

## The Search and a Graveyard Visit

In a world where everything is in a state of change and transformation, nothing can stay the same. Nothing can be the same. For this reason, each person's perception of life and self as well as their search is different. In the same way, the search for meaning is also unique to each person. However, to put it in general terms, the search for meaning on the path of life is self-discovery, self-knowledge and the journey of actualizing one's own distinguishing personal story.

Entering the light is the only way that leads from the actualization of this personal story to the light. Acting responsibly with the life wisdom that is sustained by merciful awareness and active altruism is the only way. Living a life that is fruitful for oneself and for others.

Occasional visits to a graveyard are very meaningful and valuable in terms of contributing to the transition process from **"One who thinks he knows, to one who knows himself."** It emboldens us to listen/discover/know ourselves in the ebb and flow of life as well as the current of real time. For in the course of time, humanity has made strides in the knowledge of the physical world and of matter; but, unfortunately, it has not been as successful in the realm of self-knowledge. In order to achieve this and ascend to the level of the **"one who knows himself,"** one must search for ways to dispel mental darkness with enlightened attitudes.

In a system where each person's self-perception and outlook on life varies, no one can learn, internalize, and apply in another's place. What matters is going with the flow of this truth, rather than resisting it. So the zeitgeist evokes the importance of finding a path that leads from body to heart and of convening and aligning with the spirit on this path. As we discover ourselves in this alignment, our pain will go away depending on spiritual and mental advancement. We should keep in mind that as we draw near to our heart, we will also grow near to everything else.

All that matters is to act fairly towards all existence -humanity, plant life, animals, and nature with awareness on the path of life and coexistence which leads from straits to relief. All that matters is aspiring to advance daily on the path of faithfulness. **Based on this understanding, true worship is facing oneself in the mirror and questioning oneself. For it is not easy for a person who has not discovered himself to become one with and live according to the divine flow and process.** Only through self-discovery can one

put aside relative attitudes and have the privilege of appreciation for oneself and for others. Only then can they experience the pleasure of completing others as much as they can with servile motives. Only then will the interaction of the inner flow surround them and add flavor to the world of meaning.

What a pity that those who drift away and become alienated from themselves cannot understand this or experience its awareness. Because they are not in their true home. They are in a constant state of travel. So no matter how much you knock on their door you will not hear a single sound in answer and the door will not open. Since they strangle the spirit/meaning inside a material shell, they have either forgotten or lost their true identity. This is why they always question others. **"Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?"** (Matthew 7:3). In other words, they make the great mistake of thinking that others are always to blame. And they act like this.

1700 years ago, Saint Aphrem of Nusaybin (306-373), one of the pioneers and dazzling personages of Syriac literature gave a noteworthy warning that fits this context. While highlighting the obstacles and knots that impede us on the way to absolute truth/love, he reminds us soothingly, **"If your house is honored when you host an important person, imagine the honor of hosting the master of everything (God) within yourself! Leave no filth inside your thoughts, which have become a temple. Do not leave anything inside the home of God that will upset him. Let God's home be adorned with things that are worthy of Him."**

The world-famous thinker/writer/master of our age Eckhart Tolle holds the following opinion on the topic: **"The more consciousness you bring into the body, the stronger the immunity system becomes. It is as if every cell wakes up and rejoices. The body loves your attention. It is also a potent form of self-healing. Most illnesses creep in when you are not present in the body. If the master is not present in the house, all kinds of shady characters will take up residence there. When you inhabit your body, it will be hard for unwanted guests to enter."**

In the same way, if a person is not present in his own house, if he has not taken charge of his own house, all kinds of unclean intentions will invade it and live there. In other words, the attitude of person who is absent from the house will become dubious and altered. A dubious/altered attitude leads to cross and anxious behavior. Just as this poisons life, it

also has a negative effect on the process and flow, triggering reflexes, reactions and separation. **"For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of. A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him."** (Matthew 12:35)

It looks as if within the ebb and flow of life and its workings, our intentions are in continual conflict with the divine will. As long as this conflict lasts, we will continue to be anxious. When we clean our mental world, when we make peace with the divine will and come to an agreement, everything will be more comfortable and better. We will learn this through experience.

In the search of meaning in the material world, in the effort to reach divine/positive values, there are always the traces/reflections of that divine will.

If we can behave accordingly with those traces and reflections with the intent of manifesting our inner world on the journey of life, everything will change for the better. Everything will grow more beautiful.

**Because that will is the life energy that sustains us. IT IS LOVE.**

We must allow it to direct our lives and talents. If we know how to desire, we have to know how to labor and sow.

He who sows irresponsibility reaps irresponsibility. We must learn/know well what we sow. For we will reap it one day.

Whether words or actions, whether material or spiritual, we will find whatever we sow.

If we sow a good word from our mouth, it is a good seed, it will grow big and beautiful and come find us. If we sow bad words from our mouth, it will grow big and ugly and find us as well.

Let us sow beautiful things into the fields which are our lives/souls, and thus reap beautiful things. We cannot achieve this without self-knowledge, without dispelling the mental darkness which blocks our life energy. We must transition to the program of creation/the self.

Based on this vital awareness, Saint Anthony (251-356) gives us that important/well-known reminder of his with the words, **"To know God, you must first know thyself."** And in this sense, he has made a breakthrough in the understanding of hidden meanings.

When we ascend to the luminous literary heights of Saint Aphrem (306-373), we see that he makes the following appeal regarding this topic: **"Lord, disband the darkness of my mind with the enlightenment of knowing you. Disband it so that our enlightened spirit may serve you with fresh purity."**

Saint Augustine of Hippo (354-450) also warns us in the same fashion, **"How can you grow nearer to God when you are far from yourselves?"** He continues, **"Oh Lord, grant me self-knowledge that I may know thee."**

Yes, in order not to feel sad and cry when the spectacle of life is over and the day draws to an end, we must first come to terms with our own mortality, chronic helplessness, strong/enlightened and weak/blind attributes. Meaning that during times of great uncertainty and worry, we should take this path, experience the pleasure of this search, and discover and know ourselves. **We should see the speck of sawdust in other eyes along with the plank in our own eye while claiming the essence of what makes us human.** We must hear the voice of our heart/consciousness before it is too late.

As it is written, **"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened"** (Matthew 7:7-8). To attain that pleasure we must continuously listen, search, and knock. We must listen so that we might receive. We must search so that we might find. We must knock so that the door might be opened to us. This is not a one-time thing. It has to do with continuous intention. It requires serious effort and self-discipline to this end.

Lest we forget, what really matters is searching on the path of self-knowledge. The door of the house/spirit at whose threshold we insistently wait is bound to be opened to us. As it has been said, **"Searching does not always mean you will find but those who find are always those who search."**

Yusuf Beğtaş

Syriac Association of Language, Culture and Literature / Mardin