

Daily Meditation 05-31-23

Celebrating the Holiness of Mahatma Gandhi

Good morning.

Today we have the privilege to meditate on Mahatma Gandhi and his contribution to the discussion on holiness and generosity and sacrifice and so much more.

So I decided to go back to my *Original Blessing* book because I remembered that I invoke Gandhi a lot there. So as I looked it up in the index, I was blown away by how often I invoke Gandhi. Countless pages. So, we're going to go through just a few of those, but I didn't realize how indebted I am to Gandhi, for this book, rather early in my career.

So Gandhi says, on page 68 of *Original Blessing*, "Earth and heaven are in us"

... Earth and heaven are in us. So that cosmic awareness, again, that is so common among the creation mystics and so necessary to open our psyches up.

He says in another place, "Where there is fear, there is no religion"

...where there is fear, there is no religion. Albert Einstein says something very parallel to that; he says that fear should not enter any of our religious vocabulary, and Gandhi simply put it that way, that where there is fear there is no religion, and yet you have to ask how much religion has atrophied itself based on fear over the centuries.

Mahatma Gandhi also said (this is on page 86) that it is very important "to combat the doctrine of original sin"

...very important to combat the doctrine of original sin. He says you cannot support the

...castigation of the doctrine of original sin without advancing also a theory of human perfectibility, divine grace, and the upward tendency of cosmic and human evolution. Dharma or morality cannot be ultimately divorced from rta, or cosmic order.

So that's a very profound observation, coming from outside the formal boundaries of Christianity, if you will, but it certainly rings true with my experience, both sociologically, psychologically, even theologically, remembering that original sin is not a Jewish concept; therefore, it's not in the Bible. It was a fourth-century concept coming from St. Augustine at the time Christianity inherited the Empire.

And so to have an outsider, if you will, Gandhi, say explicitly to combat the doctrine of original sin, is necessary. But also you have to advance the theory of human perfection, divine grace, the upward tendency of cosmic and human evolution. True morality is not separate from cosmic order. So much wisdom in Gandhi.

Again, page 104: "All good deeds that are prompted by hope of happiness in the next world, cease to be moral."

...All good deeds that are prompted by hope of happiness in the next world cease to be moral. This too is very much an echo of Albert Einstein, or I should say Einstein is an echo of Gandhi, because Einstein too said that we do not act, or do good actions for the sake of, you know, reward or fear of punishment.

Page 140: Gandhi says, "Suffering is the badge of the human race."

...Suffering is the badge of the human race. So it's not about escaping suffering, but it is about undergoing the choices we choose to make, and being willing to pay the consequences, something that Daniel Ellsberg was very committed to.

Thank you. Thank you to Gandhi. We'll see you tomorrow.