



Ori-Oke Spirituality and Social Change in Africa

CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES

Edited by

Soede Nathanael Yaovi, Patrick U. Nwosu, Akiti G. Alamu, Lemuel E. Odeh
and A. Y. Mohammed

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This book project is dedicated to the John Templeton Foundation, USA, for its continuous support for research and development of humanity. Also, Nagel Institute for the Study of World Christianity, is acknowledged for its generous grant award towards the success of this project.

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***Ori- Oke* in Old Testament Traditions and its Economic Benefits in Igbeti Community, Oyo State**

Caleb O. Ogunkunle

Abstract

The mountain in the scriptures, especially in the Old Testament, is a sacred place of worship, where God reveals Himself and manifests his glory. Several individuals used mightily by God were associated with one mountain or the other. However, in recent times, and in light of social change in contemporary Christianity, in Africa in general, and Nigeria, in particular, Ori-Oke has been associated with all sorts of things including economic benefits. This paper examines current trends in Nigerian Christianity, and looks at how Prayer Mountains have become a source of economic benefits for individual founders, an act which was foreign in the biblical mountain tradition. Specifically, the paper looks at what is happening in contemporary Nigerian society, with reference to the Igbeti Community of Oyo State. Historical and exegetical methods are used in the paper. The historical method is adopted to review related literature on mountains in Biblical tradition, with emphasis on Mount Sinai, while the exegetical method helps in the interpretation of key words in the passage. This is corroborated with oral interviews with some selected founders, pastors and prophets. It is observed that several people patronize Ori-Oke, as a result of chronic problems that are confronting them. Invariably, many people go to Ori-Oke not only to worship, but to ask for solutions to their problems. The paper concludes that the main purpose of Ori-Oke is to worship, pray and receive revelation from God; hence, less emphasis should be placed on their economic benefits, especially by the founders or leaders the of Ori-Oke.

Introduction

Ordinarily, mountains in ancient Israel are associated with places of worship, where God reveals Himself and demonstrates His power. However, the rate at which several individuals patronize *Ori-Oke* in

contemporary Nigerian society, calls for a reflection on the n behind visiting Prayer Mountains. Perhaps, too much rush fo *Oke* is connected with the level of hardship that people are through in the nation. The current economic recession has wor the matter, as the deplorable situation seems unbearable fo majority of the people in the nation. One of the places where p who believe in prayers look for solutions to their predicaments i *Oke*.

Therefore, the focus of this paper is to reconcile the us mountains in Biblical tradition, with an emphasis on Mount S with the rush of people going to *Ori-Oke* in contemporary Nig society, with reference to Igbeti community in Oyo State. Ind there appears to be some changes in the understanding of mount in Ancient Israel and *Ori-Oke* in contemporary Nigerian soc especially in terms of economic benefits. *Ori-Oke* is a compo Yoruba word that is made up of *Ori* (head or top) and *Oke* (mount or hill). Hence *Ori-Oke* in this context means 'mountain top.' *Ori-O* is used interchangeably with Prayer Mountain in this paper.

Mountains in Old Testament Tradition

The Hebrew word *har* which is a masculine noun generally mean mountain, hill, or hill country. Specifically, it means high elevation such as Mount Sinai (Exod 19: 1; 18; 20; 23; 24: 16; 31: 18; 34: 2; 40: 9; 52: 7); mountain range (Psa 68: 16); high mountain (Isa 30: 23; 29; 32 etc.); mountain as opposite of valley (Josh 12: 8; Deut 1: 7); mountains as hiding places (Judges 6: 2; Psa 11: 1; Jer 16: 16); mountains as running places of gazelles (1 Chro 12: 8); mountains as grazing places for cattle (Psa 50: 10; Job 39: 8; Job 40: 20); mountains as places of field and vineyard (2 Chro 26: 10; Isa 7: 23; Psa 147: 8); and mountains as a place of illicit worship (Isa 65: 7; Jer 3: 6; and Isa 57: 7) (Brown, Drivers & Briggs: 1989, pp. 249-50). The word *har* is also used to mean hill country or mountain region, and in this case, it means the dwelling place of the Canaanites (Num 13: 17, 29), or of a particular mountain region as in Deut 1: 7. The word *har* occurs about 550 times in the Old Testament. The first appearance speaks

of the mountain range upon which Noah's ark came to rest (Unger & White: 1980, p. 251). The word *bar* is found in both singular as in Josh 17: 18; Psa 78: 54; Job 14: 18; etc., and plural (*barim*) as in Deut 11: 11 and Micah 6: 2.

The words 'mountain' and 'hill' are used interchangeably in the Bible to represent an elevated terrain or region. The mountain in Ancient Israel was a symbol of refuge and security, and sometimes, a threatening place of military slaughter. The mountain is a place of vision (Deut 34: 1-4; Rev 2: 10); a place of proclamation (Isa 40: 9; 52: 7; Mat 5: 1); a place of covenant making, law giving and covenant renewal (Exod 19-20; Deut 9-10) and a place for cursing and blessing (Deut 27-8) (Ryken, Wilhoit & Longman: 1998, p. 572). Unger and White see mountains as a symbol of safety and protection, as shown by Jacob, who fled from Laban towards the mountains, where he thought of getting protection. They argue further that mountains serve as a symbol of strength (Zech 4: 7); sacred areas (Jer 3: 22-23); and location of strong fortress (1980).

Writing on the sacredness of mountains, Ryken, Wilhoit and Longman III (1998) argue that mountains are 'sites of transcendent spiritual appearances, encounters with God or appearances of God.' Examples include: Abraham, who was willing to sacrifice his son, Isaac on a mountain (Gen 22: 1-14); God's appearance to Moses while speaking to him from the burning bush on Horeb, the mountain of God (Exod 3: 1-2); Elijah's encounter with God on the same mountain (1 Kgs 19: 8-18); and Moses in a cloud on Mount Sinai (Exod 19). Talmon opines that mountains appear in the Old Testament tradition as the preferred sites for the theophany (Gen 24: 14; Exod 3: 1; 4: 27; 18: 5; 19-20; 32; 34; Deut 4: 11; 5: 4; 9: 15; 1 Kgs 19: 11-14; Mic 1: 3; Ps 18: 7-10; 17: 4-5; etc.). He also associates mountains as the place where God establishes His covenant with individuals (Gen 31: 54) (Talmon, 1978).

In addition, Talmon (1978) observes that Old Testament literature uses the terminology of human body to refer to the various parts of a mountain. For example the term *rosh* (top, peak) is used in connection with mountain in Exod 19: 18-20; Num 20: 28; Josh 15: 8-9; and Isa 42: 11). *Katheph* (shoulder or slope) is used in defining

boundaries (Josh 15: 8-11; Num 34: 11; Isa 11: 14; Ezek 25: 9); *tsela* (side) is used in 2 Sam 16: 13; and *tachith* (foot) is used in Exod 19: 17; 24: 4; 32: 19; Deut 4: 11.

The Greek word for mountain is *oros*. Incidentally, Jesus Christ is associated with mountains in the New Testament. Jesus Christ resorted to mountain to be alone (John 6: 15), to pray (Mat 14: 23; Mark 1: 35; 6: 46; Lk 6: 12), and to teach his disciples (Mat 5: 1; Mark 3: 13 (Foerster: 1985, p. 733)). It was on a mountain that Jesus resisted Satan's temptation (Mat 4: 8; Lk 4: 5); He was transfigured on a mountain (Mat 17: 1-8; Mk 9: 2-8; Lk 9: 28-36) and He ascended into heaven from the Mount of Olives (Acts 1: 10-12). (Ryken; Wilhoit & Longman, 1998).

Mount Sinai

There are several mountains in the Bible. Some of the important ones are Ararat, Carmel, Ebal, Hermon, Hor, Horeb, Lebanon, Moriah, Nebo, Olivet, Pisgah, Sinai, Tabor and Zion. Our focus at this junction is to examine Mount Sinai with a view of understanding the primary purpose of mountains in Ancient Israel. Two issues need clarification in an attempt to understand Mount Sinai. The first one is to clarify the name 'Sinai' and the other is to examine the importance of the mountain.

The word 'Sinai' is used in three senses. One, it speaks of the Peninsula, an inverted triangle between the two arms of the Red Sea, with the Gulf of Suez on the West and the Gulf of Aqabah on the East. The base of the triangle is approximately 150 miles long, and it forms a barrier between Palestine and Egypt. Secondly, the word 'Sinai' is used of the wilderness of 'Sinai,' the place where the Israelites came in the third month, after they left Egypt (Exod 19: 11). Thirdly, the word is used for the Mount Sinai, which is also called Horeb (Exod 19: 20). It was on this mountain that God talked with Moses and gave him the laws that would guide the relationship between the Israelites and God and the relationship between one another.

The significance of Mount Sinai lies in the fact that it was there that Moses, the leader of the Israelite nation and the mediator between God and the people, received the Ten Commandments and other laws from Yahweh. It was at Mount Sinai that Moses requested the Pharaoh that Israel might be allowed to worship her God (Exod 3: 18; 5: 1; 7: 6; 8: 27; 28). Writing on the presence of Yahweh with the Israelites in their journey to the Promised Land, Dillard and Longman (1995, p. 67) opine that:

Perhaps the single and most important occurrence during the journey took place just three months after their departure, when they arrived at Mount Sinai. Here God made his powerful presence known to them again as he revealed his will to Israel through the law.

Specifically, an inductive study of the passage indicates the following about Mount Sinai:

1. It was a place where Moses met with God and received instructions from Him. Exod 19: 3-6 says:

Then Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain and said, "This is what you are to say to the house of Jacob and what you are to say to the people of Israel: You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.

Indeed, God had a special interest in the Israelites as shown in their deliverance from the Egyptian bondage and the carrying of them on eagles' wings. As they camped by Sinai, Moses went to the mountain and it was there God spoke to him.

2. Mount Sinai was a place to hear the voice of Yahweh (Exod 19: 9). The Lord appeared to Moses in a dense cloud upon the mountain from where the people would hear Him speaking to Moses.

It has been suggested that, 'the reason for the manifestation on this occasion seems to have been that the people should believe in the reality of God's communication with Moses, and thus, believe in Moses, as well as in God' (Cole, 1973). This means that nobody had the excuse of not understanding what Yahweh was about to do.

3. Mount Sinai was a place of divine manifestation (Exod 19: 16). It was on the third day of camping on Mount Sinai that God manifested His glory in the midst of thunders, lightings and thick clouds. Keil and Delitzsch (1981: p. 102) note that 'thunder and lightning bursting forth from the thick cloud, and fire with smoke, were the elementary substrata, which rendered the glory of the divine nature visible to men, though in such a way that the eye of mortals beheld no form of the natural and invisible Deity.' These natural phenomena were accompanied by a loud trumpet which made everyone in the camp tremble.

4. It was a place where Yahweh came down to meet Moses (Exod 19: 20). Only Moses (Exod 19: 20) and Aaron (Exod 19: 24) were permitted on the mountain. All other priests, and the congregation, were to stand before the mountain. Incidentally, Moses made three trips to the mountain top and back (Exod 19: 3, 7-9, 20 and 25). One important document which Moses received from Yahweh on the mountain is the law which has three components namely, the Decalogue (Exod 20: 1-21), the Book of the Covenant with civil and religious ordinaries (Exod 20: 22-24: 11) and ceremonial regulations (24: 12-31: 18) (Hannah: 1985, p. 139).

Ori-Oke in Contemporary Nigeria

Ori-Oke is generally an open place of worship on a hill or mountain that is open to individuals, irrespective of religious background and denominational affiliation. It is a sacred place of withdrawal from the hustle and bustle of life. Some hills or mountains have either temporary or permanent structures, with resident pastors, prophets or prophetesses to assist those who are there for spiritual

assistance (Ayegboyin and Ishola, 2013). Alokun notes that these mount and hill tops have developed into centres for worship, conventions, tourism and education (2010). There are at least five Prayer Mountains in Ilorin metropolis. These are: *Oke Sobi*, *Oke Basin*, *Oke Alagbede*, *Oke Michael Imodu* and *Oke Tanke*. People from different denominations go to these mountains for prevailing prayer. One of my sources is of the opinion that *Ori-Oke* is a place of outreach, as many of the people that come for programme do not attend any church in the town. He observed that some of them, on their way to the farm, take off time to seek for counsel and prayer from the man of God on the mountain (Pastor Iyiade Asamu).

The theology of *Ori-Oke* is well known in Nigeria, especially among the Yoruba of the South-West of the country, where Christ Apostolic Church, one of the African Indigenous Churches, has its roots. In other words, Christ Apostolic Church, since its inception, has been associated with *Ori-Oke*. Doctrinally, Christ Apostolic Church believes strongly in the efficacy of prayer alongside fasting. This explains why all branches of Christ Apostolic Church have prayer bands, *Egbe afadurajagun* which literally means 'prayer warriors' who keep the prayer life of the churches alive (Ayogboyin and Ishola, 2013). Writing on the prayer life of Apostle Joseph Ayo Babalola, Alokun observes that Babalola's prayer life was similar to that of Jesus Christ, who was in the habit of occasionally withdrawing from the crowd to a mountain, or hill top for issues that needed serious intercessions, or for renewing his spiritual power. Some of the important mountains and hills consecrated for prevailing praying, fasting and communication with God are: *Oke-Isegun (Efon Alaaye)*, *Oke-Aanu (Erio Ekiti)*, *Oke-Iyanu (Ido Ajinare)*, *Oke-Ajaye (Ajaye)*, *Oke-Epinmi (Akoko)*, *Oke-Babalola (Odo Owa)*, *Oke-Ikoyi (Ikoyi)*, etc. Apostle Ayodele Babalola had regular special prayers on *Ori-Oke* ranging from 3 to 51 days long (Alokun, 2010).

Narrating the experience of Joseph Ayo Babalola on *Ori-Oke*, Dayo Oluwamakin states that at one of Babalola's Prayer Mountains at Omu Aran in Kwara State, the man prayed for forty days and nights, till his sweat formed the shape of his body on the floor. Another time, when Joseph Babalola had a prolonged prayer, rock

melted to make everlasting marks from the two knees that touched the rock (2010). Indeed, *Ori-Oke* meant much to the spiritual life and ministry of Joseph Ayo Babalola. He was said to have encouraged members of the church to persist in prevailing prayer, through which there would be solutions to problems confronting them. (Alokan, 2010). Following the instruction and example of Apostle Joseph Ayo Babalola, every leader in the church today (pastor, evangelist, prophet, prophetess, etc.) takes time to visit *Ori-Oke* to pray asking God for sign, revelation and direction in the ministry. One of my sources says the name given to each assembly in Christ Apostolic Church such as *Oke-Ayo*, (Mount of Joy), *Oke-Alaafia* (Mount of Peace), *Oke-Isegun* (Mount of Victory), *Oke-Aanu* (Mount of Mercy), etc., is usually received from *Ori-Oke* (Pastor Arogbonlo).

***Ori-Oke* in Igbeti Community**

Geographically, Igbeti is centrally placed with Ilorin, Kwara State capital to her East; Ogbomoso and Ikoyi-Ile (Orire Local Government) to her south, Igboho, Kisi, Ogbooro and Saki, among others to her West, and Old Oyo (Oyo Ile) National Park and Banni, to her North (Ogunkunle, 2016). Igbeti is the headquarters of Iyamopo/Olorunsogo Local Government of Oyo State. The town is located in the midst of several hills and mountains which include the *Iyamopo*, *Santo*, *Erugba*, *Abosino*, *Okin*, *Iyawure*, *Agbomola*, *Ogbaagba*, *Agbale*, *Obadimo*, *Aboyun-Ogun*, *Okuta Opo*, *Ile- odoodo*, *Ogbo*, *Onto* and *Esin*.

Two important facts must be mentioned about the Igbeti community which are relevant to this paper. One, the original settlers in the community took the hills and mountains as their source of security. Thus, with the advancements of Uthman Dan Fodio (Fulani Jihadist) towards Old Oyo (*Oyo Ile*), there was a forced amalgamation of the various settlements under a strong bond of oath (*imule*) to forge a common front against the invaders. The amalgamated settlement then moved to the top of *Iyamopo* Mountain and camped at a place referred to as House of Oath (*Ile-Imule*) or *Ile-Igbeti*, till date. The rock was strongly fortified with a thick mud fence, and the people united

courageously and methodically to have victory over the Jihadists and other invaders during the Yoruba wars of the ancient Oyo kingdom. The amalgamated settlement eventually moved back to the rich valley to settle down. The fact that they were unconquerable made them to adopt the name *Agbati* (unconquerable) which has eventually metamorphosed into Igbeti. (See Ogunkunle: 2016, pp. 15-16 for another side of the story).

Secondly, the original settlers in the community worshipped each of these hills and mountains. This is still done, as the people in the community believe that there are spirits living inside the hills that are capable of protecting and granting their requests. The coming of Christianity into the Igbeti community has made a significant impact on the people, and it has brought a lot of development to the community. Significantly, some pastors, prophets, prophetesses have taken over some of the hills as *Ori-Oke* where prevailing prayers are offered. Five of the *Ori-Oke* in Igbeti community are discussed below:

1. *Oke Igbala* (Mount of Salvation)

Oke Igbala was established in 1970 by Prophet James Adegbiyi Ishola of the Cherubim and Seraphim Church, Igbeti. The *Ori-Oke* is open to everybody, irrespective of religion and denomination to pray and meet with God for the morning, afternoon, night vigil or the whole day. Individual groups are also welcome to pray on the mountain. As the Lord led the founder of the mountain, testimonies abound, as to how the *Ori-Oke* has become a place of prayer for freedom from bondages of the devil, such as sickness, poverty and debt. It has also been a place where souls are won into the kingdom of God.

2. *Oke Kosounti* (Mount of Possibility)

This was founded in 2000 by Rev. A.A Oladebo of the Holy Ghost Sanctuary, Igbeti. The mountain is attended by different people from different religions: Christians, Muslims, traditional worshippers, Yoruba, Hausa, Tiv, Idoma, among others. The goal of establishing the *Ori-Oke* is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ and

to set captives free. The founder, following the example of Jesus Christ argues that individuals must be led by the Holy Spirit to establish a Prayer Mountain, or go to any of the mountains to pray. The *Ori-Oke* is a place where there is no secrecy from God. In other words, it is a place where one is opened to God to perform His miracles.

3. *Oke Aanu* (Mount of Mercy)

This was established in 2008 by Rev. I.K. Ogundiran, the current minister in charge of First Baptist Church, Igbeti. The founder said that his vision came from God who asked him to establish the *Ori-Oke* for salvation of mankind, deliverance from bondage of Satan, freedom of the captives and breakthroughs in life and business. Several people comprising Christians, Muslims and traditional worshippers, from within and outside of Igbetiland even outside of Nigeria, have visited the mountain. There have been testimonies of healing and deliverance in the lives of people who attend the *Ori-Oke*.

4. *Oke Isegun* (Mount of Victory)

This *Ori-Oke* was founded in 2009 by Rev. Moses Adedokun, who originally was a member of United Missionary Church of Africa, Igbeti. The vision for the establishment of the mountain came from God, for the purpose of salvation of mankind, as well as deliverance from the shackles of the enemy, for the edification of new converts and for breakthrough in life. People from different denominations visit the *Ori-Oke*, along with Muslims and traditional worshippers. Even though the problems confronting the nation are numerous and life is becoming unbearable for many, members are told that all will soon be well, and that people should pray unto the Lord.

5. *Oke Kara*

This is the newest of all the Prayer Mountains in Igbeti. It was established in 2014 by Pastor Charles Emeka who was originally a student Pastor at United Missionary Church of Africa, Jerusalem, Igbeti. *Kara* is the name of the area where the mountain is located, as the founder is yet to give a specific name. Incidentally, the young

pastor has charisma, and he is gifted in pastoral/ prophetic ministration. The main purpose of the *Ori-Oke* was to get a conducive environment for prayer and worship. He said that the Lord led him to current location of *Ori-Oke*, when bees drove him away from his former location two years ago. He says that since he came to this mountain, the Lord has been doing great things on the mountain in terms of salvation of souls for the kingdom of God, healing of sickness and deliverance from the bondage of Satan. According to him, the purpose of the mountain is to raise soldiers for Christ in all churches; teach them the undiluted word of Christ; make an impact on the lives of the less privileged; fill the gaps that churches have left open through carelessness and have personal encounters with the Lord, among others.

Economic Benefits of *Ori- Oke* in Igbeti Community

There is no doubt that Christianity has made a significant impact in the Igbeti Community. The function of *Ori-Oke* in the community, changed from places for traditional worshippers to Christian worship centres, is commendable. Obviously, the presence of several *Ori-Oke* in the community has become a source of financial and economic benefits to both the worshippers and founders of the *Ori- Oke*.

It is appropriate at this point to briefly discuss the *Ori-Oke* issue in the light of the scale of preference, an economic theory that is used in this chapter to explore the economic benefits of *Ori-Oke* in the Igbeti community. Scale of preference by definition is a list of unsatisfied wants arranged in the order of their relative importance. In other words, it is the ranking of desires according to their relative importance. That is, the most pressing wants come first, and the least pressing ones come last. It is after the first desire on the list has been satisfied that there will be room for the satisfaction of the next (Ande, 2012). The importance of this theory deals with helping individuals or groups meet their maximum satisfaction, using their limited resources and helping them to make the right choices, when it comes to allocating scarce resources. Scale of preference illustrates the wants of an economic agent, which may be individuals, firms or

governments in a hierarchical form, starting with the highest priority. Muktar opines that, since the relative intensity and desirability given to the want of economic agents differs and varies, it becomes pertinent to scale their wants, according to the preference order, so as to achieve maximum satisfaction with the limited resources at their disposal.

From the supply side, the scale of preference can be an important tool to an organization or individual traders, when a choice is to be made and economic activities are to be undertaken. It enables firms or individual traders to throw resources where priority is given, taking cognizance of various economic factors and market indices. The scale of preference holds so much relevance in economic reality, that its application can be seen in deciding not just the material to be purchased, but also the economic activities of a firm, amidst others. Unlike the individual, whose preference may be scaled according to his taste, fashion, the weather condition, price and so on, the firm's decision is drawn from the consideration of returns on investment, profit potentials, cost effectiveness, and so on. It allows for optimal allocation and efficient utilization of scarce resources.

Applying this theory to Igbeti community, it is obvious that different people derive economic benefits from *Ori-Oke* in the community. On the part of individual worshippers within and outside of the community, their spiritual and financial needs are met, as seen in the number of *Ori-Oke* in the community. Testimonies as to how worshippers have prayed for economic and financial breakthrough on the *Ori-Oke* and had God answer them abound. One of my informants told me of a testimony of one of his members who was on a mountain to pray. As he was praying, another person who was on the same mountain to pray for a different thing heard him, and the Lord used that man to meet the others' financial need. The man came back home thanking God for answering his prayer (Pastor Bojuwade).

The founders of *Ori-Oke* in the Igbeti community as well as the pastors and prophets attached to them, do experience economic benefits from time to time. These charismatic pastors/prophets are able to prayerfully identify various needs of the worshippers;

contextualize such needs in the Bible and offer prayers with prophetic declaration for the worshippers. As God intervenes in the lives of these worshippers after the prayers on *Ori-Oke*, it is normal and natural for worshippers to come back to appreciate the men of God. Some of the worshippers who make pledges and vows during prayers come back to redeem such pledges/vows. With such financial gifts, pledges and vows, the founders, pastors and prophets are economically empowered to purchase their most pressing needs in their scale of preference. In fact, some of the founders have started to construct a befitting and permanent structure on the *Ori-Oke* in the community. Our research has shown that most of the *Ori-Oke* in Igbe community are owned by individual pastors and prophets, most of whom have their congregations in the town. An example is Rev. I.K Ogundiran, the pastor in charge of First Baptist Church, Igbe, who is also the founder of *Oke-Aanu* (Mount of Mercy), which is not under the administration of First Baptist Church, Igbe. Therefore, for each of these pastors/prophets/evangelists to have a sacred mountain for prayer and worship, in addition to the places of worship in the town, is a source of additional income to them.

On the part of traders in the community, the times of programmes in any of the *Ori-Oke* are periods of economic benefit, as traders make it a priority to stock their shops with essential items such as toothpaste, soap, toilet rolls, face towels, 'pure' water, writing materials, and so on. Of course, the food vendors are not left out in making food and snacks available to the worshippers. The traders, with their limited resources, make sure that these essential items are purchased before the *Ori-Oke* prayer times, knowing fully well that the items will be sold with profit made. As for the worshippers, these essential items are the most pressing needs, which they have no option but to purchase, because they cannot go elsewhere to buy them.

Motorcycle is a common means of transportation in Igbe community. This means that the motorcycle (*Okada*) riders are not left out of the economic benefits of *Ori-Oke* in the community. The season for any of the *Ori-Oke* is a period of brisk business for *Okada* riders, as worshippers need their services to take them to and from

the venue *Ori-Oke*. Even while the programme is going on at *Ori-Oke*, the *Okada* riders station themselves at the base of *Ori-Oke* for any worshippers who need their services.

Evaluation and Concluding Remarks

The following facts are obvious from this research. One, *Ori-Oke* in Ancient Israel were places of worship, revelation and receiving instruction and law from Yahweh, as noted in Exodus 19: 1-25. Incidentally, *Ori-Oke* in Nigerian society was originally well utilized, managed and controlled, as ministers such as Apostle Joseph Ayo Babalola were there to seek divine assistance and solutions to chronic problems such as sickness, among others. However, things have changed in recent times, as there are proliferations of *Ori-Oke*, especially in the last two decades as shown in the samples from Igbe community.

Secondly, in Exodus 19, only Moses and Aaron were allowed to come up on the mountain Sinai to receive law from Yahweh, while all others were mandated to stay at the base of the mountain. This is not the case in the contemporary society as *Ori-Oke* are opened to all people irrespective of ethnic and religious background. Anyone can go up to the *Ori-Oke* at any time of the day or night. The only thing is that some of the *Ori-Oke* have rules and regulations that worshippers must abide to. For example, in some *Ori-Oke*, no one is allowed to wear shoes or scandals. In some other *Ori-Oke*, ladies are not allowed to put on trousers, or put on earrings and everything must be kept at the base of the *Ori-Oke*.

Thirdly, unlike the time of Moses when the Israelite society had less issues to struggle with, the contemporary Nigerian society is very complex with diverse issues and challenges confronting the people. The challenges, for which people are desperately seeking solutions, are marital, family, financial and spiritual, among others. The current situation of hardship has made several individuals, who ordinarily find it difficult to attend church service in the town attend *Ori-Oke* for solutions to their chronic problems. Thus *Ori-Oke* is open to all: Christians, Muslims and traditional worshippers.

Finally, and as earlier discussed, *Ori-Oke* has economic benefits to both the worshippers and founders/pastors/prophets of the *Ori-Oke*. For the worshippers, getting permanent solution to their economic crisis and family problems are the most pressing needs in their scale of preference, hence, they seek for spiritual solution on *Ori-Oke*. As for the founders, as well as pastors and prophets attached to *Ori-Oke*, getting spiritual solution to the challenges of worshippers is their most pressing need in their scale of preference. When this is achieved, two things will happen: one, they will have a sense of fulfilment in their ministerial assignments. Secondly, they will be economically empowered by the worshippers, whose problems have been solved as the worshippers appreciate them with financial gifts, which in turn, help them to purchase the most pressing needs in their own personal scale of preference.

In conclusion, founders, pastors, prophets, and prophetesses who are in charge of different *Ori-Oke*, especially in the Igbe community, must continue to attend to the spiritual needs of the worshippers as this ministration has economic benefits to them, the worshippers and the whole community. Therefore, they must be led by the spirit of the Lord in all they do on *Ori-Oke*, as they assist spiritually all the worshippers that come. They must not be seen to complicate matters for the worshippers. Rather, they must be agents through which people can worship God and receive instruction from Him. With this, the desired social change and transformation in contemporary Africa will be realized.

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