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LET
UNDERSTANDING
BE THE LAW

K. KRISHNAMURTI

BOOKS BY J. KRISHNAMURTI

THE KINGDOM OF HAPPINESS
THE SEARCH (POEMS)
THE IMMORTAL FRIEND (POEMS)
LIFE THE GOAL

LET UNDERSTANDING BE THE LAW

BY

J. KRISHNAMURTI

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FOREWORD

At the seventh International Camp of the Order of the Star held at Ommen in Holland, many questions were put to Mr. Krishnamurti with regard to matters which are troubling the minds of many people. The answers to those questions were of so fundamental and far-reaching a nature that we have felt it imperative to issue them in pamphlet form without delay. It is essential that an accurate report of Krishnamurti's answers should reach members in his own words rather than through garbled and distorted accounts given from inadequate notes. The questions considered may be of greater interest to members of the Order than to the general public but as Krishnamurti in his replies always takes us to the great height of his own illumination and makes clear to us problems more far-reaching in extent than those represented by the actual questions put to him, there may be many even outside the Order who will find in his answers a reply to their own difficulties.

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LET UNDERSTANDING BE THE LAW

KRISHNAMURTI: I am going to answer all these questions from my point of view, and I am not basing my answers on any authority whatsoever. I know that you would all like my answers to be based on authority, but I am afraid you will be disappointed. I am not urging you to accept that which I hold to be the absolute Truth, but I am leaving it to your own judgment, which alone is valuable, which alone is lasting and which alone should guide, uphold and protect you. So with this in mind we will proceed, and please have patience, and listen diligently, because I know that if you do not understand wisely, you will ask these same questions again next year.

QUESTION: Certain statements have been made with regard to you and your work which seem to be so fundamentally different from your teaching and from the Truth you set before us that we should be grateful if you could give us an opinion with regard to them. In 1925 you selected seven Apostles, the remaining five not yet having attained the necessary Arhat level. Now you say that you have no disciples.

KRISHNAMURTI: I say again that I have no

disciples. Everyone of you is a disciple of the Truth if you understand the Truth and do not follow individuals. I have no followers. I hope you do not consider yourselves as my followers, for if you do you will be perverting and betraying the Truth which I maintain. I have no disciples; I have no followers; but if you understand the Truth which I put forward, in all its simplicity and in all its greatness, and love that Truth for its own beauty, then you will become the disciples of that Truth. Do not worry as to who is or who is not a disciple. How eager you are to judge others! You look to discipleship in order to be encouraged or discouraged, in order to lean upon and to be protected by someone else; and, friend, when you depend on another, woe to your life! So I hope that it is perfectly clear that I do not want disciples or followers; because I hold that to be disciples of an individual is to betray the Truth. The only manner of attaining Truth is to become disciples of the Truth itself without a mediator. Do not be shocked, do not be disappointed — Truth is not always pleasant. Truth is harsh to those who do not understand, but Truth is lovable, kindly, generous and lovely to those who do understand. So, friend, there is no discipleship except for those who understand that discipleship is not to individuals but to the Truth in its absolute sense, the Truth

without end. And you, who are so fond of worshipping personalities, so fond of having mediators, will find it difficult to accept the Truth, but I am not here to please you. Do not become followers or disciples of individuals but become the tabernacle of Truth without beginning or end, and then these questions as to who is an apostle, who is a disciple, who is an Arhat, will all fade away, for they are of no value.

When you are climbing to a great height and there are signposts on the way, do you stop at the signposts and worship them, or do you go on and leave them behind? Ponder over the matter seriously; commune with your heart considerably and you will thereby gain understanding. There is no understanding in the worship of personalities. The labels which you adore have no meaning. I know you will all feel doubt with regard to what I am saying, feel uncertain of my statements, but, friend, I say that Truth has nothing to do with the petty, tyrannical personalities whom you worship, whoever they be. Truth is beyond all stages, and those stages only exist because of human limitations.

QUESTION: The Liberal Catholic Church and the Co-Masonic Order were said to be two organizations specially chosen by the Lord Maitreya to carry out your work. Now you tell us that all ritual and ceremonial are unessential and step down the Truth.

KRISHNAMURTI: I still maintain that all ceremonies are unnecessary for spiritual growth. How glad you would be if I were to say in a very authoritative manner that they are or that they are not necessary! How delighted you would be if I said, "Please go on performing your ceremonies", or else, "Please cease performing your ceremonies" — then you could feel at rest. Because I do not say that, because I do not base what I say on authority, you are puzzled, and in your anxiety there is confusion of purpose, which emphasizes the unessential and loses sight of the essential. I say that all ceremonies are unessential for the fulfilment of life. But you will say, "What about the ceremonies of the Liberal Catholic Church and Co-Masonry?" Friend, you must decide. It is not for me to decide. How happy you would be if I decided for you! You are all like little children who cannot stand on their own feet and walk by themselves. You have been preparing for seventeen years, and you are caught in your own creation. Do not use me as an authority, do not say that Krishnamurti disapproves of ceremonies. I neither approve nor disapprove. If you want to perform ceremonies you will perform them, and that is a reason sufficient in itself; if you do not want to perform them you will not perform them; and, again, that is a reason sufficient in itself. These difficulties only arise when

you are trying to obey, when you are frightened — frightened that you may lose the spiritual manna which you think exists in your particular organization. No organization, however seasoned in tradition, however well-established, contains the Truth. If you would seek the Truth you must go out, far away from the limitations of the human mind and heart and there discover it — and that Truth is within yourself. Is it not much simpler to make Life itself the goal — Life itself the guide, the Master and the God — than to have mediators, *gurus*, who must inevitably step down the Truth, and hence betray it?

QUESTION: It is said that with your coming, evolution is quickened in all beings and that the number of Initiates in the world will be rapidly increased. But you tell us that these stages on the Path are unessential and that Liberation may be attained at any stage of evolution.

KRISHNAMURTI: I say that liberation can be attained at any stage of evolution by a man who understands and that to worship stages, as you do, is not essential. As you have snobbery in the world, and pay reverence to aristocratic titles, so you have spiritual snobbery; there is not much difference between the two. So you must develop your understanding and your desire to attain and forget all the stages and the people who are at those stages. Of what value are they to you?

Because you lose sight of the goal of life, because you do not desire urgently, vitally and strongly to attain it, these stages, with their labels, catch you up and hold you in their bondage. You hold a toy in front of a child in order to encourage him to walk and the child who is wise does not worship the toy, because his desire is to walk. You are no longer children. And yet you are worshipping a toy. I tell you that life is much too serious to play with, and as I have said, the time has come when we must decide whether we are going to be like children who admire toys or grown-up men and women who will put aside all childish things in order to find the Truth. The finding and establishing of the Truth will depend on yourself and on no one else. If I were to destroy for you all your present crutches, you would invent others to satisfy your craving for support, you would invent other fantastic ideas. You will say that I do not believe in all these things. I neither believe nor disbelieve. To me they have very little value compared to the most precious jewel in the world, which is Life.

You can attain liberation at any stage of evolution if you have a burning desire to attain, if you have a longing to put aside the unessential things and to hold, with the grip of death, to the things that are vital, essential. And to

establish that which is essential and vital, you must observe, you must be alive to all that is taking place around you. Life is a web spun out of the common events of the day and if you do not utilize them, you will miss the purpose of the small things, out of which great things are built.

QUESTION: We have been told that the World-Mother will manifest in order to complete your work, and that the disciple through whom She will work has already been selected. You tell us that these distinctions of male and female do not exist in Truth because Life is one.

KRISHNAMURTI: I say that Life is one, though the expressions of Life be multitudinous. In Truth there is neither male nor female; how can there be? You have a body different from mine; but do you not have the same sorrow, the same pains, the same anxieties, and the same doubts? What you need is to have a clean mind and a loving heart, and then all these things will not matter. No one is going to complete my work except you. You can either pervert it and corrupt it, or keep it pure. No one is necessary to complete my work except yourselves. Perhaps what I say does not suit you and so you want another image to worship; and you will have that image of your own making, whether it be this or another. As long as you do not want the Truth in its absolute sense, as long as you do not want freedom,

you will invent for yourselves many phrases, many images, many labels, and lose yourselves in the complications of philosophies and creeds. If you desire the Truth, as a drowning man desires air, then you will not want all these complications. You would much rather be satisfied with easy, pleasant, smooth things, than face a hard struggle with yourselves, understand yourselves and thereby conquer.

Do not quote me afterwards as an authority. I refuse to be your crutch. I am not going to be brought into a cage for your worship. When you bring the fresh air of the mountain and hold it in a small room, the freshness of that air disappears and there is stagnation; and no man who is wise will allow himself to be caught in those things that pervert and bring about the stagnation of his mind and heart.

As I am free, as I have found this Truth, which is limitless, without beginning or end, I will not be conditioned by you. You may throw me out of your hearts and your minds, but I will not be utilized as a crutch or held in the cage of your small deceptions.

QUESTION: You say that there is no God; that there is neither good nor evil; that there is no moral law. In what way, then, does your teaching differ from that of an ordinary materialist?

KRISHNAMURTI: My teaching differs entirely

from that of the materialist and if you have not perceived it, I am sorry for you. I have never said that there is no God. I have said that there is only God as manifested in you, and when you have purified that which is within you, you will find Truth. Of course there is God — but I am not going to use the word God, because it has got a very specific, narrow meaning. To some it suggests a strong fist of anger; to some a being with a long beard; to some an Omnipotent, Omniscient, Supreme Intelligence. I prefer to call this Life, because it brings you nearer to the Truth; because you have to contend with that life itself and not with the worship of some exterior being, thus deceiving yourself. Truth, which is life, is like the sunshine, and if you are wise, you will open your windows to it; if you are unwise, you will draw down your blinds. If you were in love with life, then these images would have no value.

"...that there is neither good nor evil." Of course there is neither good nor evil. Good is that of which you are not afraid; evil is that of which you are afraid. So, if you destroy fear, you are spiritually fulfilled; but if you are conditioned by fear — as you are — there is evil, there is good, there is morality to uphold you in your weakness.

When you are in love with life, and you

place that love before all things, and judge by that love, and not by your fear, then this stagnation which you call morality will disappear; then you will consider how much you are in love with life, not how much evil, how much fear exists in your heart. Or rather, you will judge by your love, not by your fear. I know that you are told never to judge; but as you always do, why not judge truly? And to judge truly, you must be in love with life, and then you will never judge at all. Because you are not in love with life, you judge by your standards of morality; by good and evil; by the fear of heaven and hell; and hence place a barrier on that love, that understanding of life.

QUESTION: Some people hold that while the World-Teacher has no concern with the founding of a new religion, yet the Bodhisattva Maitreya in His larger Cosmic consciousness is concerned with and supports all religions and creeds.

KRISHNAMURTI: Oh, what a comfortable idea! How you worship words. You are in love with labels and not with Truth. What do you mean by "Cosmic consciousness"? Life? How can you divide Life into the World-Teacher and the Bodhisattva? Oh, you people of little understanding! Do you see what is implied in this question? That which you like you will attribute to the Bodhisattva; that which you do not like, to the World-Teacher — or perhaps to Krishnamurti.

What do you think yourselves? Where is your understanding after all these years? How you deceive yourselves with all these words! You divide Life into the World-Teacher, Bodhisattva, and that which is pleasant is the one, and that which is not pleasant is the other, and if neither suits, then it is Krishnamurti. What has Truth to do with the terms "World-Teacher", "Bodhisattva", or "Krishnamurti"? What has life to do with these names? If you are carried away by my authority now, you will be carried away by some other authority later. You will obey by authority and disobey by authority. You have no understanding in the matter. You want comfort all the time, and you find that comfort, in words, in authority, in gods and in dogmas.

But if you can realize that there is no comfort but understanding, you will not be caught up in words, in ideas, in books, or in the shades of remembered gods. How ready you are to judge without knowledge! To accept without understanding!

QUESTION: It has also been said that the Christ works essentially through the Liberal Catholic Church and but a portion of His consciousness manifests through Krishnaji. May we have your opinion on both these points?

KRISHNAMURTI: That which is pleasant you will accept and that which is not pleasant you

will reject. Truth, which is life, has nothing to do with any person, with any organization. Friend, you are playing with these things. To you they are not vital but to me they are vital. I am concerned with Truth and with the awakening of the desire in each one of you to discover that Truth. You are concerned with the consciousness of Krishnamurti. How can you tell when you know neither Krishnamurti nor the Christ? I do not know who tells you these things, but how you are all caught up in the lovely designs of words! I am not concerned with organizations. I am not concerned with societies, with religions, with dogmas, but I am concerned with life, because I am Life. You do not want life and the fulfilment of life which is the Truth, but a passing shade of comfort either in this organization or in another, and sweet words and smooth ideas are sufficient for your small understanding. So, friend, by these things you are held. Because you place organizations before life, the authority of another before life, the sayings of another before life, you are caught and strangled. I am talking about the mountain-top that knows no shade, that is never under the cloud, that is constant and eternal, and you are concerned about the valleys that lie in its shadow. If you would understand the mountain-top, you must leave your valley and not stay there and worship the mountain-top from afar.

Friend, do not concern yourself with who I am; you will never know. I do not want you to accept anything that I say. I do not want anything from any of you; I do not desire popularity; I do not want your flattery, your following. Because I am in love with life, I do not want anything. These questions are not of very great importance; what is of importance is the fact that you obey and allow your judgment to be perverted by authority. Your judgment, your mind, your affection, your life, are being perverted by things which have no value, and herein lies sorrow.

I saw in an Indian temple a family of monkeys — father, mother and child. The child clung to the mother and never let her go. And I saw on a lion farm in California a lioness with her little cub. The cub was wandering about, free from the mother. Which will you choose — to cling, as the monkey, or to be independent, as the lion? A man who wishes to be free from all limitations must put aside all crutches. If you desired to climb the heights, you would not take with you all your possessions, your dignities, your rituals, your friends. You would leave them behind and climb alone. To climb unhampered is not selfishness. Do not deceive yourself again with that idea. If you wish to climb you will be wise to climb purposefully, steadily, without the burden of complications. Truth does not depend on any person,

however much you may love that person. It is beyond all persons, beyond the dreams of the gods and the dark sanctuaries of temples. I know that which I am; I know my purpose in life because I am Life itself without name, without limitation. And because I am Life I would urge you to worship that Life, not in this form that is Krishnamurti but the Life which dwells in each one of you. Put aside all the paraphernalia of beliefs, religions and ceremonies, and you will find the Truth.

QUESTION: Are we to take it that we should not fear to carry the implications of your words to their ultimate conclusions?

KRISHNAMURTI: Why have you fear? What are you afraid of? Afraid that what I say may be the Truth? Afraid to give up those things that you have clung to for so long? How do you think to find anything in life if you are afraid to carry your thoughts and feelings to their ultimate conclusion?

Friend, you acquire Truth by putting away those things which you have gained, and not by clinging to them. That is the only way to find the Truth. If you want money, do you not ruthlessly do things to accumulate your wealth? But you do not want Truth in the same manner. I do not mean that you should have selfishness or ruthlessness — because when you walk towards

the Truth there can be neither selfishness nor ruthlessness. If you do anything because of fear, at the bidding of another, woe to you, because along that way lies sorrow and pain.

QUESTION: Have you one teaching for the masses and another for your chosen disciples?

KRISHNAMURTI: I have no chosen disciples. Who are the masses? Yourself. It is in your minds that the distinctions exist between the masses and the chosen ones, between the outside world and the inner world. It is in your minds that you corrupt, step down the Truth. O friend! if you are in love with life, you will include all things, transient or permanent, in that love. You want to have a special teaching for the chosen few, because in your heart there is segregation, separation; and you wish to confine the pure waters of life and keep them for yourselves. Can you ask the sun if it shines for the masses or for the chosen few? Can you ask the rains whether they are meant for the plains or for the mountains? If you do not understand you will, as has always been done, make this teaching for the few, and so step down the Truth and betray it. Because there is limitation in your heart, you divide the water of life which is meant for kings and for beggars alike. Whether it comes out of a golden well or out of a running stream the water is the

same and quenches the thirst of all without separation into colours, castes, creeds, and the specially chosen. It is because for so many years, for so many centuries, for so many aeons, Truth has been limited and stepped down that you wish to do it again, and you are already doing it when you ask, "Is Truth meant for the masses or for the chosen few?" You say that the masses do not understand; that it is too difficult for them to grasp; that it is only the few who can climb high. Do you think I have not as much affection and love as any one of you? But because I have been through all your stages I say: Do not go through those stages but avoid them, put them aside, and gather your strength as men who climb high.

QUESTION: You say that God is only *in us*, there is no other God. Will you kindly explain this important saying a little more, as the whole world believes in a God *outside* ourselves, a Creator of all, and you yourself speak of the Beloved, the *Guru* — the name is of no importance — others speak of Buddha, Christ, God. How can you reconcile these statements?

KRISHNAMURTI: Unite with life and you will unite with everything. As is stated in this question names are of no importance. If you are in love with life, then you will unite with life, whether you call it Buddha, Christ, or any other name. How can you unite with life? Not by creating complications, but by creating

that burning desire for Truth which destroys all complications. And you say: How am I to be in love with life? Gather experience. How am I to gather experience? Invite it. How am I to invite it? Do not seclude yourself from life. You see around you sorrow and suffering without end and if you only see without observation, then there is no quickening of the heart or purifying of the mind.

QUESTION: Krishnamurti says that we should not follow or obey any authority whatsoever. How far should this principle be applied to members of the Theosophical Society, who are very much governed by authority? Or even to the authority of Krishnamurti himself?

KRISHNAMURTI: I wish you would not say "Krishnamurti says". If you quote me with the rest of your authorities, you will lose the precious waters that I bring. "Krishnamurti says that we should not follow or obey any authority whatsoever. How far should this principle be applied to members of the Theosophical Society who are very much governed by authority, or even to the authority of Krishnamurti himself?"

Shall I tell you? Do not obey. Why should you obey? Why should you subjugate yourself to others? Because you want to accept, you create authority and that is the root of poison, that is the seed which you must destroy. You desire to seek comfort in obedience. Do not

think that I am antagonistic to the Theosophical Society. I am not. It wastes energy to be antagonistic to anything. If you go about saying that I told you to disobey, you will be creating another authority which you will worship. And if you obey because I say it, you will also be creating another authority which you will worship. I do not know that in the Theosophical Society you are urged to obey. I do not know; it may be, but I am not concerned with the matter. If it is not in the Theosophical Society that you obey it will be in some other organization. The desire to obey is born in each one of you and that is why you create these organizations. I am concerned with the purification of your desire and not in establishing another authority. Desire is life and if you strengthen that desire, purify that desire, ennoble and vitalise it, give to it the ecstasy of purpose, then you will break all these small things that stand in your way. Have not all my friends urged me all the time to follow one thing or another? Have they not always said: Be careful of what you do, of what you say. Be careful of your position. You must say this and you must not say that. Patience is a divine gift! Had I obeyed any one of them, I should never have found that eternal, absolute, happiness. Because I doubted the very things they maintained, because I would not accept anything

that was put before me, I have found that Kingdom which is eternal and without variance; I have fulfilled life. And I would say to you, do likewise, not because I say it, but because you yourself want to enter, you yourself want to find that absolute peace, that liberation which is the culmination of all experience, that Truth which is of no person, which is of no organization and of no church.

QUESTION: Are you the Christ come back?

KRISHNAMURTI: Friend, who do you think I am? If I say I am the Christ, you will create another authority. If I say I am not, you will also create another authority. Do you think that Truth has anything to do with what you think I am? You are not concerned with the Truth, but you are concerned with the vessel that contains the Truth. You do not want to drink the waters, but you want to find out who fashioned the vessel which contains the waters. Friend, if I say to you that I am, and another says to you that I am not the Christ — where will you be? Put aside the label, for that has no value. Drink the water, if the water is clean. I say to you that I have that clean water; I have the balm that shall purify, that shall heal greatly; and you ask me: Who are you? I AM ALL THINGS, BECAUSE I AM LIFE.

THE MASTER SINGER OF LIFE

On the banks of a soft running river
There was a village full with people
but empty of life.
Oh, the sorrow of it!

Many were the tall temples with graven images,
Gods moulded after the thought of man,
Proud priests, soft of voice, loud in chants,
Grave talkers of philosophy, under the cool trees,
The cry of burden, the fear of sorrow,
Complicated laws of religion,
Morality made for others,
The strong maintained by the weak.
The naked and the clothed walked on the same
narrow street,
All in strife one against another,
Their Gods, their laws and their love.

They called the village the world.

On a fair day, at the meeting of four roads,
A man cried,
"Listen, O people,
There is a corruption, and a strife;
The song of your life is impure.

The Master Singer of Life
Comes to this ancient village;
Hearken to the harmony of his song."

The jasmine opens its heart to the dark night.

"I am the Master Singer of Life,
I have suffered long, I know.
Keep pure the song in thy heart,
Simple is the way.
Be rid of the complexities of Gods,
of religions and of beliefs therein.
Bind not thy life with rites,
with the desire after comfort.
Be a lamp unto thyself. Thou shalt not then
cast a shadow across the face of another.
Life cannot be held in the bondage of fear.
Be free, then there shall be the miracle of order.
Love life, then there shall be no loneliness.
Ah, listen to the voice of my love.
I have suffered long, I know.
I am free, eternally happy;
I am the Master Singer of Life."

Softly comes the rain on the burning land.

A few listened and greatly rejoiced.
Putting aside all things
They freed life of all bondage.

"Yea", cried the people,
"But how shall we reconcile the beauty
of our Gods with thy song?
In what manner shall we fit thy sayings
into the temple of our creation?
Thou art the bringer of confusion,
We shall have none of thee,
Thou sayest things that we know not,
What thou sayest is of the Devil,
Away, away."

The Master Singer of Life went on his way,
And the people struggled with the problem
of reconciliation.