

## Pat Meier Death Notice

Dear friends,

Pat Meier, a steadfast and staunch member of the Berea Kentucky Baha'i community, passed away today, May 12<sup>th</sup> 2011, shortly before 2:55 pm. The burial will be tomorrow in the Berea cemetery. Please pray for the elevation of her soul in the Abha Kingdom.

"Know thou of a truth that the soul, after its separation from the body, will continue to progress until it attaineth the [presence of God](#), in a state and condition which neither the revolution of ages and centuries, nor the changes and chances of this world, can alter. It will endure as long as the [Kingdom of God](#), His sovereignty, His dominion and power will endure. It will manifest the signs of God and His attributes, and will reveal His [loving kindness](#) and bounty. The movement of My Pen is stilled when it attempteth to befittingly describe the loftiness and glory of so exalted a station. The honor with which the Hand of Mercy will invest the soul is such as no tongue can adequately reveal, nor any other earthly agency describe. Blessed is the soul which, at the hour of its separation from the body, is sanctified from the vain imaginings of the peoples of the world. Such a soul liveth and moveth in accordance with the Will of its Creator, and entereth the all-highest Paradise. The Maids of Heaven, inmates of the loftiest mansions, will circle around it, and the [Prophets of God](#) and His chosen ones will seek its companionship. With them that soul will freely converse, and will recount unto them that which it hath been made to endure in the path of God, the Lord of all worlds. If any man be told that which hath been ordained for such a soul in the worlds of God, the Lord of the throne on high and of earth below, his whole being will instantly blaze out in his great longing to attain that most exalted, that sanctified and resplendent station. . . . The nature of the soul after death can never be described, nor is it meet and permissible to reveal its whole character to the eyes of men. The Prophets and [Messengers of God](#) have been sent down for the sole purpose underlying their revelation hath been to educate all men, that they may, at the hour of death, ascend, in the utmost purity and sanctity and with absolute detachment, to the throne of the Most High. The light which these souls radiate is responsible for the progress of the world and the advancement of its peoples. They are like unto leaven which leaveneth the world of being, and constitute the animating force through which the arts and wonders of the world are made manifest. Through them the clouds rain their bounty upon men, and the earth bringeth forth its fruits. All things must needs have a cause, a motive power, an animating principle. These souls and symbols of detachment have provided, and will continue to provide, the supreme moving impulse in the world of being. The world beyond is as different from this world as this world is different from that of the child while still in the womb of its mother."—Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, pp. 155–157.

Patricia my dear friend; with this being said, perhaps you may recount, in some sublime station seated upon the realms of eternity, the sufferings you have endured in the Path of the Divine Will. Perhaps you also will converse with those holy souls of yesterday and wing your own destined flight unto the realms of glory!

I have been continuing to visit the local Senior Center in spite of being challenged in a way not conducive to uplifting focus in this time of heartfelt emotion due to the passing of Pat. Although I acknowledge the truth of the opening statement in this letter, I still feel saddened that Pat is no longer available as the continuing avenue for insight and fellowship she provided to me for more than a decade. I am wondering if, in a real sense, grief may be seen as a self-based motivated feeling. Surely Pat, and others who pass beyond to the next world become metamorphosed and attain further advancement in the next realm as Ordained by the All-Wise. Yet we, left on Earth, miss our “loved ones” and wish they were still with us. How selfish is this? It is like asking a butterfly to go back to being a caterpillar!

A day or so ago after Pat died I experienced a real feeling of grace and comfort. It seemed to be that the arms of love and kindness were surrounding me and holding me close. A presence was about me that is hard to describe. There was light that brought illumination of new experience into my life.

Of course, this may be all personal fancy and vain imagination but the fruits of the awareness were real.

One concept that was reiterated and refresh within me is the idea that any means of uniting people in love and fellowship which results in wellbeing and spiritual advancement is a good thing. the Ten Commandments given to the Jews, the Eightfold Path shown to the followers of Gautama the Buddha, the Four Directions common to Native Indian heritage, the Beatitudes and Sermon on the Mount containing the sublime wisdom spoken of by Jesus; all this and more, when seen as teachings extolling higher virtues in mankind, have all been necessary vehicles leading us all in a step by step evolutionary progression towards a time when all will see each other as citizens of a single country and dwellers upon a single Earth.

With this in mind, it becomes evident that even creed and doctrine, if it truly results in loving guidance and enlightened fellowship, can be a positive force in our lives. Ever-widening perceived social groups; beginning with clans based on cooperative family relations to tribe, city-state, and nation; can possibly be seen as resulting from the impact great teachers have had from the beginning of civilization to the present. In other words, at certain times in human history, certain creeds and doctrines were beneficial in uniting people living in certain conditions imposed upon them in their own time. In the same way, others living under different circumstances in different environments may find beneficial guidance expressed in a way more suitable for their own particular growth and development.

In past ages, these separate distant populations would experience little contact between each other. Traditions and interpretations involving certain “exclusive truth” thinking would have little overall negative consequence. Indeed, back in ancient times, this thinking may have actually been beneficial to survival in a world fraught with danger. It certainly would have fostered cooperation and cohesion between family and tribal group members.

Faith, such as a life focus on attaining Nirvana or Heaven, as descriptions for “the end of suffering” would bring enriching thought, action and creativity to all and help followers rise above simply attaining basic survival needs.

But, at the same time, it is unequivocally true that components of a misdirected, misapplied and sorely abused religious fanatical fervor founded in literal narrow scripture interpretations, especially when reinforced with the perceived political necessities of the time, can have a deleterious affect on social progress, equity, justice and stifle the lives of all concerned.

Spiritual enlightened applied concepts, originally conducive to uniting a tribe, city or guiding a civilization to the fullness of its maturity; but later misapplied resulting towards a downward decadence and “ungodliness done in the name of God” is seen throughout history. Bible teachings quoted to excuse slavery or scripture from the Bible or Quran passages recited in support of wars, atrocities and inquisitions, where the most heinous offenses are committed between men, are all symptoms of civilization turning away from Divine Enlightenment and focusing on the lower animal nature; which easily clouds and renders tarnished and hidden the true spirit abiding within us.

Other examples might include Hindu worship of Lord Krishna or the Christian deification of the Lord Christ. In both faiths Christ and Krishna are seen as “only way” pathways for redemption from worldly “sinful” matters of the temporal world. Social doctrine centralizing either Christ or Krishna as a godhead would be an important, but simplistic fragile slippery element, in keeping family unity and peace between tribal members. What initially may have been a benefit as a strengthening force among those representing a comfortable parochial singular way of thinking, would later evolve into a liability as “others” as seen as “alien” and “heretic” would become evermore manifest in their lives. This very traditional faith process, so beneficial for generations, would now turn against them. It would no longer be possible to follow an unchanged status quo or old time belief without also believing “other aliens” must be wrong for they are not like us and do not believe in our god by our name. If they are wrong they must be evil; if evil, they must be made like us and cleansed or be destroyed.

A related example showing a different level of similarity of two separate independent faith teachings is illustrated by a common teaching of Islam and Buddhism. As both the Buddha and Muhammad grew up in their respective Hindu and Christian traditions where their respective savior figures are venerated as God; both of these later teachers in turn strongly discouraged such thinking. It is a basic tenant of both Buddhism and Muslim that neither Buddha nor Muhammad are themselves God incarnate. Indeed, if the writings of these two faith authority figures are taken into account, it seems, the later aforementioned central faith Authorities were deliberately trying to rectify this harmful practice wrought by the misunderstandings of men and thus remedy this wayward situation.

I personally experienced the above concerns in action.

At Senior Citizens last week I mentioned I needed to attend and take part in Pat's burial service. Immediately two of my Christian friends asked, "Did Pat accept Jesus as her Lord and Savior before she died? Did she accept Jesus' ransom for her sins through the Cross of Salvation?" I immediately attempted to avoid the judgment call I knew was coming by simply stating, "we simply shared different interpretations and embrace a different philosophy than what is given by Christian orthodoxy. I do not want to get involved in further discussion on this issue". At this point a third member joined in saying, "If Pat failed to accept Jesus' gift of salvation, she is going to Hell". The statement was blatant and, to me, the recipient, cold hearted. Agreement was heard from others as they voiced, "you really need Jesus; it is only through Jesus...alleluia amen...praise Jesus"!

Pat was a dear close friend and confidant. She was loved and respected by many in the community. Her service as a volunteer at the local hospital for many years was exemplary; she certainly did not deserve this...nor did I! I felt the whole verbal assault was very rude and diametrically opposed to the Truth and inner meaning of what the Spirit of Christ taught!

Frankly, since being impacted by this type of mentality, I have been driven ever farther away from most churches in the area; especially "praise worship" ones preaching "only in the name of Jesus". I am tired of what organized religion and its various institutions worldwide dish out as "truth" in the name of God. I ask you to look again at the opening of this letter concerning Pat and ask yourself if you truly believe Pat is now in Hell as a nonbeliever.

To clarify my point: Back in antiquity, the social religious needs addressing acceptance of outside "alien" thinking and influence were quite different than are the wide based "one world consciousness" "new era" needs of today. Now, in this age of worldwide travel and instant communication, the old ways of thinking, though at first beneficial in their own way, have become a major source of misunderstanding, contention and conflict between many differing peoples of the Earth. In a world where we hold the power to completely destroy our own environment and each other through application of weapons of mass destruction, along with atrocities done in the name of God, a major fundamental change in our paradigm of thinking becomes imperative.

It is self evident. Think about it. War is now obsolete, narrow minded creeds and belief systems based on the past are now a major source of conflict and should be retired (or at least practiced in a way promoting advancement and mutual acceptance between diverse traditions and faiths).

In your deliberations, please consider; If God is a loving Father who guides and watches over us, then the forgoing only stands to reason.

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