

A VOICE OF ALL NATIONS HAPPY FATHERS' DAY

As we celebrate Fathers' Day, we wish all fathers God's blessing. We also remind everyone that the Bible command us to honor our fathers. The Bible tells us: "Honor your father and mother- which is the first commandment with the promise-that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth." This entails long, healthy and productive life. As I have written in INITIATION AND AFRICAN PSYCHOLOGY, there are three archetypes of the psyche through which we receive earthly and heavenly grace-the Tree of God, the Great Mother, and the Great Father. Being the fathers' day, going to consider the quality of the Great Father.

The term Great Father will refer to the male aspect of human nature, which is predominately in men, but also found in fully functioning woman. The archetypal motif of the Great Father is evident in myths, idioms, and proverbs. Structure and emotionlessness, which are the attributes of the Great Father, were demonstrated and ritualized on the actual day of circumcision. As we have seen, even the girls were not supposed to show any fear or make any audible sign of emotion or even blink. During the summit of pain, she demonstrated fearlessness. She was expected to be highly structured. The male initiated was expected to show the same mannerism. All the initiates were challenged by the Great Father to be highly structured and to confront fear and pain with courage

Wisdom is another property of the Great Father. Interestingly, the Gikuyu ascribe all wise expressions, idioms, and proverbs to Gikuyu, the father of the tribe. For this reason, whenever a Gikuyu is using a proverb, he must credit the father of the tribe; it goes this way, "Gikuyu said, 'The day is for working, the night is for resting.'" It is as though the first father coined all the proverbs that guides the tribe in their daily living. The Great Father possesses the logos, which is the subtle fire emanating the whole universe. This logos is characterized by fire or light. This light illumines and guides the human family.

Initiative, assertiveness, creativity, and objectivity are other traits of the Great Father. He challenges us to venture into new projects, to declare our standpoint, and to be ourselves. He admonishes us not to waste time with petty things. He challenges us to be and to allow others to be.... In this regard, the Gikuyu justify their individuality with a proverb, "One does not structure his family as that of his age mate." This meant that even though the age set

underwent the same school, every person was an individual. For that reason, the Gikuyu discouraged over-identification. A person who aped another person was rebuked. If for instance, Mwangi noticed that Njoroge was over-identifying himself with Kamau, Mwangi would shout, “Kamau identification!” (Kamau Kanyi), meaning, you are not yourself but a false Kamau. Thus, the Great Father urges us to be ourselves. And therefore because you are wonderfully and fearfully made, you must be yourself so as to impart your unique gift to the community. More about this in *INITIATION AND PASTORAL PSYCHOLOGY: Toward African Personality Theory*. Available in www.amazon.com