The Terrifying Power of Divine Love

Matthias Everhope

Sermon Notes

Aug. 6, 2023

Reader’s note: Since I often preach from notes, the actual sermon that was spoken turned out

rather differently from what is laid out below. Most of the points were made, but in a mixed order.

Readings:

a) Psalm 17, read in Hebrew: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zYqnI7GHmUs

b) Bhagavad Gita, Chap. 11, v. 3-20; 30-32, 45:

https://www.holy-bhagavad-gita.org/chapter/11

-11:32 recited in Hindi,

-1:17 - 9:21- timestamp: https://youtu.be/TiLduVH8PGQ?t=77

-13:16 - 15:07 timestamp:https://youtu.be/TiLduVH8PGQ?t=796 (13:16

start) https://youtu.be/TiLduVH8PGQ?t=891 (14:51 start)

-11:32 Google Translate

BG 11:32:

“

भावार्थ : श्री भगवान बोले- मैंलोकों का नाश करनेवाला बढ़ा हुआ महाकाल हूँ। इस समय इन लोकों को नष्ट करने

के लि ए प्रवृत्त हुआ हूँ। इसलि ए जो प्रति पक्षि यों की सेना मेंस्थि त योद्धा लोग हैं, वेसब तेरेबि ना भी नहींरहेंगे

अर्था त तेरेयुद्ध न करनेपर भी इन सबका नाश हो जाएगा॥32॥

bhaavaarth : shree bhagavaan bole- main lokon ka naash karane vaala badha hua mahaakaal

hoon. is samay in lokon ko nasht karane ke lie pravrtt hua hoon. isalie jo pratipakshiyon kee

sena mein sthit yoddha log hain, ve sab tere bina bhee nahin rahenge arthaat tere yuddh na

karane par bhee in sabaka naash ho jaega.32.”

-Today marks the 78th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, with the atomic bomb nicknamed “Little Boy” that took an estimated 140,000 lives.

-Before I begin, I’d like to take a moment of silence for them.

--“Now I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds.” -Robert Oppenheimer, dramatic paraphrasing of BG 11:32

You may have heard this phrase recently. Chief Scientist of the Manhattan Project, J. Robert

Oppenheimer was familiar with the Hindu scriptures, and apparently said this at the Trinity test site in Los Alamos upon witnessing the first nuclear bomb detonation in history. The big summer blockbuster movie “Oppenheimer” makes notes of this.

-Most translations have it as, “I am *time*, the source of destruction.” In time, all things pass away. The endless cycle of birth, life, death, and rebirth: samsara.

-Oppenheimer had pierced the veil of this material reality, had helped create the utter destructive power he’d only read about. The blinding burst between creation and destruction.

Verse 45: “Having seen Your universal form that I had never seen before, I feel great joy. And yet, my mind trembles with fear. Please have mercy on me and again show me Your pleasing form, O God of gods, O Abode of the universe.”

-This reminded me of something: -Read Matthew 17

-In each of these situations — and there are more like them throughout the history of prophetic visions in the wisdom literature — the beautiful and terrifying are simultaneous. It is overwhelming to witness the ascendant reality. But the Lord invites us there. ‘Be not afraid. Have faith.’

-That is the context of these stories of Arjun and the disciples witnessing, and why the stories were written down. So that we might believe in this higher dimension of consciousness, where the Divine abides, and not fear it, but carry the faith in our hearts and actions so that, in compassion, we too might abide in it, and might walk with others in doing so.

-The test site in Los Alamos, New Mexico where the first atomic explosion took place, is called Trinity. It had been a sacred burial ground for local Navajo bands. Los Alamos means The Poplars.
-At Los Alamos in July 1945, Oppenheimer stands on the precipice of a newly dangerous world. The weapon that would end the most terrible conflict in human history, would be the very thing that could destroy the planet in its entirety.
-However, Oppenheimer knew the context of this powerful quote in the Bhagavad Gita. The last verse, verse 55: “Those who perform all their duties for My sake, who depend upon Me and are devoted to Me, who are free from attachment, and are without malice toward all beings, such devotees certainly come to Me.”

-The Genesis scripture for this week, which I didn’t read, is where Jacob wrestles with the Great “I Am” until dawn, and in so doing injures his hip and is given the name “Israel” denoting “the struggle.” This is the basis of Jewish faith, the wrestling, and follows it from era to era, in the tradition of the Midrash where theology is meant not to be definitive, in the understanding of the Messiah, in the location of God amidst the Holocaust, or today in the nature of the Israeli state.

-We also must struggle. In seeking God we must walk, climb, inward and outward, to find God and invite God in, deeply. It isn’t meant to be easy. We’re not in heaven yet but in this plane of existence we are tasked with embodying the Kindom of God, making it present and alive, flourishing in all corners of the earth.
-This is a vision of a world without atomic weapons.
-Director David Lynch, advocating for Transcendental Meditation, describes the unified consciousness within all things describes its “Dynamic Peace.”

-But Matthias, how do we stop these huge sociological problems? Those which led to the war and the Manhattan Project.
-As Julia said in her recent teaching, talking about Bruce’s work in Air Force strategy, even in such a high position undoing the Military Industrial Complex is “impossible” but he did what he could. So we all become military officers and do what we can? Ha, no.
-The answer is the simplest, and in its stride, the most challenging yet the most fulfilling.
-We walk the Good Road one step at a time. We must always be vigilant on our ego, our temptation to give in to the status quo, in ourselves or in society at large.
-Also worth mentioning that this is also the 58th anniversary of the signing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 by Pres. Lyndon Johnson

-Tips:

-Start asking questions. At her job, working in commercial design, Emily undertook a cool research project last year to investigate how the raw materials that go into her design project are sourced. Are the workers respected? Is the land respected? Is it sustainable? Fair Trade everything!
-Ah well isn’t Emily such an angel…
-Since you don’t know her as well as I do, Emily isn’t perfect! None of us are. And we each will have different gifts and challenges, at different places in this journey toward greater health, well-being, wholeness. So be forgiving, be patient, always compassionate. Follow the teachings of our tradition hear in Church of the Saviour which give us strength in the inward/outward journey, but be open to the ways that the Spirit is moving in you and among us today such that those traditions do not become doctrinal walls.

-Easter and Pentecost unleashed the Holy Spirit. It is always at work. God is closeby. Walk alongside.

-Death will come eventually.

-"Like a moth unto the flame" there are two divergent paths spiraling, one unto the fire of death in violence and one unto the sacred fire of life in love.

-In this world, after it’s all said and done, regardless of your choices, we all return to dust. Ashes burned by the burning cycle of entropy churching the Samsara wheel of existence. So, live with acts of love that will live on in others, in future generations. Walk into that bright light, be not afraid, let it guide you into new and glistening dimensions.

Take out:

-”A rain of ruin from the air, the like of which has never been seen on this earth.” -President Harry Truman

-Historic events on Aug. 6: https://www.thepeoplehistory.com/august6th.html

-The dropping of the nuclear weapons on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945 and Nagasaki three days later represents a culmination of the fall of man as described in Genesis in the Garden of Eden. There we sought the knowledge of good and evil, and were banished from the paradise of innocence now blocked by a flaming sword. So, on the outside, toiling in the earth and relentlessly pursuing our newfound knowledge, we came to the great schism, and crafted our own flaming sword, the destruction of the base of matter itself, the splitting of the atom.

-For Americans, it was a means to swiftly end the war in the Pacific, to avoid a bloody land invasion where many would die needlessly. But for the citizens of Hiroshima, mostly civilians, it was the apocalypse just as described in antiquity. Not brought by the four horseman or the seven seals, but a shiny silver flying fortress, a B-29 bomber, so high you could barely see it.

-Such terrifying force. So bright. 100 suns in an instant. Total devastation. This truly was the pillar of fire. Avert your eyes, it is too powerful to even be looked upon.

-When the three disciples journey with Christ up to the mountain and see his transfigured nature, “his face shone like the sun” and when God spoke his blessing upon Christ they were terrified and fell facedown to the ground. Arjun, asking to see Krishna’s

-When God, or the angel, or Krisha, or the transfigured Divine teacher…

-I haven’t seen the Barbie movie but I could barely get through the trailer. Apocalyptic as Oppenheimer is, to be honest the Barbie universe is much more frightening to me. If that’s a perfect world let me see what hell looks like. At least Oppenheimer is a world I’m familiar with.

-...We may want to rush ahead, but are unlikely to make some giant leap unless God gives such

grace.

Music:

-George Harrison - “My Sweet Lord” (w/ lyrics):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QbMbx0jCoe4

-Japanese Bamboo Flute?

-Song for Hiroshima