

BRIDGING SEPARATION

A story in the Old Testament tells how a certain people wanted to build a tower to God using stones as their building materials. At that time the peoples in that part of the world all spoke the same language, but as the tower grew higher and higher God changed that one language into many, they could no longer communicate. This stopped the building of the tower.

We know we cannot reach God by building a tower of stone, however there is another lesson in this story. If we speak the same language, if we come from the same culture, it is easier to communicate; when we come from different cultures and speak different languages it is more difficult. We can reach God by communicating human being to human being, not with stones, not with towers, but by communicating with each other. We have to cross the bridge of language, cross over cultures, over any sense of differences and all the things these differences give rise to. They cause a separation which means we perceive some people to be unlike us, we cannot love them as we love those who are like us. Yet God reminds us He has created different nations so that we would come to know Him.

Do you see what happens when we make that leap? Different nations can come together, different cultures can come together, different ways of seeing things can come together because none of these differences are about the inner truth. Although there is just one inner truth, if we look for reasons to be different we find them endlessly. We need to look instead for reasons to recognize that we are all the same because this understanding alone would save the world; without it we will be subject to destruction. If we can see

each other's heart, if we can learn to love each other without jealousy, resentment or anger, if we could learn to live this way things would change.

When we open our heart to someone and that person opens his heart to us we are sharing something, we are showing others how to do this, offering something to each other, an example of giving, respecting each other to show what respect is like. Between two loving hearts there is only one competition, which one of us can offer better conduct and qualities to the other. This is a competition we can all participate in, who can be kinder, who can be more giving, who can be more forgiving? This is a competition for all of us; try it, see what happens, begin with your family. This is a game husbands and wives should play with each other, play with the children, with those they are close to, and then expand to all we meet; astonishing things will happen.

When we display the qualities of God, when we set out to become those qualities, the friends of God are drawn to us, we end up among those who love God. When little fires are lit everywhere, when we are close to those fires, it is easy to catch fire. We need to be caught by these fires, we must not be afraid of these fires which are the purpose of our life. This is not complicated, if we look to the world for satisfaction it will humiliate us; no matter the circumstances, eventually it will humiliate us. Go to a nursing home, see the state of those people who have lived a long time, see what has happened to them. The world will humiliate us, we cannot expect anything from the world, whatever expectations we have we will always be disappointed. We should have no expectations and no regrets.

God alone knows how a situation will turn out. God is responsible for results, our job is just to do things appropriately, to keep doing things appropriately. We must act

correctly, whatever happens is not in our hands, whatever happens is in God's hands—we cannot expect anything, we just have to act correctly. Things happen as God intends them to happen, things happen in His time, nevertheless we have to do what is correct. In every situation we have to do what is correct, and then what comes comes, what goes goes, what happens next happens next, our attitude should not change. If we are praised it should not matter, if we are blamed it should not matter. Our responsibility is to do our best: some will praise us, some will blame us, but God knows the truth, and we should do our work for Him. He is the One we have to answer to, He is the One who will judge us.

May doing what is correct be easy for us, may we learn what to do from the teachers on our path, may understanding the difference between right and wrong be easy for us. May our hearts be drawn to what is right, and may God find everything we do pleasing.