

July 23, 2005

PROPHETIC TOPIC

DIVINE PERFECTION CAN BE ACHIEVED

FORMAT

OPENING REMARKS AND INTRODUCE GUEST

LOVE AND LIGHT, I'M REV. PHIL AND I'M YOUR HOST FOR "WORDS OF THE PROPHETS." THIS MORNING I AM GOING TO DO SOMETHING I HAVEN'T DONE IN 3 _ YEARS, A SOLO SHOW. MY LAST SHOW WAS FOCUSED ON THE BEATITUDE "BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS" AND THE SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION OF THAT BEATITUDE. I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO YOU, THE LISTENING AUDIENCE, TO SPIRITUALLY INTERPRET THE ENTIRE SET OF BEATITUDES THIS MORNING. IN ORDER TO ACCOMPLISH THIS I HAVE RELIED PRIMARILY, BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY, ON TWO BOOKS, EMMET FOX'S "SERMON ON THE MOUNT: THE KEY TO SUCCESS IN LIFE" (1934) AND SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA'S "THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT ACCORDING TO VEDANTA" (1963). THE BEATITUDES THEMSELVES ARE TAKEN FROM THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO SAINT MATTHEW, THE KING JAMES VERSION, CHAPTER 5, PARAGRAPHS 3 THROUGH 12. TODAY'S PROPHETIC TOPIC IS "DIVINE PERFECTION CAN BE ACHIEVED". THIS TOPIC IS EXTRACTED FROM THE INTRODUCTION TO "THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT ACCORDING TO VEDANTA" BY SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA. THE STATEMENT READS AS FOLLOWS: "LIKE KRISHNA AND BUDDHA, CHRIST DID NOT PREACH A MERE ETHICAL OR SOCIAL GOSPEL BUT AN

UNCOMPROMISINGLY SPIRITUAL ONE. HE DECLARED THAT GOD CAN BE SEEN, THAT DIVINE PERFECTION CAN BE ACHIEVED. IN ORDER THAT MEN MIGHT ATTAIN THIS SUPREME GOAL OF EXISTENCE, HE TAUGHT THE RENUNCIATION OF WORLDLINESS, THE CONTEMPLATION OF GOD, AND THE PURIFICATION OF THE HEART THROUGH THE LOVE OF GOD. THESE SIMPLE AND PROFOUND TRUTHS, STATED REPEATEDLY IN THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT, CONSTITUTE ITS UNDERLYING THEME.” BEFORE WE GET STARTED WITH OUR DISCUSSION LET ME REMIND YOU THAT WE WANT AND NEED TO HEAR FROM YOU. PLEASE CALL US AT 428-1382.

EF - THE PLAIN FACT IS THAT JESUS TAUGHT NO THEOLOGY WHATSOEVER. HIS TEACHING IS ENTIRELY SPIRITUAL OR METAPHYSICAL.

VEDANTA TEACHES THAT MAN’S REAL NATURE IS DIVINE AND THAT THE ONLY REAL GOAL OF HUMAN LIFE IS TO UNFOLD AND MANIFEST THAT DIVINITY.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO SAINT JOHN, THE KING JAMES VERSION, CHAPTER 4, PARAGRAPHS 21 THROUGH 24: JESUS SAITH UNTO HER, WOMAN, BELIEVE ME, THE HOUR COMETH, WHEN YE SHALL NEITHER IN THIS MOUNTAIN, NOR YET AT JERUSALEM, WORSHIP THE FATHER. YE WORSHIP YE KNOW NOT WHAT: WE KNOW WHAT WE WORSHIP: FOR SALVATION IS OF THE JEWS. BUT THE HOUR COMETH, AND NOW IS, WHEN THE TRUE WORSHIPPERS SHALL WORSHIP THE FATHER IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH: FOR THE FATHER SEEKETH SUCH TO WORSHIP HIM. GOD IS A SPIRIT: AND THEY THAT WORSHIP HIM MUST WORSHIP HIM IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH.

1. BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT: FOR THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

EF - POOR IN SPIRIT MEANS TO HAVE EMPTIED YOURSELF OF ALL DESIRE TO EXERCISE SELF-WILL AND TO HAVE RENOUNCED ALL PRECONCEIVED OPINIONS IN THE WHOLE HEARTED SEARCH FOR GOD. HEAVEN IS THE PRESENCE OF GOD AND HEAVEN LIES ALL ABOUT US.

SP - POOR IN SPIRIT MEANS TO BE HUMBLE, WITHOUT PRIDE OR ANY PRECONCEIVED IDEAS.

2. BLESSED ARE THEY THAT MOURN: FOR THEY SHALL BE COMFORTED.

EF - MOST PEOPLE WILL NOT UNDERTAKE THE SEARCH FOR GOD WHOLEHEARTEDLY UNLESS DRIVEN THERETO BY TROUBLE OF SOME KIND. COMFORT MEANS THE EXPERIENCE OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD, WHICH IS THE END OF ALL MOURNING.

SP - WHEN WE GRIEVE THAT WE HAVE NOT REALIZED THE TRUTH OF GOD WE WILL BE COMFORTED. IT IS A MOURNING WHICH ARISES FROM A SENSE OF SPIRITUAL LOSS AND SPIRITUAL LONELINESS, NOT THE LOSS OF WORLDLY PLEASURES AND POSSESSIONS.

3. BLESSED ARE THE MEEK: FOR THEY SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH.

EF - MEEK IS A PERFECT WILLINGNESS TO ALLOW THE WILL OF GOD TO COME ABOUT IN WHATEVER WAY DIVINE WISDOM CONSIDERS TO BE BEST.

EARTH MEANS THE WHOLE OF YOUR OUTER EXPERIENCE, AND TO INHERIT THE EARTH MEANS TO HAVE DOMINION OVER THAT OUTER EXPERIENCE.

SP - EGO TELLS US WE ARE SEPARATE FROM ONE ANOTHER AND FROM GOD. EGOTISM MUST BE OVERCOME IF THE MIND IS TO BE FREED FROM DELUSION AND IGNORANCE. WHEN WE LIVE IN SELF-SURRENDER TO GOD, FREE FROM THE SENSE OF ME AND MINE WE BECOME MEEK. BY SINCERELY GIVING UP THE EGO TO GOD WE WILL GAIN EVERYTHING. WE WILL INHERIT THE EARTH.

4. BLESSED ARE THEY WHICH DO HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS: FOR THEY SHALL BE FILLED.

EF - RIGHTEOUSNESS MEANS NOT MERELY RIGHT CONDUCT, BUT RIGHT THINKING ON ALL SUBJECTS, IN EVERY DEPARTMENT OF LIFE. THEY SHALL BE FILLED REFERS TO THE GREAT LAW OF THE UNIVERSE WHICH STATES THAT WHICH YOU THINK IN YOUR MIND YOU WILL PRODUCE IN YOUR EXPERIENCE.

SP – RIGHTEOUSNESS IS DELIVERANCE FROM EVIL AND UNION WITH GOD. THE HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS IS THE HUNGER AND THIRST FOR GOD. WHEN THE MIND BECOMES ONE-POINTED AND CONCENTRATED UPON GOD, WE WILL BE FILLED WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS.

5. BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL: FOR THEY SHALL OBTAIN MERCY.

EF - KIND ACTIONS COUPLED WITH UNKIND THOUGHTS ARE HYPOCRISY. THE THING THAT REALLY MATTERS IS THAT YOU BE MERCIFUL IN YOUR THOUGHTS. BECAUSE IN DEED AND IN TRUTH WE ARE ALL ONE, YOU YOURSELF WILL ULTIMATELY RECEIVE THE SAME TREATMENT YOU METE OUT TO OTHERS.

SP – TO BE MERCIFUL IS ONE OF THE CONDITIONS NECESSARY BEFORE WE CAN RECEIVE THE TRUTH OF GOD. IF WE WANT TO FIND GOD, WE HAVE TO BECOME GOD-LIKE IN MERCY. IF YOU FORGET GOD AND SIN AGAINST GOD, GOD WILL FORGIVE ALL YOUR FAULTS AND REMEMBER THE FEW TIMES YOU SINCERELY PRAYED TO GOD.

6. BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART: FOR THEY SHALL SEE GOD.

EF - PURE IS TO RECOGNIZE GOD ALONE AS THE ONLY REAL CAUSE, AND THE ONLY REAL POWER IN EXISTENCE. HEART MEANS THE PART OF MAN'S MENTALITY KNOWN AS THE SUBCONSCIOUS MIND. TO SEE IN THE SENSE REFERRED TO HERE, SIGNIFIES SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION, AND SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION MEANS JUST THAT CAPACITY TO APPREHEND THE TRUE NATURE OF BEING. TO SEE GOD IS TO APPREHEND TRUTH AS IT REALLY IS, AND THIS IS INFINITE FREEDOM AND PERFECT BLISS.

SP - THE MORE WE THINK OF GOD AND TAKE REFUGE IN GOD, THE MORE WE SHALL LOVE GOD AND THE PURER OUR HEARTS WILL BECOME. THERE ARE FIVE OBSTACLES TO A PURE HEART; IGNORANCE OF OUR DIVINE NATURE, EGO WHICH MAKES US THINK WE ARE SEPARATE FROM GOD, OUT OF EGO WE DEVELOP ATTACHMENT, OUT OF EGO WE DEVELOP AVERSION AND FEAR OF DEATH. THE MORE YOU MOVE TOWARD THE LIGHT, THE FARTHER YOU WILL BE FROM DARKNESS.

- 7. BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS: FOR THEY SHALL BE CALLED THE CHILDREN OF GOD.**
EF - PRAYER CHANGES CHARACTER, MAKING A NEW REACTION POSSIBLE. IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS IN PRAYER ONE MUST OBTAIN SOME DEGREE OF SERENITY. THE PEACEMAKERS ARE THOSE WHO BRING ABOUT TRUE PEACE, OR SERENITY, IN THEIR OWN SOULS, FOR IT IS THEY WHO SURMOUNT LIMITATION AND BECOME THE CHILDREN OF GOD.
SP - PEACEMAKERS ARE THE ONES WHO REALIZE THEIR ONENESS WITH GOD AND WITH ALL BEINGS. ONLY WHEN WE BECOME ILLUMINED BY THE UNITIVE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD DO WE REALLY BECOME GOD'S PEACEMAKERS AND GOD'S CHILDREN. THE ILLUMINED SOUL HAS NO EGO.
- 8. BLESSED ARE THEY WHICH ARE PERSECUTED FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS' SAKE: FOR THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. BLESSED ARE YE, WHEN MEN SHALL REVILE YOU, AND PERSECUTE YOU, AND SHALL SAY ALL MANNER OF EVIL AGAINST YOU FALSELY, FOR MY SAKE. REJOICE, AND BE EXCEEDING GLAD: FOR GREAT IS YOUR REWARD IN HEAVEN: FOR SO PERSECUTED THEY THE PROPHETS WHICH WERE BEFORE YOU**

EF - WHEN WE STRIVE FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS WE SHOULD EXPECT TO BE PERSECUTED. THE SOURCE OF THE PERSECUTION IS OUR OWN LOWER SELVES. WHEN WE HOLD THE WRONG THOUGHTS OR GIVE WAY TO FEAR, ANGER OR DESPONDENCY, THEN WE ARE BEING PERSECUTED FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS SAKE. SINCE THESE COMBATS WITH THE LOWER SELF HAVE TO BE FOUGHT OUT SOONER OR LATER, THEN THE SOONER THEY ARE OVER AND DONE WITH THE BETTER. AND, SINCE WE WOULDN'T BE FIGHTING THESE BATTLES IF WE WERE NOT TRULY ADVANCING, HENCE, THE BLESSING. WHEN ONE IS ADVANCING SPIRITUALLY ONE IS AT RISK OF BECOMING SUPERIOR, VAIN OR SELF-RIGHTEOUS. WHEN THIS OCCURS ONE WILL BE REVILED AND PERSECUTED. THE BLESSING IN THIS IS IN KNOWING THAT NOTHING CAN COME INTO OUR EXPERIENCE UNLESS IT FINDS SOMETHING IN US WITH WHICH IT IS ATTUNED.

SP – WORLDLY PEOPLE DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE VALUE OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE. OFTEN THEY MOCK THE SPIRITUAL INDIVIDUAL, AND SOMETIMES THEY REVILE THEM AND TRY TO DO INJURY TO THEM. THE SPIRITUAL PERSON DOES NOT REACT TO THIS. THEIR MIND IS FIXED IN GOD; THEREFORE THEY FEEL THE UNITY, THEY SEE THE IGNORANCE AND THEY ARE MERCIFUL. BUT WHETHER THE INDIVIDUAL IS CRITICIZED OR HARMED, THEY DO NOT COMPROMISE, THEY DO NOT CHOOSE TO PLEASE WORLDLY PEOPLE. A REALLY SPIRITUAL PERSON KNOWS THAT IF THEY HAVE TO GO CONTRARY TO THE WHOLE WORLD FOR THE SAKE OF GOD THEY WILL DO IT. THE REWARD TO THE ILLUMINED SOUL, WHO DOES NOT REACT TO ANY INJURY DONE TO THEM, IS IMMEDIATE, BECAUSE THEY KNOW THAT HEAVEN IS ALWAYS PRESENT WITHIN THEM AS WELL AS WITHOUT, EVEN IN THIS LIFE.

BUDDHA'S 1ST SERMON IN THE DEER PARK AT SARNATH, USUALLY TITLED "SETTING IN MOTION THE WHEEL OF THE DHARMA" PUT FORTH THE "FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS".

- 1. ALL EXISTENCE INVOLVES SUFFERING.**
- 2. THE CAUSE OF SUFFERING IS CRAVING.**
- 3. RELEASE FROM SUFFERING COMES THROUGH ERADICATING PASSIONATE CRAVING FOR MATERIAL OR SENSUAL SATISFACTION.**
- 4. THE WAY TO ACHIEVE THAT RELEASE IS THE " NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH". THESE EIGHT WAYS OF RIGHT BEING ENCOMPASS:**
 - 01. RIGHT UNDERSTANDING**
 - 02. RIGHT THOUGHT**
 - 03. RIGHT SPEECH**
 - 04. RIGHT ACTION**
 - 05. RIGHT LIVELIHOOD**
 - 06. RIGHT EFFORT**
 - 07. RIGHT MINDFULNESS**
 - 08. RIGHT CONCENTRATION**