

Inner Call Podcast #162 Thoughts on Palm Sunday April 10 2022

One of the often remarked upon features of our present age is the way that opinion-storms can blow up suddenly and sweep across the globe. Like the extreme weather produced by global warming, peaceful skies can turn dark without warning, and waves of harsh judgment strike at whatever stands in their way. Then, just as quickly, the winds can veer round, and blow from a different angle.

This is commonly attributed to the use of social media, but while the interconnectedness of everyone, allowing your point of view to instantly reach almost anyone on the planet, certainly amplifies these storms, the changeability of popular opinion is nothing new. Today is observed by many Christians as Palm Sunday, the day on which Jesus made a triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the city of Peace. The Gospel tells us that a welcoming throng lined the way he was travelling; they placed him upon a donkey, and praising him, spread palm leaves in his path as a sign of honour. Yet less than a week later, when Pontius Pilate asked the crowd if he should fulfil the tradition of releasing a prisoner for the Holy Days by giving Jesus his liberty, the mob shouted, 'Give us Barabbas.' They saved a murderer and condemned the Master.

The extremes of opinion, and their variability, show that many people worship their own individuality, but without knowing who they are. Their opinions and reasons are most often second-hand, borrowed from the loudest voices around them, and this leaves them prey to the tempests of duality. If we wish to find something more trustworthy, we need to look for a better teacher than the crowd.

In the prayer Khatum, we hear, "Open our hearts that we may hear Thy voice which constantly cometh from within." If the voice of Truth is constantly speaking in our hearts, could we ever hope for a better teacher? Yes, nature can inspire us, and we can benefit very much from the presence of an external guide, a guru or a murshid, for example, but only insofar as that guide awakens our heart, for that is where the true teaching occurs.

If we wish to learn, though, we must come to the schoolroom with the attitude of a student. If our classroom is cold and dark, and full of refuse we have thrown there over the years, ugliness such as jealousy, spitefulness, resentment and selfishness, what truth can we learn? The voice of Truth would be inaudible, or perhaps the lips would be completely sealed in such a space. On the other hand, if we come humbly, kindle a fire, and clear away all that we would not like to show to our 'Teacher,' then we will certainly be rewarded.

In Gayan Boulas we find these two sayings: "Truth is a divine inheritance found in the depth of every human heart." And : "The human heart is the home of the soul, and upon this home the comfort and power of the soul depend."

The crowds of Jerusalem spread palm leaves before the one they thought was a Teacher. We could try to approach our own inner Teacher with as much joy and devotion, and hopefully a more enduring sincerity.