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- *Asking “where is God” in challenging times*
- *Best prayers open the heart*
- *Judge behavior but not the individual*
- *Do not use prayer to condemn*
- *Life after death and reincarnation*

God is present. God has always been present, and there is no moment in what you perceive to be the future when that presence is not available and embracing all that is.

You share many concerns with one another, and indeed there are many others that have not been shared but are known to you, are known to your guides, and are known to God. Despite the concerns each of you has about society, health, and relationships, it is important to know that all that exists is within God’s vision, and speaking in human terms, in God’s care.

But what does this care mean? Does it mean that a time comes when there is no distraction from the exercise of love? No, for the human condition, there will always be distractions. But what you observe and identify are merely distractions. They do not lead in the paths God has created.

So often we say you live human lives in order to have human experiences, realizing that those experiences are different from life in a purely spiritual realm. But what you experience is only a corner of the reality of what life is. Those lives are creating anxieties and fears. They foster anger, competition, and distrust, but those are merely distractions from the true direction of human life and the pathway of the spirit.

You share your concerns about seemingly overwhelming challenges that fly in the face of your perception of God’s will. We do not mean to devalue those concerns and say that they are not of importance, for they are important. They impact your experience of human life, but in the grand scheme of God’s creation, these are distractions. They are not the path of humankind.

Some of your concerns relate to health. It is a fact of life that all experience concerns regarding health, but in experiencing those challenges, you also recognize that your lives contain within them more substance than issues of health. You are not who you are only when you are in perfect health. You are who you are. Your health is as it will be, but your lives are more than issues of health.

In the same way, the trajectory of humanity is more than the experiences of individuals and forces that are immediately perceived as destructive. A community may suffer great losses through acts of nature, but the character, value, and sacredness of human life remains. There are those who suffer seemingly more than others, but is physical suffering of greater importance than emotion or mental suffering, or societal or political suffering? There are many ways to suffer.

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One may question “where is God” when thousands are impacted by forces of nature, but you might equally ask “where is God” when someone suffers physically, or “where is God” when one deals with traumatic emotional challenges. Whatever seems to be a distraction from your perceived proper paths of humankind can be challenged by the question “where is God?” All challenges, at some level or another, can be met by “where is God?”

What is the purpose of the suffering, the agony, the concerns, the conflicts? The answer to all this is simple to say and difficult to understand, allowing what is **in** oneself to **become** oneself. The answer is “God is here.” The question may be “if God is here, then why doesn’t God act as I would wish?” God is here, and God does act. When you feel in some way abandoned from the goodness of God, it is not because God has abandoned you or abandoned countless others. It is rather the vision of the heart which is blind to the light that is God.

God’s presence is constant. God’s healing light is constant. How that presence and healing light are experienced differs from one to another, but when you reach out in prayer, asking for God’s help, you are not activating God’s help. You are opening your own eyes to the help that is already there.

You ask about prayer. You ask about what the proper prayer is. We provided in our last message to you numerous kinds of prayer. It is understandable that a question would arise about which is most important. The prayers that are most beneficial for all are prayers for vision, not prayers of condemnation.

Human beings often bring a level of condemnation, of judgment, to their prayers. When someone is hurt by another, it is natural to want to get even, to punish the other, to have the other pay in some telling way. Such prayers are understandable for many to make, for those are entirely human reactions.

We implore all humans to consider substituting such prayers of condemnation by offering prayers from vision. We speak here not of vision as eyesight, but vision as compassionate, nonjudgmental love. Such prayers are not intended to express that whatever someone else does is unimportant. Rather, we suggest the most beneficial prayers to be those that offer an opening of vision of the heart toward another and by another.

You can judge behavior, but you can never judge an individual. The solution to evil behavior is not judgment of the behavior but a prayer for an opening of spirit, an opening of heart vision by another. It is a prayer based on faith that another can be open. It is a prayer based on the belief that you individually may become more open to others. Prayer in the end is most importantly an affirmation. It is not a condemnation.

Prayer is positive. It is an offer to find light in what happens in life. It is a prayer of bringing light to the actions of others. It is a prayer of bringing light to the fears and anxieties of others. It is a prayer of light that brings vision and understanding to the self. Prayer is all about affirming what is light and not condemning what is unknown.

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You do not ever fully know another person. Recognizing that, how can you possibly condemn another? In many significant ways, you cannot know yourself, so how can you condemn yourself by being judgmental? The experience of guilt is a judgment itself. When individuals feel guilty about some action or belief, it is a judgment and it does not fully grasp what was behind the action or belief.

None of you will fully know yourselves. None of you will fully know others, and in that state of incomplete knowledge, there is no basis for judgment. You may regret your own failings, or you may recognize the inappropriate behavior of others, but for prayer to be most beneficial, you can acknowledge those concerns and yet surround yourself and others with an affirmation that you, that they, are more than what they say and what they do.

The challenge in life for all human beings ultimately is to say and do what reflects your current understanding of what it means to be loving. That understanding is fluid. You don't reach a conclusion to that path where you can say with confidence you understand fully what it is you seek. Human life is a process. That's why it is a pathway. It is a path that you travel. It is a path on which you grow through those travels. It's a path that allows your understanding, your tolerance, your acceptance of others and yourself to deepen, to broaden.

The vision, as we say, of the heart is wide and tall and deep and more all-consuming in letting the light in and allowing the light that is within to go out. The door of the spirit is open. It is not restricted or judgmental. It does not play favorites. It welcomes what is good. It welcomes the potential that all have. Prayer, therefore, embraces that potential, the potential to be loving, the potential to give and receive love, the potential to see the possibility of growth of yourself and the growth of others. Prayer is affirming. It does not condemn. It does not judge. True prayer is not a matter of getting even. It is a matter of being elevated to become encased in light.

Some of you have asked about whether those whom you have known and loved in the past and who are with us are also experiencing some form of life that is concurrent in time with your own. We can say without a doubt this is so, but not everyone who accompanies you on your journey accompanies you as a close friend or even as a human being. Some accompany you and are connected to you when you sense a great radiance around you. It is not a radiance of light. It is a radiance that is felt, not seen, not seen with the eyes but felt with the heart. It is in those moments when you briefly think all is well.

Such experiences of inner joy, inner peace, inner radiance can last but a brief moment, but you do experience them, and then the concerns of each of you related to many areas of human life begin to reassert their presence in your thoughts. Those brief moments of transcendence become memories of transcendence. But it is at those moments that you can acknowledge that the love that is God's presence, the love that is

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part of the existence of all whom you have loved, come together in a brilliant flash of spirit, and you can only acknowledge the special power that that moment has upon you.

Sometimes, therefore, the presence of those who have joined us whom you have loved are made manifest in that manner. There are other times when you encounter those who offer their love in such an unconditional way, their compassion and caring toward you or others, and you are overwhelmed by the warmth of that presence, that person. That is a kind of embodiment of spirit that has been a part of one or more whom you have held close. We can say that in all instances, whether they are what appear to be new and very deep friendships, or the observing of loving relationships to others, or that sense of transcendent peace, they are all a means of communicating with you by those who have been parts of your lives, and you can cherish each of those moments for what they are.

You may or may not recognize someone else as part of an individual who crosses your path and joins you on your journey. You may not recognize that someone else, having been a brother, a sister, parent, aunt, uncle, grandparents, going back even further—that recognition may not be there, but that is a process of the seeing heart. That seeing or lack of seeing does not change the reality of that presence of another. Sometimes that presence of another whom you have loved is experienced through a strong awareness that somehow you are being accompanied by that individual. You feel that presence. It is almost a visceral sensation.

For some people, the awareness of presence is not so much of an individual but a guide. There are those who experience the presence of their guide in a kind of physical sensation—a weight on the shoulder or the arm, or some other kind of physical manifestation of the presence of guidance. The ways you experience and know of the presence of others whom you have loved vary so much from one person to another. The vision of heart in one is never the same as the vision of heart experienced by someone else. But the basic question of “is there someone in your family who’s actually experiencing human life,” the answer is yes.

There are some who are experiencing human life, and there are others who are experiencing other forms of life. Each of you has experienced human life before this current manifestation of spirit, and you may choose to experience human life once again, because there are lessons to be learned by the spirit. But each of you will also experience new life in different forms, not necessarily human forms. Human forms are only one of many life energies that have a sense of self-awareness and, at the same time, an understanding of the presence of a creative and spirit center that is shared by all.

We do not wish for you to imagine that somehow you come back to life as another animal form on earth. Yes, animals have a sense of their own existence but don’t have a sense of spiritual presence. They may evolve through time, as you would measure, to become spiritually aware. But when you have spiritual awareness, your

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lives and the cycles of life that are part of your existence are such that your awareness of God, by whatever name you wish to identify it, only increases, only becomes deeper and more profound.

Human life, therefore, is just a small part of the totality of what God is. It is an important part, but it is not all that is needed. You grow. You expand your vision. You expand your abilities to affirm. You lose the need for condemnation, for judgment. You lose the power of fear and worry. It is a progression of spirit. It is the grand path that all human beings are on, for the paths that are experienced by all are like many shapes of branches on a tree. They're all different, and yet in the most significant way, they are all the same. They all belong to the tree. The tree is the grand path. The branches are the paths that are most appropriate for you.

We again reassure you, you are, each of you, where you need to be. Your lives are appropriate. Your lives are as they are to be. It is for you to take that life, to open the heart, to let the nourishment of light shine upon each of you, and allow yourselves to grow in shape and color and brilliance, sharing the breeze that is experienced by all branches, and recognizing the common source, the grand path that leads ultimately in one direction, the direction of total love, complete peace.

Each of you will become what it is you seek, for you seek what is reflective of your understanding of God. As that understanding continues to evolve, what you seek will also expand, and your understanding of what love can be will far exceed what you believe love is at the moment.

Rejoice in your growth! Be glad to be upon the path you're walking. Welcome the interaction with other paths, with other individuals. Accept the validity of their paths. Avoid judgment. And pray only for what binds each of you together, reminding yourself that all are truly one. In that oneness that you share, you're blessed by God's love.

Amen.