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SUNDAY MEDITATION

APRIL 19, 1998

Group question: Our question this week concerns the concept of gratitude. How does gratitude work in the spiritual or metaphysical sense? It is said that it is a powerful force to have in the heart, just to be alive, to be breathing, and to serve the Creator. How does gratitude affect our spiritual growth, even in the worst of situations?

(Carla channeling)

We are those of the principle known to you as Q'uo. We greet you in the love and in the light of the one infinite Creator. We bless and thank each of you for all that you have done to come to this circle of seeking at this time, for all that you have sacrificed and the choices that you have made that have brought you, as seekers of truth, to sit together and open your hearts to each other, to the universe whose citizens that you are, and to those thoughts of ours that might have use for you. You have truly given us a great blessing and a great gift. We hope that those thoughts that we share with you shall be helpful to you. If any thought does not please you, we simply ask that you release it and forget it, for we do not have authority but, rather, are as you: pilgrims sharing that which we have come to feel is our truth, hoping that it might be a resource for you as well. As always, we encourage your careful discrimination in listening to any and all opinion, for there is no authority as great as that which rests within you and which knows what is yours.

You ask this day about gratitude, thankfulness. We realize that this is peculiarly difficult to come to in any situation, for within the illusion that you experience as your incarnation the atmosphere is not full of clarity and illumination but rather often full of confusion and negative seeming emotion. The heart within desires to experience only a greater and greater amount of solitude, peacefulness and beauty, but that which the world seems to offer is crowded with many different people with many different opinions and certainly seems far from peaceful as the timbers and rafters of your own personal mental interior shake and stagger under the many confusions that reign and that shall always hold sway over the incarnation, over the experience throughout the incarnation, for truly, as we often say, no one who takes incarnation upon a third-density planet is hoping for a clear and peaceful existence, but, rather, is hoping to be utterly confused and yet to remember, somehow, those truths which can only be known by faith, which can only be remembered by faith, and which can only yield hope, praise and gratitude within the transformed heart.

It is that transformation of experience that each hopes for again and again within the incarnational experience. And as each of you looks back over patterns that have been completed in the past, each may see the working out of seemingly insurmountable confusion in ways that were unexpected and yet elegant, difficult and beautiful.

Such is the bittersweet quality of realization amidst the sea of confusion that is consensus reality within your Earth world.

What is the spirit that it should be mindful of such things as praise and thanksgiving? It is at this very basic level that so many among your peoples cannot grapple with the issue of life itself. What is the spirit within that it must take flesh and be thrust into a world of sensation that overstimulates with glorious disarray and confusion? The spirit, from the instant that it awakens into the Earth plane until that moment when the last breath leaves the body, what is this entity that it should feel anything, positive or negative? It is in facing this question of identity that the search for true thankfulness must begin. For just here, just upon that spot where the slide is under the microscope, there at that first glimpse of light of that which changes, we get the first scent of the dangers and the glories of this ephemeral and all-to-short process of incarnation. Each of you begins with that spark of light that is your essence and your core. It is in no way different from or lesser than the Creator Itself, for it, as all things, is infinite and divine love.

The clay from which you have been formed expresses that love but is not that love. There is no thing about each of you that one can pick up and say, "This is the essence of this person." No, the essence of you is much closer to you than your body, is much more a part of you than your breathing or your heartbeat or the rush of blood through your veins. You are love. It is this identity that is the only explanation for praise and thanksgiving, for positive or negative expression of any kind. When one can realize, even momentarily, that deep identity within, that congruency with the Logos Itself, the seeker then has his feet on solid ground and may say to the self, and in response to the world however it comes to him, "I am love. I am in a state of utter confusion. But I am love. This is my nature. I take this on faith." When one can begin with this much confidence then one is able to move into that attitude which this instrument would call the positive path or the path of service to others. If one thinks to oneself, "I am responsible. I did these things," or "These and these things have been done unto me," then one has become willing to begin, not from that place of love, but, rather, from a place where masks have been put on and a stage play is being acted. Once one has moved into that level of interaction and the various responses to each other's

catalyst that characterize relationships one no longer has a quick or short route to that positive place of rest within which knows, "I am love, and the I am that is me is the I am that is you."

Without this feeling of self as love, one simply begins to see oneself as positioned in such and such a way and aiming to get positioned in such and such a way. Then the self has a story that is not being created in rhythm and according to destiny's often slow pace, but rather the self is creating the self with masks at a level which does not fill the heart. The conversation before this meditation several times touched upon the many ways in which that feeling of humble thankfulness comes to one as a blessing and a special visitation much like the spring rain feeding the young plants. We encourage each of you to be willing, when thinking upon this subject of identity, to see the self as a deeply impersonal, a deeply true, entity. For truly each of you is that which is beyond personality, and if the spirit can rest in that most basic and profound identity there stems from time and attention spent here a strength and flexibility of emotional responses that is part of the rhythm of faith.

We are often aware of the degree of suffering among your peoples. The sorrow of your peoples is great, the yearning for that which is remembered is great. There is a hunger for heavenly things, as this instrument would call it, a thirst for that meat and drink that feeds the soul, and yet in so many ways the restless heart cannot find quiet enough to connect with that great heart of Love Itself, which is the source and ending of each and every spark of light within the infinite creation.

When entities attempt to feel gratitude they may well fail, for gratitude is not that which may be approached head-on with the most effectiveness but, rather, a sense of thankfulness or gratitude comes as a natural efflux or emanation from the soul which is willing to be still and allow the world to find its balance within the self. This is not something that is easily done by those within incarnation, for the living without faith is that which is taught and practiced by your culture, not here and there, but as a general rule. Young ones within your culture are taught to work, to give a good effort, to follow certain paths in order to further ambition. The soul is taught that worth is in what one does, and so each growing spirit faces the self, attempts to find that

which will earn the money, attempts to prepare the self for doing this, and then spends the life following a certain career, profession or job, and as one is wending one's way through the various obstacles that seem to pop up from day to day in the execution of these various professions and jobs and so forth, any entity that is able to help or facilitate one or another of these ambitions is seen as someone to whom to be grateful while those who are stumbling blocks seeming to be in the way between the self and the ambition are seen to be irritations and of negative help.

When we, or any, attempt to speak upon spiritual things we are often tempted simply to tell stories, for there is within stories that which words alone cannot express. And when dealing with gratitude perhaps the story that this instrument is most familiar with is the story of the Prodigal Son. There are several different ways to look at this little story that was told by the teacher known to you as Jesus. In this story the sons of a wealthy man have two different natures. The older son is the good son, and this son never thinks of anything but simply staying at home and working on the family estate. However, the younger son is impatient and ready to have fun, have a good time in his life. And so this younger son asks his father for his inheritance. He has decided that he wishes to go to the city and have a good time. The father is willing to give his young son his fair portion of his accumulated fortune that he has to offer. And so the Prodigal Son trots off to the big city and engages in various excesses of various kinds until he becomes penniless, homeless and forlorn. Finally, the young man is reduced to living with the pigs, eating what is given to the pigs in order to stay alive. And it occurs to this Prodigal Son, "You know, I could go back to the country, back to my father's house. Of course he wouldn't take me back, but I could be a slave and eat much better than this because my father treats his slaves much better than this." And so off he goes, but when the father sees him coming he rejoices greatly and orders a great feast to be prepared. Now the older son is very jealous of this, and says, "Gosh, dad, I've been with you all the time. I've always been a good boy. I've done everything you wanted me to do. You never killed a fatted calf for me, and here you are having a huge party for my idiot brother who never did anything." The father says, "But don't you see? I thought I had no son and now I do."

Look at the gratitude in all of these people. The father grateful because he has regained the son whom he loves. The Prodigal Son who is grateful simply to be accepted back as a slave, much less as a younger son. And look at the hard heart, the pain of the older brother who does not feel his father's love since he has never done anything wrong for which his father has had to forgive him.

Each of you is a prodigal. Each of you has squandered precious things. Each of you greatly and humbly seeks to return to the house of the Father, to that place of love that is undefiled and pure. For in that state gratitude is natural and flows effortlessly and this is a great truth [for] each of you, that you are loved deeply, that you are welcomed in spite of any and all failures, and that the Creator does give great thanks for you. Truly, it takes the movement of thought from the little self experienced in every day to that self that each knows is a truer and deeper self. Gazing at life from the standpoint of the everyday self there is hardly ever a completely trouble-free or worry-free experience. There is hardly ever a reason to feel completely or profoundly grateful. And yet if one can move back into that prodigal self that is coming home, you may see that all of experience is such that the only response is thankfulness and praise.

Why is this gratitude so powerful? Simply because it is the truth. In truth everything that occurs to you is a gift. Each situation delivers to you the sisters and brothers of experience, Sister Sorrow, Brother Pain. The list is different for each entity. Brother Anger. Sister Depression. Each spirit will have its own guests that seem to be difficult indeed to be hospitable towards, and yet each of these guests comes with great gifts to give you. There is a natural rebellion against having to see things from such a deep perspective. The mind does not want to move to this level where it can be seen that all things are gifts. The mind wants to distinguish between things. The mind wants to make choices and stack everything in neat and orderly piles. "This is that. This is the other. This is something else entirely." But that spark of true self within you is ever ready to spread and illuminate the spirit within, the heart within.

Each entity, each spirit that has taken flesh comes to the experience of incarnation with an agenda, with the hope of learning and the hope of service. It

seems very simple before incarnation, this whole remembering of things through the veil. And it is not so simple, for the veil is surely there and surely appropriately thick and impenetrable. But for those who can live within the open heart, who can face the difficulties of the day from that place of the open heart, there is the opportunity to see each day as part of a dance that is all too short, a dance of rhythm and grace, a dance of living and feeling and expressing the truth within. We hope for each of you the grace to see into that rhythmic and muscular pattern that is prepared for you to walk upon. May each of you have the courage to wait when it feels right, to wait even though to the world this may make no sense. For if each of you can stay within the heart and can sense for the rhythmic delightfulness of things, that attitude of gratitude shall come easier and easier until finally you may experience whole days at a time for what they really are: one moment, one now that is ever fresh, ever beautiful, and ever perfect.

May you learn to express this faith by an increasing stubbornness in holding to that attitude that has its source in the spark of love itself. For the attitude which you bring to your experience shall make a great deal of difference in that experience, and every moment that you spend attempting to center the self and balance the self, turning always again to that center of love within, each moment is an experience of truth. We realize that this is a concept difficult to work with words, for the emotional content of thankfulness is far greater than words can express. The power of a thankful heart is truly infinite. May your heart have that great benefit of your protection of it, of your nurturing of that spiritual self within that more and more yearns to dance the dance of incarnation with rhythm, grace and beauty.

We would at this time transfer this contact to the one known as Jim. We leave this instrument in love and light. We are those of Q'uo.

(Jim channeling)

I am Q'uo, and I greet you once again in love and in light through this instrument. At this time it is our privilege to offer ourselves in the attempt to speak to any further queries which those present might have use in the requesting. Is there a further query at this time to which we might speak?

T: Could you comment on my meditational experience from last Sunday?

I am Q'uo, and am aware of your query, my brother. We may speak to a certain extent. The boundary which we do not wish to cross is that which infringes upon your own free will. However, we find that we may suggest that the catalyst which faces you now in the world of illusion is that which has significance to a deeper portion of your being. And as it does have a potency it therefore affects the perceptions that you experienced when you attempted to enter the meditative state and reach down into a deeper portion of your conscious mind in order harmonize your vibrations as a part of the group meditation. The difficult nature of the catalyst which you now face had its effect upon the images which were being fed to you from your subconscious mind and were attempting to give an indication of the effect of this catalyst upon a basic portion of your personality structure. Therefore, the distortions in your perception occurred as a means whereby the effect of the deeper levels of your being was presenting itself in symbolic form to the conscious mind.

May we speak to any other query, my brother?

T: No. Thank you.

I am Q'uo, and we thank you, my brother. Is there another query at this time?

Carla: I would like to ask about this sense that was suggested to me that my reluctance to work on this book was related to it being my swan song, the last thing that I would do before leaving this incarnation. Could you comment on this possibility?

I am Q'uo, and am aware of your query, my sister. Again, we may speak only in a limited sense in this instance. To look upon a project or an activity as that which shall be the final statement of an incarnation is an attitude and an experience which could be utilized at any time by any entity within the incarnation, for, indeed, no entity knows the length of days which await in the future, as you call it. Whether this particular project is indeed the final curtain of your incarnation has little value in whether or not an entity such as yourself might decide to undertake it. For to think in this manner is to put a limitation upon one's own perceptions and experience whether the perception may eventually be true or false. Thus we would counsel you, my sister, to worry not in this regard for it is well said in one of the cultural sayings of your people that "what will be, will be." Your attitude in partaking in this

experience is that which will make it as it will be for you.

Is there a further query, my sister?

Carla: No. Thank you.

I am Q'uo, and we thank you again, my sister. Is there another query at this time?

(No more questions.)

I am Q'uo, and we would once again thank each entity present for inviting our presence in your circle of seeking this day. It is always a great privilege for us to be invited to your meditation gathering, for we, in these experiences, are able to have our being within your illusion and are able to see the Creator in each and every entity and activity, observing the effect of illusion upon love. We would remind each that there is no entity which walks this path alone. For each here and, indeed, each person of your planetary population, has a guide, a teacher, a counselor, a friend, and many of them that accompany each upon this journey. Within those moments of meditation, of prayer, and of contemplation retire you there to speak with those who walk with you and who offer you unseen hands in times of need. We are known to you as those of Q'uo, and we leave each of you in the love and light of the infinite Creator. Adonai, my friends. Adonai.
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