

P04_4_17_Way_not_Straight_vscript (February 2022)

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!

Ase! Ase! Ase o!

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

Thank you for joining us for another lesson in our Video Blog Series. I invite you to **click the links below** to become a **Subscriber** to this Channel, 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 ***Orisa*** and ***Egun!***

Our topic in this video review from my April 2017 Blog Post is: *The Way Is Not Always Straight*

In my last Post we spoke about our **Destiny** and our **Fate**, and the role our **Ori** plays in assisting us to align our **Choices** and therefore our **Fate** (the consequence of our choices) with our **Destiny**. When we consult **Ifa** to assist us in that alignment, the guidance we are given may not always make sense to us. After all, if it all made sense, we would have no need to consult in the first place. **Ifa** does not challenge us, but life does because of the way we function mentally, that is,

- The **brain** thrives on associative links (connecting one thought or idea to another)!
- The **mind** needs to complete pictures (to fill in the blanks)!
- The **imagination** loves stories (we each have a story that we are telling ourselves about who we are)!

And so, the journey that we take in following **Ifa's** guidance may not be along a straight and smooth road because of what we think about the guidance. Perhaps a story can help to clarify this important point.

The 256 **Orisa Odu** provide the seeker with wisdom and guidance in the form of stories that are at once the Yoruba history of the beginning, and at the same time a library of metaphors and analogies that give insight and solutions to the affairs of human beings. **Ifa** provides food for your **brain**, your **mind**, and **your** imagination. So, we say,

Bi owe, bi owe, ru Ifa soro!

Like proverbs, like proverbs, is how *Ifa* speaks!

Here is one of the stories my teacher, the late Baba Chief Adelekan, shared during his visit with me years ago. Where the commentary **On Becoming a Babalawo** speaks to the training, responsibilities, and character of the *Babalawo*, this story speaks to the faith that the devotee must have in *Olofi-dumare, Orisa, Egun*, and the *Babalawo*. This *Ifa* Story is called:

The Thief

There was a man and his wife who lived in a prosperous town. A town that was prosperous for everyone but him. Everywhere he looked the people were flourishing, but his own condition remained the same - poor. In time the man's condition drove him to consult with his *Babalawo*. *Ifa* advised him that in order to be successful he had to follow in the profession of his father. This honest man was somewhat confounded by the *Ifa* reading and went home to discuss the matter with his wife.

How can you follow in the footsteps of your father, she asked - when your father was a thief? The man, sincere in his faith, and his wife, sincere in her love, agreed that he should follow the instructions of the *Babalawo*. They devised a plan. The man would travel to the nearby town, enter the king's palace, and steal something of great value. One night the man snuck into the king's chambers. Meanwhile, the king had taken a younger wife and was spending private time with her in another room. However, the king's other wives were quite jealous and angry over his decision and actions, and were devising a plan to poison the king.

As the man snuck into the king's chamber, the group of angry wives came in and he hid in the ceiling rafts. As he hung above their head, he heard their plan and saw them place poison in the king's food. When the king returned, the wives began encouraging him to eat. As the king got ready to put some of the poison food in his mouth, the man fell from the ceiling. Everyone jumped back in surprise. The king demanded the man's identity and an explanation for his presence in the king's palace and chamber. The man explained his circumstance and what he had overheard. In gratitude for saving his life, the king gave the man both wealth and status, and he was allowed to return home to his wife.

What a wonderful reminder that *Olofi-dumare, Orisa, and Egun (Orun – heaven)* have no desire to harm us or to lead us astray. Like the circumstances of **my journey to Ile-Ife**, the Path that *Ifa* chooses for us to arrive at our intended destination may not be straight, and in fact may sometimes look like we are being asked to travel in the opposite direction.

In this story,

- The man's **physical Ori (Ori Ode)** asked him, *how could you, an honest man, become a thief?*
- His **Spiritual Ori (Ori Inu)** asked *how could you, a faithful man, not trust your Babalawo and follow the guidance of Ifa?*

I often remind my spiritual godchildren:

Trust the Process!

Ifa kii puro!

Ifa does not lie!

Ifa kii seke!

Ifa does not mislead or deceive!

Ohun tiyoo sele nifa nwi!

Ifa simply says what will happen!

Orisa never break their promises!

Certainly the decision that the man and his wife came to was not made easily. Their decision was made based on their faith in ***Ifa***, and the knowledge that what the man's ***Ori*** permitted to come through in the reading was intended to guide him toward his destiny, (even though it seems contrary to his righteous nature). Certainly, the man and his wife had to overcome their fears and practical concerns in order to make the right decision.

That is what you and I have to do, each and every day of our lives. **We have to choose!**

- Some of our choices are **pretty clear cut** and **easy**.
- Some are clouded with **uncertainty** and **difficulty**.
- And some are **downright scary** and surrounded by the **veil of mystery**.

But nonetheless, the only way to move forward is to **make a decision, to choose**.

Ifa does not guarantee that our Path will be straight and without obstacles and challenges.

Ohun tiyoo sele nifa nwi!

Ifa simply says what will happen!

In fact, what ***Ifa*** says is that there must be, and will be, a **balancing of the good and the bad**, the **positive** and the **negative** in life. That is the **Divine Law!** Part of the Architecture of ***Olodumare's*** creation. What ***Ifa*** guarantees is that, if we follow the guidance we are given, including performing the prescribed *ebos*, we will travel through experiences that will enable us to learn lessons, to grow, and to fulfill our purpose for coming into this world, (our destiny).

- In the unknowability of the darkness, we must listen to the guidance of our ***Ori***, and then move ahead with confidence in our eventual success!
- In the clarity of the light, we must look carefully and then move ahead with confidence in our eventual success.
- Always, seek to move ahead!

We have a saying in ***Ifa***:

B'ao ku ishe o tan!

When there is life, there is still hope!

So, as you are in the process of making those important and sometimes difficult decisions on your life journey, **trust** in the **coherent** relationship you are creating between your **heart** and your **brain**, the alignment between your **Ori Inu** (Spiritual **Ori**) and your **Ori Ode** (physical **Ori**), and trust in the guidance of **Ifa**, and your **Babalawo**.

You are a magnificent being, and you are here to choose, to learn, to experience, to grow, to transform, and to expand.

Na Wa ni Ogun ibi e!
Expansion is your birthright!

Ase! Ase! Ase o!

Iba se Orunmila, e leri ipin, ibekeji Olodumare!
Homage to **Orunmila**, Witness of Fate, Second to the Creator!

Orimi Apesin!
My **Ori**, the Most Precious!
Ise Olorun Tobi!
God's Work is Great and Mighty!
Ase! Ase! Ase o!

Ki Olodumare, Orisa, ati Egun fifun e ni
Itona, Imoye, ati Opo Ire!
My Olodumare, Orisa, and Ancestors bestow on you
Guidance, Wisdom, and Abundant Blessings!

Ifokanbole! Peace of Mind from *Olodumare!*
Ajolo Ajobo! We go out together; We return together!
Ase! Ase! Ase o!