

Love/Pain

Document II
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When I first came to this country, in 1955, I had the feeling that what was going on here, 'was about the most glorious thing in the world'! How does a picture like that form up in the psyche of a twenty-one year old?

That was a picture being sold by what are sometimes called the 'professional Jews'. Many speeches were heard as they worked to raise money from the Montreal Jewish Community.

This was a mere seven years after the State of Israel was established, and only ten years from the end of World War II with the resulting extermination of six million Jews. Various elements came together that seemed 'just unbelievable' – all following two thousand years of exile, with the Jews praying yearly, 'next year, in Jerusalem'!

So, six million gassed and burnt, and then the State declared with hundreds of thousands of Jewish refugees pouring in from all over the world. I had to come to see what all the fuss was about.

Amal was born here. She claims, 'born into hell'. That's her memory. A lot of 'strange' things were taking place here. Immigrants from North-Africa and other Eastern countries were sprayed with DDT on arrival. The 'professionals' spoke of these people as being primitives, 'just out of caves'. They used everything, and anything that might support the 'cause'. That's a whole story in itself, but never mind – it's hard to imagine what prejudice is and how people will use it.

I talk about 'prejudice'. If you don't have it it's hard to imagine where that comes from. Maybe that's what we're trying to understand here, using some aspects of the 'Zionist phenomenon' as an example.

There's the expression in English, probably in all languages, that says: 'Ignorance is bliss.' Anyone need a translation of that?

Another event of the day: the ship, Altalena, was bringing in arms to Menachem Begin's 'terrorist group'. Ben Gurion says, "give us the arms, we're going to have one army here, no bullshit." Begin says, "no!" So, Ben Gurion has the ship sunk, and then goes out hunting the extremists.

Prime Minister Rabin was assassinated just a few years ago. Quite a few Jews killed Jews, along the way. The Zionists weren't exactly all angels, it seems.

'Changing perceptions.' Everyone has a certain sense of who they are, and what's going on in the world. But I tell you, by the time another few years pass, you're going to see an awful lot of things that are going to change your picture. Like, you sit in the movie theater, and after fifteen minutes you have some idea of what's going on. After an hour has gone by you've got a better idea of what the movie is about. And, by the end, it should be fairly clear.

So, some say, 'ignorance is bliss.' My mother used to say, 'you know, people who don't think so much, maybe they're the happiest ones.'

Here is where it gets really serious. The Work says: 'Life cannot be explained in terms of itself.' What does that mean? If you look at the average person's life, with a long enough view, it doesn't make any sense at all. People think, calculate, struggle, move, build, 'grow' children, start countries, fight wars – all within so much pain and confusion.

Those struggles for comfort and safety simply don't go anywhere. Happiness and satisfaction cannot flower at that 'level of being' – lived without any reference to what is 'larger than life'.

Back to Israel in the 50's: Beautiful nature, the incredible energy of Jerusalem, and the 'resurrected ashes' of a people. The Jews rose from the ovens, like shoots coming out of the ground, like a garden. 'Making the desert bloom' was one of the slogans. Anyone not hear of that?

A whole lot more could be said, but now that scenario has to face up to the reality of today. It's turned into somewhat of a horror scene. Now, what am I supposed to do – go kill myself? I'm very disappointed!

I have done a good deal of traveling in my day, and have come to know a goodly number of people along the way. It's absolutely clear: 'people are people'. If they're wearing a turban or galabia, whether Israeli or Indian, they are made of the same stuff. And, they're

in 'life' – proud and vain, have the usual share of prejudice and fear, fall in love, strangle each other in law-courts, or otherwise, and have children that view them as being more or less redundant. There are exceptions.

Who can figure out what? We've known people that survived Auschwitz, beaten, families burnt, starved, worked to death, treated as animals, their whole past destroyed. Then, they started 'life', all over again!

How do they do it? How does all that work? How does imagination work? You'll find out. Would you prefer to remain ignorant? Is ignorance bliss? Do you have a choice?

At the level that we've been describing, everything is accidental: Sleeping mankind living under the Law of Accident. Nothing, however, is totally accidental. We for instance, find ourselves here at the same time, in the same country, in the same room. The implications? You might want to think about it.

It is true we're all living in a lot of fear. It's fear of the unknown. That has already just about reached its limits. If you don't make a conscious effort to attain a degree of 'separation', from all that's going on, inside and out, then you can only keep spinning in the habit of fear.

Maybe, by now, you are getting a little more modest.

'The more sure you are that you're right,
the more sure you can be that you are asleep.'

What is happening when you insist on being 'right'? Are your 'conclusions' so calculated and clearly thought out? That's nonsense, no? It would be far more profitable for you to acknowledge how things 'appear to you', rather than labeling your latest conclusion, 'right'!

Do you travel the 'ignorance is bliss' road, and take everything for granted? I don't know how to put it – everything is taken for granted as everyone is attempting to make themselves comfortable. Are you busy, making yourself comfortable?

Sometimes you say: 'THANK GOD FOR THE WORK!' And, then what? Are you going to take that for granted, too?

Growth takes place only with conscious effort; Work is about conscious effort.

Each individual is a 'world within a world'. Each of you grew-up in a different household, different city, went to different schools and had different friends – different 'impressions' of all kinds. That world inside of you is – your world.

Good idea to tape this talk, you think? We'll see if it's useful or not. As a friend of mine commented years ago, as we got stuck shoulder to shoulder in the back of a crowded synagogue on Yom-Kipur night just as the kol-nidray service started: "If there is no God, then a lot of people are wasting their time!" Also, here, if there's no value, then 'a lot' of people are wasting their time.

If it does have value, then what? I guess you might want to 'support' the endeavor. People who believe that the State has value, send their children to the army. Others like the 'Matzpen' people, emigrate to London. Has such simple logic been totally washed out of us? Has the society that we grew up in also disallowed things like this to appear perfectly obvious? Have you followed my line of logic?

At the moment I feel that all that has been put out by me, up to now, is part of a world that is already dead. There's no time to mess around anymore, it's already gone beyond words, beyond explanation. I see this from 'my world' – now, what do you see, what field are you moving in?

I'm going to finish this if it kills me. Of five notes that I made, four have already been touched: 1. Ignorance is bliss. 2. Life cannot be explained in terms of itself. 3. A world within a world. 4. Nothing is an accident. Guess what's left on the list – just one word.

Merav : Work?

Alan : Another guess – that's not exactly wrong, but . . . I'll give a hint, it starts with 'L'.

Stephen : Love.

Alan : Okay, but what a strange word, eh? What is it, where, who, what do I love, where do I love, who loves? What a word. It has more pain in it, than anything, no? It's got more confusion in it, yeah. Wow, it just disappeared.

Songs and movies use that word a lot:

*§ I'd love to get you on a slow boat to China
all by myself alone . . . §*

§ Is you is or is you ain't my baby . . . §

Ah, I don't know what they are singing anymore. Hard rock, Heavy metal, Rap. And, in the movies – are love and sex the same thing? But the word is already down on a piece of paper, nothing I can do about it, I'm going to have to deal with it: l, o, v, e.

A new card says:

'Trust is to the mind what love is to the heart!'

Got it? I like the word trust. I trust the word 'trust' more than I trust the word 'love'. I can't imagine love without trust.

The strange thing is that there is only one goddamn thing in this world that you can really trust – and that, first of all, you've got to find, inside yourself. Until then you're really on totally shaky ground.

(To Juliet) : You have to pay more attention to what goes on inside yourself. You do on occasion experience 'that truth', but you experience a lot of other stuff as well. If you're not paying enough attention, it all appears to be on the same level. You can only recognize something outside yourself when you know it in yourself – trust, love or anything else.

Now, we're 'beating around the bush' – the fire of the Burning Bush, called 'Love'. Who knows the story of the Burning Bush?

Tamara : It was Moses.

Alan : Where? And what about?

Juliet : When he went up the mountain, God revealed Himself to him.

Alan : 'Take off your shoes (false-personality), you're on holy ground'!

Love tells you to get out of 'Egypt', out of the land of 'personality'. Or, as Krishnamurti put it: 'If you're in a house that's on fire, and you're nervous, you should be – get out of the house'!

Do we love? Let's say 'relatively' speaking. Ah, well, does love have degrees? In a way it does, as 'self-remembering' has degrees. You can 'be', more or less. The effort to remember yourself is one thing, the degree of remembering is another. Full Self-remembering is quite something else again. Got it?

Your Real Self, is Love, the next level up within you – the 'God' within.

Last night we went looking for another word, to replace that 'distasteful' word, 'Work'. We got to the word, 'Labor'. Was there no tape on?

Tamara : No.

Alan : Conscious Labor!

Nobody likes the word 'work' – it has a bad 'reputation' and an uncomfortable semantic-reverberation. The word 'love' also suffers from a similar problem – too much pain in it.

Another card:

'Love is not an embarrassment, it's a state!'

When Shelly saw that he said, 'why embarrassment?' He didn't like the word 'embarrassment'. Maybe he thought that too narrow an alternative. But when someone is 'in error', they often label their discomfort, 'embarrassment'.

It's hard to think 'love', without thinking 'pain'. Can they be separated? Well, it's best not to expect love without pain. Who would 'share the burden' with our Common Cosmic Father? How about that one – we expect that love should have no pain in it.

Gurdjieff said, 'that any relationship he had, or would have, could only bring him more pain!'

That sounds pretty depressing, no? (laugh) One could say, 'who needs it?' I think some people do say that. Every time they had love, they had pain with it – and they don't want, anymore, of that.

The biggest pain that love has to face is that the love might, somehow, get 'lost!' We want to hold it – and you can't. Love, in its essence, is free. 'God', is free, the Higher in you, is free, relative to the lower.

People go around feeling: 'I have a right to be disturbed, a right to be unhappy, a right to be angry!'

Look, you are either a 'thankful something', or a nervous something. So many people are not thankful for anything, they feel cheated by everything. If there is something that you are really thankful for, it would be most useful for you, to remember. 'Thankful' should be for something, that has value, something functional. See what you value, identify it, and use it.

What's going on in the world? What you see on television is only a fraction of the actuality. But, we are in the middle of a tremendous amount of suffering, and a mountain of anxiety. Israel and the Palestinians are under tremendous pressure. The Americans have been bombing the shit out of Afghanistan. We hardly get a true picture, but the atmosphere is heavy as hell. We get, sort of, used to it. Not so much anymore.

Do you have a memory of your reaction when they blew up the Russian kids at the Dolphinarium in Tel-Aviv? That was pretty shocking, right?

Tamara : It was.

Alan : That was shocking. Now, what just happened in Jerusalem – not so much?

Tamara : Still shocking, but . . .

Alan : We get used to it, not so much anymore.

About tomorrow we have no idea. Want to go to India? Ah, I don't know, the Moslems and Hindus are at it there as well. And they're also fed up with Westerners; that's the rumor, they've seen enough hippy backpackers, they're not curious anymore. How about New York? Anthrax. Florida? Anthrax. Anywhere?

All you got, baby, is now! You're going to have to learn how to deal with that now, or never.

You are a part of ETERNITY – the 'timeless'. You are also part of LIFE – with 'pictures' of where you are, and some of where you'd like to be. Try to make those pictures conscious – because, you're making a lot of, as if, 'decisions' from there.