

B u d d h a

Let a Man Overcome Anger by Love

(520 B.C.)

If a man by causing pain to others, wishes to obtain pleasure for himself, he, entangled in the bonds of selfishness, will never be free from hatred.

Let a man overcome anger by love, let him overcome evil by good; let him overcome the greedy by liberality, the liar by truth!

For hatred does not cease by hatred at any time; hatred ceases by love; this is an old rule.

Speak the truth; do not yield to anger; give, if thou art asked; by these three steps thou wilt become divine.

Let a wise man blow off the impurities of his self, as a smith blows off the impurities of silver, one by one, little by little, and from time to time.

Lead others, not by violence, but by law and equity.

He who possesses virtue and intelligence, who is just, speaks the truth, and does what is his own business, him the world will hold dear.

And the Blessed One observed the ways of society and noticed how much misery came from malignity and foolish offences done only to gratify vanity and self-seeking pride.

And Buddha said: "If a man foolishly does me wrong, I will return to him the protection of my ungrudging love; the more evil comes from

him, the more good shall go from me; the fragrance of goodness always comes to me, and the harmful air of evil goes to him."

A foolish man learning that Buddha observed the principle of great love which commends to return good for evil, came and abused him. Buddha was silent, pitying his folly.

The man having finished his abuse, Buddha asked him, saying: "Son, if a man declined to accept a present made to him, to whom would it belong?" And he answered: "In that case it would belong to the man who offered it."

"My son," said Buddha, "you have railed at me, but I decline to accept your abuse, and request you to keep it yourself. Will it not be a source of misery to you? As the echo belongs to the sound, and the shadow to the substance, so misery will overtake the evildoer without fail."

The abuser made no reply, and Buddha continued:

"A wicked man who reproaches a virtuous one is like one who looks up and spits at heaven; the spittle soils not the heaven, but comes back and defiles his own person.

"The slanderer is like one who flings dust at another when the wind is contrary; the dust does but return on him who threw it. The virtuous man cannot be hurt, and the misery that the other would inflict comes back on himself."

The abuser went away ashamed, but he came again and took refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha.

William Penn

from "Essay Towards the Present and Future Peace of Europe"

(1693)

As Justice is a Preserver, so it is a better Procurer of Peace than War. Though *Pax queritur bello* be a usual Saying, Peace is the end of War, and as such it was taken up by O.C. for his Motto. Yet the Use generally made of that expression shows us that properly and truly speaking, Men seek their Wills by War rather than Peace, and that as they will violate it to obtain them, so they will hardly be brought to think of Peace unless their Appetites be some Way gratified. If we look over the Stories of all Times, we shall find the Aggressors generally moved by Ambition; the Pride of Conquest and Greatness of Dominion more than Right. But as those Leviathans appear rarely in the World, so I shall anon endeavor to make it evident they had never been able to devour the Peace of the World, and engross whole Countries as they have done, if the Proposal I have to make for the Benefit of our present Age had been then in Practice. The Advantage that Justice has upon War is seen by the Success of Embassies, that so often prevent War by hearing the Pleas and Memorials of Justice in the Hands and Mouths of the Wronged Party. Perhaps it may be in a good Degree owing to Reputation or Poverty, or some Particular Interest or Conveniency of Princes and States, as much as Justice; but it is certain that as War cannot in any Sense be justified, but upon Wrongs received, and Right, upon Complaint, refused; so the Generality of Wars have their Rise

from some such Pretension. This is better seen and understood at Home; for that which prevents a Civil War in a Nation is that which may prevent it Abroad, viz., Justice; and we see where that is notably obstructed, War is kindled between the Magistrates and People in particular Kingdoms and States; which, however it may be unlawful on the side of the People, we see never fails to follow, and ought to give the same Caution to Princes as if it were the Right of the People to do it: though I must needs say, the Remedy is almost ever worse than the Disease: the Aggressors seldom getting what they seek, or performing, if they prevail, what they promised: and the Blood and Poverty that usually attend the Enterprise, weigh more on Earth, as well as in Heaven, than what they lost or suffered, or what they get by endeavoring to mend their Condition, comes to: which Disappointment seems to be the Voice of Heaven, and Judgment of God against those violent Attempts. But to return, I say, Justice is the Means of Peace, betwixt the Government and the People, and one Man and Company and another. It prevents Strife, and at last ends it: for besides Shame or Fear, to contend longer, he or they being under Government, are constrained to bound their Desires and Resentment with the Satisfaction the Law gives. Thus Peace is maintained by Justice, which is a Fruit of Government, as Government is from Society, and Society from Consent.

There is another manifest Benefit which redounds to Christendom, by this Peaceable Expedient: the Reputation of Christianity will in some Degree be recovered in the Sight of Infidels; which, by the many Bloody and unjust Wars of Christians, not only with them, but one with another, hath been greatly impaired. For, to the Scandal of that Holy Profession, Christians that glory in their Saviour's Name have long devoted the Credit and Dignity of it, to their wordly Passions, as often as they have been excited by the Impulses of Ambition or Revenge. They have not always been in the Right: nor has Right been the Reason of War: and not only Christians against Christians but the same Sort of Christians have embrewed their Hands in one another's Blood: Invoking and Interesting, all they could, the Good and Merciful God to prosper their Arms to their Brethren's Destruction: yet their Saviour has told them that he came to save, and not to destroy the Lives of Men: to give and plant Peace among Men: and if in any Sense he may be said to send War, it is the Holy War

indeed; for it is against the Devil, and not the Persons of Men. Of all his Titles this seems the most Glorious as well as comfortable for us, that he is the Prince of Peace. It is his Nature, his Office, his Work, and the End and excellent Blessing of his Coming, who is both the Maker and Preserver of our Peace with God. And it is very remarkable that in all the New Testament he is but once called Lion, but frequently the Lamb of God; and that those who desire to be the Disciples of his Cross and Kingdom, for they are inseparable, must be like him, as St. Paul, St. Peter and St. John tell us. Nor is it said the Lamb shall lie down with the Lion, but the Lion shall lie down with the Lamb. That is, War shall yield to Peace, and the Soldier turn Hermit. To be sure, Christians should not be apt to strive, not swift to Anger against anybody, and less with one another, and least of all for the uncertain and fading Enjoyments of this Lower World: and no Quality is exempted from this Doctrine. Here is a wide Field for the Reverend Clergy of Europe to act their Part in, who have so much the Possession of Princes and People too. May they recommend and labor this pacific Means I offer, which will end Blood, if not Strife; and then Reason, upon free Debate, will be Judge, and not the Sword. So that both Right and Peace, which are the Desire and Fruit of wise Governments, and the choice Blessings of any Country, seem to succeed the Establishment of this Proposal.

Scott Nearing

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from *The Trial of Scott Nearing and the American Socialist Society*

(1919)

I told the District Attorney on the stand that I was opposed to all wars. I regard war as a social disease, something that afflicts society, that curses people. I do not suppose three people in a hundred like war. I do not suppose that three people in a hundred want war. There are some people who are pugnacious, and who love to fight, for the sake of a fight, and they might like war, but I do not believe there are three people in a hundred, certainly not five in a hundred, that do.

I believe the great majority of people agree with me that war is a curse, an unmitigated curse. All the things that come out of war come out in spite of war and not because of it.

The democracy that has come into Europe, whatever it is called, has come in spite of the war and not because of it. That would have come out in any case, and we would have had it without the expenditure of twenty million lives and a hundred and eighty billions of wealth.

I regard war as a social disease, a social curse, and I believe that we should stamp war out. To my mind the great curse of war is not that people are killed and injured, not that property is destroyed. That happens every day in peace times as well as in war times. To my mind the great curse of war is that it is built on fear and hate.

Now, fear and hate are primitive passions; the savages in the woods

are intimidated by fear and hate. They do not belong in civilized society. In civilized society, for fear and hate we substitute constructive purposes and love. It is their positive virtues. When we fear things, we draw back from them. When we hate things, we want to destroy them.

In civilized society, instead of drawing away from things, and wanting to destroy them, we want to pull things together and build them up. Fear and hate are negatives. Peace and love are positives, and form the forces upon which civilization is built. And where we have collectively fear and hate, it is a means of menace to the order of the world.

Furthermore, during war, we ask people to go out and deliberately injure their fellows. We ask a man to go out and maim or kill another man against whom he has not a solitary thing in the world—a man who may be a good farmer, a good husband, a good son, and a good worker, and a good citizen. Another man comes out and shoots him down; that is, he goes out and raises his hand against his neighbor to do his neighbor damage. That is the way society is destroyed. Whenever you go out to pull things to pieces, whenever you go out to injure anybody, you are going out to destroy society. Society can never be built up unless you go out to help your neighbors.

The principle “each for all and all for each” is the fundamental social principle. People must work together if they are going to get anywhere. War teaches people to go out and destroy other people and to destroy other people's property.

And when Sherman said that war was hell, I believe that he meant, or at least to me that means, that war creates a hell inside of a man who goes to war. He is going to work himself up into a passion of hatred against somebody else, and that is hell.

The destruction of life and property is incidental. The destructive forces that that puts into a man's soul are fundamental. That is why I am opposed to all wars, just as I am opposed to all violence. I don't believe in any man having the right to go out and use violence against another man. That is not the right of one human being to have against the other, that is not the way you get brotherhood. That is the reason I told the District Attorney on the stand that I was against all wars. I am against dueling; I am against all violence of man against man, and war is one of those methods of violence.

I believe war is barbaric, I believe it is primitive, I believe it is a relic of a bygone age; I believe that society will be destroyed if built up that way. That is, I believe that they that take the sword must perish by the sword; just as they that set out to assist their neighbors are bound to build up a strong, cohesive, united society. That is the field over which I went in my direct testimony and in the cross-examination.

I have been a student of public affairs. I am a Socialist. I am a pacifist. But I am not charged with any of these things as offenses. On the other hand I believe that as an American citizen I have a right to discuss public questions. I think the judge will charge you so. I have a right to oppose the passage of a law. I think the judge will charge you so. I have a right under the law, after the law is passed, to agitate for a development of public sentiment that will result in a repeal of that law. I think the judge will charge you so.

In other words, as I said in the beginning, in a democracy, if we are to have a democracy, as a student of public affairs and as a Socialist and as a pacifist, I have a right to express my opinions. I may be wrong, utterly wrong, and nobody listen to me, nobody pay any attention to me. I have a right to express my opinions.

Gentlemen, I have been throughout my life as consistent as I could be. I have spoken and written for years, honestly and frankly. I went on the stand and I spoke to you as honestly as I know how. I answered the District Attorney's questions as honestly and as frankly as I could. I stand before you today as an advocate of economic justice and world brotherhood, and peace among all men.

Mohandas K. Gandhi

My Faith in Nonviolence

(1930)

I have found that life persists in the midst of destruction and, therefore, there must be a higher law than that of destruction. Only under that law would a well-ordered society be intelligible and life worth living. And if that is the law of life, we have to work it out in daily life. Wherever there are jars, wherever you are confronted with an opponent, conquer him with love. In a crude manner I have worked it out in my life. That does not mean that all my difficulties are solved. I have found, however, that this law of love has answered as the law of destruction has never done. In India we have had an ocular demonstration of the operation of this law on the widest scale possible. I do not claim therefore that nonviolence has necessarily penetrated the three hundred millions, but I do claim that it has penetrated deeper than any other message, and in an incredibly short time. We have not been all uniformly nonviolent; and with the vast majority, nonviolence has been a matter of policy. Even so, I want you to find out if the country has not made phenomenal progress under the protecting power of nonviolence.

It takes a fairly strenuous course of training to attain to a mental state of nonviolence. In daily life it has to be a course of discipline, though one may not like it—like, for instance, the life of a soldier. But I agree that, unless there is a hearty cooperation of the mind, the mere outward obser-

vance will be simply a mask, harmful both to the man himself and to others. The perfect state is reached only when mind and body and speech are in proper coordination. But it is always a case of intense mental struggle. It is not that I am incapable of anger, for instance, but I succeed on almost all occasions to keep my feelings under control. Whatever may be the result, there is always in me a conscious struggle for following the law of nonviolence deliberately and ceaselessly. Such a struggle leaves one stronger for it. Nonviolence is a weapon of the strong. With the weak it might easily be hypocrisy. Fear and love are contradictory terms. Love is reckless in giving away, oblivious as to what it gets in return. Love wrestles with the world as with the self and ultimately gains a mastery over all other feelings. My daily experience, as of those who are working with me, is that every problem lends itself to solution if we are determined to make the law of truth and nonviolence the law of life. For truth and nonviolence are, to me, faces of the same coin.

The law of love will work, just as the law of gravitation will work, whether we accept it or not. Just as a scientist will work wonders out of various applications of the law of nature, even so a man who applies the law of love with scientific precision can work greater wonders. For the force of nonviolence is infinitely more wonderful and subtle than the material forces of nature, like, for instance, electricity. The men who discovered for us the law of love were greater scientists than any of our modern scientists. Only our explorations have not gone far enough and so it is not possible for everyone to see all its workings. Such, at any rate, is the hallucination, if it is one, under which I am laboring. The more I work at this law the more I feel the delight in life, the delight in the scheme of this universe. It gives me a peace and a meaning of the mysteries of nature that I have no power to describe.

Dorothy Day

Pacifism

(1936)

The Catholic Worker is sincerely a *pacifist* paper.

We oppose class war and class hatred, even while we stand opposed to injustice and greed. Our fight is not "with flesh and blood but principles and powers."

We oppose also imperialist war.

We oppose, moreover, preparedness for war, a preparedness which is going on now on an unprecedented scale and which will undoubtedly lead to war. The Holy Father Pope Pius XI said, in a pastoral letter in 1929:

"And since the unbridled race for armaments is on the one hand the effect of the rivalry among nations and on the other cause of the withdrawal of enormous sums from the public wealth and hence not the smallest of contributors to the current extraordinary crisis. We cannot refrain from renewing on this subject the wise admonitions of our predecessors which thus far have not been heard.

"We exhort you all, Venerable Brethren, that by all the means at your disposal, both by preaching and by the press, you seek to illumine minds and open hearts on this matter, according to the solid dictates of right reason and of the Christian law."

"Why not prepare for peace?"

Daisaku Ikeda and Linus Pauling

The Immorality of War: A Conversation

(1992)

Pauling: Nuclear war is the ultimate immorality. But the immorality of war is not limited to the use of nuclear weapons. As early as biblical times, noncombatants were killed off in warfare. After the walls of Jericho fell, for example, the Israelites slaughtered all the women and children in the city.

In later times, however, combat came to be generally limited to soldiers—mostly young men—although kings too were sometimes killed in battle. Even when nations were at war, women and children were generally safe. In the American Civil War, for instance, casualties were mostly soldiers. Some bombings occurred during World War I; but, in World War II, both the British and the Americans adopted a policy of bombing cities—for example, Amsterdam, Hamburg, and Dresden—thus destroying thousands of civilians. Such acts are highly immoral. It is shocking that the modern world still does not ban war as totally degenerate. In our age, not even victors benefit from war. This aspect of the struggle for peace deserves special emphasis.

Ikeda: I agree entirely. As weapons have grown more destructive and national states more confident of their sovereign rights, large-scale, indiscriminate slaughter has become a commonplace of war. A backward

look at the development of modern warfare makes apparent the extent to which human beings have become subservient to the weapons they have created. To alter this situation, each individual must strive to attain wisdom and enlightenment. We must do all we can to hasten the arrival of the day when the enlightened commonality of the human race assumes the lead in the work of preserving peace. In this connection, your quotation in *No More War*, from the words of your good friend Professor George B. Kistiakowsky is highly pertinent:

There simply is not enough time left before the world explodes. Concentrate ... on organizing, with so many others who are of like mind, a mass movement for peace such as there has not been before.

Pauling: If they are not misled by false statements from politicians and authorities, the people will recognize the need for world peace and their own responsibilities in achieving it. The power of the people to set politicians on the right track has been demonstrated a number of times during recent decades. I believe that, in the near future, a mass movement for peace, as described by Dr. Kistiakowsky, will lead to very significant progress.

Ikeda: Often presented as ideal statesmen, the ancient Indian kings Ashoka (died 232 B.C. and Kanishka (possibly the first half of the second century) were both devout Buddhists. Their approach to governing was imbued with the spirit of Buddhist compassion. Virtual embodiments of this philosophy, the flourishing Buddhist cultures they built in their peaceful nations are outstanding in all human history.

Although wars among believers in different religions have undeniably taken high tolls in human lives, numerous religions have exerted themselves unstintingly in the name of world peace. What is your opinion of peace movements conducted by people of religious faith?

Pauling: As you say, religious wars in the past have taken great tolls in human life. Indeed, as events in India, the Middle East, and other regions show, they continue to do so. Although the struggle between rich, property-holding Protestants and poor, laboring Catholics in Northern Ireland has a primarily economic basis, religion too plays a part in it. Of

course, Catholics and Protestants have fought for centuries in the British Isles and elsewhere.

A few religions have worked for world peace on the basis of absolute pacifism. But, even in the United States, the Protestants began to take a moderately active interest in such work only in the last decade or two.

As to my own evaluation of peace movements based on religion, in general, I think they are fine. But problems sometimes arise. For example, the American Quakers are active in the work for world peace but refuse to participate in meetings attended by communists. For this reason, they broke up a meeting the British convened at Oxford because representatives from the Soviet Union had been invited. My wife and I, who were attending the meeting, could not understand their attitude. We work with all peace organizations because we need them. But not all religious groups see eye to eye with this attitude.

Ikeda: Undeniably much human blood has been shed in the name of religion; and, sadly, some of the wounds caused by religious conflicts remain unhealed. A religion that fails to contribute to human happiness and peace is useless, worse, it is pernicious. This is why I have long insisted that, in considering their roles in society it is essential to divide religions into two groups: those that work for the sake of vested authority and those that work for the good of humanity in general.

The pattern prevailing in many religions is one in which human beings are subjected to the rule of a god or some other absolute authority. Under such circumstances, human beings become means in the name of religious authority; and their very lives are sometimes sacrificed. I witnessed something of the fearsome aspects religion can assume when I examined mounds of human remains at a site once occupied by offices of the Inquisition in Lima, Peru. Any religion that sacrifices human life in the name of its own authority is wicked.

Religions ought to recognize the good of humanity as both the source of their being and the goal of their actions. The sole valid reason for a religion to exist is to contribute to the well-being and peace of the human race. The religion to which my fellow believers and I devote ourselves exists solely for the sake of humanity.

The members of Soka Gakkai International are all good citizens of

the one hundred and fifty nations in which they live. All of them work steadily and unflaggingly in the name of peace. Their goals are the happiness of humanity, the prosperity of the whole world, and the rejection of war and all forms of violence. For this reason, we are especially eager to do everything we can to eliminate nuclear arms.