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*“Suffering of spirit” defined*

*Guides serve as a bridge*

*God does not see religions but beliefs*

*God’s single wish is for us to see everything as sacred*

*Those who have died are not separated from us*

God surrounds your lives with warmth, with radiance, and an abiding love that comforts, uplifts, affirms, cherishes, and embraces.

Many of you are filled at this time with a sense of loss and a heightened awareness of the suffering of spirit. When we say “suffering of spirit” it does not mean that your soul is suffering as you think of suffering, but that your soul is giving forward, is giving outward, is giving beyond in a spirit of love and of peace. Your spirit is not only growing through its association with human life but is responding, and the suffering of spirit can therefore be considered a giving rather than a receiving, a reaching out and an embracing.

The suffering of spirit is an act of compassion. It is in a sense an expenditure of energy. It is the using of the energy that has been stored by way of the many ways you have contributed to its strength through your actions, through your prayers, through your giving.

You know you experience moments when you are too spent personally to give, for giving requires energy. Giving requires sacrifice. Giving requires commitment. Giving requires selflessness. All of these are part of the fountain that is love, and it is in that spirit of giving that we use the term “suffering.” It is not a sense of pain. It is not a sense of anguish but of reaching out and expending the energy that it draws from its connection to your own individual human existence. The spirit grows through its indelible and permanent connection to your human lives.

You may think of spirit as being not unlike a battery that can be recharged. The battery provides energy. The battery provides light, power, many forms of energy, but the battery also receives sustenance. It is through the sustenance of your growth as loving human beings that the spirit, your individual spirit, is strengthened. It is for that reason that they accompany you on your journey, and you are empowered as loving human beings by their presence and your welcoming of that spirit energy. It is a kind of exchange of energy. You benefit from your own souls, and your souls benefit from you.

You experience loss, and such losses as you speak of—the loss of friends and associates, family members, people you know and respect—serve as reminders of the temporal nature of your own human lives. We help in your understanding of the nature of human life and the future of the spirit, but we also are present as you contemplate more personally your own futures, futures in life that are beyond your human existence. In a sense, therefore, we serve each of you as a bridge that connects you with all forms

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of life, life that you experience and life that you anticipate in spirit form, devoid of the human physical presence.

We are a bridge. We are a means of expanding your awareness of all that truly is. We speak totally about what is real, what is true, and what is truth. We speak of matters of spirit as they impact each of you and of your lives as they impact spirit.

A question was raised about the nature and future of corporate worship in the sense that in so many ways, interest in the awareness of such realities that we speak of is limited. The limitations that you are aware of are not really limitations based on age. One cannot say that matters of the spirit are of interest only to those further along the timeframe of their lives. We do understand that there is a division between those who pursue the spirit and those whose primary experience of spirit is corporate, connected to some kind of shared spiritual beliefs, principles, and hopes. As you know, there are many who describe themselves as spiritual but not religious. Those individuals find a connection to life beyond human life through one set of lenses, but there are many who experience their lives with different lenses. There is no lens that is more important than another. Someone who pursues spiritual awareness outside of an established religious tradition does not necessarily remain outside. Many migrate toward a shared expression of faith that is more institutional than individual. Likewise, there are many who feel committed to more accepted practices of spiritual understanding who feel that their paths lead in another direction.

Any approach to trying to understand the nature of spirit within the human experience has value. There are some expressions in that pursuit that may seem restrictive or extreme or too casual to the observer, but that sense of alienation from someone else's pursuit is of no importance. What is important is what has meaning for you. What is important is how you connect to an awareness of the Creator. For every person it is a different path. For those institutions that feel that their pursuit is exclusively correct, they may in turn be facing away from what many seek out, but for them it is appropriate at that time and at that place.

In God's view, there are no religions. In God's view, there are only beliefs. God sees levels of belief—limited, expanded, and everything in between. If there is something that could be accredited as the single wish of God that is asked of human life, it would be to acknowledge the absolute sacredness of everything in creation. You cannot judge what you view to be sacred. You cannot judge another when you view that person as sacred. You can find you disagree, but there is a wide difference between disagreement and judgment when judgment is felt to be a determination of worth, of value, of legitimacy.

Every human being is valuable. Every human being has worth. Every element, every molecule, every subatomic particle, every stone has value, has purpose, exists for a reason, and every bit that you acknowledge is also in the process of change. Nothing is static. No smallest particle is inactive or inert. There is an energy to absolutely

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everything, and that energy shares equally in being of value. This is what God seeks, an acknowledgment of the sacredness of all, for when you see and feel that sacredness, you become part of the unity that is creation.

How do you arrive at a point in your lives when you are fully aware of that sacredness? For some, the journey is individual. For others, it is corporate. There is no one way. There is no right way, for all ways ultimately find the path to the oneness that is the Creator and part of the totality of creation.

Life is to be acknowledged. Life is to be shared. Life is to be valued, not only human life but life of the spirit. Human life is no more important than spirit. All are essential, for our spiritual lives are part of what has been created, just as human life is part of what has been created.

As you experience loss, accept that what you see as loss is merely a change in life. No one is lost. No one is separated. You may not see someone who has become pure spirit, but you are not separated from that individual. That spirit that joins us is fully aware of you. There is no sense of separation. There is only an awareness of being together. Life transitions are indeed transitions *of* life. They are not transitions *from* life. Those who join us are not away. They are with you constantly. It is only your awareness of them that may find a gap of sorts.

Accept the grief that you feel, for that grief has purpose. It connects, it binds, it accentuates the value another has in your life. It affirms the importance of another. That is the ultimate result of grieving. You are connected, and you shall continue to feel that connection. It is a different exchange of energy, but it is just as real.

Embrace your lives. Embrace the lives of those who have made the transition to a new life. You embrace them with your love, you embrace them with your memories, and you embrace them through gratitude.

We embrace you with our love. We embrace you with our memory of the many changes that you have each made in your lives, and we embrace you with our gratitude for your love.

Amen.