

## **Buddha, man, God**

What does it mean to see Buddha as fully human and also as fully God? First and foremost, I think, it means that we open the door of nirvana to all mankind, for those who believe in God and those who do not. If words are ladders that go upwards from the mire and fire of the world to something more real and helpful, why not use it, and let others use it, too.

We all have ways with words; we make the holy and the unholy, and they make us happy or unhappy. Words then are but extensions of how we think and feel; how we hope and free ourselves from words themselves. Above all, we free ourselves from our own limitations, something that even words cannot do. That's why we need to rise above words.

Only when we learn to rise above words that we find the key that opens the gate out of the word prison. Then, we immerse ourselves in the wordless, the ineffable directness of true reality that cannot speak itself except in the words and ways of our race, dialect and bias.

When we speak of such living experiences, we are only going back into the past. For, all thoughts are gone by the time we know them, say them, write them. How else can we communicate what we love and live by?

So we try, in our frail pride of humanity, to touch divinity by concocting *the* Word. We declare that It was, It is, It will be. What does this mean, anyway? How helpful are these words? How can we fix the divine, label God, or drag the Buddha out of nirvana? Are we really capable of immersing in the divine, of speaking with God, or listening to the Buddha? We don't even listen to ourself.

If we can't, then we are not yet human. We are still caught in the rat-race; we are merely pens, machines, computers, things within office walls, earning a living from chairs and boards, big names and numbers moving loudly. We are still not human yet.

To say the Buddha is human is not only telling the truth, but also reminding ourselves that we should be human, too. That's the least we can do if we do not want to remain as merely pens, machines, computers and things to chairs and boards, big names and numbers moving loudly.

Yet, to be human is to be a lot of things. Let's leave all the frivolous and fake aside, and look at what really matters to us if we want to be at least human. We have to learn to think for ourselves: this is the most human thing we can and must do. Should we throw this away, and let the pens, machines, computers and things to chairs and boards, big names and numbers moving loudly run our lives?

Buddha the man challenges us to think for ourselves, to free ourselves from the priests of society and the walls of religion. Priests turn religion into regular prisons where we stop thinking and just follow with the stick of hell and carrot of eternal happy hours we can only imagine about.

Religion is a circle of walls that imprison us so that we love no other, and never more seek to free ourself, or even think about it. See how weekly and timely we move like sheep and goats to the slaughterhouses of thinking and openness, listening to talking heads replaying borrowed hunches, which even they themselves haven't a clue about?

And notice how God or Buddha on the high altar does not move at all, transfixed in our beliefs and habits. He, too, has to listen to our talking heads. The reality is that we have stopped listening from the time we started to believe. We have only been following, hoping we will go somewhere, maybe a better place. We're not really sure. So we need to be reassured time and again. Without this doubt or helplessness, we don't really need religion.

Buddha is fully God. Yes, we have yet to understand what this means. Buddha the human frees God from his prison of heaven and brings him home in our hearts where he really belongs. He is the radiant light of lovingkindness that shines from our hearts, and embraces everyone and everything.

Our heart is always radiant; we only need to open our eyes to it. It is a seeing light, a healing fire. It's always there, whether we see it or not. But if we see it, we see our humanity. If we shine this light on others so that they, too, might see and be healed, then we have tapped our divinity. We become all-loving, all-embracing, ever-present.

Then, we see others without their masks. We see torn hearts, bleeding hearts. We see free smiling faces and warm open arms. None of us deserve kindness, that's why we need to show it, to give it freely. That's why it's called compassion.

When we give, we also receive. For, kindness and compassion free our heart so that it is untorn and heals. But it must go on bleeding so that we live in its flow. The same blood runs in all our hearts. So we bleed outwardly when we are cut. When the cut heals, our blood flows on within, rightly and joyfully.

To have a heart is to be happy, truly happy. How can we not be happy when we see that others' hearts have healed and are flowing rightly and joyfully? Being happy when others are happy is the greatest treasure we can have: this is what we live for, only we often forget this. Our heart reminds us to live, and to live joyfully.

The divine quality the Buddha embodies teaches us the peace with which we must watch the world. We can only find good earth, till it, water it, enrich it; we give the plants light and shade, prune them, love them, but they must grow all their own so that they flower, fruit and grow. That's all we can do: we can only watch them grow, let them change; we can neither hurry them nor tarry them. So, too, with us.

We must never worship God or Buddha. They do not need our worship and praises. For godliness is within us; we are all capable of awakening. So, to worship God or Buddha is to worship the self, which is not helpful. Indeed, we can become most selfish when we worship others out of fear or favour.

The supreme worship, declares the Buddha, is to live, seeing truth and freeing love. The supreme worship is our beating heart of kindness, word of kindness, act of kindness. True love is a joyful random act of compassion, showing kindness even where others don't deserve it. Every time we do this, we bow before Buddha, we worship God.

Let us then not vainly use God's name or the Buddha word as if they're our own, to distance us from others with our false humility, our hidden pride, singing about kindness out of tune with the music of love. We boast of big vehicles but our path is narrow, along which we kill the Buddha, yet vow to be Buddha.

The road is long because it keeps coming back to the start. The path is narrow when it is crowded. When we give way, we move faster. For, it is a way within, an inward journey, an undistracted sense-free path to the heart of all things.

The Buddha we see is not Buddha; the God we hear is not God; the Buddha we smell is not Buddha; the God we taste is not God; the Buddha we touch is not Buddha; the God we think is not God.

When our senses are still, the world is ended. Heaven is come in senseless stillness. Then, we see better with eyes closed; we hear music beyond ears; we smell sweetness no nose can smell; we taste freedom which tongue tastes not; we feel peace with no body; we mind what is before us.

If we judge these as mere words, then we merely measure the letters. We can only free the spirit from dead ink, or, the bright points just mean nothing. Our mind gives it meaning; our heart gives it purpose.

This is life's secret we've known all along: God and Buddha are always there when we clear the words away.

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[an occasional re-look at the Buddha's Example and Teachings]

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