

The White Stone

Revelation 2:17

"To him who prevails, I shall give him a white stone, and on that stone a new name written which no-one knows except him who receives it."

What is meant by this sentence in Revelation? I think it suggests that once we reach the point of our enlightenment, our mastery, we will know it – no-one else will and it will not matter whether they do or not, and that we will take that journey alone.

The symbolism in the sculpture.

The white stone is beautiful – it carries delightful patterns and radiates a warmth. It symbolises you (or me, or anyone else). It is loose on the plinth and can be placed inside the temple or outside. The question is, in order to reach true enlightenment, do we need the temple? Do we need the structures that so many faiths and religions build around us? Or do we reach a point where we finally realise that, actually, they are no longer necessary?

The temple, or church, or religion (whichever denomination) is symbolised by the three legged structure which symbolises the ancient structures and buildings we have always used for worship. The basis of having such structures has been one of conveying to the people that God is omniscient and that we must build these beautiful temples to honour him. They are generally old (as the metalwork suggests) and based around old perceptions and belief systems. Indeed, belief systems even before Christianity or Islam used similar symbols to signify power and greatness (i.e. Egyptian temples etc). The bronze at the top symbolises the wealth and beauty we have placed in these extraordinary buildings to honour God.

The concept of the temple structure in old rusty steel asks a question – are these structures out-dated?? Church groups are flourishing in simple buildings (often not even in buildings) in other parts of the country and the world..... is the temple necessary? Is it conveying a message that is now no longer relevant? This is not to say they are not beautiful and outstanding buildings hosting amazing pieces of work: it is about the question of relevance.

And the base? It conveys a suggestion of the cosmos, of which we are a small but important part. It asks the question; who or what is God? When we refer to God, we speak of 'him' (usually) and sometimes 'her'. This suggests a human 'likeness'. Are we just making God in our own likeness so that we can be more comfortable with 'him'? In the process, do we not 'limit' our perception of God's 'awareness' to a human 'conception' of things? We are mired in duality, i.e. good and bad, light and dark etc and so we readily and easily apply God's approval of 'us against them' in war (for example).

Would not the American Indians' name of 'Wakan Tanka' (the Great Mystery) or similar be better? Suddenly it is no longer a person. It is a force of energy and consciousness which is everything we think we understand and way, way beyond..... Does this concept not help us to see a wider picture, way beyond duality, more into the conception of timelessness and a multi-dimensional cosmos?

The wisdom in Jessica's words;

Many years ago, I read a novel by André Brink entitled, '**Looking on Darkness**'. It was about the prevailing racial issues being faced in South Africa at that time. In it, the two main characters try hard to find ways in which to deal with the obvious challenges they face within a multi-racial relationship. At one point, Joseph Malan hands Jessica a pebble which she gazes at in contemplation, then says;

"I wish I could be like this. Like this pebble. So smooth, so whole. If I let it drop, it'll endure it, for it has no pride. It's so completely itself."

'It's so completely itself'.....is this not the point to which we all aspire? Is this not what Christ meant when he said 'Love thy neighbour as thyself?'

"We can only merge with the Divine when we are capable of true forgiveness. If we are able to take the leap of faith and forgive completely –and that includes forgiving ourselves – then everything is possible, and the future beckons like an open door. Without forgiveness, we are locked forever in the past and we cannot reach the future. Forgiveness casts aside division and affirms Oneness, for it is only in a state of Oneness that we can rise into eternal life."

Daniel Ben Ezra

James Maberly