

JOY: The Journal of Yoga

September 2002, Volume 1, Number 1

An Apology to Gandhi and King

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nonviolence is a way of life
seeking to express the purity of love and truth
to all beings...

not even a century has passed since you last graced the earth
with your living breath and actions
yet it seems we, as a human collective
have greatly forgotten the lessons of your lives
even as we live within what remains of your accomplishments

and even more disappointing (to me)
is how we who seek to honor your memory
often treat your lives as a mere memory
to be acknowledged and savored in the favors of our minds
instead of
treating your lives as great, attainable lessons
to be lived and practiced through our actions, thoughts, and prayers
that we quickly speak high words and eloquent praises
adore and admire the sacrifice your lives are
(sometimes without seeking to know the fullness of what your lives truly are)
yet we remain within the enclaves of our own selfish and self-centered lives
somewhat comforted that we took time to remember you
that we make holidays and name awards in your name
hold festivities and celebrations as memorials to you
that we make a show and wonderful spectacle of your work
in place of living the substance you courageously became
that we minimize your wholistic practice of nonviolence
into condensed strategies and ideologies that we apply to only portions of our lives
that we transform the love that was and is your life
into mere politics, philosophies, and historical remembrances
so i apologize
from the depths of my sorrowful heart
that we have danced and cheered at the place where you left the path of your work
instead of working to continue the path
to extend further into the wilderness of humanity's societies
i am sorry
that we have taken comfort
in not fulfilling the unyielding persistence and commitment you exemplified
by embodying the discipline and sacrifice demanded
to make nonviolence an untiring, undefeatable force

sorry that we have placed a veil of complacency

upon the magnificent beauty of the virtues you extolled
to love all beings, even our "enemies"
to treat all with love
even refraining from holding negative feelings toward others
and using unkind words
especially to those we dislike, or those who oppose us
i am sorry we have not strived
to purify and enhance our ability to love
for you have been yet another example
that true love lived and practiced is sufficient to overcome all challenges
and have shown us again
that the real enemy
is the practice of injustice, oppression, and hate
not those who practice such
(say it again:)
that the real enemy
is the practice of injustice, oppression, and hate
not those who practice such
and
that with love we can transform the practice and the practitioners
of injustice, oppression, and hate
transform these
to manifest justice, equality, and love
and with these the world will surely evolve
into a realm of peace
happiness and abounding understanding
beauty and love
i am sorry
that we have chosen expediency and opportunity
over the mantra of having all our means justify our ends
over the compassion of recognizing and striving against
injustice to anyone and everyone
such that we celebrate your achievements in the face of
the continuing poverty that exists
without truly working to end such poverty
and build memorials to you in the shadows of institutions that continue to practice
injustice, oppression, and hate
without truly working to transform these institutions
and speak praise of you, esteem you in our minds
without addressing the negative attitudes which have made a comfortable home in
our hearts
attitudes you confronted within yourself and within this world
which we allow to remain in our own hearts as we echo words of your praise

that we still allow anger to consume us
that we still fail to treat all beings as sacred
that we still accept injustice as it breathes and breeds
that we still compromise our vision and hope for truth, justice, and peace
that we still don't truly or fully appreciate and honor
you, your lives, and your work
for if we did, just as we see that we are clothed and fed
we will see that we give as much care to sincerely living nonviolence

so i apologize to you,
gandhi and king
as i should
that we (including me) have allowed such to be
have allowed such to prosper
and as any true apology is coupled with action to correct our wrongs
i will start with myself to correct our wrongs
by not only remembering but living
in action, thought, and intention
the virtues you have so graciously embodied
not just on days of memorial but every day
in every way that will become the basis of my every day
to continue the great path you have left to us
to continue and expand it that it may prove to be a benefit to ourselves
a benefit to others
and hopefully,
a benefit to all (beings)

my apology, my commitment...
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