

December 2020

Greetings!

First, I would like to wish everyone a very joyous holiday season. I know this year has been a bit more difficult, but this makes the effort to keep your heart open and to keep looking up even more important. In this email, I would like to offer my gratitude and thanks to my editors and contributors to these emails. If it were not for them, there would not be any emails. So thank you Rev Master Bennet Laraway, Geoff Nisbet, and Allan Pober. I would also like to thank all of the readers for their very kind support. This support is very helpful and keeps me going in Seattle. My sincere thanks!

Recently, I have heard a couple of things that I feel were very uplifting. The first was an interview on NPR with Shemekia Copeland, a blues vocalist. Speaking about these very divided times, she said that "anger and hate doesn't help", and that what we need is something to help bring us together. I could feel that her words were straight from her heart. When I reflected on this, I felt that in large part, this is what I am trying to reach in my own meditation and daily spiritual training. It can be so easy to get "riled up" and angry, being totally dismissive of the beliefs of others. In your meditation and practice, you can go to a deeper place, where there are no differences, no judgements, where we can see all beings with the pure love and compassion of the Eternal. Training in this way allows the anger and hate to dissipate and the pure love to flow, and this really is something that will help bring us together in these difficult times.

The other thing I heard, that rang true for me, was when a prominent politician said, "we have to move away from this attitude of demonization and really let it go." I reflected upon this and saw how demonization really pulls us out of that deeper place. Demonization hardens us towards others and when our attitude hardens in this way we are no longer taking refuge in the Love, which we are all part of. This causes us suffering and leads us into states of anger, hate and despair. Demonization is a spiritual problem because we see others as outside the flow of the Eternal. All beings have this flow of pure Love, no-one is outside of the flow, and no-one has any more or less than anyone else.

I know how hard it can be for so many of us to not go down the road of judging others harshly, but as I have always said, it is very well worth making the effort. If meditation is too difficult for you, just try to be still and quiet for some part of the day, allowing the love of the Eternal to flow through you. Also, try to be mindful of when your heart hardens and you move into the attitude of mind that demonizes others. If you notice this happening, you have to get hold of your will, and tell yourself "I'm not going there." This works, and as Shemekia said, it can really help us to be together in a state of love.

With all my heart,
Rev Basil