

**The Great Compassion – Donald Neal McKay – The CopyGUY – Guru.com – 09 April 2006**

Co-habiting within the fabric of creation are two entities diametrically opposed to the other. Such oppositions are not uncommon in the Creation, for they sustain equilibrium of existence. The ‘oppositions’ in particular are: arrogant self-centeredness versus honest, forthcoming compassion.

Prior the advent of cogent human beings, there was no such ‘opposition’. The ancient writings, scripture, advancing science, and logic all point to one inescapable conclusion: harmony prevailed throughout the ever-evolving creation before the arrival of the egocentric human intellect. As the Creation evolves – as the human mind evolves – so, too, does the friction that exists between the created and the Creator. The arrogance of the human involvement and participation in this contest of wills is no more brilliantly framed than in the Hebrew Scriptures’ Book of Job, Chapter 38, 1 - 4:

*“Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind – “Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up your loins like a man, I will question you, and you shall declare to me. Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding?”*

“Without knowledge” ... “Where were you?” A indictment followed by a question; the two coupled are profound in describing the status of the relationship between the Creator and the creature; a relationship that sets at odds the intents of both parties. The human error of assuming a position of sole independence, and exaggerated importance in the scheme of things is one born out of ignorance.

Many great minds – those with special insight – have come through the ages, repeatedly telling humankind that it is not separate from, but part of that which is known as God, the Unborn, Brahman. Yet, in the main, the messages have been ignored at best, rebelled against at worst. Sri Krishna, the manifestation of the personality of the Supreme Consciousness, tells us that we are not only associated

with the Creator, but are actually part of the Creator. Buddha has endeavored to explain that humans are part-and-parcel members and creative agents of the Unborn. Jesus, by virtue of his teachings and ultimate sacrifice, reemphasized the Unity of Creation and the compassion God has for it.

“The Unity of Creation and the Proximity of the Creator.” The Unity is profoundly illustrated in the Hebrew Scriptures’ Psalms; a most remarkable expose’ revealing the special relationship between the Creator and the created. Krishna, Buddha, Jesus, along with others manifesting over the ages, and in locations spanning the globe, have not only revealed the unity of the creation, but have stressed the main purpose of the unity: To accept the fact that the entire creation is inter-related, inter-feeling, inter-dependent and because the rest of the creation is a ‘brother and sister’ to the individual, compassion for the ‘other’ is one of the two main underlying themes for all of existence – life not to be denied, coupled with the creation’s compassion for its membership.

Christ, being the latest of the epochal epiphanies presently understood to be God, materialized to us not only as a savior, but *mainly* as our brother out of compassion for us. The theological purpose of the Christ can be, and still is, debated among those who revel in such sport. What cannot be denied is Jesus’ underlying message of compassion of one creature for another; demonstrated and substantiated with his sacrifice.

From Christ to Clara Barton, during the American War Between the States, to the contemporary Mother Theresa, what has been brought forth are clear examples for the rest of us where one human being has put aside their personal needs, cravings and self-importance, and placed before themselves the needs, and elimination of suffering of others.

Therein is the Great Compassion. It exists. It is invisible to the self-centered and arrogant, but obvious to the compassionately enlightened. Those who understand this have come to know that no single entity of the Creation stands independent

as a self-centered autocracy. Those enlightened among us *know* that if the Great Compassion exists, it exists as a unity with all of its component parts.

Those who believe in hoped-for longings to be sated by divine miraculous intervention in providing solutions to problems, eliminating suffering, removing threats and, overall, making life easier and more pleasant, exist in a vacuum of ignorance. They see a world where they are a person independent of other persons. They may mouth utterances proclaiming unity and brotherhood, but deep in their hearts and minds, these persons believe themselves to be outside the rules and regulations of creation – separate and special from their fellow humans – and thus entitled to a generous share of God’s remediation for their problems and cravings. Instead of doing for themselves, the ignorant petition and wait for divine intervention. The 13<sup>th</sup> Century Persian Sufi poet, Rumi, captured this feeling in his “Mathnawi” with these words, “You see throngs of afflicted feeble folk seated at the door in ardent hope. O you who are crushed, your pleas have been heard. Hark! Rush toward the mercy of God and be delivered of pain. How often has your disease been cured? How often has your soul been delivered of grief?”

This is the great battle of existence: universal compassion for the other, versus self-centeredness and the absence of compassion for anything else.

A mother, seeing her child trapped inside a burning building, throws aside the importance of her own life and charges into the fire to save her child’s life. There are no second thoughts of personal safety on the part of the mother. Instead, what arises from the mother, is an active force from within that compels her to run to her child’s aid and do whatever humanly possible to end the child’s distress, fears and eventual pain from burning to death. The mother instinctively embraced the concept of the Great Compassion.

Or, the dear heart who, in soldierly manner, accepts the voluntary surrender of many years of their life in order to take care of a terminally-ill patient. This is the greatest of compassion.

The Great Compassion is that feeling which permeates the entirety of creation, and to the enlightened among us, is understood to be our caring feelings and actions toward our fellow creatures; not only at the conscious level, but also at the deepest level of the sub-conscious. To empathize with others is the purest harmonic of creation.

The educated among us understand that the solutions to contemporary life-threatening problems and outright assaults to human existence will come from a collaborative effort of the collective human knowledge and wisdom, the applications of discovered and empirical science, and a faith that a challenge can be surmounted and answers found and implemented. Gone are the blissful days of ignorance when we humans would do nothing about our plights and woes other than to sit around, pray, and wait for our god(s) to deliver salvation and cures.

The solution to our societal problems and threats will result as the partnership between the enlightened, educated human mind is coupled with the realization that we cohabit a physical body with that Supreme Consciousness which created us. If we come to understand that the Creator is of us as a human being, shares in our suffering, emotions, experiences, and, in our happiness – and that such a state is not unique to ourselves alone – then we arrive at the undeniably logical point where, when looking out over the billions of our fellow humans, we see and empathize with our genuinely connected relations. They are us. We are they. We are connected, and when we hurt, we feel compassion for the other. This Great Compassion extends not only across the human strata, but moves across all planes of existence wherein the Creator resides.

Wars, famine, and, diseases will arise to challenge humanity. Disease, especially, oftentimes borne out of our own neglect for human cleanliness, seems to have profound marching orders: destroy humanity. Why this should be, and why suffering exists, seems to be the by-product of the continual struggle of existence versus non-existence. As Buddha summarized in postulating his first Noble Truth, “Now this, monks, is the noble truth of pain: birth is painful, old age is painful, sickness is painful, death is painful, sorrow, lamentation, dejection, and despair are painful. Contact with unpleasant things is painful, not getting what one wishes is painful.” Later in his Sutras, Buddha clearly stated that he had no idea why suffering was instituted by Creation, but he also made it clear that much of our suffering can be done away with a change in our life styles and outlook regarding the interrelatedness of creation, self-conduct and human relations.

The Great Compassion mandates that we, as human beings, formally recognize the suffering that exists in others, and we are compelled to eliminate it. The current Dali Lama came forth with a wonderfully crystal clear statement that expresses our human call to action: “Adopting an attitude of universal responsibility is essentially a personal matter. The real test of compassion is not what we say in abstract discussion but how we conduct ourselves in daily life.” It is not a matter, only, of our reacting to a situation, but to learn from experience and apply our wisdom to acting beforehand to prevent a bad situation. This is known as responsible compassion.

The Great Compassion is real only if the partnership of Creator and created is acknowledged and forms into a unified instrument of action to combat and vanquish suffering and disease threatening not only the human factor, but the creation as a whole. Tolstoy, in his ‘War and Peace’ asked, “What is the purpose of life?” Answering his own question at the same time the reader usually arrives at the answer, we see that the purpose of life is to enjoy it. This cannot fully be done if suffering exists. Or, there are those among us who are hungry, or sense no redemptive purpose in their lives... enjoyment of life cannot be realized if want and suffering exist.

Human existence and development are continually challenged by disease. In ancient times, we accepted the inevitable and, overall, sat by to allow the 'devastation *du jur*' to run its course and move on. In contemporary times, looming on the horizon of human events is the threat of 'Bird Flu', a virus pregnant with the promise of mass destruction should it be unleashed within the human population. The compassionate among us will institute measures, and promote scientific research, to prepare for the threat and, hopefully not, have to combat the organism itself. The dispassionate, non-caring among us, will think only of themselves and may actually do more damage as the result of their self-centered protectiveness to ensure their sole survival, than the Bird Flu itself does. The compassionate will attempt to maintain order, while simultaneously persevering to alleviate the suffering and needs of a stricken community. The ignorant, non-compassionate, self-centered will destroy property, lives and government in their quest for protection and survival of self.

Should the Bird Flu break out and cause pandemic among the human population, victory over this disease will come about only as a result of two factors - a caring for others so as to *want* to combat the pathological enemy, and, a unified coupling of human courage, spirituality, intelligence and the urgent need for the species to survive. This is the state of the Great Compassion as it exists amongst the human element today: we must feel humankind's suffering; we must find solutions to eliminate the suffering; we must prove victorious over the causes of suffering. We must become the Great Compassion itself – we must unite in the exquisite partnership with the Supreme Consciousness, that not only created us, but resides in us to form a dynamic power of unity that cares and is driven to action. Then, and only then, will humanity not only survive, but will prevail.

-- Donald Neal McKay

