

## THE CHOICE WE HAVE

The world calls itself modern—today's world is a time of discovery, a time of innovation and radical developments in technology. We think of the past as a time of darkness and not knowing, we think of this as a time of enlightenment and knowing. We believe we can repair the ills of the world with the discoveries of today. Modern medicine can wipe out the devastation of disease, modern psychology understands the mind and the psyche in ways which have not been understood before. This is the arrogant propaganda sold to modern society: our modern culture is hip and cool, we are all-knowing and all-accomplishing, all we have to do is jump on board for the ride.

But the truth is that the state of mankind has not changed over the centuries, the condition of man has not changed, the life of man exists essentially within the same limits. We make much of the fact that our lifespan is longer now, this confirmed by the statistical evidence gathered in our modern day, although we ignore both the transience of life and what lies beyond. More than that, we have lost touch with ancient knowledge and the ancient understanding. We believe we now have new explanations to understand human beings. We believe in an evolutionary theory of human growth which has us developing in an unbroken progression, we do not contemplate a human existence which has developed, regressed and needs to develop again.

The arrogance of our society stems from the collective arrogance of a community, a culture, a civilization which has overwhelmed us and kept us from understanding our true state. If we buy into this arrogance we believe anything can be done if we have the right pill. In the late sixties and seventies enlightenment was sold in pill form, anything

can be had with a pill. Now health and vitality are sold as pills. There is always some external way to correct whatever is wrong with us, to take us to a different place; the arrogance of this civilization is the belief that all these external things are products of our advanced civilization.

This civilization has forgotten God, it has forgotten the masters of wisdom, the words of the prophets, the words of God and His instructions. We have had knowledge of who we are, what we are and our state of being, knowledge preceding the oldest civilizations and recorded history. This ancient knowledge is still available, but it is almost entirely ignored by modern society, and because it is ignored, it appears to be hidden. It is not hidden, it is just not visible without the effort to look for it. We think we have to undertake a great search to find it, yet it is openly available in so many different places.

The attitude of this culture, this society, makes it appear difficult to find, difficult to understand and difficult to enter. None of that is true, a foundation in this ancient understanding is the easiest and most natural way for man to exist, the correct way for man to exist, the way man was intended to exist. Our civilization and our culture however, have told us we should be something else, we should adapt ourself to the arrogant stereotype now on display in the world. This is true of our own culture, and others everywhere, because the truth has been obscured.

From the time of the prophets until now religions have gone through major changes which have produced the same results in all of them. First comes the word, the word comes through the prophet, the prophet teaches the people, the prophet passes away and a religion forms. At first the religion deals with a small group, then it deals with a

larger group, then as it deals with a much larger group it becomes political. Once it is political it is institutionalized, once it is institutionalized there are considerations other than the development of the individual, the institution has to be protected. This has happened all over the world, on every path.

We need to move back, deinstitutionalize ourself, we need to step back from this imposed civilization, enter the reality of true human nature and learn what it is. This repositioning, this stepping back from society and going the right way is a key to saving ourself. What society and civilization have to offer now can be understood by looking at the heroes of modern society, by looking at what the media display as important in society, looking at the lives of these people. Understand that something immensely powerful exists which the world does not recognize as sensational enough to write about, not enticing enough to sell newspapers, magazines, or to be put on television. If it does not produce advertising revenue it is not shown. Even though our lower inclination is for things other than the holy, we do have wrong inclinations, understand that we have aspects of ourself which are different.

Now that wrong inclination, the inclination for things other than the holy is rampant in civilization, rampant in ourself because it has become a principal way for enterprises to make money. The ability to make money guides and determines what stays in the forefront of our system. If we changed, if we wanted to receive something different and demanded something different, this world would change, but we get what we demand, our society is a reflection of who we are. When we change the image of ourself the image of our society changes. How do we change our image, how do we change what we are, who we are and what we want to become?

Genesis tells us we are created in the image of God. Although we cannot comprehend the majesty of our Lord, we have been given hints which help us understand His majesty and His nature, hints which come from being told of God's gracious qualities. If we learn these qualities and incorporate them in our own state, the low inclination we begin with will be eliminated in the presence of the highest inclination. This does not happen with outer occurrences, it happens with inner occurrences, with work by the self on the self, within the self. It does not happen in parades, in stadiums, in marches, it happens in quiet times, in intimacy with our Lord. Intimacy with our Lord is available to everyone.

The world does not talk much about mystics who are said to exist in ways beyond the scope of normal men and women. This is not accurate, each of us is involved in the mystery of man and God, each of us is created to be intimate with our Lord. We have lost the inclination for that intimacy, lost the thirst for this understanding, the yearning for this knowledge. We need to bring it back, bring back that yearning, that thirst and that inclination, because nothing else is satisfying. If we look at our lives carefully we understand we have no true satisfaction until we begin to walk the path this way, becoming intimate with our Lord.

That has always been the reason for our existence. No matter what civilization has to say about the reason for existence, that has always been the reason for existence. Truth is not ordinary, not commonly sought. Since finding the truth and incorporating it in our existence requires stepping outside the accepted, it is a struggle. We need to take that step, we have to take that step, we have to want that step and understand what awaits us

by taking it. What awaits is greater, more magnificent, more valuable, a larger understanding than anything the world has to offer.

Because it lies hidden in the world, if our attention is focused on the world our interest in God, our awareness of God, our yearning for God may all wane. We have a choice, we can either take hold of the world and consume it, or rid ourself of these desires, change our focus, change our attention. We can change what we consider important in our life, change our priorities and move towards an understanding of what intimacy with our Lord means. On this path there is satisfaction, there is peace, on this path we can have rest, we can be the exalted beings God intended us to be. That is the choice we have to make in our life.

Many scriptures talk about God's gift of free will. If we look at life closely, if we understand the human condition and peer deeply into what we are, what we do, what happens during our life, we realize this free choice God has given us comes down to one thing, either we choose Him or we choose the world. This is the only choice we have to make.

Our arrogance is so complex it makes us think our choice is not simple, our choices exist on a grand scale, both complex and subtle, nuanced beyond imagination. This is merely the hypnosis and the magnetic attraction of the world. And what does the world have to offer in the end, why are we hypnotized, magnetized and confused by all the sparkling things of the world? We have an inclination, a disposition for all that. This means if we are going to change, our inclination must change, a change which requires discipline, instruction, understanding, and just as important, it means being in the presence of someone who understands the lie. If we talk only to people who have been

lied to, they cannot tell us the truth, they know only what they have been taught. We need someone who has stepped out of the world into a separate place, someone who is no longer attracted by the hypnotism, the magnetism and apparent complexity of the world, someone whose desires have disappeared, someone who has controlled the lower inclinations in another way.

This has always been the work of mankind. There are books on this which are thousands of years old, yet we talk about psychology as though it had been brought into the world a hundred years ago. The arrogance of our civilization, our time period, the arrogance of a few which has spread through society, all this makes us forget the great teachers of the past, those who saw the truth and were given God's authority to disseminate it.

We see only what is in front of us, but we have to stop forgetting and look in different places, in different directions. We should understand the continuity of human beings and see how we fit into that continuity, we should understand the reason why man was created. We have to ask the questions, who am I, why was I created, what is my purpose in life, where do I go when this life ends? We have to ask these questions, look for answers and go on that search, then teachers will appear. We will be shown the way because we are intended to find the way, this is intended for each of us.

We need to set our own intention to do that, and when we do, it coincides with God's because this is His intention for us. We should make His intention ours, and when the two coincide this is the time of miracles, the time when things happen which are beyond words and beyond description. When glory and radiance come into focus all the usual expectations of civilization and mankind, all the usual explanations of what is

happening around us disappear. That glory is for us, it really is, and it is available, truly available. We must believe in its availability. This path we are on has been a study for thousands of years.

When we talk about those who have gone on this path before us, we are talking about the holy beings whose purpose it is to help and assist, we are speaking about those who have traveled for Him in His way. When we speak of those who have done this, all the good beings of the universes come to help. This path is the purpose of our existence. We need to understand it clearly and take steps on it, securely and with discipline. May God help each of us be firm and positive in this purpose.