

Greetings: *Oriire fun owo!* (Good Tidings to you!)

I pray that you are feeling awake, aware, and elevated in mind, body, and spirit wherever you are, and whatever may be happening around you!

Àṣẹ! Àṣẹ! Àṣẹ o!

I am Baba Umar, Oluranse Emese, (Voice of the Emese), Member of the Isoro Traditional Council of Chiefs, Olúwo of the House of Umar, and Babaláwo of Ile Awo Òrìṣà. This Ile (Spiritual House), our website, and these video lessons are sanctioned by the Isoro Traditional Council of Chiefs in Ile-Ife, Nigeria.

Opo Ire (abundant blessings) to our Ègbé, our online community of Subscribers that's growing daily. Thank you for joining us for another lesson in our Video Blog Series. Remember, as a member of our Ègbé you can support each other's spiritual journey by posting your questions and uplifting comments in the comment section below. You can also email me using the link in the description section below if you need to reach out to me on a more person matter.

If you are new to these video lessons, we invite you to click the links below to become a Subscriber and member of our Ègbé. Also, click the Notification button to stay up to date, and share this resource with your family, friends, associates, and anyone who you feel may benefit from this wisdom.

Homage to The One Who Sends, and to those who are sent!
Homage to Òrìṣà and Egun!

Our topic in this video is: *Ifá: Ancestor and Òrìṣà Worship, Part IV*

I want to conclude the part of our discussion dealing specifically with Ancestor Worship and transition into a discussion of Òrìṣà Worship. There is an important thread that ties these two topics together and that is the importance of the Feminine Principle in both Ancestor and Òrìṣà Worship. In my publication, *Adura: An Ifa Prayer Book for Beginners, Vol I 2nd Edition*, I stated, "The Àṣẹ gave expression to *the Feminine Principle*. The Creator [*Olofi-dùmarè*] gave expression to the Masculine Principle. And *Olódùmarè* gave expression to the androgynous, harmonic balance of left-brain logic and right-brain intuitive that rules the ebb and flow of the Àṣẹ and the currents of life." Let me expound on that statement a bit.

In explaining the *Ifá* History of the Beginning, I have said, "In the beginning there was nothing but the Àṣẹ, the black material of the darkness from which all things come, the Realm of Infinite Possibility, Pure Potential. And the first thing to emerge from this material, this primordial field of pure potential energy, the Àṣẹ, was consciousness. The Àṣẹ became self-aware. We call this sentient manifestation of the Àṣẹ, *Olódùmarè*. We can think of the Divine Source of Creation (*Olorun* – God) as having three aspects, the Primordial Essence (the Àṣẹ), the Sentience or awareness of Itself, Consciousness (*Olódùmarè*), and the creative impulse that proliferates creation, (*Olofi-dùmarè*), the Creative aspect. Now what is important to realize about this sequence of expression is (1) in the beginning there was nothing but the Àṣẹ, and then something

emerges from or in the *Àṣẹ*, Consciousness, Ori, Awareness. Hence, the *Àṣẹ* takes on the character of the Womb that gives birth to everything else. Therefore, (2) the first principle in the Divine Order of Creation is the Feminine Principle. In the beginning was the womb. Once we fully understand this sequence of events it becomes clear that the Feminine Principle holds, and must hold, a very high and important place in our spiritual traditions of both Ancestor Worship and *Òrìṣà* Worship.

Under the misguided representations of many Western Cultures and Religious Systems, the role and status of the Female and the Feminine Principle has been diminished. This has led to a significant imbalance in modern societies with an over emphasis on the Male and the Masculine Principle, and has progressively spread its negative influence even to indigenous cultures around the world. However, in the *Ifá* History of the Beginning we say that *Olofi-dùmarè* (The Creative Aspect of *Olorun*) is the One Who Calls to the Material of the Darkness (The *Àṣẹ*) and says to It, “*Come forth, willingly and unwillingly.*” So, creation is wholly and completely dependent on two aspects, the material of the womb and the creative impulse. These two are interdependent, inseparable, and incapable of manifesting without mutual cooperation. Hence, the Feminine Principle and the Masculine Principle each have equally important roles to play in the creative process.

The Hermetic Philosophy expressed in the “*Kybalion*” puts it this way,

- “*Gender is in everything; everything has its Masculine and Feminine Principle; Gender manifests on all planes.*”

The word ‘gender’ is derived from the Latin root meaning,

- “*To beget; to procreate; to generate; to create; to produce.*”

So, the very idea of creation embodies the coexistence and cooperation of these two principles or forces, the *Yin* and the *Yang* of the Chinese Taoist Philosophy. The *Kybalion* goes on to state in relation to Mental Gender,

- The Masculine Principle of Mind corresponds to the so-called Objective Mind; Conscious Mind; Voluntary Mind; Active Mind, etc.
- And the Feminine Principle of Mind corresponds to the so-called Subjective Mind; Subconscious Mind; Involuntary Mind; Passive Mind, etc.

In *Ifa*, when we speak of *Ori*, we are speaking of both Principles, the Masculine and the Feminine. Or, on another level we might say that

- our Physical *Ori* is a characterization of the Masculine Principle of Mind, and
- our Spiritual *Ori* is a characterization of our Feminine Principle of Mind,

the former focused on the objective reality, the *oja* (the marketplace), and the later focused on the subjective reality, the *Orun*, the Realm of Spirit.

All these comments are intended to point us in the direction of understanding the importance of paying homage to the Feminine Principle in our Ancestor Worship. It is difficult for me to state how many times, when a devotee tells me that they have had a visitation from an Ancestor, it is from an aunt, or grandmother, or mother much more often than it is from an uncle, grandfather, or father. And it doesn't seem to matter whether the devotee is male or female. I'm stating this simply as an observation since I have no solid explanation for this occurrence. But perhaps there is an explanation. And perhaps it lies in something that the *Isoro* Council shared with me in a correspondence. I'll speak on it in a moment.

In his presentation of the "Sacred Ifa Oracle", author Philip John Neimark states regarding *Ejiogbe*, the first of the Sacred Odus,

- "*Ejiogbe* is the most important *odu*. It symbolizes the masculine principle and is therefore regarded as the father of the *odus*. In the fixed order of Orunmila, *Ejiogbe* occupies the first position."

Regarding *Oyekumeji* he states,

- "*Oyekumeji* is the second principle *odu (olodu)*. It symbolizes the feminine principle. *Ejiogbe* and *Oyekumeji* gave birth to the remaining fourteen principle *odus*."

It is this first creation of the Sixteen Principal *Odus* that in turn gave birth to the remaining 240 *Odus* to complete the Sacred *Ifa* Oracles of 256 *Odus*. So again, we see the importance of the balanced interaction and interplay of the Masculine Principle and the Feminine Principle in establishing and maintaining the nature and order of the Divine Creation. In establishing your Ancestral altar and in reaching out to your *Egun* for assistance or in gratitude, you want to make sure that you pay due respect to your female Ancestors, not in disregard of the male Ancestors but in recognition of the importance of the womb in the creative process.

Last month I shared with you that I had raised some questions in my correspondence with the *Isoro* Council regarding the email that I had received from a devotee on the placement of altars (see last month's video). Let me share some additional wisdom that I received from the Council. I am going to quote as much as possible from their response.

"To address your first question, if *Sango* and *Oya* are the primary *Òrìṣà* of a devotee, *Oya* takes precedence because of her femininity. It is the law of *Tako Tabo* (the male and female essence) inherent in all *Òrìṣà*. Because *Òrìṣà Oya* is primarily dominated by the *Tabo* (female) energy/essence/representation, she naturally takes the lead and creates the umbilical cord from the devotee to other *Òrìṣà*."

"If in another embodiment the two ruling *Òrìṣàs* are of the *Tako* (male) essence/energy/representation like *Sango* and *Ogun*, the first *Òrìṣà* during the reading takes precedence and that *Òrìṣà's Tabo* (female) essence naturally surfaces to create the umbilical cord for the devotee. This is the power of *Tako Tabo* (the male/female, positive/negative) essence/energy inherent in all *Òrìṣà*."

A Sacred Odù can help to stress this important point on respecting the Feminine Principle.

(242) Ọ̀ṣẹ̀ Ọ̀túrúpòn / Ọ̀ṣẹ̀-Ọ̀túrúpòn

This Odù also says: (speaking of the importance of respect for women.)

Aboru Aboye!

“Atodunmodun l’Erin ti n rin
Erin o fara k’asa.
Atosumosu, l’Efon ti nrin,
Bee ni o tese bo poolo,
Eeyan ti o mo’ni leni
Ti o mo eeyan leeyan.
Eeyan ti o ba ko ede d’ele
Nii pe t’obinrin o si laye,
D’ífá fún Ewuji,
Ti yoo gba seke Ide lalade Orun.
Ẹbọ ni wọn ma f’oju di oun o
O ni Seke Ide ti oun gba yi.
Ki wọn ma f’oju di oun o
O ni eni to ba fori bale.
Yoo maa laje.
Yoo maa laya.
Yoo maa bimọ.
Yoo maa bimọ.
Yoo maa de’bi aiku wa,
Kenikan ma wipe eni ateyinto lobinrin o.
Àṣẹ.”

“For the many years that Elephant had been roving,
Elephant had never been hit with a javelin.
For the long months that Buffalo had been wandering
Buffalo had not slipped into a ditch.
A person who does not appreciate the value of a fellow human being,
Who does not recognize the importance of a fellow human being,
A person who is ignorant,
Is the person who devalues women.
These were the declarations of *Ifá* to *Ewuji* (praise name of *Ọ̀ṣún*),
When going to pick up a brass rafter in *orun*.
She was advised to do *ẹbọ*.
She did it.

She said that the brass rafter that she got from *orun*,
Let nobody underestimate her or be insolent with her.
Those who show respect,
They will be blessed with wealth.

They will be blessed with a spouse.
They will be blessed with children.
They will be blessed with long life.
Let no one use negative language regarding women.

Àṣẹ!

Ọṣẹ Ọtúrúpòn / Ọṣẹ-Ọtúrúpòn (242)

So, in *Ifá*, the *Tabo*, Feminine Principle, female energy/essence takes precedence because it is the *Tabo* that exercises the umbilical power to connect us to the Àṣẹ of all the other Ọrìṣà and spiritual entities. Consider the current arrangement of your altars, your current practices regarding reaching out to your Ọrìṣà and your *Egun* and let the wisdom of *Tako Tabo* guide you to make any changes that seem appropriate.

***Ki Olódùmarè, Ọrìṣà, ati Egun fifun e ni
Itona, Imoye, ati Opo Ire!***

May Olódùmarè, Ọrìṣà, and Egun bestow on you
Guidance, Wisdom, and Abundant Blessings!

Ifokanbale! Peace of Mind from *Olódùmarè!*

Ajolo Ajobo! We go out together; We return together!

Àṣẹ! Àṣẹ! Àṣẹ o!