The Nexus between the Ten Commandments of the Bible and the Guiding Laws in *Ifá* Oracle

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**ABSTRACT** ---- *In every given society, there are rules and regulations enacted to guide the conduct of the people living in the society without which people would do something injurious to fellow human or the society with impunity. Some of these rules and regulations are made to guide our moral behaviours with one another. Some are specifically made to guide profession while some are for religious conducts. Again, some of these rules were made by the members of the society while some were given directly by the creator through religious and natural means to guide our conducts with the creator and the conduct of humankind via their religious belief. However, this paper makes a comparative study on the connection between the Ten Commandments of the Bible and the guiding laws in *Ifá* oracle. This is done to dissuade people from religious particularity, which is the claim that one’s religion is the best. This is to show that the creator has diverse means of revealing Himself to the humankind thereby religious harmony would be achieved in a pluralistic society like Nigeria with diverse religious faiths. However, in selecting society for our study, we focused on the Yorùbá where *Ifá* is one of the moral and religious instructors and where these commandments are found. The study adopted physical cosmological theory of Roger Bacon, which believed that the universe is governed by physical laws as theoretical framework. A total number of 20 Babaláwọ were interviewed to gather their views on the commandments in *Ifá*. The study shows that the respondent Babaláwọ - *Ifá* priests have perfect understanding of Olódùmarè’s rules and regulations as revealed in *Ifá* oracle and they as well try to obey these rules.*

**Keywords**--Commandments, Yorùbá, *Ifá* priest, Òrúnmilà, Olódùmarè.

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**1. INTRODUCTION**

Today, the notion that Africans are religious and believe in a Supreme Being is no longer debatable. This we can see through physical and non-physical evidences. Among physical evidences to show African belief in Supreme Being are sacred places like temples, shrines, grooves and cultic functionaries like priests and priestesses of various divinities. While non-physical sources are expressed in proverbs, myths, short statements, songs, prayers, stories and religious ceremonies.

It is their belief that the Supreme Being is responsible for the creation of heaven and earth and everything there in. This belief is an important factor of social control, the basis of ethical revolution which is the basis of moral discipline. However, these moral laws and religious laws have no clear distinction. In fact, in the opinion of some scholars, it is rare to find a moral code in any society that exists outside of a religious system (Knight and Loma, 1977:135). They fused together to control both the secular and the religious life of Africans. For instance, in Yorùbá religion and society, anyone who neglects his or her parent’s and elderly ones is not respected by the society. This is what we find in *Odù Ìrẹ̀jẹ̀ Egíntán* (Apatá, 2015) where *Ifá* says;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jùbà ìyá pèlú bábá rẹ</th>
<th>Honour your mother and your father</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kí o bá le pé làyè</td>
<td>that you may live long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rúbọ fún ìyá oun bábá rẹ</td>
<td>make sacrifice for your parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Èbọ itójú Òdodo ìtì ìrēlẹ</td>
<td>sacrifice of sincere care and meekness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kí o bá le tún ara re bì</td>
<td>that you may liberate yourself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rúbọ ìyá oun bábá rẹ</td>
<td>make sacrifice to your mother and father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Èbọ itójú ìrọ́bọ́n Ìrọ́bọ́n</td>
<td>sacrifice of care and obedience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kí ègún wọn mà sòkàlè lè o ìrò</td>
<td>that their curse will not come upon you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ègùn bábá oun ìyá rẹ</td>
<td>the curse of your father and mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ní ègùn Olódùmarè.</td>
<td>Is the curse of the almighty!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rúbọ fún ìyá oun bábá rẹ</td>
<td>make sacrifice for your mother and father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Èbọ́lẹ́ Òdodo</td>
<td>a sacrifice of sincere love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kí o bá le ni iṣẹ́nmi</td>
<td>that you may have rest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kí o bá le ni ìbákùn</td>
<td>That you may have blessing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is one of the Ten Commandments found in the Bible and its equivalent in *Ifá* oracle that this paper tried to explain about God’s revelation that is not limited to Christians or Muslim doctrines alone. Rather, it is a universal...
phenomenon. With this notion at heart, religious peace, tolerance, and harmony would therefore, be possible in Nigeria if we realize that what is preached in one religion is equally present in other religions. Such notion or understanding will thus help to eradicate hatred, and religious particularity in the country. The consequence of such understanding will help to bring about the unity needed in the country considering the significance of religion in the life of the citizenry. With religious peace and harmony in existence, other aspects of human endeavors will also experience peace and harmony. Though in most traditional societies in Africa, there are no sacred writings in which all is compounded except recently that few scholars tried to write some things on Ifá. Rather, it is passed from one generation to another, yet they are binding on people, they are obeyed and they are respected and feared.

2. THE CONCEPT OF GOD OF THE BIBLE

The biblical Hebrew are the people speaking Semitic languages. Their origin can be traced to the Syro-Arabian desert, in which they wandered for centuries (WipNet, 2004: 9). However, to really understand the origin of the Jews, one would need to trace the history back to the land of Sumer, the birth place of civilization. Etymologists claimed that the story of the Garden of Eden found in the book of Genesis, the book that was first written down around 2,700 years ago is the story of Sumer with evidence that writing had stated thousands of years far back in history in the land of Sumer before it was written, the Sumerians had developed excellent farming techniques, building technology, writing, glass work, metal works stone carving, carpentry works and theology that attracted travelers from distant lands (WipNet, 2004: 10).

Ur, Kish, Eridu, Lagash and Nippur were parts of important cities out of twenty cities that made up of Sumer land and each was politically and religiously autonomous with a King and a priest. However, contrary to people’s belief that cities like Ur, Larsa and harm mentioned in the book of Genesis as cities of the Jews were in actual sense part and cities of Sumer. As at that time, the Jews were actually Nomads who travelled and changed settlements often. Therefore, they have no city they could call their own. They are not a race or a historical nation as we are made to believe in the books of the Bible, but a group who found commonality in their statelessness and adopted a theological history based on Sumerian sub group (Knight and Lomas, 1997: 120). Their first experience of seeing people living in communal cities were when they first encountered the Egyptians who usually called them Habiru, a derogatory term used to describe the Semitic tribes that wandered like the Bedouin. Therefore, they were wanderers and the word Habiru was changed to Hebrew and became the name of that nation at a later time (Knight and Lomas, 1997: 120).

The Sumerians believed in many gods, the gods that had humanlike emotions and feelings. They also viewed that the sun, moon and stars were gods. They had hope in a goddess of the reeds that grew around them and in a goddess of the beer that they distilled. They opined that they had been created to serve their gods and they served these gods with sacrificial offerings and supplications. In Sumerian, gods are not just a helper, hinderer or agent of change, they are lords, owners and authorities over the land of Sumer and the priests that served these gods claimed their status on their association with the gods. These gods were originally associated with a particular city and were worshipped in the temples and small shrines in family houses. When ranking became necessary among the gods because of the fact that two or more gods came to be viewed as one, Anu, a sky god, the city god of Uruk became the greatest of them all and Enil, the storm god of Nippur was the second. However, these gods were violent and unpredictable.

Around 2000 B.C. the inhabitants’ incurred the wrath of their gods. Both Sumer and Akkad along with sixteen other cities were attacked by the Barbarian invaders. The Elamites from Iran, took the city of Ur, sacked it and burnt it down. This sacking was attributed to failing their gods and their gods delivering them in the hands of their enemies. However, Ur survived this attack, but never regained its glory as it were in the beginning. As a result of this, there was a decline in the relationship between the people of Sumer and their central city gods. And this led to the concept of personal gods which makes it possible for a person to inherit his god from his father. This is responsible for the usual phenomenon.

The concept of god. The concept of god in the Bible is an important role in the history of the Jews was from the city of Ur, one of the prominent cities of Sumer that was checkmated by Iran as said earlier. Based on the Sumerian deities narrated above therefore, the tendency and belief that Abraham left Ur during the time of decline for another city could be said to be true and while leaving, he left with his own personal god with a promise that he (his god) would be given a new home in the land of Canaan where he was directed to go by his god. Therefore, it was from the Sumerian city of Ur that Abraham came with his personal god known as the God of his fathers between 2000 B.C. and 1600 B.C (WipNet, 2004, 15). We should note however, that this land of Canaan that his personal god promised him and his generations yet unborn was formerly owned and occupied by some people who were dispossessed of the land through the help of a storm god, a god of war that is not different from Ògún, the Yorùbá god of war which the Hebrews or the Jews called Yahweh (Knight and Lomas, 1997: 206). Therefore, if stories we read in the Bible are true, then, Yahweh is not different from the above description. He is a questionable and vengeful god who justified invasion, theft and slaughter of innocent people without any compassion. With Moses reference to the god’s of their father Abraham Isaac and Jacob, showed that Yahweh is Abraham’s personal god or his fathers or family god that instructed him to leave the city of Ur for a new place he promised him if he obeys as found in Gen 12:1. Though this personal god of Abraham’s fathers called Yahweh was not known until the time of Moses. Even in introducing himself to Moses, Yahweh played it cleverly by not mentioning his own name. It was this personal god that later became the god of the descendants of Abraham and the Jews till today. He
revealed himself to Moses as Yahweh, the god of their fathers. He assisted them in killing, maiming and disposing of many nations of their lands and properties. He gave them rules and regulations to follow. Above all, he gave them the Ten Commandments found in the book of Exodus 20:1-17, the Holy book of the Jewish/Christian religion.

3. ÒRÚNMÌLÀ: THE CUSTODIAN OF ÍFÁ ORACLE.

Many things have been written and said about Òrúnmìlà. However, taking a cue from what Salami said about Òrúnmìlà, only a little can be said or written about him. Trying to write everything about him is like trying to write or know everything about ìfá, the word of Olódùmarè (Salami, 2008: 193). According to (Salami, 2008: 194), when Olódùmarè created the heaven, he created the sixteen major Òdù, Ṡàwọ́ùrè, the priest of Òrúnmìlà’s house. He also created Ajágúnmáìlélè Oláwù ọ́dè Òrùn – the head of all the priests in heaven to care for everything he (Olódùmarè) created. The purpose for which Òrúnmìlà was created by Olódùmarè is to cater and proffer solutions to any spiritual problems that could be facing the inhabitants of the world that Olódùmarè is about to create, or had created because Olódùmarè had already created some to care for the needs of those in heavens. So Òrúnmìlà was created together with Agyọnìrẹ̀gán his brother.

However, this is contrary to the report presented by (Àdèoyè, 1985: 11) who believed that all the divinities had been created already and were living in heaven with Olódùmarè. According to him, sixteen principal among all the divinities brought forth by Olódùmarè held a meeting and agreed at the meeting to request for the creation of the earth. Among those who met was Òrúnmìlà. In fact, it was this Òrúnmìlà that consulted îfá oracle for them where Òdù Òbárá Òlassayèrò came out and necessary ëbo offered before they went for the creation of the earth and Olódùmarè granted their request. Among the principal divinities that went to make this request were Òrúnmìlà, Òbáhálà, Ìyámi – witches, Ìyìgí Ìjúè, Ajálórún Òrùn, Aṣẹṣéfèlèlè Awo Òsàdáyè, Òdù Òlòfù, Ògó Awo, Ògógo Sèkètè Mòlòjìgbò, Òpèpè Ìlè, Àdídáà, Àbá, Ìjókóbírikítíkàlé, Ìjúèrè ọ̀n ò wò ọ̀n, Àṣè and Ìnlè ọmọlókùn.

Again, as Salami claimed that Ìjá is the word of Olódùmarè (Lijadu, 2001: 4) also agreed with the assertion. He, Lijadu opined that Olódùmarè, the Olú Awo Òrùn has uncountable numbers of Awo in heaven beside those mentioned above by Salamian Adeoye. Lijadu went further to claim that all the ìrùnmolè- gods had been in existence before the creation of the earthly world and in the process of creating it, Olódùmarè gave all of them duties to perform. For instance, Òrùnmọ́lè nla was in charge of molding the physical body of man, while Òrùnmìlà was put in charge of destiny and in charge of ëbo – offering for healing in every aspect of man’s life. However, contrary to Salami’s view that it was only cow meat that was shared by the divinities, Lijadu included some material things like money, clothes, gold, and silver as part of what they shared. He affirmed that the creation of the world was performed by Òrùnmìlà rather than Òdudùwà as postulated by Salami and Ìdòwà (Lijadu, 2001: 4). However, there are a host of other writers who claimed that it was Òrùnmìlà that actually performed the work. Writers like Adeoye, Ògùnìbìyì, Òmbímbòla and Òfàsinàre in this category.

Other school of thought who asserted that the art of creation was done by Òdudùwà may possibly be trying to justify his (Òdudùwà) claim on the throne of the highest and prestigious seat of tradition of the Yorùbá. Although this is not to justify the claim that he came from Mecca or Egypt as opined by some historians after all, Ìjá made it clear in Òdu Oyèku (Abimbola, 1968: 33) that Òdudùwà descended from heaven to the earth with a chain like other divinities.

Òrùnmìlà was trained in the art of divination and was initiated into the cult of ìjá. This is to affirm the fact that there was a great many priests of Ìjá in heaven among which Òrùnmìlà was a prominent figure. This fact was attested to by (Abimbola, 1976: 116) in one of his works where he cited Ogbéigúà. According to the Òdù, Òrùíṣẹ́kú òmọ ọgún, OlùÌmèrè òmọ ìjá and Òrí Àfìwápè Àmọ Òrùnmìlà were going to Ajálà’s house to choose òrì while they decided to go to the world. They were warned not to branch to anywhere while going to Ajálà’s house to choose Òrí. However, when Òrí Àfìwápè heard that his father Òrùnmìlà was divining, he went to go and see him despite the warning. He met his father being divined for by some priests. He told them of his mission and he too was divined for by these priests. He was asked to offer some ëbòand part of what he offered was given to him to go with and was told how to dispose them. The point here is that, there were many priests in heaven, but Òrùnmìlà was chosen as a special candidate of Olódùmarè to carry out a big job for Him. The reason for this favour could be as a result of many factors which could be his diligence, consistency, truthfulness and competency.

Again, some scholars like Ògùnìbìyì, Adéwálé and Adéshìnà maintained that Òrùnmìlà and Òdudùwà are the same just as Ìjá and Òrùnmìlà are thought to be the same. But report has it that when Òdudùwà who some scholars said created the world had a problem along the line , it was Òrùnmìlà that performed divination for him . This has however, contradicted the earlier claim and report that Òrùnmìlà was the same thing as Òdudùwà. When Òrùnmìlà was coming to the earth, Èṣù who was also a created being in the city of heaven followed him and became the first òmọ awo – apprentice that Òrùnmìlà had. This however corresponds with what Baba Raúl (Canières, 2000: 2) said about Èṣù that he knows and studied ìjá under Òrùnmìlà. Besides the ẹ̀ṣẹ-command power that was given to Èṣù by Olódùmarè, Èṣù also stole four additional powers from Òrùnmìlà, one for making money, another one for making children, the third for making all good things of life while the last one he uses to trouble the world. This is the reason why the Yorùbá believed that Èṣù can give human kind children, money and all good things of life. However, we should not forget that no power surpasses that of Olódùmarè, therefore, Èṣù cannot use his power without Olódùmarè’s permission. In (Adéwálé’s, 1999: 44) opinion, Òrùnmìlà is also known as Òdudùwà who lived in heaven but came to the earth with the order of
Olódùmaré to come and partake in the creation of the world. According to him, Oduduwa as a spiritual being has capacity to operate both in heaven and on earth.

Under the leadership of Òrúnmìlà, other divinities came to the earth to control it. This evidence can be found in Òdù Òṣé Mèjì (Akintola,1999: 45) where Ìfá says:

Érì ì wára gbemí, Salvation quickly uplift me
Èsfélèlégbémíè gostè fèrè whirl wind take me uphill quickly
A dùfà fún Òrànmílà a divination is cast for Orunmila
Ti yòo gbè ègbá iwà who is to carry the ancient calabash of fate
Fòóṣà lòdè tsálayè, To the deities on earth

This Ègbá iwà that Òsé Mèjìs talking about here was what Lijadu said was given to Òrùnmìlà to create the first man and woman.

However, with the look of things and opinion of scholars mentioned so far, it seems everything revolves round Òrùnmìlà. He was the one believed to have been handed over all the affairs of the world by Olódùmaré. In Yorùbá cosmology, it was Òrùnmìlà that Olódùmaré handed the four pillars that held the world firmly. It was this same Òrùnmìlà that Olódùmaré gave the order to appoint those who will hold the four pillars. Òrùnmìlà in turn placed Èjìogbè in the rise of the sun, Òyèku Mèjì at the close of the sun, Èwòrì Mèjì at the right pillar while Èdì Mèjì held on firmly to the left side of the pillars. They are believed to be the people that held on to the pillars till today.

Among other things given to Òrùnmìlà for humanity and other divinities are rules and regulations, ethical, and moral guides for proper man to man relationship, man to divinities relationship, divinity to divinity relationship and man, divinities relationships to Olódùmaré.

4. NEXUS BETWEEN THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF THE BIBLE AND THE GUIDING LAWS OF IFÁ ORACLE

The Yorùbá never lost the consciousness of the divine presence and intervention in their daily affairs. Everywhere in Yorùbá land there is the concept of the Supreme Being called Olòdùmaré. Also, the concept of divinities, spirits, as well as the belief in ancestral cult. However, the Yorùbá believe in Olódùmaré as one and only who is responsible for the creation of everything on earth and in heavens can be seen through the involvement of Him in everything they do. They also expressed their belief in Him in proverbs, myths, short statements, songs, prayers, stories and religious ceremonies and in Ìfá Oracle the words of Olódùmaré that contained ethical and moral instructions and the will of the creator for man expressed for the betterment of humanity. Òrùnmìlà the custodian of this Ìfá strongly advise us to believe in Olódùmaré as the only God because Ìfá, the word of Olódùmaré says there is no Òrìṣà that can give any man child beside Olódùmaré. Òrìṣà are just means to an end. Therefore, Òrùnmìlà explained further that it is only in Olódùmaré that all our hopes is and we should therefore worship Him. Ìfá attests to this fact in Òṣé Ìrẹtè (Kolawole, 2003: 31) where it says;

Abiti biti Abiti biti
Okó bále ta biti biti Okó bále ta biti biti
A dá jùn kèkè rèrè cast divination for chariot
Atì aṣòòtò and the righteous
Aṣòòtò inע iti ṣolú ṣin Olódùmarè the righteous bow down for Olodumare
Oloṣùrun oba ti nje ọkan soṣo the almighty who is only one
Nitorì kí nkan tó nfe báa le to lọwó for him to receive what he desire
Atipè kí ò bá le rí iṣe gbà lọwọ Olódùmarè. More so to receive goodness from Olodumare

This was the position of the Yorùbá, their attitudes and belief in Olódùmaré before the advent of the white with their religions. The Yorùbá have been keeping and are still keeping the rules and commandments of Olódùmaré till today. They believe in Olódùmaré as one and only creator, no contention and the verdict remain till today. In Òdù Òṣécarsá (Akintola, 1999: 42), Òrùnmìlà further emphasized that we should worship and pay homage to Olodumare alone because he would one day leave the people. Therefore, if he leaves, who would humankind be worshipping then, he asked.

The second commandment in the Bible says; you shall not make for yourself an idol. Also in Ìfá, as said earlier, besides belief in Olódùmaré, the Yorùbá also have belief in Òrùnmìlà. Ëla, other divinities and spiritual beings, belief in ancestors, and mysterious powers as agents that Olódùmaré sent to the world for one purpose or the other. Ìfá does not say or encourage anybody to worship these agents. The fact that these agents, particularly the divinities could sometimes be an agent of disease causation, whenever such happened, about to happen, or when preventing it from happening, the Yorùbá can appease them by giving them the type of foods they delight in eating. They, divinities are regarded as just middle men between Olódùmaré and human beings. This is so because they were not created like man. Rather, they were brought forth to carry out Olodumare’s creative functions of the world. Therefore, they were his ministers with different portfolios.

They have their belief in Olodumare as one God. The Òrìṣà are used as means to get to Olódùmaré. No wonder the Yorùbá believe that there is no Òrìṣà that can give anyone a child beside the creator (Olódùmaré). This is the reason why after offerings, prayers, and worship the conclusion, is always “may Olodumare grant you request” . It is also the belief of the Yorùbá that Ọlọrun kò ni yìí ju èni tó sê - image does not have prestige than the maker. They also affirmed
that “A kii be’gi nigbó kò di Olórún eni” — one does not cut a tree in the forest and turn to one’s god. This is what Ọrinmílẹ̀ divined in Òdí Méjì (Lijadu, 1923: 72) where Ìfá says:

A kólé kátópá förisà
Kórisà o gba bè́ç
Orísà sọ wipé kò dára tó
Awọn akèlè Orisà dàún pè,
Ti kò ba dára tó
Kórisà o wọnm igbó lọ
K’ó pa igí
K’ó já okùn
K’ó já ewë
K’ó wá mò bì agara ti ndánni.

A small house was built for the deity
that the deity should manage it
the deity complaint that it was not good enough
the builders respond
that if it is not good enough
the deity should enter into the forest
and cut plank,
cut rope.
and gather leaves.
Then he will feel the pain.

The Yorùbá knew and aware that images have ears but cannot hear, they have eyes, but cannot see, it has mouth but cannot speak, and have legs but cannot walk. Therefore, why should they become their god they queried, when they are aware that Olódùmaré is somewhere, though they cannot see Him but they can feel his presence everywhere and in all things they do?

Third commandments of the Bible says; “you shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God”. However, in Ìfá, the thought of the Yorùbá about Olódùmaré is so deep that they have it in their words that “Ọba lónílé aye, Orísà lò sì ní ọba, ọgbọn Olódùmaré lò ní awọn Orisà—the earth belongs to the king while the Orisàs own the king, but Olódùmaré is the owner of the Orisàs. This is to show that everything in heaven and on earth is under the care and control of Olódùmaré. However, looking at the social and political structures of the Yorùbá in the olden days, a child is not bold enough to go and make any request before his or her father directly. Rather, he or she must go through the intermediary of either the mother, being the closest person to the child or through the elder brother or sister. Also, before a case is brought before the king, the Báalé—the head of the house and Olóyé àdúgbọ—quarter chiefs must have settled the matter to certain level without success. A matured lady is not directly approached for a marriage proposal; rather the man goes through alárenà—intermediary. Wives do not look at their husbands in the face while talking and they are always on their knees while given food to their husbands, even when the husbands are not on seat does not matter. While preparing food of some powerful chiefs in those days, their wives dare not utter a word till they finished preparing the food. Some would even be on their knees till their husbands finish eating. This is the kind of a respect that is given to the fathers by their children, subjects to their chiefs and their kings, the way the Yorùbá move their society forward with decent culture/tradition and the way the wives have fear and respects for their husbands before the pollution of the Yorùbá culture with the advent of foreign culture. With this kind of structure that involves honour and prestige given to the earthly people and the people believed to be the earthly representatives, it should be expected that something better than this must be given to the owner (Olódùmaré) of everything in heaven and on earth. Therefore, the Yorùbá, from time immemorial have been respecting and keeping the name of Olódùmaré holy. This is the reason why the Yorùbá approached the throne of Olódùmaré through the divinities.

Although, I do not say here that the Yorùbá do not have direct way of worshiping Olódùmaré, but this is done on rare occasions. Furthermore, if the Yorùbá cannot mention some divinities names for the sake of incurring their wrath, how much more the creator of such divinities. A good example is that of Sıpìnà whose name is not mentioned directly, rather he is called Olóde, Bábà Ágbà, and Obáaláwáyéand so on. Odu Òbara oturraand Osa-turupon (Ilayemi, 2015), attest to the fact based on Araba Awo Olayemi’s citation. The fact that the Yorùbácannot mention the name of some divinities because of the fear of what they would do, how much more he who created the divinities? Therefore, rather than to call the names of the creator like every other divinities, the Yorùbá would prefer to deal with His ministers.

Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy is the fourth commandment in the Bible. In Ìfá, after the creation of the world, the divinities came to dwell on earth before the creation of mankind. When humankind was created they were living together with the divinities in harmony. It was after the earth was populated with these living beings that Ọrinmílẹ̀ went to Olódùmaré to request for the days of the week. Olódùmaré gave him five days of the week. Odu Ògíndá-sẹ̀ẹ̀ (Adeoye, 1989: 80) revealed this where it says;

Àtunpákò s’èyìn kóòl pòbì ìmọ̀ ògbọn ọ́rùnlà, A díìfà fun Òrùnlà Ìfá n’ò sòdè ètòun lòrè rè è gba ojọ wá sìlè ayé... then he will feel the pain.

After receiving the days of the week, he then distributed it among the Irùnmálẹ̀. He gave ìjú ìsè — the first day to Òbáta and nineteen other divinities. It is a special day to all the divinities because it is a day of showing and receiving mercy. Òbáta, being the leader is known for his purity, cleanliness and toughness, this he teaches. This is the reason why Yorùbá regard that day as the day they do not play with. They do not do any other event like marriage, laying of foundation, travelling and naming of a child on that day beyond worship. One of the informants says, “As important as that day is, if divination is carried out, any ebo that comes out of such a divination must be offered same day without delay. It must not wait till the following day”. He explained further that Babaláwọ—Ìfá priest knew that there are some Odu Ìfá that must not be chanted if they come out of divination that day. Some of such Odu Ìfá are Òwọ̀nrin Méjì and...
Qobara Ikà. The Babalowo must make haste to stop the divination and park his divination materials which he must not touch till the following day. Other days of the week are Ojo awo — the second day of the week meant for Orumila and fifty eight other divinities. The third day is Ojo Ogun, for Ogun and twelve other divinities. While the fourth day, Ojo Jakunla is for Sango and fourteen other divinities. However, there is also Osu Ela — Ela’s week that was given to him because of his spectacular role. This corresponds with the modern seven days of the week. However, all days of the week, month and year are sacred to the Yoruba. Worship to the Yoruba controls and ends all affairs.

The fifth commandment of the Bible says, honour your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the lord your god has given you. While it is a must and part of the Yoruba culture to respect ones father and mother, it is also a must to respect elderly ones even if the difference in age is just a matter of few days or weeks. Once the person is declared older than one, then one does not have option than to give honour to whom honour is deserved, and it is not compulsory that the person must come from ones family. Therefore, it is a built-in matter in the moral and ethical standard of the Yoruba. Ifa stressed it further in Odu Ose ‘turur or Osu Onira (Jubril, 2007) that;

Agharara ko lepo, erosion has no hands
O gbeltete kan lepe dodo it digs grand dip to the red soil
A difa fun iseke cast divination for tradition
Ti somo olori nefete who is the son of a leader in Ife
Kilala nbo nefete kato rire, what do we worship in Ife before we get fortune,
Iseke la nbo nefete it is the tradition that we worship in Ife
Baba eni ones father
Iseke eni ni is ones tradition
Iya eni ones mother,
Iseke eni ni is ones tradition
Iseke la nbo nefete kato rire, It is the tradition that we worship in Ife before we get fortune

As earlier said, it is not only the parents that a Yoruba child must respect. They must respect those who are older than them. Every elderly man and woman in Yoruba land is regarded as parents. If a child had done something bad, they don’t wait to see the parents before they discipline the child for bad conduct. This validates the Yoruba proverb that says; “ou merin lo nibimo, igha ou lo nto” — it is only four eyes that gave birth to a child, it is two hundred that will look after the child. Matters relating to children then was a matter of our children not my children as we have it today. Ifa further explained this commandment in Odù Ikà-di (Lijadu, 1923: 49) that;

Bomođe ba nsiwo ogbaju if a child is initiated into the cult of boldness,
To ba padè awo lonà kò gba loju if he sees an initiate on his way, he should slap him
To ba ri awon aborè níbi wọn nforí balè júbá fòlorùn if he sees great herbalists, he should punish them
Kò dojù wọn bolè he should push them face down
A difa f’awon omò alaıgbọran cast divination for the disobedient children
Ti wọn wipé kò sénti tó le e miwọn that claimed, no one can arrest them
Haa, eyin o mo pé Haa, you don’t know that
Ajepe ayé kò si f’omọ tó n’agbà awo long life is not meant for a child who beats the initiates
Àtẹlẹpè kò si f’omọ tó n’agbà iṣẹgù longevity is not a portion of a child who beats great herbalists
Omo tó ba na aborè, the child that beats a priest
Nibi tó gbè nforí balè júbá Olórùn, where he is bowing to worship Olodumare
Ikúara re lo nwá seek for his own death
Wárawàrwa niki idin instantly is the death of maggots
Wárawàrwa màní. It is instantly.

Based on this Ifa injunction therefore, for a child not to go astray, die young or face any calamity beyond his capacity, it is the responsibility of the whole elders in any given community in Yoruba land to collectively train their children. Also in Odù Ejigbè (Lijadu, 1923: 11) there are further explanations that if a child respects his parents, whatever he desired in life, he would get it.

You shall not murder is the sixth commandment in the Bible. Murder is a grievous offence in every society in the world. If we ask for the causes of murder, we shall realise that greed, selfishness, and anger or provocation are some of the factors. Among them all, anger, or provocation is the greatest cause of murder in every society. For this reason why Ifa warned that we should be careful and deal with people gently and desist from anger so that we can inherit what is good. Ifa says in Odù Idi-Kànnrin (Lijadu, 1923: 48) that;

Ibínù awo ilé alára, anger, the priest of Alara’s house hold
Edò fùtú awo Ajéò, wrath, the priest of Ajero
Pèlé kútì awo Oràngún patience, the cult of Orangun

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Lọ dífà fún ọmọ iyáMẹta cast divination for three siblings
Pé ki wọn máse bínù that were told to avoid anger
Tórípẹ̀, ọjìnfàn kan nbọ wá because one assaulter will come their ways
Láti dá wọn wọ to tempt them.
Ọjìnfàn àlejọ yi dé ọdọ Alárà the assaulter visited Alara
Ọ bẹrẹ síń ńiń irín. He picked quarrel with him
Alárále e jàde Alara sent him away
O tún dé ọdọ àjèrọ, àjèrọ lee jàdè he equally visited Ajerọ, he also sent him away
O dé ọdọ ìǹkẹta wọn, he visited the third person,
O ńiń irín títí ti he picked quarrel with him for long to exhaust his patience
Agara fí dà ńiń ìnikara rè till he gets fed up
Lo bá kọ gbogbo će tọ wá lówọ ć ìjú, he therefore released all his blessings for him
Lọ bá wípẹ̀ míi bíi kíi ńírẹ̀ gbá láyé he said anger will not bring blessing
Èdẹ fáfa kí láníyàn wrath cannot bring prosperity
Íwà péletí la fí ńírẹ gbá láyé with patience, one can access all good things of this world
Ayé Òrāngún wá dàra Orangun became prosperous
O tútú péẹ̀ péẹ̀ ju t่าวon tọ ká lọ he was so comfortable than his colleagues

You shall not commit adultery; the seventh commandment of the Bible is an act that the Yorùbá generally condemn in all ramifications till today. Even in the face of Western education, civilization, science and technology, they still look at the act with disdain. They have various names they call it such as ówọ nábí, ólemékè, ókọkan ó kùn ń kòmòdù, and so on. This is to show their displeasure to such an act. Besides economic reasons, people are encouraged to marry more wives rather than engaged in adulterous. To teach those who engaged in such an act the lesson of their lives and does not end well for those who engaged in it. For instance, Òdú OgbeAtè (Lijadu, 1923:35-36)sounded the warning bell that;

Ogbè wá tẹ̀ kára ọ̀ rọ̀ wọ́n Ogbe come and imprint for them to be at peace,
Mo gbá mo tẹ̀egùn Ìfà Ifa I accepted to be initiated into Ifa cult
Nígbaí ọ̀mọ gbá, when I accepted
Bábá mí tẹ̀mi my father initiated me
Bí a bá tẹ̀fà tān, after the initiation into Ifa cult,
Àra a ńrò, One becomes comfortable
Aláítílògbó nún òyé leads one into initiation groove thrice
Ní mìnì wọgbódù lèɛɛ mẹta it remains Esu’s concern
Bí a bá tẹ̀fà tān, after the initiation into Ifa cult,
Ọrùnmìlà’s kìlòdè tó fì ku Òṣù Èṣù Òdárá? Why does it remain Esu’s concern?
Bí a bá tẹ̀fà tān, after initiation into Ifa cult,
A kí fúnírrin awo. One does not befriend initiate’s wife.
A ko gbódo gbàya ìṣẹ̀gín. One must not snatch the wife of a herbalist
A ko gbódo ba obinrin aborè wọ ńkèlèkèlè. It is a taboo to make tete-a-tete with the wife of a priest.
A ko gbódo ba obinrin imiile síká. It is a taboo to connive with initiate’s wife to perpetrate evil
Awo eni kí i ńi nṣù fún ìjìṣíṣì jẹ̀ sẹ̀. It is forbidden to tell lie to fellow initiate.

Here, Ìfà did mention Awo, Ìṣẹ̀gín and Aborè which especially belong to some particular cults. But ìmílè generalized this rule because it involved the generality of people. As part of the awo rules, code of ethics and respect that another awo can accord his fellow awo is the fact that an awo should not, or cannot sit on the seat that another awo’s wife just stood up. To be a qualified Babaláwọ—Ifá priest till date, Arábá Oláyémí (Olayemi, 2015)explained that sucha candidate must enter a sacred bush called Igbódù. This is a place where the secret of awo is being exposed to the candidate.1 Seven days before the initiation rite is performed, the candidate is locked up in a room with a woman to attend to his needs. If he has any sexual intercourse with the woman during these seven days, then he is not qualified to be initiated to the cult because he could not control his sexual urge. Such a candidate is not competent to be called a good Babaláwọ. Òtòrù Méjì (Atunfagbonbi, 2014) further buttressed the point that adultery is not a good venture where it narrated the ordeal that Anipupa passed through in the hands of Òrùnìnílă’s friends and his Ìwàrèfà as narrated by Àtunfágbọ̀n an informant. According to him,

1It should be noted here that it is not all the practicing Babaláwọs that we see around us are qualified to enter this sacred bush whenever such a rite is to be performed. Unless such a practicing Babaláwọ had undergone such a rite before, or during his practice before he can be qualified to enter the sacred place. Otherwise, he stays at the back stage to listen to whatever the qualified ones are saying there.
They forced her against her will. After which they felt sorry for what they had done. They then connived together and sold the woman off with a conclusion that when Orúnmílá returns, they would tell him that his wife, Anǐpupa had died. They did and Orúnmílá was sad because the woman was precious to him. He then consulted Ìfá to know whether he could still get a very good woman like her and Ìfá told him that he should offer a big he goat and a very big fish because the wife was still alive. Orúnmílá then sent two of his apprentices Amọọre and Amooṣu to go and buy the two items for the offering. He warned them that they should not haggle the price. Rather, they should pay whatever amount the seller placed on the items. The two apprentices went and got to Atoosu the fish seller who was a former apprentice of Orúnmílá. He said he would sell his fish for ẹgbẹ̀fà ọkẹ̀ and the two paid the money. Atọọṣu was surprised and sent for his wife to come and see those who paid ẹgbẹ̀fà ọkẹ̀ for a fish olóké méfà. When the wife came, they discovered that it was Anǐpupa the wife of Orúnmílá. When they got home, they told Orúnmílá what they saw where they went to buy fish that his wife that was told died was seen in the market. He sent his loyal servants to go and bring her back. The perpetrator of this evil act later came to come and beg for forgiveness.

You shall not steal, the eighth commandment of the Bible says. There is no society or religion on earth that encourages stealing. Yorùbá society is not an exception. General ethics of the society does not support stealing. So also Ìfá does not encourage stealing. One of the informants sited Òdù Ògúndá-Fù (akukanla, 1999: 119) and narrated a story that follows. The story goes thus, a wealthy man has two sons whom he left with a lot of wealth after his death. The family picked a date to share the wealth for the children. However, before the date fixed for the sharing, the two sons decided to go and hide a bag of an expensive beads. On the day of sharing, the family could not see this bag of beads and this caused a lot of misunderstanding among them that resulted into killing one another. After a long period of time, the sons took some of these beads and sold them. When they have sold up to half of the bag, the eldest of the sons decided to cheat his brother. As a result, he took the remaining beads and kept it with the king without the knowledge of the junior brother and told his brother that thieves had stolen the beads. The king also was planning to steal the beads by poisoning the eldest son so that the beads would become his own. However, before he does that, he said he was going to test all his Babaláwọ. He took part of the beads in a bowl, put the poison he wanted to kill the person that kept the beads with him on it and cover it. He thought to himself that any of the Babaláwọ if they can reveal what is inside the bowl, he would not steal the beads and he would not kill the child. If otherwise, he would even use the poison to kill the boy, all the fake Babaláwọ and inherit the beads. He called all his Babaláwọ, they divined but could not reveal what was inside the calabash bowl. They now sent for the last youngest Babaláwọ in town. When he got there he asked for the odu that came out and they told him Iká-Fù, he told the king that what he had intention of doing, he should stop it and give all the Babaláwọ that were present there some money. The king asked him why, and Kèkèrè awo said;

_Æmi Kékeré awo ki sinìle aye, _there is no little or junior initiate on earth
_Lòdítà fún ëyìn babaláwọ abídè jègbèdè, _cast divination for you priests decorated with beads
_Tì wọn sòbìra òpèlè jènìwínni, _‘that owns numerous Opele
_Tì(Ôòjìn yìò gbègbì ìwò fún, _who Olofin will present with calabash of poison
_Tì wọn ki yìò lèè kì Ìfá sì, _Which they will not be able to recite its Ìfá verse.

The king was amazed at this revelation. The Babaláwọ continued, said the king should go and offer eighty snails to the odu that came out, and offered sixteen she goats to Ìfá so that what he planned to do will not boomerang. Olofin asked again the reason why he should do that and Kèkèrè Awo said;

_Fúnmi ní kò fún o, _give me, I will not give you
_A kò lèè jììà ìlèkè d’Òyò _we cannot fight for beads till Oyo land
_Kā já dèlé Olofin, _and fight to Olofin’s house
_Bi a bá ti nijà ẹkòkọ rélè, _if we have been fighting in the secret before,
_Níjọ a bá dèlé Òba nì à n sò ‘tíọ _the day we get to the king’s palace, we must tell the truth.
_A dìjà fún ìwọ oba, ti a gbé àpò ìlèkè fún pamo_ cast divination for you the king, who was entrusted with a bag of beads in your care.
_T’ò sètàn t’ò ni ìwọ fún ìwọ f’ọnìlèkè jẹ, _that you now proposed to poison the owner of the beads
_Kì ọ̀un le rí ìyì fì ịlèkè sè ti._ So that the beads may be yours
_Nje Ògundá ma foun foloun n _oh you Ogunda, return it to the owner
_Ọràn ìlèkè kíi tán bòrò._ Issues of beads cannot be resolve on time.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor says the ninth commandment of the Bible. Bearing false witness is detestable to the Yoruba. This has led many to their early graves. According to Ìkà Ofún, (Adewale-Somadhi, 1993: 14) when some sixteen elders were coming from Ìkòlé Òrun to Ile-Ife, to ask for long life, they were given some instructions to guide their deeds. They advised not to say what they do not know, not to perform anything for which they do not have the basic knowledge, not to mislead people, not to deceive people and not claim wisdom that they lacked. When they got to the earth, they started doing all those things they were advised not to do. As a result, they were
dying one after the other and they claimed that it was Orunmila that was killing them. Orunmila said the elders were dying because they broke Ifá laws. For those who do not have the fear of Olódùmarè at heart would say “if a fowl spills my medicine, I will break its eggs.” They have forgotten what Ifá says in Ḍíkú Ọfún that:

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Eléké lọ idálè ogún odún kò dé
A deceiver traveled for twenty years he could not return

Opúrò lọ idálè ogbón oṣù kò dé yinbò
A liar traveled for thirty months he could Not return

A d'Ifá fun opúrò áti èkè
Not cast divination for a liar and deceiver

Nígbáti wón dé idálè
when they get to a sojourning land,

Wọn ní orúkọ Olódùmarè. Puró
they deceived people with the name of Olodumare

Wọn nhu ivá kíwá
they engaged in an un awesome act

Wọn nhu jìbitì
they duped people

Wọn ngbá lọwọ eni tó níkèkeré fi kún tiwọn
they were collecting from people with

little and add to their own

Wọn nkó oró èkè jo fúnra wọn
they gather false wealth

Otíi inú kiló fúnwọn tíí
truthfulness warned them

Wọn kò gbió
they disregard his warning

Wọn kògbá
they rejected his advice

Béni Olódùmarè Oba aténilégé légé forí şágbéjì
and Olodumare in his grace

Kì kì kí rùn
who would not die nor sick

Ojíkan náá ní i gbé
who abodes in same place

Níbí tí tí níi oon gbogbo
where he sees everything

Tó wá nísdútú ọrùn áti tayé.
Both in heaven and on earth

Eléké lọ ìdálè ogún odún kò dé
A deceiver traveled for twenty years he could not return

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Níbí tí tí níi oon gbogbo
where he sees everything

Tó wá nísdútú ọrùn áti tayé.
Both in heaven and on earth

The last commandment of the Bible says you shall not covet your neighbor’s house. In Yoruba society, it is part of home training for the parents to teach their children to be contented with whatever they have. This they do through storytelling, proverbs, sign language and so on. Ifá also teaches that Covetousness is not good. There are so many places where Ifá pointed it out that the act is not welcome.

The last commandment of the Bible says you shall not covet your neighbor’s house. In Yoruba society, it is part of home training for the parents to teach their children to be contented with whatever they have. This they do through storytelling, proverbs, sign language and so on. Ifá also teaches that Covetousness is not good. There are so many places where Ifá pointed it out that the act is not welcome.

Iṣẹ́ lọ́ ṣíṣì ní múmi mo ́fá
Ifa knowledge comes by learning Ifa

Nà ni kọ́ yé èkó sí bí ́ṣíbá ́ṣíbó
making mistakes bring perfection

A díṣaáún Ósanyín
a strange road brings confusion

Nígbáti wón n lo ́rùn ẹ̀̀kò
for misfortune was looming over him

Ṣugbón tí kò gbó
though he was told to stay back

Oyékú ńtò ń ńbá Òlórín ìkà
for misfortune was looming over him

Aje tete lọ dílà fn ìkà ńn Òyékù
Aje tete cast divination for Ika and

Nṣawo ńọ sápá ẹhín èkùn
on a sacred voyage to the other

side of the sea

A ní kò rí èrín ìgbádo kan
they were told to offer sacrifice of a corn

Óyékù kò kò rí, Ìkà níkan ló rí.
Oyeku ignored the oracle, it was only Ika that observed the sacrifice

A ní tó wón bá dóun kẹ́ kẹ́ kẹ́ bí wón múa yan ‘bo ọ̀.
they were told to take things easy in the new place

Óyékù díhún, óún yan ègbáárun gbáárun lèbò
Oyeku got there, he was prescribing ten thousand

as sacrificial items

Wón sá kúrá lódó è ́
people ran away from him because of that

Ìkàán yán òkèlèògbùn ówó eyó lèbò
Ika prescribed twenty one cowries as sacrificial item

Àwọn ènìyàn sì ńyà lọ sódò Ìkà
many people patronized Ika

Nígbáti wón n bó lónà,
On their way home,
Oyekú ti iká sómí, ọ sí lóun ọ ríká nọjú

Biká se ri sinú omi,

Esù fì ẹrinka le lówó

Èdìn ri I bótiṣe ündura sinú omi

Ọ sí särẹṣọ sídà ọkà, ó tẹ orí ọgà ọkà lé orí omi

Owó iká sì tè

Agbawò ni ọgà náà.

Igi tí ógba ló mà kí a má a pé tí agbawò.

Ìká délẹ̀, èrù só ba Òyèkù láti ríi

Ọ sí dà gbọ́gbo èrù ẹ tí ó jí padà fún ọ.

Wín bá Òyèkù wíjó,

Wọnsí ẹ̀rù lárín ilú fún ṣìwà bùhùrù rè.

Again, Irosin Ogbe (Salami, 2002: 216-18) narrated a story of a king called Olórèé Àgbọn who had three children that were entitled to his throne after his demise. They were Igún—vulture, Èlúlú—a kind of bird and kólìkóli—another kind of bird. Èlúlú was specifically warned that he should not be covetous if he would actually be enthroned as the next king so that he would not die a premature death. He did not listen and he died before he was made the king.

5. CONCLUSION

There are other places in Ifá that one can refer to as far as all these useful instructions are concerned; in fact, there is no limit to this. They are made for us to live in peace and harmony with one another. They are words of wisdom, knowledge and understanding that we have been using from the beginning of the world. Besides the Bible and Ifá Oracle, they are also found in other religions of the world. Therefore, no one is superior to another. They are equal before the Creator who gave them to the people of the world living in different continents of the world. The striking similarities between the commandments of the Bible and Ifá, no doubt is an indication that the giver is not stupid and silly after all these religious laws and commandments had been in existence before the world became a global village.

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