

August 31

**MESSAGES FROM ARCHANGEL MICHAEL * LM-9-2004
TRANSMITTED THROUGH RONNA HERMAN**

MOVING BEYOND RELIGION INTO SPIRITUALITY

Beloved masters, the winds of change are blowing strongly within your inner and outer worlds, and you often feel you are being tumbled about by the winds of fate. You are being bombarded with so much new information that your body and brain are in overload. Everything is changing so rapidly in your world that you can no longer depend on what was considered to be the "norm," and there is such a plethora of new information that it is difficult to know what to believe. Old concepts are being updated and the philosophies of the Eastern and Western worlds are blending as higher expanded truths are being presented for your learning as humanity strives to become spiritual adults and masters of their destiny.

There are many paths to en-LIGHTEN-ment and many variations and levels of the truth; however, the universal laws and Creator truth are immutable. There are essential truths in every religion, and if you strip away the dogma, man-made superstitions and limitations, you will find they all contain more similarities than differences. Instead of criticizing or condemning the beliefs of others, would it not be better to seek a common ground of understanding? The majority of humanity does not have a clue about the origins or major beliefs of other religions, and yet there is condemnation of all beliefs that are not one's own. The core cause of all the wars of the past and the wars that are presently raging around the world are based on conflicting religious beliefs. How sad and how futile. There can be no winners; everyone loses in the rage and fury for supremacy that is rampant on Earth.

I have asked my messenger to research and give you a condensed synopsis of some of the similarities and the differences between the Eastern and the Western world views, as well as a condensed overview of the major religions of the world, past and present. It is important that you understand the customs and beliefs of your brothers and sisters around the world if you are to move forward on the path of reunification and harmony.

Humanity is gradually moving beyond the narrow concept of isolationism and secular "religion" into the expanded and cohesive truth of spirituality whereby you turn inward and connect to your own Divine Source for Creator truth and universal laws to guide you, instead of turning to someone you think is more knowledgeable and powerful than you. In the past, humanity has been mostly of a "herd-state" mentality, and it has been a common practice to follow the man-made religious laws as defined by others: dogmatic beliefs or superstitions which were/are often steeped in fear.

Herein we will list some of the similarities and also some of the differences:

SIMILARITIES: CONCEPT OF GOD: Eastern view: Belief in a Supreme Deity, maker of all souls and all things and in lesser deities. Western view: Belief in a Supreme Deity, maker of all souls and all things, including angelic beings and the heavenly host.

ON SALVATION AND GOD'S WILL: Eastern view: Salvation is through strict obedience to God's will and the descent of His grace through spiritual enlightenment. Western view: Salvation is through strict obedience to God's will, usually through a messiah, prophet, minister or priest.

ON GOOD CONDUCT: Eastern view: Moral living is essential to spiritual progress, for unrighteous thoughts, words and deeds keep you from spiritual liberation. Western view: Religion is based on ethical and moral conduct as outlined in the ten commandments; the opposite leads you away from God.

ON THE NATURE OF REALITY: Eastern view: There is more to reality than we can experience with the five senses. The soul is immortal, deathless and eternal, and will ultimately be liberated from the cycle of rebirth. Western view: There is a reality beyond what we experience on Earth. The soul is immortal, deathless and eternal, living forever in God's presence or separated from Him in an eternal hell.

DIFFERENCES: REGARDING CREATION: Eastern view: The universe exists in endless cycles of creation, preservation and destruction. There is no absolute end to the world. We are a part of God and God is within us. Unity is stressed. Western view: The world was created by God and at some point in the future it will be destroyed. He is distinct from it and rules from above. A dualistic nature of the world and humanity is stressed.

THE TRUE GOD: Eastern view: There is but one true and absolute God. All souls are destined to receive God's grace through experience on many paths according to their understanding, temperament and maturity. God is pure love and Consciousness. Western view: There is but one true God and one true religion. Those who accept it will enjoy God's grace; all others, unless they repent and come to "your" God, will suffer eternally in hell. God is loving as well as wrathful.

ON KNOWING GOD: Eastern view: Personal, inner and often mystical experience of God is the foundation of Eastern religions. Man can and ultimately must come to know God during earthly life. Individually oriented and introspective. Western view: It is presumptuous for man to seek personal knowledge of God. The basis of religion is not experience but belief, faith and a virtuous life. Socially oriented and extroverted.

ON HELL AND EVIL: Eastern view: God is love and all souls are a facet of God. Each soul is guided as it experiences karma interactions into dharma (enlightenment and alignment with universal laws). Hell is the lower astral planes, not a physical place, nor is it eternal. Karmic suffering is a state of mind during life or between lives. There is no intrinsic evil. All is good. All is God. Only the veil over our intuitive-intellectual mind keeps us from realizing our personal relationship with God.

Western view: On judgment day the physical body of every soul who ever lived is brought to life. Pure souls are granted entrance into heaven, while sinners are sent to everlasting hell. There is genuine evil in the world, a living force which opposes God's will. Satan and his demons embody this evil, as well as in man if he develops evil tendencies and does not follow God's commandments.

HEREIN IS A BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF THE MAJOR WORLD RELIGIONS:

HINDUISM: Hinduism is the world's oldest religion; it predates recorded history, and has no human founder. Its major scriptures are called The Vedas. There are nearly one billion followers, mostly in India. Hinduism is a vast and profound religion whose followers believe in one, all-pervasive Supreme Being who is both Creator and unmanifested reality. They believe that all souls are evolving toward union with God and will ultimately gain spiritual knowledge and liberation from the cycle of rebirth. They believe in karma, the laws of cause and effect by which each individual creates his own destiny by his thoughts, words and deeds.

BUDDHISM: Buddhism began about 2,500 years ago in India and was founded by Gautama Siddhartha, the Buddha, "Enlightened One." The Buddha's essential teachings are contained in the Four Noble Truths. There are over 300 million believers throughout China, Japan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Burma, Indochina, Korea and Tibet. There are three main sects, Theravada, Tibetan and Mahayana. Zen Buddhism, well-known in the West, is a Japanese Mahayana school. Their goal in life is nirvana (salvation). They believe in the "Middle Path," living moderately, avoiding extremes of luxury and asceticism. They believe in love and compassion for all creatures that live, and that man's true nature is Divine and eternal. They believe in karma, dharma, reincarnation and the passage on Earth as an opportunity to end the cycle of birth and death.

TAOISM: Taoism began about 2,500 years ago in China and was founded by Lao-Tzu, whom Confucius described as a dragon riding the wind and clouds. The Tao-te-Ching, or "Book of Reason and Virtue," is among the shortest of all scriptures, containing only 5,000 words. There are approximately 50 million believers, mostly in China and other parts of Asia. The Tao or the Way, has never been put down in words, rather it is left for the seeker to discover within. The primary goal of Taoism may be described as the mystical intuition of the Tao, which is the Way, the primal meaning, the undivided unity and the ultimate reality. He who has realized the Tao has uncovered the layers of consciousness and sees the inner truth of all things. Taoists believe in the oneness of all creation, in the spirituality of the material realms and in the brotherhood of all men.

CONFUCIANISM: Confucianism began about 2,500 years ago in China by the supreme sage, K'ung-fu-tsu (Confucius) and Second Sage Meng-tzu (Mencius). Its major scriptures are The Analects, Doctrine of the Mean, Great Learning and Mencius. There are over 350 million adherents, mostly in China, Japan, Burma and Thailand. Confucianism is, and has been for over 25 centuries, the dominant philosophical system in China and the guiding light in almost every aspect of Chinese life. Confucius urged individuals to strive for perfect virtue, righteousness, and improvement of character. He taught that man grows spiritually by living truthfully, serving selflessly, and aligning himself with the Eternal way through humility, simplicity, serenity and effortless action. They believe God is the sovereign One, the omnipotent, immortal and personal Creator, a being beyond all time and space. They believe in the oneness of all creation, in the spirituality of the material realms and in the brotherhood of all men.

ISLAM: Islam began about 1,400 years ago in present-day Saudi Arabia. It was founded by the Prophet Mohammed and its major scripture is The Koran. There are over one billion followers, mostly in the Middle East, Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Africa, China and Eastern Europe. There are two main divisions of Islam. The Sunnis are followers of the political successors of Mohammed. The Shiites are of Mohammed's

family successors, all martyred at an early age. Islam means "submission," surrender to the will of God, called Allah. Those who submit are called Muslims. Islam is based upon the Five Doctrines and observance of the Five Pillars. The virtues of truthfulness, temperance and humility before God are foremost for Islam, and the practice of fasting, pilgrimage, prayer and charity to the Muslim community are most necessary to please Allah. They believe that the soul of man is immortal, embodied only once on Earth, then entering heaven or hell upon death according to its conduct and faith on Earth. The primary goal of Islam is to enjoy eternal life, both physical and spiritual, in a heavenly paradise with Allah.

JUDAISM: Judaism began about 3,700 years ago in Egypt-Canaan, now Israel. It was founded by Abraham, who started the lineage, and Moses, who emancipated the enslaved Jewish tribes from Egypt. Its major scripture is The Torah (the first five books of the Old Testament and the Talmud). There are about 12 million believers world-wide, over half in the United States. Jews are divided into Orthodox, Conservative and Reform sects, with other regional and ethnic divisions. The religion of the Jews is inseparable from their history as a people. By far the most profound characteristic of Judaism is its strict monotheism. The Jews hold an unshakeable belief in one God and one God only from whom all creation flows. Much stress is placed on the hallowing of daily existence, worship in synagogue, prayer and reading the scriptures. They believe obeying God's laws brings rewards in the future life when the Messiah will come to overthrow evil and reward the righteous in God's kingdom on Earth. The soul thereafter will enjoy God's presence and love. They believe that man has two impulses: good and evil. He can either follow God's law or rebel and be influenced by Satan, who caused God's Creation to go astray. One must strive to follow justice, charity, ethics and honesty, being true to the one true God, Yahweh.

CHRISTIANITY: Christianity began a little over 2,000 years ago in what is now Israel. Its major scripture is The Bible, Old and New Testament and was founded by Jesus (Yeshua) of Nazareth. There are estimated to be about 1.5 billion Christians. Christianity consists of three main sects: Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and Protestant. Among Protestants there are over 20,000 denominations. Most Christian faith revolves around the basic principals of the Apostles' Creed, but with important exceptions to its various beliefs. Christianity has an unswerving conviction that it is the only true religion, the only path to salvation. They believe man's plight is caused by disobedience to God's will. Man needs redemption from the forces of evil which would enslave and destroy him: fear, selfishness, desire and the supernatural forces of the Devil, sin and death against which he is powerless. Stress is placed on acceptance of Jesus as God and Savior, on good conduct, compassion, service to mankind, faith and preparation for the Final Judgment. Only "good" Christians will be saved and accepted in heaven. The goal of Christianity is eternal life with God in heaven, a perfect existence in which God's glory and bliss are shared.

For your higher understanding, we have touched on some of the major religions and beliefs of the world. Next month we will give you a brief overview of some of the less well-known but still important religions: Janism, Sikhism, Shintoism, Zoroastrianism, shamanism, and spiritualism.

Beloveds, can you not see that there is a strong pattern, a compatible philosophy that is the basis for all religious beliefs: the belief in a Supreme Being, a desire to personally know the Creator, a belief in the intrinsic goodness of humankind, and the priceless value of love, harmony, charity and faith. Are the differences so important that wars must rage and separation of family, cultures, and nations must prevail? Unity consciousness is the foundation of spiritual teachings of the present and future, not the separatist views of the past. The current religions of the world are based on the spiritual teachings of a particular time, beliefs and energy of the past. It is time to let go of the negative, restrictive, dis-empowering, fear-based teachings of the past, as humanity prepares to move into the realms of higher learning and self-mastery. Why not glean the beauty and positive aspects of each religion as you strive to embrace and live your own higher truth? The Creator and our Father/Mother God does not care what religion you are, or what you call your beliefs. You are known by your radiance and by the Love/Light you give forth. Our greatest desire is for you to understand and experience the ecstasy of the harmony and Oneness that are available to you in the higher realms of Light. We are ever near to guide and protect you. I AM Archangel Michael.

*** Transmitted through Ronna Herman * STAR*Quest* 6005 Clear Creek Drive, Reno, NV 89502

*** Phone/Fax: 775-856-3654 * Email: RonnaStar@earthlink.net * Web Site: www.RonnaStar.com

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