God's instructions that are beneficial.
2. The Christians need to be conscious of Muslims' practice of cleanliness emanating from their perception of purity. The careful attention on this will not only help the Christians to be everything to all people, but, it will also endear them to Muslims.
3. Christians need to understand what purity truly means as recorded in the Bible. This will assist them to cross-check their opinion in any matter regarding purity.
4. The Seventh-day Adventist Church members need to make use of their advantageous perception of purity as an avenue to minister to Muslims. The purity perception of SDA Church can actually serve as a mission opportunity to their fellow Christians and also to Muslims. SDA Church

position remained advantageous in mission to Muslim because her members practice of purity is closer to that of Muslims.

5. Further study could also be done on purity with a wider field of study in order to ascertain the differences in perception of purity between Muslims and Christians in a wider population and the effect on the mission.
6. An urgent study needs to be made to develop a strategy of reaching Muslims through the lens of purity perceptions between Christianity and Islam.
7. The Christians need to be conscious of the practice of the people they want to minister to whenever they engage in mission purposely for the proper understanding of them. This step will not only reduce friction, but, it will also engender success in mission.
8. The findings of this study can serve as eye opener to missionaries on the need to have a better understanding of people theology as they are being ministered to. This could enhance addressing their worldview adequately and so lead them to Christ without any blend of syncretism.
9. This study has also revealed that a missionaries or believers' lifestyle can become a bridge or a wall to their neighbors hence they must be conscious of it.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Introduction: You are being required to participate in a research study entitled: “The Perception of Purity in Islam and Christianity in Ijebu-Ode and Its Missiological Implications on Seventh-day Adventist Church.”

The information below is all about what is involved in participating in this research. It stated what will be required to do, the benefits and probable risk if you choose to participate in this study. Besides, you are allowed to ask questions or seek for clarification regarding this study. Also, you may choose to or not participate in this research since your participation is voluntary. You can as well choose to participate or even discontinue your participation at any time during the study.

The Purpose of the Study: This study is set to understand the differences in Muslim and Christian perception of Purity in Ijebu-Ode.

Your Participation: Your participation in this study is through interview. This means that you will be asked to explain what you know about purity in Islam (if you a Muslim) or in Christianity (if you are a Christian) The interview will take 40 minutes to 1 hour to complete . The interview questions will be asked to discover your understanding of purity.

Benefits and Risks: If you participate in this study, it will help to contribute to the knowledge of how best Muslim and Christian can relate with one another in Ijebu-Ode. Participating in this research will take some few minutes of your time.

Confidentiality: Your personal information will be made confidential. Your interview responses will be kept under anonymity and so they will not be traced back to you in any report or publication whatsoever.

Please carefully read and sign this Form, if you are willing to participate in this study.

1. My participation in this research work is voluntary. There is no explicit or implicit compulsion whatsoever regarding participation in this study.
2. I may withdraw and discontinue participation at any time without any penalty.
3. I understand that I have the right to not answer a question during interview, if I don't feel comfortable with it. I have the right to end the interview or discussion altogether.
4. I understand that the interview will be audio-recorded purposely to capture my words because it will be transcribed for data analysis.
5. I understand that the researcher will not use my name in any report whatsoever while using the information in this interview or discussion.

Note: If you are concerned regarding the ethics of participating in this research, please contact Institutional Scientific Ethics Review Committee, Adventist University of Africa on ethics@aua.ac.ke

I have read and accurately understand the statements on this Form. All my questions were answered satisfactorily. Therefore, I willingly agree to participate in this study.

Participant's Signature**Date.....**

Researcher's Signature.....Date.....

Contact the Supervisor of the research, if you need more information or have questions. **Adelowo Felix Adetunji Ph.D (Primary Advisor)**
Olaotse Obed Gabasiane Ph.D (Programme Co-ordinator)

Thank you!

Fasaanu, Abiodun Peter

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Approved by the AUA Institutional and Ethics Review Board

APPENDIX B

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Interview Questions for Muslims

1. What is purity?
2. What does purity entail as regards one's relationship with God?
3. Are all animals safe for consumption considering the clean and unclean animals in the Noble Qur'an?
4. What are some of the things that can disrupt purity in Islam?
5. How will you describe purity as a Muslim?
6. What are some things either natural or biological that can defile a Muslim?
7. Do you find it easy to relate with people of another religious persuasion?
8. In case one becomes impure, what are some rituals for purification in Islam?
9. Does being ceremonially impure really matter to God?
10. Who or what can actually purify human?

Interview Questions for Christian

1. What is purity?
2. What does purity entail as regards one's relationship with God?
3. Are all animals safe for consumption considering the clean and unclean animals in the Holy Bible?
4. What are some of the things that can disrupt purity in Christianity?
5. How will you describe purity as a Christian?
6. What are some things either natural or biological that can defile a Christian?
7. Do you find it easy to relate with people of another religion persuasion?
8. In case one becomes impure, what are some rituals for purification in Christianity?
9. Does being ceremonially impure really matter to God?
10. Who or what can actually purify human?

APPENDIX C
FOCUS GROUP

1. How do you understand purity?
2. What caused defilement as recorded in the Bible?
3. Do Christians still need to practice the ritual regulations in the Bible in the twenty-first century?
4. How can you identify some unclean animals?
5. What are some purification rites in the Old Testament?
6. What are some purification rites in the New Testament?
7. Is abstaining from impurities important today?

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Ekiti Conference, Ekiti State

Executive Secretary- March 2024- Present

Skill

- Providing training through seminars, workshop and lectures on evangelism, Adventist Muslim Relation and Bible Studies

Ogun Conference, Ogun State

Global Mission/ Adventist Muslim Relation Director- Dec. 2024- Feb. 2025

Skill

- Pioneer the Global Mission and Adventist Muslim relation in Ogun Conference
- Develop the program for the Ogun Conference Global Mission/ AMR
- Give training on Adventist Muslim Relation in Western Nigeria Union Conference

Ijebu-Ode District Leader- November 2019-January 2024

Skill

- Revive the weekly Sabbath afternoon Bible Study
- Organize a weekly counselling/ prayer session for members and non-members
- Supervise the Church school in the district
- Prepare the members to embrace the orderliness in the church through proper planning

Pioneer Church Pastor- August 2013- March 2020

Skill

- Pioneer the evangelism work in Ago-Iwoye until the church is established and inaugurated
- Conduct Daniel and Revelation Seminar for the Adventist Students in Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State
- Conduct regular training for the new members on how to study Bible
- Raise spiritual awareness among members

Owena Circuit Pastor- June 2003-August 2009

Skill

- Organize and supervise the building project of Timo-Oloja Church
- Promote the daily keeping of the morning watch in agrarian community of Owena, Bolorunduro and Timo-Oloja
- Promote oneness and unity among the circuit church members
- Prepare the youth to embrace Adventist Youth activities
- Encourage and lead the youth to attend youth congress
- Initiated the creation of Youth Ministries in Owena

- Initiate the youth entrepreneurial skills

EDUCATION

Babcock University, Ilishan-Remo, Ogun State, Nigeria –August 2009- June 2013

- B. A. Christian Religious Studies- June 2013

LICENSE

- Ministerial Credential- January 2018

CERTIFICATIONS

- Invested Master Guide- July 2002
- Writers Workshop- November 2010