

LESSON NOTE FOR WEEK THREE (FAMVAR INTERNATIONAL SEC. SCHOOL)

SUBJECT: HISTORY

CLASS: JSS3

TOPIC: ISLAM IN NIGERIA

THE ORIGIN OF ISLAM AND THE SPREAD OF ISLAM TO NIGERIA

Islam refers to an Abrahamaic monotheistic religion which is centered religion on the Quran/Koran and the teachings of the Prophet Mohammed. The prophet Mohammed (570 – 8 June 632 CE) was the one who introduced the religion in Arabia in 622 A.D.

Islam came into North Africa under the leadership of Umaru-Ibn-al-Khattab(634-644). Islam then spread from North Africa to West Africa during the period of the Trans-Saharan trade when they engaged in trade relations with each other. It is difficult to give a precise date for the coming of Islam into the areas of the central Sudan or the present day Nigeria. It is however known that the Kanem Bornu empire was the first to receive the religion in about the eleventh century A.D. It is also noted that the first king of Borno to accept the Islamic religion was Mai Humai who reigned in about the 11th century AD.

Another area in modern day Nigeria to which Islam spread is Hausaland. Islam was introduced into this area by the Wangarawa merchants and teachers from Mali in the 14th century. The kings of Kano and Katsina supported the Islamic teachers and preachers who completely Islamised these states. By the 17th century, the Islamic religion was strong not only in Kano and Katsina but also in Gobir, Zazzau, Kebbi and Yawuri.

One notable historical figure who played a key role in Islamizing Northern Nigeria was the charismatic Fulani scholar and revolutionary reformer, Usman dan Fodio. He did this through numerous jihads starting from 1804 and lasting till around 1808, and through the establishment of the powerful Sokoto Caliphate.

Other areas of Nigeria where Islam penetrated before 1800 A.D. were Nupe and Yorubaland. As was the case of Borno and Hausaland, Islam came to the Nupe and Yorubaland through trade.

AGENTS OF THE SPREAD OF ISLAM

The agents which enhanced the spread of Islam include:

1. The Arab and Berber Moslem travellers and merchants.
2. In Nupeland, Islam spread through the efforts of the Arabs, the Kanuri and the Fulani.
3. Islam also spread faster through the influence of the ruling elite who accepted and patronized the religion.

HOMEWORK

1. Give a brief historical account of the spread of Islam to Nigeria
2. State three agents which enhanced the spread of islam in Nigeria.