

# On the Watch-Tower

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## **Life is Unity**

The human being, when not animalish which he tends to be, will find that he has a purpose different from just looking after his body, and its physical comforts. He begins to realize what is relationship, which is intrinsic to his nature. It concerns everything that exists, the earth itself, the vegetation, worms of every kind, insects which fly, the unseen beings who may be around, his fellow human beings, and so on. Each one can think for himself of what appears to him to be a part of life. If he goes far enough he will realize that everything that exists, what is apparently animate or inanimate, has a close contact with him. In fact, he is unable to distinguish them, or the life in them, from what is in himself. The body may appear to be different, but it is composed of the same material as his own body.

Thich Nhat Hanh points out that we are connected with everything. But we do not know it.

It is a strange thing that everything looks different — in a way it is different — but it is also the same. This is one of the great paradoxes of life, which we cannot grasp with our ordinary minds, but which is grasped by something more refined. We will not try to name it —

something in our consciousness which responds to unity.

It may be that the fundamental portion of our life is nothing but the unity with all things. So relationship gradually becomes one of unity. To begin to discover why each human being is, and to think differently about what the human being lives for, is the first step. The simplest of men thinks that he exists in order to eat and live out his life as best as he can; this is all that he knows. We do not understand the purpose of life till we come to the point where we begin to think carefully about it. Something within us has moved us to examine the relationship with the rest of existence, whatever form that existence may take, insect, bird or fish, or human being or whatever.

Whatever one looks at in this world, one gets, if one is really aware, the feeling of something beyond physical existence, something which cannot be divided. Ultimately we can only call it the 'One'. Even if different names are given, it is the one truth which pervades all existence. Very few of us feel we have the time to look at Nature. In fact, it is considered a sin to look, and not to be doing something or other all the time. But Nature has a vast variety in it, even the small area we look

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at. In the *National Geographic Magazine* some years ago, there was an article which was called 'God's Half Acre'. Every half acre, even a half acre in a desert where you think that nothing is growing, is actually full of life, and every half acre has something in it which one can only say is marvellous.

So there are these differences, which are not difference; man belongs to that network or relationships which are unity, but we rarely realize it. Unfortunately we think we are different and superior to everything else. And we not only not accept it but we have no idea whatever that we will come to the truth only by looking at things, without making a difference, between the looker and that at which he is looking.

### How Are We Related?

In a way the tiger is related, let us say, to the butterfly and other creatures one can think of. Only when our eyes which are full of deceit see, we say: 'illusion is better'. In Theosophy we are told that life is one. Does it mean only what our mind may make of it, or is it actually one in spite of the bodies, which each little portion of life may use at any particular time? Think of the bodies of the human being. A person may be born today in a certain race, community, having a certain sex, looking in his own way, but the next incarnation may be totally different. So the body does not matter. The body contains the same elements of matter, but we are not aware of this.

Simple people, like the American

Indians, before they began to become more sophisticated, were forced to change their life, which they were living in their natural way. But they had a sense of unity. Many American Indians did not kill more than they needed for their existence. They believed that they had to eat other animals, but they had a profound feeling of respect (perhaps I exaggerate) for the life around them. They regarded all that life as one — in a simple sort of way. But one can realize this in a profound way, and that is what human life is meant to be — to grow in the feeling of oneness, which even the primitive man can feel. It grows and becomes a reality to the more enlightened people. So we look at nature and we realize that we belong to the network of relationships.

To start with, realization may be only mental, but it becomes more and more of a reality, is based in reality, something which we grasp deep inside ourselves which we cannot put into words. And evidences of unity can be seen everywhere in Nature, if we have eyes to see beauty. There is great truth in the simple statement that the divine appears as truth, beauty and goodness to human beings. If we look at things carefully, we see beauty in their construction, in the way they behave, what they do.

### Beauty is Everywhere

We often feel the need to kill or hurt something, but the more a person develops spiritually, the less inclined he is to kill and hurt. Unfortunately, as he proceeds in life with a physical body, some killing

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takes place, even if there is no intention to put an end to another existence. The feeling of beauty, the sacredness, the importance of life in any form is very clear and felt by that person, not merely thought of; because to think of such things is easy in a way. Although for many, life contradicts it and therefore it cannot be seen as a truth, but it is a truth.

The Bendits, Lawrence and Phoebe, in their book, speak about taking a little sand in the palm of the hand, and letting sight increase. They see, not sand, not as what we consider to be useless material, because there is so much of it all over the world. But every handful of sand contains a brilliance. The light of God (if one likes to put it that way) is shining through every material, even if it seems to be of no value. We have to use some of this material, but we can learn to be aware that we are using property which we do not possess. The whole idea of possession brings a note of something different.

So even sand contains for him who knows something of the indescribable, that precious element we call God. There is nothing natural that does not possess beauty. If we look carefully, we will find that the beauty that we feel in some creatures is only an enhancement of what exists everywhere. But to feel that only our enhanced sense of beauty is real, the rest is not, is an imagination. The worth of things, not in terms of monetary value, but the reality of it can change from person to person, from creature to creature, but deep inside it remains the same. Goodness also exists everywhere. We think that

certain things are good, and other things are not. We think that some creatures are good and other creatures are bad; this becomes false when we see correctly.

We begin to see that no portion of life fails to contain the element of goodness. We see a caterpillar crawling on leaves: it may appear to us a nuisance, or it may appear as a subject of scientific study; it may appear in different ways. But to a person who really sees, it is the divine element which takes a particular form, and does what it wants to according to what is fitting for it. So truth, beauty and goodness are part of the one existence that is everywhere. We see division and differences, some are more attractive to us than others, but to the eye that really sees, all these things appear divine. So the person on the path realizes that much of the activity that the human being indulges in, has nothing to do with being human at all.

There are many ways of turning away from the divinity which is everywhere. Everything in life offers a possibility to understand the nature of the one divine existence. Human life is not meant for only ordinary purposes. We have to eat, we have to keep clean, we have to do certain things which are necessary, but let us keep them to the minimum and not make them very important in life.

In *The Mahatma Letters*, there is mention of a man bringing a message from them, who is dirty, who does not wear nice clothes, but he himself was a clean individual. These external things do not matter much, but the internal awareness, the perception of things as they really are,

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should not be very far, and we should be tentative in our attitude towards things: I know somebody, how he is, how he is not, and so on. We can be tentative in the best sense of the word 'negative', not taking everything that we see to be correct, not taking anything for granted, making our internal condition open to see the new in the old. Everything that we have seen in a particular way may be wrong. So with this mind we can have a different attitude towards everything that exists.

### Why Plant Trees?

You need tremendous energy to keep up with all the changes that are taking place in the world. And you cannot have energy if you allow yourself to remain complacent in relation to the widespread devastation and suffering which human beings are inflicting on Nature and her creatures. The callous destruction of the Amazon rainforest continues almost unabated, in spite of international public opinion against it. In many countries, countless cows are confined to extremely small spaces, having hormones pumped into them so that the milk production continues to feed a market based on such cruelty. Soon after their calves are born they are killed in order to supply 'tender

meat' to the same market.

Krishnamurti was once asked: 'Why should we plant trees?' He replied:

. . . When you plant a tree and watch it, when you nourish a tree, when you take trouble over it, it gives you the feeling — not just intellectually — that you are part of the earth . . .

When you have a pet — a dog, a cat, a bird, a horse — something you care for, take care of, you brush it, comb it, and see that it does not catch disease. You love it and it loves you and so you have that feeling of loving something other than just yourself: wanting saris, coats and wondering how you look. Most people think about themselves all the time, and if you plant a tree, make a garden, it helps to break down this concern . . .

Very few in India take the trouble to create a garden . . . When you think out what you are going to plant, about putting a rock there, a bigger rock there and a plant there, you begin to appreciate something; you create something beautiful . . . Is not that part of education? . . .

Have you ever looked at the stars? . . . They are all moving away from each other at a terrific speed. . . . Think of that space.