

# **The Blessings of Trouble**©

For the One Who Feels Separate from Life  
February 2012

I would like to begin by referring to a portion of Psalm 86, a prayer of David.

“Incline Your ear, O Lord, answer me, for I am poor and needy. Preserve my life, for I am steadfast. You, O my God, deliver your servant who trusts in You. Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I call to You all day long; bring joy to your servant’s life, for on You, Lord, I set my hope. For you, Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call on You. Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer; heed my pleas for mercy. In my time of trouble, I call You, for you will answer me.”

Like the one who wrote this prayer, we all have times of trouble, great trouble even, faced with the uncertainties inherent in manifest life. And, like him, we cry out for mercy. We know that our efforts alone are not enough. We have reached the edge of the known world and can go no farther.

This is an important moment, the reaching of the edge of the known world. The known world includes all of our strategies and ways we effort and push in life. They no longer work for us here.

At this moment, we are tempted to only feel great sorrow and anguish.

And, yet, this is also a moment filled with the potential for tremendous healing and awakening into a deeper relationship with All That Is.

It is here that we have the opportunity to listen, truly listen to the inner and outer voices that have been silenced, to hear the minor quieted voices that are now calling to be met, to be heard.

Here, if we listen, we can discover how we have divided the world into pieces and parts. Here, we can hear where we have split the world into oppositional forces of our will *versus* God's will, the known *versus* the unknown, the personal *versus* the transcendent.

Here, the divided voices gather together to say what needs to be said and to be heard. Listen.....

The voices that have been silenced may be filled with pain and sorrow. And it may feel like too much for the personal being to bear alone. There is deep wisdom.

Now, like David, we cry out to the Great Unity that includes all. Now we are in the territory where we the separate personal being has the opportunity to enter into a new relationship with all of Life, including his troubles, his pain and sorrows.

When David prayed, he knew that he could not face his time of trouble alone. He called out, seeking God's mercy and God's abounding love. He knew that if he called out to the Lord, he would be answered.

Why did he believe that he would be answered? What gave him this certainty, in the midst of the deep uncertainty and the trouble of his life?

One answer to these questions might be faith. He had faith in his Creator, the One who had called him into being and is always listening.

Another answer might be that he understood something about the nature of Reality.

The great Jewish prayer, the Shema, as we paraphrase it in *A Society of Souls*, tells us: "Hear all of you who are wrestling with the nature of Reality, Reality is one and not two."

Or, we could say when one calls, One Answers.

The call and the answer are built into the nature of Reality. When we are honestly who we are, where we are, when we are—we call out to Reality and Reality answers. The call and answer co-arise in this place.

Our personal troubles, sorrows and pain may appear far away, distant from the One we are calling out to, but David knows that they are not.

The road is long, particularly during a time of great trouble. The small view keeps us cycling in our pain, believing we are all alone, separate from the rest of Reality. Sometimes, we try to push our way through and sometimes we collapse. We have reached the end of the known world.

And, here, in this place, we need our inquiry into Reality, into the great matter of Life and Death to become deep and broad.

We need support now, but not the support that will only take us away from what is now occurring. We need support that will bring us into deeper and deeper relationship with All That Is, into ourselves, into Life.

Here, we need a relationship to the undivided wholeness that Reality is, which includes the known and unknown, personal and transcendent. Here, like David, we enter into this

relationship by being honest with ourselves, which is the place where all of Reality responds, the Real to the Real.

To consider this is to begin the journey of healing and awakening.

The difficulties of our life are not something to only get through as swiftly as possible. There is something Whole, albeit mysterious, in the struggles of our lives. And we can only discover this Wholeness when we can engage in relationship with where we are right here and now.

David cried out, knowing that, as he did, he would be answered.

There is a wisdom and beauty in Reality that we cannot know fully unless we are also willing to be here, as we are, not only as we wish or demand ourselves to be.

The Wholeness that we seek is not really Wholeness if we cut out pain, sorrow, death or loss.

To consider this is to begin the journey of healing and awakening to the Source of Creation itself, to find a Wholeness that is neither small and manageable nor vast and uncaring.

This is the Oneness of All That Is, at once personal and transcendent. You are included in this Wholeness and this Wholeness is You.

*We simultaneously awaken to our ideas and concepts of who we are and what the world is AND empty ourselves of these ideas and discover something new.*

This is not a denial of the uncertainties of life. We do not know what the next unfolding moment will bring. The known and the unknown are here present, in relationship. Reality calls and Reality answers. This is the True Self calling out to the True Self.

The troubles of our life and their solutions co-arise. When we hold vividly the difficulty, as it is, in the state that it is right here and now, then the Call and the Answer exist together in the same place of honesty.

This is a willingness to be clear-eyed, ghosts gone and fantasies gone, embracing the singular truth of the Beauty and Wholeness of this Life As It Is.

Embracing life, with its troubles, is the process of finding blessings—gold in the rocky hard places. To receive the blessings, we become like David, willing to engage this time of trouble. We call out to Reality to help us be here, to meet us here, calling out, trusting that we will indeed be answered.