

June 21, 2007

- *Darkness and light*
- *Individual faith journeys*
- *Circumcision and other symbols of faith*

God blesses and gives light. When each of you is affirmed, you are said to be enlightened but so few know the real truth of that expression. You are enlightened, and in the true meaning of light, all of creation is enlightened because you all exist within God's light. There is no real darkness other than the darkness you create for yourselves. Darkness is not the way of God but it is a part of God. We can clarify this by saying that for every human being, it belongs to the human condition to experience darkness as well as light. But the way of God, the route to God, the path to God is permeated throughout in light. When you experience the dark, you are not hidden from God. But when you recognize the light, you can feel the way.

If you want to know more about the path that leads to God, then explore what in your life creates light for you. If you are surrounded by what encourages darkness, by what creates discouragement, then although it is a part of your experience, it is not what leads you with love. It is not what points you in the absolute direction of God.

We have assured you in the past that there is no one route for all, that every human being has an appropriate route for that individual, regardless of how it compares to another. The reasons for these differences in route are centered on the presence of darkness. It is through that darkness that your faith can grow, and it is out of that darkness that the light you seek is revealed. The darkness is essential but it is not the direction. It belongs but it does not govern. It is a part of your lives, but it is not your life.

There are times when experiencing the dark is critical for your own growth, but God's direction, independent of the route, is what provides light for you. Although you experience frustration, anger, disillusionment, those belong but you are still drawn inevitably to the light, back to the route that is best for you. What is light for one individual may not be seen as light to another. There is no doubt that God's direction is a direction of light, but how that light is perceived is an individual journey. For that reason, you are not all herded in the same direction. You are not corralled to a common location and then shown the next route to take. That is not what human life is about.

You experience what life provides and you seek what it is that brings light. We are not suggesting that you turn your lives into all that provides pleasure and avoid anything that may hold pain, for then you would miss precisely what it is you are given life to experience. What we are saying is for you to capture the moment when it occurs, when the light in your life seems more brilliant. When you are filled with joy, when you are filled with a sense of affirmation, you can glimpse at that moment the direction which leads to God. You can understand, if but for a moment, what it means to be godly and god-like.

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The natural direction of all that is created is to move to the light. All living matter responds in some way to light. There are those organisms that grow when it is dark, but there is nevertheless a response to the presence of light. Human beings do not benefit by being shielded permanently from light. You need to experience it, you need to see it, you also need to welcome those moments when the light you seek is not visible.

It is difficult for human beings to grasp a sense of purpose or direction or connection when there are so many shifts between light and dark. You look for meaning. You look for indications of why something is correct. You look for feedback. You want to ask, "Is this meaningful, is this correct?" You want to be told, "No, don't go there. Go here instead." There is this natural tendency, and it is important, to gain an understanding of what and why you do what you must do.

Your question about the wisdom, the value, the purpose of circumcision is part of a much greater question, that being the value of symbolism as it relates to your spiritual growth. Human beings, in a desire to connect and find meaning, seek symbols that give evidence of meaning, symbols that allow you to focus on meaning. Symbols that are appropriate for one group may not be desirable to another. For Christians, the cross is the central symbol. It represents all that is sacred and it is all but forgotten that it evolves from what was pagan. It is the symbol that directs the thought, and it is that direction of thought that is so essential. For many, the cross has no meaning. For others, the cross represents all that is perceived to be evil. The use of symbolism in your connection to the Spirit Center, to God, is a personal choice.

There is concern that the symbol of which you speak may be considered inhumane, painful, somehow damaging, at the very least a negative way to begin one's human life. We can tell you that that symbol, per se, is not evil. It is not a kind of unwitting torture. Is there pain? Yes, there is some, but there is pain in hunger, there is pain in sadness, there is pain in anger, there is pain experienced from many directions. But this is not the kind of pain that remains and shapes the life and experience of the soul.

It is a personal decision. If it has meaning creating a connection with purity, a physical cleanliness that represents spiritual cleanliness, then it has meaning, not to the child but to the parents, to the family, and to others who relate strongly to the child. It is in the end not for the child's benefit but for the benefit of the faith of those surrounding the child. Is it wrong to do? No. Is it appropriate? It can be, but if it is done in a blind belief that it should be done with no connection, no symbolic relationship to faith and spiritual growth, it becomes an empty symbol.

There are other symbols, other actions that are placed upon those who are unable to choose what they wish. Many of these actions are culturally motivated, not spiritually motivated. The symbols of belief that are of value are those that spiritually connect to a concept of a loving, forgiving, nonjudgmental God. Outside of those parameters, the symbolism surrounding much of the human condition is of little value.

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Faith is the goal. Human beings construct many ways of facilitating the growth of that faith, and from those ways arise many religious doctrines and practices. It is for these reasons that we often assert that there is no one correct faith. The faith that is correct is the faith that comes with an open heart and with choice. It is not a faith that is imposed or dictated.

Your sense of connection, of purpose in your journey toward God can only be one of choice, one that provides you individually with the light that you seek. You do not pursue a faith because someone else does so. That is not your journey. You then merely mirror the journey of another. The journey of your soul is the journey of *your* soul, and you must allow that journey to take on characteristics, the direction, the momentum that are most appropriate, and such considerations will always be different from one standing next to you.

You are loved for who you are, not for whom you are like. You are loved for your individuality. You are loved for your own journey. You are given strength for your journey. You are given direction, assistance, affirmation for your journey. When your path intersects the path of others, that is a point of light. That is a blessing of life. But allow your own journey to pursue your own quest of light. That light will always point to God, and you will be given the direction needed to pass through the darkness and finally to be bathed in a light that has no end.

Rejoice in the life you are given! Rejoice in the light that is revealed! We rejoice in the light you emit. We are blessed when you are placed in the path of light. We rejoice when your light and our light occupy, but for a moment, the same path.

Be blessed in your light, be blessed by your life, and go forward with the confidence that that door will always provide God's loving light upon your lives.

Amen.