

January 5, 2008

SPIRITUAL TOPIC

**WISHES FOR A SPIRITUALLY PROSPEROUS
YEAR**

FORMAT

OPENING REMARKS AND INTRODUCE GUEST

LOVE AND LIGHT, I'M REV. PHIL AND I'M YOUR HOST FOR "WORDS OF THE PROPHETS." THIS AFTERNOON MY GUESTS IS MY GOOD FRIEND ROBERT RANSOM ODOM (575-531-0505). ROBERT, FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO DO NOT KNOW HIM, IS A SPIRITUAL COUNSELOR, WHO USED TO WRITE A WEEKLY COLUMN FOR THE SANTA FE REPORTER TITLED "WALK YOUR TALK". ROBERT'S LATEST BOOK IS TITLED "AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A REDNECK HINDU". TODAY'S TOPIC IS "WISHES FOR A SPIRITUALLY PROSPEROUS YEAR". THE TOPIC IS FROM ROBERT'S "HAPPY NEW YEAR, 2008, OFFICIAL REDNECK HINDU HAPPY NEW YEAR GREETINGS". THE GREETING READS AS FOLLOWS: "OFFICIAL REDNECK HINDU HAPPY NEW YEAR GREETINGS TO ALL OF YOU ON THE REDNECK HINDU MAILING LIST! HAPPY NEW YEAR 2008. I AFFIRM MANY BLESSINGS AND THE HIGHEST GOOD AND GREATEST JOY OF EVERYONE. THIS IS THE TIME OF YEAR WHEN PEOPLE TRADITIONALLY MAKE NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS. THAT'S NOT A BAD IDEA, GENERALLY SPEAKING, IS IT? WHEN WE MAKE RESOLUTIONS, IT'S ASSUMED THAT THERE IS SOME SELF REFLECTION GOING ON. WE DON'T REALLY NEED TO BE IN THE BUSINESS OF MAKING RESOLUTIONS FOR OTHERS. WHILE WE MIGHT

WANT TO SHARE OUR RESOLUTIONS WITH OTHERS, RESOLUTIONS SEEM TO BE MOST PROFITABLE WHEN WE FOCUS ON IMPROVING OURSELVES, INSTEAD OF PREACHING AT OTHERS. IT'S GENERALLY BEST TO ASSUME THAT WE'RE NOT QUALIFIED TO TELL OTHERS WHAT TO BELIEVE, OR HOW THEY SHOULD LIVE. CONCERN FOR OTHERS IS A LAUDABLE TRAIT, BUT IT'S BEST TO AVOID THE TEMPTATION OF THINKING THAT WE NEED TO CONTROL HOW OTHERS BEHAVE. AFTER ALL, WE DON'T GENERALLY ENJOY IT WHEN PEOPLE TRY TO CONTROL US, DO WE? IN THE SPIRIT OF SHARING, AND WITH NO EXPECTATIONS FROM YOU, TO WHOM I'M SENDING THESE THOUGHTS AND OBSERVATIONS, I WOULD LIKE TO WRITE ABOUT MY SOLE/SOUL RESOLUTIONS FOR THE NEW YEAR. IN 2008, I RESOLVE TO FOCUS ON DISCERNMENT, AND TO CONSCIOUSLY FORGO THE EGO LUXURY OF JUDGMENT. IN MY FIRST BOOK, "YOUR COMPANION TO 12 STEP RECOVERY", I CONTRASTED THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DISCERNMENT AND JUDGMENT. I WROTE THAT DISCERNMENT INVOLVES ASSESSING SOMETHING, DECIDING ON WHETHER IT IS BENEFICIAL FOR US, OR NOT, AND THEN ACTING FROM THAT INNER PLACE OF PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY. ON THE OTHER HAND, JUDGMENT INVOLVES MAKING AN ASSESSMENT OF A SITUATION, ACTION OR BELIEF, AND THEN ATTEMPTING TO FORCE OUR OWN PERSONAL VALUES ONTO OTHERS. THIS IS, IN EFFECT, TAKING AWAY THE INDEPENDENCE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS TO THINK FOR

THEMSELVES, AND ACT ACCORDINGLY. IN OTHER WORDS, IT IS STEALING. NO ADULT HAS THE RIGHT TO TELL OTHER ADULTS HOW TO LIVE. EVEN IF WE BELIEVE THAT ANOTHER PERSON IS WRONG, WE NEED TO REMEMBER THAT MAKING MISTAKES IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT WAYS WE LEARN HERE IN THIS MATERIAL WORLD. ALL OF THE WAR, HATRED, MURDER, INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT, AND OTHER ASSORTED NASTIES, ARE THE DIRECT RESULTS OF PEOPLE TRYING TO CONTROL OTHERS. USUALLY, THIS MISCHIEF CLOAKS ITSELF IN THE VOCABULARY OF CONCERN. FOR EXAMPLE, HOW OFTEN DO YOU HEAR OF VIOLENCE AND OPPRESSION JUSTIFIED IN THE NAME OF DEMOCRACY, TOLERANCE, SALVATION, OR ECONOMICS (SOCIALISM, CAPITALISM, COMMUNISM)? SOME PEOPLE WILL OBJECT TO MY PHILOSOPHY OF "LIVE AND LET LIVE" BY COUNTERING THAT RACISM, HOMOSEXUALITY, ABORTION, FASCISM, MARXISM, CHRISTIANITY, ZIONISM, ISLAM, ETC., ARE SO DANGEROUS TO SOCIETY, THAT WE HAVE TO PROHIBIT THEM. I RESPOND BY SAYING THIS: LIVE YOUR VALUES, YOURSELF. IF YOU THINK ABORTION IS WRONG, DON'T HAVE ONE, AND PEACEFULLY SHARE YOUR BELIEFS WITH OTHERS. IF YOU BELIEVE HOMOSEXUALITY IS A CRIME AGAINST NATURE, THEN DON'T ENGAGE IN IT. LET YOUR LIFE BE YOUR MESSAGE. LEAD BY EXAMPLE. WHEN WE START FINGER POINTING AND CONDEMNING OTHERS, WE'VE LITERALLY ABANDONED OUR OWN SPIRITS. IT IS FAR TOO EASY TO LOOK ACROSS THE

BACKYARD FENCE, AND LECTURE THE NEIGHBORS ON HOW THEY SHOULD LIVE. INSTEAD, WE NEED TO FOCUS ON CLEANING UP OUR OWN YARDS, AND TIDYING OUR OWN HOUSES. WHEN WE HAVE ALL OUR OWN AFFAIRS IN ORDER, WHEN WE'VE SWEEPED AWAY THE LAST OF THE DARKNESS IN OUR OWN HEARTS, THEN, PERHAPS, WE'LL HAVE THE TIME AND ENERGY TO STRAIGHTEN OUT EVERYONE ELSE. OF COURSE, THIS GOES AGAINST MOST OF WHAT THIS CULTURE TEACHES. IT SEEMS THAT EVEN THE MOST WELL-INTENTIONED FOLKS STILL ASSUME THAT THEY KNOW HOW EVERYONE ELSE SHOULD BEHAVE, THE WORDS THEY SHOULD USE, AND WHAT THEY SHOULD BELIEVE. THIS EGO ILLUSION BECOMES EVER MORE SUBTLE AS WE PROGRESS ON A CONSCIOUS SPIRITUAL PATH. JUDGMENT, OR THE ASSUMPTION THAT WE'RE RIGHT, AND THEY'RE WRONG, IS A TEMPTATION WE NEED TO AVOID, AT ALL COSTS. THE NEW YEAR OF 2008 PORTENDS YET MORE STURM UND DRANG. THE PASSIONATE DRAMA OF POLITICAL CAMPAIGNING AND ELECTIONS BOILS DOWN TO, QUITE SIMPLY, THE CHOICE OF BEING CONTROLLED BY FASCISTS OR MARXISTS. EITHER WAY, THIS COUNTRY WILL DESCEND FARTHER INTO DICTATORSHIP. THE ONLY QUESTION IS WHICH DICTATOR WILL BE IN CHARGE. THIS SITUATION IS A DIRECT RESULT OF THE POPULATION'S INFANTILE DESIRE TO BE PROTECTED BY THE GOVERNMENT. THEY DON'T REALIZE THAT GOVERNMENT IS THE PROBLEM, NOT THE SOLUTION. MANY PEOPLE SAY THEY WANT GOVERNMENT OUT OF THEIR LIVES AND PERSONAL

DECISIONS, YET THEY CONSTANTLY ATTEMPT TO LEGISLATE AGAINST WHAT THEY DISAGREE WITH. HOW IS THIS GETTING GOVERNMENT OUT OF THEIR LIVES? OTHERS ARE SAYING THAT THE ONLY WAY WE CAN BE SAFE AND PROSPEROUS IS IF WE HAVE GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS TO CONTROL AND MANAGE THINGS. THIS PHILOSOPHY IS CALLED BY THE BENIGNLY SOUNDING TERM, "SOCIAL ENGINEERING". THE NEW SECULAR RELIGIONS OF DEMOCRACY, MULTICULTURALISM, AND GLOBAL WARMING DEMAND CONFORMITY, NO LESS THAN THE ECCLESIASTICAL INQUISITIONS OF PAST AGES. THEY PROMISE SAFETY AND SALVATION, YET, AT THE END OF THE DAY, THEY'RE ALL SEEKING TO CONTROL US. TYRANNY IS THE PREDICTABLE RESULT. MOST OF OUR COUNTRYMEN ARE GENUINELY CONCERNED, COMPASSIONATE PEOPLE. THEIR VERY CONCERN MAKES THEM VULNERABLE TO MANIPULATION. IN THIS CONTEXT, I MUST ALSO REMIND US ALL OF THE SPIRITUAL LAW OF KARMA. THIS SAYS, IN EFFECT, THAT WHAT WE PUT OUT, COMES BACK TO US. IF WE PARTICIPATE IN ANY POLITICAL, OR RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION THAT STEALS THE FREEDOM OF OTHERS, OR ANY SOCIAL SYSTEM THAT OPPRESSES ANYONE, THEN WE BECOME PERSONALLY KARMICALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONSEQUENCES OF THOSE ACTIONS. WHILE OUR INTENTIONS MIGHT BE NOBLE, IT IS THE RESULTS OF OUR ACTIONS THAT GO WITH US WHEN WE STEP OUT OF THESE BODIES, AT THE END OF A LIFETIME. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO SURRENDER OUR PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY TO ANYONE ELSE.

WE WILL ALL, IN THE END, BE CALLED TO ACCOUNT FOR OUR ACTIONS. THIS INCLUDES OUR SILENCE. IF WE ALLOW LOYALTY TO A COUNTRY, A RELIGION, A POLITICAL PARTY, AN ETHNIC GROUP, OR ANY OTHER MATERIAL WORLD ENTITY, TO CAUSE US TO JUSTIFY OPPRESSION, OR VIOLENCE AGAINST OTHERS, THEN OUR SILENCE IS AN AFFIRMATION OF THAT CRUELTY. WHILE I DO NOT ADVOCATE TELLING OTHERS HOW TO LIVE, THAT DOES NOT RELIEVE ME OF THE RESPONSIBILITY OF SAYING AN EMPHATIC "NO!" TO THOSE WHO VIOLATE THE FREEDOM OF OTHERS, EVEN WHEN, OR SHOULD I SAY, ESPECIALLY WHEN TAKING A STAND MIGHT COST ME SOMETHING. I FEEL A PERSONAL CALL TO SPEAK MY OWN TRUTH QUIETLY, AND CALMLY. I DO NOT HAVE THE SLIGHTEST DESIRE TO FORCE MY BELIEFS ON OTHERS. I REJECT THE TEMPTATION TO LABEL OTHERS AS LESS EVOLVED THAN I, SIMPLY BECAUSE I DON'T AGREE WITH THEM, OR APPROVE OF HOW THEY LIVE. I OBJECT ONLY WHEN OTHERS WOULD FORCE ME, OR ANYONE ELSE, TO LIVE BY THEIR VALUES. QUITE SIMPLY, IF A PERSON DOES NOT HARM ME, OR ANOTHER, THEN WHAT THEY DO, SAY, OR BELIEVE, IS NONE OF MY BUSINESS. I ALSO REJECT THE TEMPTATION TO THINK THAT I'VE GOT IT ALL FIGURED OUT, AND HAVE NOTHING MORE TO LEARN. I TRY TO REMAIN OPEN TO THE IDEAS OF OTHERS, WHILE INSISTING ON MY PERSONAL RIGHT TO DECIDE FOR MYSELF. I CANNOT SURRENDER THE RESPONSIBILITY TO ARRIVE AT MY OWN CONCLUSIONS, TO ANYONE ELSE. AGAIN, THAT INCLUDES SURRENDERING TO A

RELIGION, A GOVERNMENT, OR A POLITICAL PARTY, ESPECIALLY IN THIS ELECTION YEAR. BUT, I WILL ADMIT TO THE POSSIBILITY THAT I'M WRONG ABOUT ALL THIS. EVEN IF I AM, THEN I'VE ERRED ON THE SIDE OF FREEDOM, AND PERSONAL SOVEREIGNTY. SO NOW, I END THIS NEW YEAR GREETING WHERE I BEGAN. I RESOLVE TO BE DISCERNING AND TO RELEASE ANY JUDGMENT I MIGHT HAVE. THIS LEAVES ME FREE TO EXPLORE THE UNIVERSE, UNFETTERED BY THE ACCUMULATED, ASSORTED BAGGAGE OTHERS WOULD FORCE ME TO CARRY. IT ALSO LEAVES YOU FREE TO CONSIDER MY WORDS, OR TO HIT THE DELETE KEY ON YOUR COMPUTER. I SEND YOU ALL MY WARMEST REGARDS, AND MY WISHES FOR A SPIRITUALLY PROSPEROUS YEAR. MAY GOD BLESS US ALL, EACH AND EVERY ONE. HAPPY NEW YEAR, AND MUCH LOVE FROM THE REDNECK HINDU.