



The Still, Voice Small

Judith Pennington

911 – WHO WILL ANSWER THE CALL?

On Sept. 11, 2001, news reporters used the expression “wake-up call” to point out that America is now as vulnerable as other nations to destructive acts of terrorism. People quickly realized the co-incidence of the date and our emergency telephone number, 911. The symbol etched itself into our collective consciousness as powerfully as the attacks on our towering symbols of economic and military power: the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. 911 was indeed a wake-up call, and yet, how many of us received its higher message?

I did not. Last month, on the anniversary of 911, I was surprised to find myself spiraling back into the same sadness and feelings of loss experienced by all of us the year before. I dropped off my grandson at his day care center, where the children were making red, white and blue flags for a parade, and, as I drove home, memories of 911 cascaded into my mind: the horrific pictures etched into memory, talks with loved ones, meditations on peace, the news media’s search for the reasons why, and how—for an eternal, timeless moment—reporters held up a mirror to the face of America and we could have made new choices about our role in the Middle East.

Instead, our president announced plans to bomb Afghanistan and in the heat of battle, the mirror darkened, America’s gaze shifted outward, and this blessed moment of introspection and truth-telling passed us by. Just hours after George W. Bush announced his plan to bomb Afghanistan, I drove to my meditation class and struggled mightily to hold back tears of disappointment and rage. I taught my students that only here, in the silence and its still, small voice, is the peace and wisdom that will never leave us, never forsake us, and will always whisper truth.

Even so, this past year of war, economic flux, corporate fraud and global uncertainty has undermined the peacefulness in many of us. I worried and did not see the truth of it: that the mirror is still in place and the veils are dropping away. I felt that America had missed her moment of truth, of recognition and self-knowledge, and for years, perhaps centuries, would not be “a light unto the world” as our country was in its earliest days. I believed that our whole planet had missed a golden opportunity to learn, heal and grow.

I still felt this way on the anniversary of 911, as the U.S. threatened war on Iraq, so after leaving my grandson at daycare, I allowed my intuition to lead me from my computer to my garden, where I relieved my heartache by digging into the rich, black earth. Strong, gusting winds blew cool air and a healing green-and-white mosaic of light across our back yard. Gradually I relaxed and grew peaceful, but only in my meditation room did I find a deeper, lasting peace

in that wise, guiding voice in each of us.

I listened carefully, as always, and wrote down what I heard, but for the first time in 15 years I recoiled emotionally as my inner voice spoke of 911 as “the beginnings of peace, sown in the heartache of loss and destruction and growing still today in the rubble of loss and decay.” Perceiving no peace in the world, I doubted, rebelled and broke off the flow of words. But soon I calmed down and that kind, gentle voice reassured me: because of 911, it said, peace is taking root in hearts—in America and across the world—awakened to the truth of selfishness, greed and hatred.

The Law of Balance, greater than karma, brought America its “wake-up call.” Our busy accumulation of wealth and inattention to the injustice and poverty suffered by others created a

darkness, an energetic imbalance; the terrorists, resonating with this darkness, gave the people of America an opportunity to take stock of who we are. The terrorists were only instruments in a symphony of events restoring balance to the world.

In this perspective, of course, is the divine right order in which so many of us believe. But the still, small voice gave us more: a crystal-clear guiding principle that we can live by, in every moment of every day.

On the anniversary of 911, I felt the blessed relief that is the gift of balance as Christian, Jewish and Muslim people spoke of peace during a World Day of Prayer service at my Unity Church. I was reminded of balance again, as a friend stood up to say that she’d just heard a TV reporter voice a survivor’s belief that the powerful winds across the Northeast that day were the souls of loved ones reassuring us all that they are eternal. I felt that these spiraling, uplifting winds were Spirit sweeping across our region to heal those needing help the most.

I feel it now when I close my eyes and my still, small voice projects its wheel of balance upon my mind’s eye: how the wheel must stay in balance for life to move forward and evolve and how its balance depends on our cultivation of love, mercy and compassion and our willingness to extend our riches of body and soul to others.

Now I can see that we are a light unto the world. Our work is to go slowly enough to stay in balance, be guided by the still, small voice, and allow its golden light to burn brighter within us and all that we touch. No matter what happens, this is our call, our awakening and the beginnings of peace.

(Judith Pennington is the author of “The Voice of the Soul: A Journey into Wisdom and the Physics of God,” and founder of an educational outreach dedicated to helping people find their wisdom and inner peace. She may be reached at eaglelife.com.)

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