

Missions in Seasons of Chaos

Lessons from Yoruba Civil Wars for Contemporary Christian Missions

Introduction

Nigeria is going through some of the worst security challenges in her existential history. The security challenges can be divided into food security, health and social security, job security and safety issues. However, the most glaring security challenge has to do with armed conflicts. The conflict is exemplified in banditry, ethno-religious crises, kidnapping for ransom, kidnapping for ritual, armed robbery and others. Many parts of the nation have practically become theatres of war, which makes residing there almost like an anathema. The nation is summarily largely unsafe.

Nevertheless, amid the violent situation, Christians have been called to be harbingers of the tidings of the Prince of Peace. Those whom Christ saves are duty-bound to extend the frontiers of the kingdom of God through missionary activities. They have been commanded to preach the gospel of salvation, whether it is safe or not (Matt 28.19-20; Rom 1. 16-17; 2 Tim 4.1-5). Christianity is a missionary religion. However, can missions be done in the chaos that has become descriptive of Nigeria?

The task of this article is to show that doing missions in a chaotic situation is not new. It shall demonstrate that the present security situation in Nigeria is not without precedence. It shall illustrate that the Yoruba land, through which most protestant Christian missions came into what became Nigeria, was embroiled in armed conflict when missionaries came. The article shall also draw lessons contemporary missionaries should learn and apply in the current security situation.

Security Challenges in Nigeria

Without mincing words, Nigeria's most significant challenge is security. The situation

has reached a point where everyone in the nation, including political leaders, seems to be at sea. Security challenges in the nation are typically manifested in armed conflicts and terror attacks. Their increased expression may be why the embassies of the United Kingdom, the United States and Australia, within the space of one week, issued travel advisories to their citizens living or doing business in Nigeria to avoid the nation's capital.¹ The three embassies hinged their advisories on Nigeria's increased threat of terrorist attacks. It is not only the embassies of those world powers that feel Nigeria is grossly unsafe. Nigerians also think that security threat is a significant issue in the nation. The result of an online survey by *Premium Times* indicated that 42% of the participants on Twitter rated insecurity as the major challenge in Nigeria.²

The above data are not without bases. The armed attacks in Nigeria in the past ten years have been scary. The horrendous stories of unprovoked armed attacks in Nigeria are numbing. For instance, on June 5, 2022, there was a gun attack in a church in Owo, leaving

¹ Chiamaka Okafor, “US, UK warn Citizens of Terror Attacks in Nigeria” in *Premium Times*, 23/10/2022 available @ <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/561301-us-uk-warn-citizens-of-possible-terror-attacks-in-nigerias-capital.html> accessed on 11/11/2022.

The online survey asked participants what problem the next president of Nigeria should tackle. The report is available @ https://twitter.com/PremiumTimesng?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1577595120240795648%7Ctwgr%5Edb46763a8d457fa2ffc4e8f272b3213de50df4ea%7Ctwcon%5Es1_&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.premiumtimesng.com%2Fnews%2Ftop-news%2F561301-us-uk-warn-citizens-of-possible-terror-attacks-in-nigerias-capital.html accessed on 11/11/2022

fewer than 40 deaths and several injuries behind.³ The Owo attack reminds one of a similar attack on a church on Christmas day in Madalla, some nine years earlier.⁴ As if that was not enough, numerous armed attacks have also been conducted on police and military formations in many parts of the nation.⁵ An armed gang attacked the Kuje Minimum Security Prison, and more than 900 inmates were set free, including suspected high-profile terrorists. Reports also indicate that there has been increased armed conflict in the South-East of Nigeria, including the “stay at home” that has become volatile in several parts of Igbo land. There has also been targeted killing in regions including Akwa-Ibom, Rivers, Delta, Imo, Anambra, Delta, Edo and Ebonyi states.⁶ The nation’s northeast has been embroiled in armed conflict with the deadly Islamic extremist group Boko Haram and its several splinter appendages. The northwest and north central are also inundated with clashes between the nomadic herders, predominantly Fulani and the farming communities spreading from Benue to Kebbi states and everything in-between. The southwest, which was reputed to be relatively peaceful, has started seeing increased incidences of kidnapping for rituals and ransom. The whole nation is experiencing security challenges. The picture above shows that Christian missions within the national borders also experience insecurity-related challenges. The fact that Christians claim to call upon the Almighty God has not immuned them against the blistering security situation in the nation. Several Christian groups have counted irreparable losses in human and material terms. The northern part of the country is particularly replete with stories of horror meted on hapless Christians. The

kidnap of young girls from the Chibok community and the Leah Sharibu saga is often perceived as religiously motivated crimes. When the extremist Boko haram began, the focus was on church buildings and Christian gatherings. In some locations, the assailants looked for Christian leaders and missionaries to kill or maim. There are too many stories of Christian leaders murdered in cold blood in northern Nigeria. The northern parts of Nigeria have recently been hostile to Christian missionary enterprises.

Nigeria’s security situation makes one wonder whether it is safe to do Christian missions in the nation. The security situation is capable of instilling fear in the mind of anyone who may want to venture into proclaiming the gospel of Jesus in the hostile environments of Nigeria. The enormity of the insecurity at the moment makes people argue that the security challenge has been unprecedented. However, available records show that Christian missions doubled during the armed hostilities in the 19th-century Yoruba land.

The Yoruba Civil War

One of the defining characteristics of the 19th-century Yoruba land was the widespread fratricidal wars that engulfed the entire country. Yoruba country was at war with itself, and the people were severely displaced from the northern end of the land to its southern borders. Prominent wars were the Ilorin wars of the 1830s and 1840s, the Batedo war of 1844, the Ijaye war of 1860-65, and the kiriji war of 1878-1893, which involved practically all of Yorubaland.⁷ Samuel Johnson⁸ amply demonstrated that for reasons such as mutual suspicion, jealousy, royal impudence, insubordination and territorial expansionist ambitions of provincial chiefs and military leaders, the entire land was in armed struggle. For instance, the Owu king was at war against the Apomu. The Egbas joined Ife to Sack Owu; Afonja raided several Yoruba towns and villages to assert his military supremacy.

³ “Foreign Travel advisory on Nigeria” available @ www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/Nigeria/safety-and-security accessed on 11/11/2022

⁴ Christmas Day Bombing Sweeps Nigeria, at Least 39 Dead available @ <https://www.voanews.com/a/at-least-10-killed-as-blast-strikes-nigerian-church-136201763/149937.html>

⁵ Taiwo Hassan Adebayo, “Inside Story of how Nigerian Presidential Guard Fell into Terrorist Ambush” in *Premium Times* 03/08/2022, 4; Solomon Odeniyi and Abiodun Sanusi, “Suspected Terrorists Attack Niger-Abuja Millitary Checkpoint” in *The Punch*, 28/07/2022, 3.

⁶ Foreign Travel Advisory”.

⁷ S. Ademola Ajayi, *Baptist Work in Nigeria (1850-2005)*, (Ibadan: BookWright, 2010), 45-46.

⁸ Samuel Johnson, *The History of the Yorubas: From the Earliest Times to the Beginning of the British Protectorate* (London: Lowe and Brydone, 1961).

Everyone seemed to be against everyone in the country.

While the events in Yoruba land were not cast in a religious light, religious elements mixed with unbridled personal desire contributed significantly to the imbroglio of those days. The story of Afonja of Ilorin illustrated, among other things, the insubordination of provincial leaders to the Alaafin of Oyo and the selfish ambition that pitted the country against itself. However, the crisis in the land was further accentuated by Fulani marauders, who began to infiltrate Yoruba land towards the middle of the 19th century. In his pursuit of independence from Oyo, Afonja had recruited the Fulani marauders, called *Jamas*, as his soldiers.⁹ While he was alive, they became a security threat to the northern parts of Yoruba land. Their activities were possibly some of the earliest expressions of banditry in the Yoruba land. Their activities eventually snowballed into a major security crisis throughout the Yoruba land.

The warring parties dispatched by provincial chiefs against one another and the marauding troops displaced many people. In the heat of fratricidal wars, Afonja was killed by the Fulanis under the command of Alimi, an Islamic cleric. Under him, the marauders promptly proceeded to sack the rest of Yoruba land, one section after another. The headquarters of the Empire, Katunga, was also sacked.¹⁰ Smith wrote, "in the course of the Ilorin war, the Fulani had succeeded in capturing and sacking the Alaafin's capital at (old) Oyo (or Katunga) in about 1822, forcing Alaafin Amodu and his people to accept Islam."¹¹ Many Oyo people were forced to leave their homes in the savannah region around River Niger to look for new settlements.

The fall of the old Oyo Empire, the most prominent political unit in Yoruba land, had significant ripple effects on the entire Yoruba country. Oyo had served as the stabilising force for Peace within the whole country. Alaafin served as the protector of the land against external aggression as well as a threat to any provincial power that may want to foment internal trouble within the country.¹² However,

the desecration of the imperial capital and the successive defeats of provincial rulers sent jitters across the land. The power of the Fulanis *jamās* was great, and they aimed at nothing short of the subversion of the whole Yoruba country.

Meanwhile, the Yoruba war chiefs inadvertently assisted the plot through their mutual jealousy of one another. Allegiance was no longer to the King, not even in the capital. The Fulanis launched one expedition after another resulting in the devastation and depopulation of the country. The situation led to an upsurge of internally displaced persons moving from one end of the country. Ijaye, and the war, which immortalised the town's name, is representative of the situation of that age.

Ijaye, an Egba town, was located at the northern tip of the Egba forest, close to the limits of the oil palm belt.¹³ Nevertheless, the sack of the Old Oyo Empire and the concomitant events that accompanied it forced Ikoyi chiefs under Kurunmi to move southward around 1821. Kurunmi and his men summarily took Ijaye intact and its compounds occupied.¹⁴ Meanwhile, Ibadan had metamorphosed from the war camp it was to an emerging significant military power in Yorubaland. The war in the northern part of Yorubaland had forced the Egba people to abandon their scattered forest settlement to congregate around Olumo rock and form Abeokuta. Hence, the emergence of Ibadan, Abeokuta and Ijaye, which may have taken place in about 1830,¹⁵ was a product of the civil wars in the Yoruba country.

Amid the armed conflict of the 1840s, which affected practically every part of the Yoruba country, Christian missions began in Yoruba land. The Yoruba freed enslaved people, many of whom have become Christians, had returned to Badagry, Abeokuta and Lagos. Those immigrants had sent messages to missionaries in Sierra Leone requesting them to send teachers. The response to the appeals gave birth to missionary activities in the Yoruba country. Thomas Birch Freeman of the Wesleyan

⁹ Ibid, 197-198.

¹⁰ Ibid, 142

¹¹ Smith, 322.

¹² S. Ademola Ajayi, *Baptist Work in Nigeria (1850-*

2005), (Ibadan: BookWright, 2010), 42.

¹³ R. S. Smith, "Ijaye, the Western Palatinate of the Yoruba" in *Journal of Historical Society of Nigeria*, 2, 3, (Dec. 1962), 329.

¹⁴ Ibid, 330.

¹⁵ Ibid, 333.

Missionary Society (WMS), Henry Townsend of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) and Thomas Bowen of the Baptist Mission were the first missionaries to arrive in Yoruba country. Freeman and Townsend arrived in 1842, while Bowen arrived in 1850. Abeokuta became the centre of missionary activities immediately.

Meanwhile, Kurunmi, the Ijaye war chief, was becoming powerful and famous. His fame and the strategic location of Ijaye made Alaafin Atiba confer on him the title of Aare Ona Kakanfo. Oluyole, the warrior-chief at Ibadan was made Bashorun. The intention of Alaafin Atiba was to make Ijaye defend the empire from Dahomi from the southwest and Fulani from the northwest, while Ibadan would protect the empire from the Fulani invasion from the northeast.¹⁶ The relationship between Ibadan and Ijaye was cordial at the initial stage. Smith illustrated that Kurunmi assisted Ibadan in defeating a coalition of Ife and Egba's attack on Ibadan while Ibadan joined forces with Ijaye to sack Abemo.¹⁷ However, with time relationship deteriorated. Ibadan soon faced Ijaye in the Batedo war in 1846. The two war chiefs had territorial expansionist ambitions. Ijaye was destroyed on May 18, 1862. The town was reduced to rubble so much that when Rev Buhler of the CMS visited the town on Dec 10, 1862 (less than seven months after the war), he could not recognise it.¹⁸ The destruction of Ijaye by Ibadan warriors further illustrated the disturbed state of the Yoruba country in the days when missionaries entered Yoruba land.

Missions in Season of Chaos. Christian Missions during the Yoruba Civil War.

Before the armed conflict that involved Abeokuta, Ibadan and Ijaye, mission stations had been established at Ake, Igbein, Itoku, Owu, Oshiele, Ikija and Ibadan. Because of the importance of Ijaye, the CMS opened a station there with Rev Adolphus Mann in charge. Meanwhile, the town had also been prospected by Bowen in 1852. Bowen had intended to go to Igboho. However, Kurumi had barred the caravan to that route. Hence, he invited Bowen to settle in Ijaye. He established the first missionary station there in 1853. David

Hinderer of the CMS had been well received in Ibadan in 1851, and in 1853 started a mission station at Kudeti, Aremo and Ogunpa.¹⁹ Several converts have been made, while the missionaries of the various denominations also proved themselves to be valuable and tactful friends and advisers to the non-Christian rulers. It is instructive to note that Townsend, Bowen and Hinderer spoke Yoruba fluently and could converse freely with the rulers and their people. Although the process and progress of conversion were slow, Christian missions were beginning to impact the Yoruba country. However, as indicated earlier, several factors were working together, resulting in the outbreak of a cataclysmic war between Ibadan and Ijaye. The missionaries were divided in their attitude towards the war.²⁰ The war would have been an entirely Yoruba-Oyo war. However, Abeokuta became allied with Ijaye. Hence, David Hinderer, who stayed in Ibadan, supported Ibadan in the war. He rationalised that because of the threat of Ilorin, the power of Ibadan must not be allowed to reduce. He argued that, if it did, the entire country would be overrun by Mohammedanism, and Christian missions would be jeopardised. He was even distressed that Abeokuta Christians joined the battle against Ibadan. He felt the war was a Yoruba-Oyo war; Egba Christian should have been neutral.

Meanwhile, Townsend aligned with Abeokuta in their support for Ijaye. He argued that Egba represented the most progressive civilised part of the country and that the victory of Ibadan over Ijaye would upset the power balance in the interior, and the Christian course would be in great danger. The leaders of Abeokuta further explained that being Christians did not remove Egba Christians from civic responsibility. The missionaries were too committed to their respective flocks. Furthermore, they had become emotionally involved with the local politics of their domains. Hence, their judgments were clouded with sentiments.

¹⁹ W. O. Ajayi, "Christian Involvement in the Ijaye War" in *The History of Christianity in West Africa* (London: Longman Group, 1960), 200–202.

²⁰ This paper section depends largely on W. O. Ajayi, 207–210.

¹⁶ Ajayi, 43.

¹⁷ Smith, 334.

¹⁸ Ajayi, 52.

The war raged with attendant consequences. The centres of missionary activities were bombarded. In Ijaye, the mission house of Adolphus Mann became a camp hospital, and his surgical skill became necessary. He was busy extracting bullets and treating wounds, attending to the needs of orphaned children and making arrangements for some of them to be sent to Abeokuta for safety. Missions in Awaye, Ibara, Biolorunpelu and Oyo were suspended. The Baptist missions were not spared. R. H Stone was travelling to Iddo from Ijaye to warn Vaughan of the impending danger when Ibadan warriors captured him. Ibadan warriors believed Stone, Philip and Vaughan, the American Baptists, and Adolphus Mann had helped Ijaye with their skilled shootings and rifles. Mann was explicitly charged with the offence of using his special telescope to detect Ibadan warriors' movements. Hence, when Edward Roper, the catchiest who came to relieve Mann in Ijaye, was taken to Ibadan among the prisoners of war, they spared him only because he was not the "white man of Ijaye". One can see here that the Ijaye war, like any other of the Yoruba wars, constituted a significant risk for the early missionaries. Missionary activities were grounded to a halt.

The conflagration and stress of the incessant war in Yoruba land had worn everyone involved out. Hence, people were longing for Peace. Christians and their missionaries provided leadership and influenced decisions that led to relief. The first step was to pray. Hence, at Ota, Abeokuta and Ibadan, a series of weekly prayer meetings began. They were praying for the restoration of Peace to the country and the preservation of churches. The Abeokuta Christian soldiers camped at Olokomeji also began to hold Sunday services. Non-Christian soldiers also joined the Sunday services. In most towns, Christians formed themselves into relief bands for the sick and the poor. Those organisations worked through mutual edification, reading of the scriptures and prayers. Some fetched wood to make fires, and others brought medicine, money, and food for the patient. David Hinderer used his office to secure the release of many Christians captured in wars. Other Yoruba Christians in Ibadan also provided material and emotional support to the

missionaries who were cut off from the rest of the world because of the wars.

Furthermore, many widows and orphans were rescued to Abeokuta, where they were placed in the care of missionaries. While the war wore on, to boost the morale of the Christian Egba soldiers, Townsend launched a media war on Ibadan. The news items were crafted to portray Ibadan in a negative light. He made use of his *Iwe Iroyin* extensively. Hinderer responded by advancing Ibadan views through the *Anglo-African* at Lagos.

The fall of Ijaye did not end the Yoruba wars. However, it became a turning point in the protracted crises that crippled the country. It pushed the people to the point where everyone wanted the wars to end. They wanted to live in Peace, and an atmosphere wherein legitimate commerce could flourish. Christian missionaries took the initiative. In December 1862, Captain JPL Davies and Rev James Lamb of the CMS in Lagos secured the permission of the Egba authorities to embark on a peace mission to Ibadan. Rev Buhler joined them in Abeokuta. They intended to relieve the missionaries trapped in war zones and to win the goodwill of various authorities in Ibadan, Oyo and Abeokuta for the immediate restoration of Peace. They visited places ravaged by war and interacted with the people. That visit opened the way for Peace that was later to come.

The missionaries also served as agents of relief in those days of crises. They built institutions and structures that provided succour for the hurting. For instance, when Ijaye fell, refugees flocked to Abeokuta. Egba authorities gave them a separate quarter called Ago-Ijaye. Many Ijaye people became Christian converts in Abeokuta, and Henry Townsend opened a school called Ake Orphanage. It became a charity home for orphaned children sent by Mann and Philips to Abeokuta. Among the refugees were members of the Ijaye Baptist congregation. They settled in Alabama and started a new congregation called Ijaye Baptist Church in 1862.²¹ Many orphaned children rescued from the Ijaye war later became influential members of the larger societies.

²¹ Ademola Ajayi, 53.

Lessons for Contemporary Missions

Contemporary missions, like those during the Yoruba civil wars, are situated within the context of general armed conflict. Like the days of the Ijaye wars, missions are faced with the challenge of safety, environmental hazard, armed conflicts and general insecurity. Nevertheless, Christian missionaries must continue to carry out the demands of the gospel in obedience to the command of Jesus to preach the gospel and the human existential needs for the Prince of Peace. Missionary activities during the civil wars, exemplified by Ijaye War, provided vital lessons that are adaptable in the face of the ongoing security situation in the country.

Christian missions and their leaders must display objectivity in emerging armed hostilities. Because Christian leaders, like Mann and Townsend, often have emotional attachments to their religious course, parishioners or tribes, they are prone to make irrational decisions. Such decisions also often get communicated either overtly or covertly. That was the situation in the prelude to the Ijaye war. One is concerned that Townsend and Mann belonged to the same CMS. However, while their reasons were the same, their approach showed that they were more concerned about their ecclesiastical provinces than the overall good of the Yoruba country. Recently, some Christian leaders have been found to inadvertently stoke the ember of violence through utterances that inflamed passions among their followers. For instance, in the wake of Boko Haram armed hostilities, some Christian leaders approached the issue from a sectarian perspective. It must be borne in mind that religious leaders hold a strategic position in the socialisation process of their communities. Their followers take their words seriously. Hence, they must be objective in their comments on issues capable of jeopardising the nation's Peace.

Missionaries should also stay with their parishioners or converts during hostilities. Adolph Mann, R. H Stone, Philip and Vaughan in Ijaye, and David Hinderer in Ibadan demonstrated this. They remained in their mission stations. Until the fall of Ijaye, Stone and others remained there. Hinderer was

reported to have remained steadfast, deploying his sense of humour in situations that should have made him cower. It was reported that he was practically cut off from the rest of the world. Mrs Mann, despite her failing health, was caring for the many orphans and widows in Ijaye. Ditto for Stone and Philip. Their continued presence encouraged their parishioners. When it was time to move out of Ijaye, Philip and, later, Stone led the converts to safety in Abeokuta. Of great significance was the fact that the exit of Mann hastened the fall of Ijaye. The rumoured departure of the white man of Ijaye alarmed the Egba warriors and emboldened the Ibadan warriors to launch a further offensive that ended Ijaye. Christian leaders must realise that by agreeing to serve the Lord, they have also agreed to hazard their lives if need be. Jesus taught that a good shepherd does not abandon the sheep in the face of danger.

Missionaries and mission leaders should be agents of Peace. In hostile situations, people want Peace. Even *dramatis personae* in armed conflict do not desire continued hostilities. Hence, those who represent the Prince of Peace should broker Peace. They must take calculated steps towards ending strife and usher in moments of calmness. Revs James Lamb and Gottlieb Buhler demonstrated that. The missionaries, having failed to be able to stop the commencement of the war, there was a need for men of goodwill to step in to broker Peace. Their visit to several torched locations was reassuring for the victims of the armed struggles. It also led to the gradual sheathing of the devouring sword. It could be hazardous to do that, mainly when conflicts are shrouded in religious garbs. Christian leaders can quickly become the target for extinction in religious conflict. That is the reason why they need calculated involvement in community issues. However, they should not be left behind whenever there is a need to broker Peace.

Missionaries and mission leaders should pray. Prayer does a lot of mysterious things. It can engage the power of God to change tides of events that were once considered beyond human control. While one is careful not to oversimplify the situation, the fact that prayer meetings began in Ota, Ibadan, Abeokuta and several other places was quite significant. Those men and

women were calling on God to bring the hostilities to an end. The situation eventually came under control. While one is concerned about the preponderance of Africans thinking that prayer is all they need to do in all situations, one needs to emphasise that hostile situations demand that those who claim to know the name of the Lord must raise their voices in intensive, intentional and unselfish intercession. The “Nigeria Prays” result, launched by Yakubu Gowon in the days of former President Abacha,²² shows that God answers prayers.²³

Mission leaders should work towards getting material relief for those hurting and troubled. Situations of armed conflict and attendant distress present unique opportunities for Christians to demonstrate the love of Christ. The missionaries did this while staying with their people. Furthermore, believers in Ibadan, Abeokuta and other parts of Yoruba land banded themselves together to form relief clubs. They gathered money for relief materials, and some gathered firewood to make fire, effective medicine in those days, to care for the poor and the afflicted. In Abeokuta, an orphanage was built for the orphaned children while widowed women were cared for by the missions; this is very important for contemporary missions. Children and women are more vulnerable in armed struggles. Armed marauders could sack communities and everyone displaced. Missions should take advantage of the situation to extend the love of Christ. Showing love this way requires mission agents to look beyond their own pain and loss to reach out to those equally hurting.

Modern missionaries and their people should preach the gospel. The primary purpose of Christian missions is to preach the gospel. Hence, contemporary missions should take advantage of every opportunity to preach the gospel. Adolphus Mann and R. H. Stone of the Baptist Missions did that in Ijaye. Mann was quoted to have said that the crisis made the war

chief in Ijaye relax his control against his people’s conversion to Christianity. However, the people were too worried to listen to a preacher.²⁴ The Apostle Paul wrote that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation for everyone (Rom 1.18). He also charged Timothy to be ready to preach in season and out of season (2 Tim 4.1-2, 5). Hence, the missionaries should not be afraid to keep sowing the word of God in all directions.

Conclusion

The security situation in Nigeria is not without precedence. The entry of protestant missions into Yoruba land coincided with the period of civil unrest in the Yoruba country. That unrest culminated in the Ijaye war of the 1860s. However, the missionaries did not shrink back. They continued to minister in the name of the Lord amid those hostilities. They represented the Prince of Peace in the seasons of chaos. Modern missionaries should see the security crises as an opportunity to demonstrate the love of God by ministering to the need of the hurting. They should also be unbiased mediators among warring gangs and use every opportunity to preach Jesus in chaotic situations.

(Akinwale O. Alawode PhD, Senior Lecturer, Department of Intercultural Studies, The Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomoso.

Samson O. Adebayo, Lecturer, Department of Intercultural Studies, The Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomoso.)

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²² “How I Started ‘Nigeria Pray’. Gowon” in *Daily Trust* 13/09/2015 available @ <https://dailytrust.com/how-i-started-nigeria-prays-gowon> access on 11/11/2022 .

²³ This writer participated as a teenager in that prayer movement. It was a time when Nigeria was in the grip of general insecurity and desperation. The nation's situation improved significantly after those days of the call to national prayer.

²⁴ W. O. Ajayi, 206.