

THE CREATOR, SUSTAINER AND NOURISHER

In the name of God, the compassionate and the merciful, the creator, sustainer and nourisher. These words are intertwined to give us the understanding that if it were not for God we would not be here, and if it were not for God this creation would not exist, if it were not for God there would be no protection, if it were not for God there would be no sustenance.

When we repeat these words do we believe them, do we believe that God is the protector, sustainer, nourisher, the merciful and compassionate? If we believe it, why do we fear things? If we believe it why do we have difficulties in relationships, if we believe it why do we put ourselves in situations which make us hesitant or anxious? How deep is the faith that our protection comes from God? Or do we believe that protection comes from other things, from our ability to influence other people, an ability to influence situations, an ability to make things work one way or another? What makes us cling to the understanding which takes for granted that everything depends on our intervention, not His? How do we change our understanding from a dependence on our own actions to a dependence on His?

God loves the effort we make. Certain things are our duties in the world, yet we should understand as we perform them that results occur because of His grace; our responsibility is to be satisfied with the way things turn out. We are responsible for what we are given, but what He has kept for Himself is not within our comprehension or capacity. We have a certain understanding of what belongs to Him and what belongs to us. Let us focus on the limited nature of what is ours. We do have a limited nature, if we

understand the truth of our limits and the glory deposited there, we know we are not deficient. As long as we feel limited, as long as we see our limits as deficient we could become neurotic, we might experience anxiety and stress, doing things we should not be doing.

We need to disengage ourselves from all the things binding us in this world, things that keep us from being free to worship Him as He is supposed to be worshiped. We cannot worship Him freely while we are tied to certain situations in the world whose outcome keeps us from being in a state of joy. We cannot worship Him freely unless we accept outcomes allowing the serenity to reach out to Him. We need to be calm because it is easier to move towards Him in a serene state.

What stops us from being calm and serene, what holds us back, what are the individual chains binding us? They are different for each of us, we have all been created a different way, like snowflakes, every snowflake is certainly a snowflake although each one is individual. We are individuated in a worldly way even though we are certainly all the same, but we take the individuation to be more important than the ultimate sameness. When we look at a blanket of snow on the earth, the individuality of each snowflake disappears in the unity of pure white snow. It's like that with us, it's as if we put a microscope on each tiny snowflake and talk about the differentiation, forgetting that each snowflake is made of the same crystalline substance. We are all made of the same thing, we have been brought into this world, given the same gifts, yet because the world individuates us we are locked in that individuation. This does not allow us to expand, this limits us because individuation, by its very nature, defines limits.

Our lives are not meant to be separate, they are meant to be united. If we cannot act as a unifying force and pull things together, love for the sake of unity among us, we have lost the truth of that name of compassion and mercy which explains our unity and oneness. We have all been made by the same Creator, we all exist because of His mercy, we exist because of His compassion, we are sustained by whatever He has set in motion. Our purpose is to return to Him, to know Him; as long as we separate ourselves from each other we cannot. It is this separation which makes us think something other than God supports and sustains us, we think that this is what we are, the sustainers and nourishers, yet we are not, in a profound way, just as He is, in a profound way.

We have lost a sense of the profound and substituted the superficial, we have substituted the foam on the ocean for the depth of its water. When we do not see deeply enough we are satisfied with surface illustrations, surface solutions and surface thoughts, all that satisfying our sense of self, separating us from every other self. While we exist in that state of separation neither grace nor true glory can be ours, true love cannot be ours. Once we assume that we are sustaining and nourishing, we love whatever helps us sustain and nourish ourselves, we love what satisfies us, we love for the sake of our lower self, for the sake of the surface not the depth. We do not love for the sake of the truth, for the sake of mercy and compassion, but we should learn to love that way and understand the difference between two kinds of love.

True love is quite different from ordinary, worldly love; on the surface true love does not do anything for me, nevertheless at its depth it does everything, it liberates me, makes me free. It does not give me things in the world, it liberates me, giving me the opportunity to be something, to step out of the mundane into reality. When we cling to

the things of creation we cannot step into eternity, if we cannot step into eternity we cannot step into reality.

Everything we create and sustain, everything we empower is ephemeral, all these things exist for a brief, illusory span of time. If we spend our time with things that exist for a brief, illusory time, our rewards are brief, illusory things. We should decide which we want, do we want to engage the brief and illusory or do we want something which has no mortality, which exists beyond time, always in His presence, understanding as He does? Does He have a body, is our body going to last forever?

A version of all this should keep flashing before us, especially in moments of difficulty, as it does sometimes. At a funeral these thoughts rise up, many things which are ordinarily so relevant suddenly become irrelevant. How long do we stay in that state of mind, how long do we remember how irrelevant these things become during moments which shock us into the truth?

We need to shock ourself into the truth regularly, on a daily basis, and if that is not enough on an hourly basis, and if that is not enough at every minute. Each time we are unconscious of the truth and fall back into assuming we are accomplishing things, we are doing things, we need to be shocked back into an understanding of truth, into an understanding of our place in things.

There are probably ants who believe they can move mountains, just as there are people who believe they can do anything. I am astonished by the height and depth of our delusions. Grand delusions are quite exciting, they make the best movies, the best novels, the best stories and fantasies. We need to step back from delusion, step back from the delusion of the self which will deceive us as long as we let it. If we do not put the brakes

on, the delusion of selfhood takes us everywhere, anywhere, making us think we are in the driver's seat while it takes us to the most distant planets and back. The mind can travel around the world in an instant, taking us in an instant to all the places we have ever been in our life, but we cannot be there and here as well, we cannot be rid of the self at those moments. If we come together, bring all the fragmented pieces of ourself together in the now, there would be an extraordinary explosion no one would hear yet all the universes would applaud.

We should understand our inner capacity and give up anything that keeps us from that, give up our pettiness, our involvement with difficult relationships which cause distress. We should be joyful, our interaction with people should be joyful, positive, we should do things for others and stop worrying about ourself. In the name of God, the compassionate and merciful—He worries about all of us, each one of us, He worries about us collectively and individually. This is part of the grace and glory of His name of compassion and mercy.

We need to have faith in this glory, we need to become what we talk about, become the words we utter, become the essence of those words, their sound, their vibration, their resonance. Those words must permeate our state of being, not just be something we say once in a while, they must be the truth of who we are. If that happens the heavens open even though it is a cloudy day, the stars shine even though we cannot see them. For us, everything is right with the world although newspapers and television describe chaos all around. Those who are in tune understand the perfection which exists at every moment, they understand what others will never understand no matter what changes outwardly.

May God help us understand the truth of our lives, of our journey, of our essential being, who we really are. Our connection to God is the purpose of existence, nothing else matters. When we simplify all the mysteries to that, something changes. As long as we think we are complicated, as long as we think there are a thousand things we have to resolve, nothing is resolved; for every resolved thing a dozen other complications arise.

If we can cure not knowing God, not having a relationship with God, and it is something which can be cured, that will cure us. Everything else is hopeless; when we chase the hopeless our lives are hopeless, we are the product of hopeless lives. This was certainly not God's intention nor should it be ours. May He help us understand the true intention of our life here, the intention of the prophets, the saints and the friends of God who came to this world. May He bless each of us with this intention.