

Bible Reading and Words of Encouragement

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• Summer Sermon Series ~ God the Parent

• Happy Mothers' Day "God The Heavenly Mother"

- Several years ago I was asked by a female attendee to our New Members' Class why is it we at First Afrikan Church refer to the Creator as "Mother/Father God"? She went on to say she had a hard time grappling with the concept of God as "Mother". I am sure she is not alone. The notion of God as "Mother" took some time to become acceptable to me too and most of us have embraced it over time or are still struggling with it.
- We have come to accept this concept of God as Father only, because of our western patriarchal Judeo-Christian orientation, even though the bible contains many references to God using feminine/mother imagery - Isaiah 66:13; Luke 13:34; Genesis 1:27.
- The word 'idol' (Heb. *Pesel*) refers to a carved object which is used to represent a god. Because of the strict adherence to the commandment given in Exodus 20:3-6, we have no statues, drawings or pictures of Yahweh. By contrast with this aniconic (no pictures) approach however, the Bible is full of word pictures of God, sometimes combining male and female imagery in one verse or passage - Job 38:28-29; Deut. 32:6,18; Is.49:15. (Bulkeley)
- We have come to accept God as "Father only" because we have forgotten the ways of our ancestors, our great Afrikan past.

Happy Mothers' Day Cont.

- Afrikans' earliest formation of a Supreme Being , the "Great Mother" was successively called "Goddess Net", "Universal Mother", "Heavenly Mother", and "Divine Mother". Each term indicating her ability to assume metaphorical roles that matched a piece of a spiritual element within each human at birth. Ancient Afrikan Griots (storytellers) used metaphorical symbols because they disregard the limitations and boundaries of human thought in order to impart indescribable ideas. (Bailey)
- An example of such is the idea that out of the "Great Mother's Womb" come three basic things: (1) Moral Order (2) Aesthetic Order (3) Mythic Truths. Everything in life and death had it's existence within the "Great Mother's Womb, and since living things could only be created by females, beginning Afrikan cosmology spoke of a Creatrix rather than a Creator. This continued for centuries and we see the ancient Egyptians adopting this concept, tracing their descent through their mothers and their Pharoahs, ruling by matrilineal succession, calling themselves "Rulers of the Womb".
- By 431 AD, at the Council of Ephesus, the Great Mother Afrikan Isis was replaced by the 'white skin' European Virgin Mary. There also Europeans converted God into a Man. (Bailey) Let us remember God was identified to Moses as "I am who I am", (Ex. 3:14) a most profound and intriguing definition. I maintain that the essence and nature of God is quite capable of being both Mother and Father.
- So, on this Mothers' Day I think we ought to recognize the Mothers and Mother figures in our lives. Realizing that they represent more than just a familial bond, a biological conduit into this present reality we call life. Mothers represent the presence and essence of the Creatrix - love, truth, protection, security, support.
- On this Mothers' Day let us celebrate our Mothers and in so doing acknowledge, venerate and celebrate "The Great Mother".