

## THE POLITICS OF THE ROCK

The heart should be a place melted in love, but too often it is a rock, a hard, difficult rock which reacts to the world in a rock-like way. What happens to the soft place in a baby to make it the rock-like place it often becomes? When a baby enters the world it has not landed yet, it has come into time and space, but it is still not actually here, it remains in another world until slowly, it is rooted in this world.

Children have different experiences when they are brought into this world, some are born into strong, kind, nurturing environments, some are not. Sometimes, even what appears to be soft, kind and nurturing has an edge which frightens a soft child, and fear does terrible things to people, fear and occasionally the reality of what happens to their young lives.

When children are frightened they might develop a mechanism to deal with that fright. There are different mechanisms; there is one in which they develop a protector, something to protect themselves from all their difficulties or invasive fears. Inwardly, the child is a soft, vulnerable being, but to protect this soft, vulnerable inner being, it develops a coating, a hard shell to protect what lies inside.

Over the course of time, depending on the way this outer shell develops, or the extent to which it develops, often that soft, inner thing disappears, except for a small dot inside the mind of the person who still sees himself or herself as soft and vulnerable, while on the outside there is something like an enormous roar. This is what the world sees, but it is not the way the person thinks of himself, he thinks of himself as a soft, vulnerable, frightened thing with the right to do whatever he has to do for his own

protection. There is so much illusion, so much rationalizing in this kind of thinking, such people fail to understand the monster they have created.

If there is no space created for that soft, vulnerable being to exist, to be brought into the open, a space where people can be that loving, melted being, it will not happen. People have to feel safe, feel protected, and this does not happen quickly. First the outer shell must be broken, this rock has to be split, a long process. What the rock creates is different for different people. For some that rock becomes an impossible child, and that is as bad as it ever gets, for others it might be a biting, sardonic sense of humor, their protective force.

Individually we create a shell, a rock, a tyrant to protect our soft core. At the heart of this is a failure to understand reality. We are not all blessed with wise parents or teachers, they cannot teach what they do not know. Until we have an understanding of reality, those who have not been raised with it feel the need to defend themselves from the world. They see it as a harsh place demanding self-defense.

When we understand the truth of faith, when we understand that everything is in God's hands, recognizing that our own capacity to defend ourself is limited, then we begin to replace our will with His. Religious movements are just as capable of creating rocks as authoritarian movements are.

We should understand that we are a microcosm of everything which goes on in the world, of everything we see whether it is political or religious, whether it is a peace movement or a tyrannic movement, all this takes place inside ourself. We must stop at some point to take inventory, to assess where we are: this rock can become our personality, the person we are. We have been in the business of protecting ourself for so

long, we have lived so long in fear that the benign, the soft, the loving are lost, all that remains is the rock.

How do we turn this around, how do we enter a new phase? We have to give up fear, we have to stop being afraid—we can be afraid of almost anything. Different people have different phobias, the list is long. For us it does not make sense that someone else is afraid of that, and for him it does not make any sense that we are afraid of this. The point is that fear causes some kind of reaction, it is the anticipation of future events experiencing their consequences now. It means that we make ourself a fortuneteller, predicting what God has in store for us, fearing the worst possible outcome.

This perspective stems from a negative way of looking at things, a way which makes us protective, we are certain misfortune will occur unless we intervene. The reality is that the only One who can intervene is God, the reality is that God is merciful, our future is in His hands, He only wants the best for us. He is the kindest, the most loving parent imaginable. We should start thinking this way, start thinking about our future this way, remember how important we are to Him as His vice-regent. He bestowed this importance on us, He will care for us, we must believe that.

Strong faith is a key to ridding ourself of paranoia, strong faith is a key to shattering the rock which has surrounded our softness. Faith will replace that rock we are so ready to throw at any moment. Those who are on the receiving end of the rock sometimes wonder who the person is throwing it, wondering why they have to deal with it, why they even allow such a person to be near. We do not need to wonder about this; instead we should understand the truth and softness, the melting heart which is the heart

of a lover of God. We must have the courage to be unafraid. It requires courage to be unafraid.

Do you have the courage to step outside every seemingly normative thing in your life, to expand who you are? Do you have the courage to become more than the limited being you are aware of now? Do you have the courage to see the entire universe within you? Do you have the courage to let everything go, to put everything in His hands, understanding profoundly that this is the only route to true freedom? Do you have the courage to be free, or do you insist on being bound by illusion because it feels safer there than in the open space?

When the time comes to take that step into reality, will you have the courage? When the time comes to say I have to leave everything I've ever known behind, will you have that courage? How can you have courage in the future if you do not develop courage now? To die before death requires a tremendous act of courage because we all fear death, we all have a vision of death. Part of that vision entails giving up everything we hold dear in this life. Do we have the courage to detach ourselves from all that? Do we have the courage to give up the material things we hold onto as if they were sacred, do we have the understanding to reach that state of detachment, to be that detached?

As long as we keep or hold onto things we are afraid of losing, we live in illusion. When fear goes, when fear of everything, of every little thing disappears, we can be free. We should know what we are afraid of because what we are afraid of separates us. We think we are brave when we defend ourselves from the things we fear; instead, we should surrender fear, be unafraid. A state of fearlessness is a state of true faith, defined correctly

as belief that what is supposed to happen is what is happening, that perfection exists and we are in the midst of it.

The problem is we do not understand perfection, since we do not understand God we use our own judgment on the nature of perfection. We have to surrender this judgment, be in tune with what is going on, give up our own will which is not His. It is all a matter of willfulness, an insistence on our will, not His. If we can give up that insistence, fear disappears because fear often stems from the thought that my will is not going to be done. We have to surrender our will so that fear can be dissipated in its irrelevance.

When two children are together and one of them is misbehaving, we tell that child to leave the other one alone, but it makes no difference, the child cannot do it, cannot ignore the other child, he just will not let him be. This is no different for us. What is it we just cannot let be, what is the degree to which we cannot let it be? Can we acknowledge it, understand what it is we cannot let alone, that we have to torment, play with, that we have to have turn out as we think it should? Why is our will so important we do almost anything to make sure things turn out as we determine they should? These questions have to be addressed inwardly, answers are different for each of us; we cannot legislate for others, tell others how to function and what to do, we can only do this for ourself, prescribe the process we alone have to undertake. If the process is correct, if we are strong enough, others will understand and do the same thing.

There is a state of being which has stillness at its core, it brings stillness and serenity to those who exist in it. The great teachers are in that state, in their presence fear goes away, nothing unfortunate can happen. Fear leaves, we find sanctuary in their

presence, but we are always in God's presence, we are always in sanctuary. If we open our eyes we will see the protection, if we open our eyes we will see the glory, the grace.

May the vision which sees that grace directly be available. Whatever our circumstances, wherever we are, may our eyes be open to that point of glory, open to that point of grace. May the fear be dissipated at each moment of our existence, may our eyes see the perfection of each moment and melt in His will.