



Expressions

A Publication of the Claremont Center for Spiritual Living
509 S. College Ave, Claremont, CA 91711 / 909-624-3549



Roadside Assistance for the Spiritual Traveler

by Rabbi Rami Shapiro

Note: Rabbi Rami Shapiro writes the column "Roadside Assistance for the Spiritual Traveler," a regular feature in *Spirituality and Health* magazine. Some of his advice for the May/June 2018 edition seems appropriate for the 4th of July, when we celebrate our unity in all its diversity...

Competing religious truth claims confuse me. Who really decides if a religious claim is true or not?

You do. If you agree with the claim, you say it's true; if you don't agree with it, you say it's false. Once you admit you are the arbiter of religious truth and falsehood, and that you believe what you believe simply because you've been conditioned to believe it, you will start questioning all your beliefs, liberate yourself from the straitjacket of intellectual and religious conformity, and slip into the gentle and terrifying grace of living with not-knowing. This is what I hope for both of us.

I want to love the Bible, but the Bible is one crazy book: love your neighbors in one verse, annihilate them in another; a merciful God in one chapter, a psychopathic God in another. How am I to make sense out of this? Why isn't the Holy Book wholly consistent?

The Bible is a collection of books written by hundreds of authors over 15 centuries. The Bible isn't a book, it's a library. You don't complain about a library's lack of consistency when you find within ("Roadside Assistance" continues on Page 2...)

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Expressions Has A New Page Format

If you print out your copy of *Expressions*, you'll notice the page is different - not so much space at the top and bottom (if you use regular letter-size paper).

Previous issues were formatted to print in 'landscape' (sideways) on legal-size paper, then fold into a pamphlet. This was a hold-over from when the newsletter was sent to a professional printer, and it's hard to do. Most people (including the editor) just printed it out on letter-size paper. That left a lot of wasted space on each page.

Beginning with this issue, *Expressions* is formatted to print in 'portrait' (vertically) on standard letter-size paper. This will make it easier for everyone (including the editor) with less wasted space.

Edward Graff, Editor
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(“Roadside Assistance,” continued from Page 1...) its walls books in a variety of genres: history, poetry, philosophy, sci-fi, romance – covering a huge number of subjects, and offering mutually exclusive points of view on almost every one of them. On the contrary, you marvel at the diversity of human thought and your access to it. Engage the Bible the way you engage a library: Look for books that speak to you, dare to read some that challenge you, and be thankful that you live in a country where (at least for now) diversity of thought and reading books is still legal and respected.

I’m both a Conservative Christian and a feminist. How can I reconcile these two positions?

The key isn’t reconciling your faith and your feminism, but keeping them in honest dialogue with each other. This is what Judaism calls *elu v’elu* (these and these): “These words (your faith) and these words (your feminism), no matter how opposed, are both the words of the living God” when their aim is to promote justice, compassion, and human flourishing. Holding multiple ideas in creative tension is what it is to be wise. Be wise.

I’m a single mom, and my parents, who are very Jewish, are obsessed with having me raise my daughter in what they call the one true religion: Judaism. I don’t believe any religion is true. What should I tell them?

Tell them, politely, that you are raising your daughter in the religion of truth, rather than any one true religion. Make your home a place of inquiry where truth – spiritual, scientific, rational, intuitive, and metaphorical – are all welcome. Tell your parents that your religion is truth, compassion, justice, and humility, a religion where doubt is valued, and questioning praised, and seeking celebrated. Explain to them that where Judaism supports these values, your daughter will be raised Jewishly, and where it doesn’t, she won’t.



Judgments / Perceptions

by Michael Price

When I was about 10 years old I made a decision that was based on only one event. I decided I was not a good joke teller.

My friend and I were riding in the back seat of his Dad's car. Both of our dad's were in the front seat. As we were riding in the car my friend told a joke, and we all laughed. I decided to tell a joke. When I finished with my joke, nobody, absolutely nobody laughed.

From that time until only a few years ago, I believed I was not good at telling jokes. And then I examined what was "true" about that situation. True - I told a joke and nobody laughed. Period! Everything else was a judgment by me, a perception of the situation, and eventually a belief.

There are numerous reasons why our dad's may not have laughed. Perhaps something was happening on the road in front of the car that my friend and I could not see. Perhaps, they started a serious conversation and actually did not hear my joke. Numerous things could have kept them from laughing.

Yet, from that one event and my judgment of the event based on limited facts, I decided that I was not a good joke teller.

We all do this. And we do it in many areas of our lives. We make judgments about events in our lives based on limited information. Take a close look at situations and events in your life and determine what is actually true and what is judgment.

Use your Fearless Thinking skills to change your limiting beliefs to ones that serve you.

Be a Fearless Thinker.

Michael George Price is the creator of The Courage of Fearless Thinking System. He is an author, teacher, consultant, coach, and motivational speaker. Michael teaches The Courage of Fearless Thinking System to Businesses, Associations, Schools, Sports Teams, Churches and Individuals. Visit www.FearlessThinking.com for additional information or contact Michael directly at Info@FearlessThinking.com.

What Can Animals Teach Us About Spirituality, Part 3

Animals Are Healers

by Diane Clements

Note: This is the third excerpt from a talk that Diane gave at a Wednesday night service several years ago...

Cesar Milan is my favorite animal person. Not because he is such a good dog trainer, but because I believe he is a closet religious scientist! He teaches our beliefs. His motto is "I rehabilitate dogs, I train people."

He teaches that we are all made of energy, and dogs pick up on our energy and imitate our energy. If we are fearful, they are wary. If we are confident and calm they are submissive. Dogs want pack leaders. They want to take direction and please us.

And he teaches we must give dogs rules and boundaries.

Isn't that what we learn about ourselves? We must teach people how to treat us. We must set rules and boundaries in all our relationships.

Cesar says when a dog misbehaves it is the human's fault because we have allowed it. He teaches "Take responsibility and correct the behavior." We also teach "take responsibility and correct the behavior," the behavior or thought that brings the unhappy circumstance to you.

He teaches, "Don't hate the dog." He says that we have to realize the basic truths about dogs: they are first "dog," then "breed," then "Fluffy." All dogs have similar behavior. After that, certain breeds have hot-wired behavior. We must realize that we can never teach a beagle not to howl, or a retriever to stop chasing and bringing things back. We cannot

teach a Labrador to stay out of water. Finally, the name we give the dogs is our way of humanizing them.

In Religious Science we are taught we cannot change anyone, we can only change our reaction.

There was one episode where a man had a beagle. All was well until he walked the dog. When the beagle would see another dog approaching it would howl. (Have you ever heard a beagle howl? Oh, my!)

Cesar taught the owner, you can't take the howl out of the beagle, you can only understand why it howls and work around that. Beagles were bred to chase and corner prey and signal humans of the find.

This hometown beagle had never hunted, but deep down its DNA said, "When I find something, and need to alert my human, I howl."

Once the owner understood, he and Cesar experimented and found that praising the dog worked and the dog stopped. So, at the first howl, the owner stopped, and said to the dog, "Good dog! You found it!" He gave him praise and affection, and the dog stopped.

In Religious Science we learn to accept other people as they are, we can't change them, we change our reaction.

*You Can Read Past Issues
of 'Expressions'!*

Our Web Guru, Jeff Harrison, has made it possible to read and download past issues of the *Expressions* newsletter. (He also updates our home page, www.claremontcsl.org, with links to the 5 most recent Sunday morning messages.)

For past issues of *Expressions*, go to:

<http://www.claremontcsl.org/expressions/expressions.html>

And if you have something you would like to contribute - a poem, prayer, article, photo, meditation, book or Web site recommendation - please email it to: eemgraffvz@gmail.com

Thanks!

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Meditation on Freedom

Science of Mind Magazine, July 1, 2008, pg. 34

Nothing can come into your experience unless you summon it through persistent thoughts.

- *The Secret*

The Universe is the result of the Self-Contemplation of God. Our lives are the result of our self-contemplations...

- *The Science of Mind*, page 307

Personal freedom is the focus of this month's guides. Let's start today by accepting that if there is an area in our lives in which we would like more freedom, we already have it. Every day there is an opportunity to express more of life – this is the adventure of living freely.

If you need more spiritual freedom, it may be helpful to assess the feelings and opinions that you have about God. Over the centuries, the concept of what God is has become similar to that of the personality of a human being. If this is your belief, then you may feel that God can be critical, angry or "little" in Its perception of your life. I believe that nothing is further from the truth.

We can start to grow a new thought about God; one that is more liberating. We can develop the thought that God is beyond human littleness and is always accessible right where we are. This doesn't mean that we can't personalize God. We can call God whatever we choose. One man may call God "Papa," another "Friend" or another "Beloved." Starting today we are free to experience God as only love and all that is good, allowing ourselves to look at the world with a new awareness and insight.

Affirmation:

Freedom is priceless. Today I am free to choose how I want to experience God.

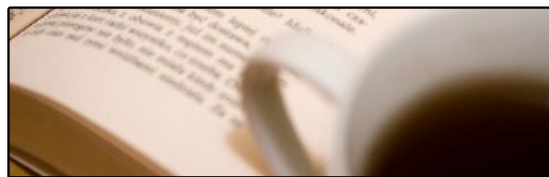
Found and shared by Neysa Burrous, who read it at the Sunday morning service on July 1, 2018.

I Opened a Book

by Julia Donaldson

"I opened a book and in I strode.
Now nobody can find me.
I've left my chair, my house, my road,
My town and my world behind me.
I'm wearing the cloak, I've slipped on the ring,
I've swallowed the magic potion.
I've fought with a dragon, dined with a king
And dived in a bottomless ocean.
I opened a book and made some friends.
I shared their tears and laughter,
And followed their road with its bumps and bends
To the happily ever after.
I finished my book and out I came.
The cloak can no longer hide me.
My chair and my house are just the same,
But I have a book inside me."

Found on Facebook and shared by Graham Dunlap



Support Claremont CSL While Shopping At smile.amazon.com!

If you shop at Amazon.com you could support Claremont CSL with every purchase:

1. Go to <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/95-2049147>

You can paste this address into your browser. It's specifically for our church. (Be sure to save it in your 'Bookmarks'!)

2. Log in with your regular Amazon account or "Sign Up" if you're a new user.

All prices are the same, but 0.5% of your eligible purchases go to our congregation!

Thank You!

Calendar of Events for July, 2018

Claremont CSL Events

Ongoing:

Sundays -

AA Meetings, 8 AM; Chapel
Meditation, 10 AM; Chapel
Sunday Service, 10:30 AM; Sanctuary
Fellowship Hour, 11:30 AM; Holmes Hall
Apostolic Church, 2:00 PM; Chapel
Living Proof Meeting, 4:30 PM; Chapel

Mondays -

ManKind Project, 7 PM; Chapel

Wednesdays -

Meditation, 6:15 PM; Practitioner Room
Wednesday Service, 7 PM; Chapel

Thursdays -

Kindly Conversations is on vacation
through the summer, to return September.

Saturdays -

Yoga Classes are also on vacation through
the summer.

For July:

- 1 Call to Prayer Sunday during service,
also Potluck Sunday in Holmes Hall
- 7 Drum Circle, 3:00-5:00 PM, Chapel
- 12 Brown Bag Lunch with Rev. Tracy,
11:30 AM, Board Room
- 15 Board of Trustees Meeting, 12:30 PM,
Board Room
- 20 Sacred Frequencies Sound Meditation,
7:00-8:30 PM, Chapel
- 26 Brown Bag Lunch with Rev. Tracy,
11:30 AM, Board Room



Sacred and Cultural Events

- 1 Canada Day, celebrates the enactment of the Constitution Act in 1867. The Act united the former British colonies of Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick as the single nation of Canada.
- 4 Independence Day, celebrating the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776.
- 9 The Martyrdom of the Bab (Baha'i), observes the anniversary of the Bab's execution in Tabriz, Iran in 1850.
- 14 Bastille Day, marks the Storming of the Bastille, a fortress-prison that housed French political prisoners. The event was a turning point in the French Revolution.
- 18 Nelson Mandela International Day, established by the UN General Assembly in 2009 to celebrate Mandela's birthday, life and legacy.
- 21-22 Tisha B'Av ("Ninth day of the month of Av"), a time of fasting and mourning for Jews. The first and second Temples in Jerusalem were both destroyed on this day: the first in 586 BCE by the Babylonians, and the second in 70 CE by the Romans. This month of the Jewish calendar also saw the expulsion of Jews from England in 1290, and from Spain in 1492.
- 23 Birthday of Haile Selassie I, a former Emperor of Ethiopia whom the Rastafarians consider to be their Savior.
- 24 Pioneer Day, observed by Mormons to commemorate the arrival of the first Latter Day Saints pioneer in Salt Lake Valley in 1847.
- 28 Asalha Puja Day (or "Dharma Day"), celebrates the first teachings of the Buddha.
- 30 International Day of Friendship, proclaimed in 2011 by the UN General assembly with the idea that friendship between peoples, countries, cultures and individuals can inspire peace efforts and build bridges between communities.

Licensed Practitioners

You can email prayer requests to:

prayer@claremontcsl.org

You may also call Practitioners directly at the following numbers:

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