

2004-11-08 The Paramis: Virtue

Wed, 7/29 1:51PM • 44:24

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

people, ethical, virtue, situation, sensitivity, person, buddhism, developing, ethics, liberation, compassion, understand, precepts, deep, raft, practice, life, qualities, surpasses, depth

SPEAKERS

Gil Fronsdal

So this year, I am offering a once a month study program, practice program on what's called the paramis, the perfections. And these are qualities. Some people might call them virtues, but qualities of the heart qualities that are cultivated can be cultivated, which are support for the path to liberation, and which are an expression of maturity of people who are developing and maturing in the path to liberation. They're often overlooked by meditators, especially sometimes here in the West, where sometimes people think well meditation is all I need to do. Sometimes in our tradition that people do a lot of retreats and go sit and sit and sit, and they're focused a lot on the power of mindfulness. presence and concentration and meditation and overlook developing other qualities. And it works pretty well for some people. But it's often sometimes it has lends itself to problems. Sometimes it makes it kind of dualistic kind of approach to a spiritual life where one part of our life is okay to address develop in other parts or not. It also leads to kind of being imbalanced spiritual life sometimes, where people can be very, very well developed in one area of their life, but not in others. Or there can be areas of their life which people don't actually notice or pay attention to their blinders on or unconscious for. And mindfulness by itself doesn't guarantee for everybody that all the areas of our inner life or spiritual life are somehow addressed to dealt with in the course of meditation practice or mindfulness practice. And so these developing these are the qualities and look how they exist within us is one of the ways of ensuring that we kind of develop ourselves in a well rounded way. And we have the, the necessary or the appropriate supports for going really deep in practice. Sometimes people will go quite deep in practice, but not have that support. And sometimes it gets kind of difficult for people because they feel could very well kind of wobbly or uncertain or it's quite can be quite transforming, you know, the whole movement towards liberation. And unless there's a firm basis of context to hold that, some people get frightened, some people get, what kinds of things can happen. So the power of music and also one of these ways of developing this broad support, so that the deep work of transformation has a base. So on so what I wanted to do is, on the Monday following the Friday study class, we look at one of these qualities to give a talk on this one Equality and happens to be that last Friday was the day to look at ethics or virtue. And so less we spent time looking at it and discussing it last week. And it also coincides with a lot of discussion nationally about the role of morality and United States. It's become like one of the number one topics or number two or something, moral values and not only moral values, but moral values in a religious setting and religious context, what to religious people have to say about ethics and values and other people's values. So what is Buddhist meant to say about this? Well,

ethics

cultivating an ethical sensibility inside of this. Ethics has to do with some of the most interesting aspects of human life. It has to do with things like you know, people write books and movies and soap operas about things having to do that x, right? Sex, money, power, relationships. What else is there?

Pleasure. And so certainly something that you know, captivates people's interest in all kinds of other settings. Sometimes when you come to sometimes people come to a Buddhist context, imitation kindness, they don't want to hear about ethics. But then they go home and turn on the television or read the newspaper and it's, you know, all over the world all a lot of ethical issues. These ethical issues are connected. to some of the deepest longings, deepest aspirations, deepest core values, core aspects of human being. And so to look at ethics to look at ethical sensibility is to hopefully connect with something that's very deep in each individual person. And one of the issues in any kind of life, I would believe, but certainly the spiritual life, where it becomes essential is somehow to harmonize our core inner values, core inner sensibilities, with our behavior and how we live. And without correlating those two together, I would say there is no spiritual life at all. We're fooling ourselves if we don't kind of harmonize those, you know, our inner life, inner outer actions. And how we act, based on our inner values has to do with ethics. That's what ethics is all about. My first interest in Buddhist practice was a little bit more I would say, compared to later interest. was much more intellectual. And but it got me into studying Buddhism getting interested in it was when I was a college student, and I was 18 years old living in the dorms in college, and it was during the Vietnam War, and I could be drafted. And so there was a lot of discussion among the other 18 year old, especially guys about the war in Vietnam and what was going to happen if we got drafted. And I was the extreme pacifist on our dorm floor. So when you're extreme on one side, then you have to be you know, you have to use a lot of discussions, you know, kind of tense discussions. And, but one of the things I was very clear about was in my dedication to non violence wasn't passive in the sense of, you know, just like, whatever, whatever happens is fine, I'm not going to, you know, get involved. But I felt that nonviolent approach to dealing with conflict in society in the world would perhaps would be require me someday to put myself in a situation where I put my life on the line. And there were examples back then, of certainly college students getting killed in America, because of their protests against the war. And there was a fair amount of violence in this country because people are protesting the war someplace else. And, and I felt they'll go, you know, what I have to, you know, might come to the day where I have to kind of stand in a protest line or do something that threaten my life. And if I was going to be committed to non violent action, I'd have to be able to risk my life for that purpose. And what I noticed was that I didn't seem to have the ability to do that, that I was afraid. And that incongruence between what I felt was the right thing to do and what Mormon values were in my inability to follow through and it bothered me a lot. And I felt like I needed to find some way to deal with my fear. So that I could follow, you know, live my values. And that's where Buddhism came in. And for some reason, I can't get my point to you why I hooked on to the idea that Buddhism offered me a practice in a way to somehow help me deal resolve with a fear that would prevent me from doing what I feel was aligned with my deepest values.

One of the interesting questions is why people don't live by their deepest values. And as soon as people know their deepest values, it's very easy to live by superficial values. And I think that a lot of people haven't really explored the depth of their beliefs in depth to their values and depth to their hearts, that the depths or their sensitivity sensibilities to others, in such a way that this becomes a relevant issue. But if we have some sense of ethical depth within us Then there are things like fear, or ambition, or hatred, or confusion, many things that can get in the way from really following through and living based on those values. And then it's part of the function of a spiritual practice, I believe, is to be able to look at these fi they fear the hate the greed and things that gets in the way of living from the deepest place that we know.

Now, the, the, what I'm calling the ethical sensibility or the ethical integrity or the depth within us, is something I think there's not so far away from most people. I don't think it's so foreign. Sometimes people people say no. Anyway, it's not so foreign. And one of the ways to get a sense of this is to spend

five minutes With a total stranger, but really sitting down in front of the store total stranger really sitting and looking at them really looking at them even silence. And yeah, sometimes in workshop situations, people do this kind of exercise where you sit down with total stranger, and you sit there and you look at them. And maybe the workshop leader talks about, you know, this person is that person like you and the person was born, this person had parents and this person went through the trials and tribulations of growing up and this person like us probably know in some depth in their life, that people have died that were important for them. They probably gone through various struggles, like everybody else does kind of go through kind of the universal aspects of what human life is like. Just talk about it and you're sitting looking at this person and taking them in and taking you in after five minutes of doing this. I've known people who feel more connected to that person and people they spend an hour talking to kind of deftly really taking someone and really letting them in to our psyche into our heart really taken with this person. And you can take a person in with that. Presence, it's going to be very hard to lie to them or steal from them, or act somehow unethically towards them, because there's kind of a depth of connection that's there. So that gets of connection, I would argue, is not so far away if we give ourselves a chance to really take in other people or take in the situation from very deep sense of careful presence and sensitivity. Mindfulness itself the practice that we do here at IMC is a practice of becoming more sensitive, and learning how to be skillful and wise and developing a heightened sensitivity. And if you want to develop a heightened sensitivity, you don't want to do insensitive things. And the idea is that being unethical is based on being insensitive. So if the movement is you become more sensitive, don't don't disrupt that movement by doing insensitive things. It does, it doesn't make sense to do that. So, to kind of drop into some depth of ethical integrity sometimes of some people would call it authenticity, some people would call it integrity. Some people might call it beauty heartfelt This is one of the I think one of the most beautiful things a human being can do. And for me, personally, ethical purity is something I really find beautiful in people. And I'm actually more interested in finding ethical purity and people their ethical maturity and people than I am in spiritual maturity if we can see the two as being separate. And some people have this kind of approach you know, enlightenment or bust. And and, you know, and it, it might be nice but you know, ethical or bust about that I'm gonna get really ethical or, you know. And in the Buddhist tradition, it's understood that the ethical place of ethical system sensitivity inside of us is a very beautiful place. And it's, there's all these praises wonderful praises to its value and its importance. And I want to read you one passage, which talks about the virtue of one of these perfections, where the ethical sensitive sensitivity integrity in the following way. perfection of virtue, should be thought about as follows. Even the waters of the Ganges cannot wash away the stain of hatred, yet, the water of virtue is able to do so. Even yellow sandalwood cannot cool the fever of lust, yet virtue is able to remove it. virtue is you is the unique adornment of good people, surpassing the adornments cherished by average folk, such as necklaces and earrings. So the idea that your virtue, your ethical depth, is an adornment is a sort of ornament that, you know something makes you really beautiful. And it said in the Buddhist tradition that you need to have some of this adornment in order to follow the path to enlightenment to go all the way. Isn't it nice to make yourself beautiful first.

Virtue should be reflected upon as the basis for rapture and joy. As granting immunity from fear of self reproach, or the reproach of others. It should be thought about as offering freedom from punishment. It is praised by the wise is the root cause of freedom from from remorse, and it is the basis for safety. Virtue surpasses material wealth, because thieves cannot confiscate it. Because it enables one to achieve supreme sovereignty over one's own mind. Virtue surpasses the sovereignty of warriors, kings and priests. That great if you want a lot of power and highest powers control over your own mind. Virtue surpasses the achievement of beauty, for next one beautiful even to one's enemies. It cannot be vanquished by the adversity, adversities of aging and sickness, since it is the foundation for states of happiness, virtue surpasses such dwellings as palaces and mansions. in accomplishing the difficult

task of self protection. virtue is superior to troops of elephants, horses, chariots and infantry. So those of you who have elephants, they're not going to do you much good. As well as such devices as mantras, spells and blessings, for it depends on oneself not on others. Thus esteeming virtue as the foundation of all achievements, as the soil for the origination of all the Buddha qualities, the beginning footing head and chief of all the qualities issuing in Buddhahood one should guard diligently and thoroughly perfect virtue as a hen guards, its eggs. It was kind of anticlimactic to have that as an example. Except the idea of you know, the chickens sitting you sitting there kind of nurturing and keeping warm if the egg is kind of nice, so you sit there just simply close have your little egg or Bircher, close it by keep it warm. Sometimes people forget to keep their ethical sensibilities warm and you know cooking, growing. So, the word I keep using the expression I keep using is ethical sensibility sensitivity. Because the assumption in Buddhism is that if, if we develop a sensitivity, a presence of mindfulness, a clear awareness and open awareness to ourselves into others, that is going to be very hard to be unethical. It's somehow innate in the human being to be ethical. And so, part of the fun part of what we do in Buddhism is not so much focus on moral codes and commandments, this is how you should behave. But rather we rely on somehow cultivating and developing the depth of sensitivity that we that is available to us as possible, and then let our ethical life come out of that sensitivity and not out of some rules and codes. Are precepts in Buddhism, there are kind of our ethical ethical codes in Buddhism. But they're not meant as commandments. They're meant as supports an AIDS to developing this deeper sensitivity. And one of the arguments, one of the one of the teachings around the five precepts, for example, the five basic moral codes that late Buddhists will follow is that these are descriptions of how a person would live, if they're coming from their deep ethical sensitivity, or deep kind of Buddha nature, their kind of good heart, a person coming out of the good heart, and he really, really is stabilized there and it's not going to sacrifice it for anything, is incapable of killing, incapable of stealing, incapable of lying in capable of harming people through their sexuality intentionally. And, and this is this is say and capable of intoxicating themselves. with alcohol or drugs, the and so that when when part of the function of these these precepts is to offer us a guideline saying, when you're about to break this cross this line, you're about to kill or steal or lie. Wake up. This is probably an indication that you've lost touch with something really precious and important inside yourself.

Use that. that possibility of breaking a precept or having broken one look at that as a mirror, to focus back on yourself and see if you can get back in touch with your own beauty with your own sensitivity. So rather than being you know, so rather than using it as a guilt trip, or as an obligation, it's to come back to that place where it becomes natural to want to be ethical again. Now people who practice meditation mindfulness practice, often report that after a month years of practice, their ethical sensitive sensitivity develops on its own. And then it becomes makes more more sense that they want to protect this and save it. If that makes more sense than to use the precepts as as as signpost, pointing us back to that purity or the beauty inside of us. When other way of using the precepts in Buddhism is, it's kind of connected to this is as a ways of helping to understand ourselves better. So not just simply understanding where our ethical beauty is, but understand all the things that get in the way, the impulses, the arguments in the mind and why we should do this. All the different forces that move us away from some deep heartfelt connection to others, to understand our fear, to understand our ambition or hate our greed, to understand what's going on there. And a very important part of, you know, Buddhist prayer There's a mindfulness practice involves a self understanding. If we don't really understand ourselves well, then I think any kind of moral code becomes a danger becomes a danger. So, the emphasis is always how do we understand ourselves better and come back to here. The ethics or virtue in Buddhism is not something to be to be believed in, but rather something to be to care about. to care about to be concerned about to do to explore and develop and refine.

One of the interesting explorations and all this is for what would you sacrifice your ethical purity? If you have some sense that you know some degree of kind of ethical standards or values that come out of your your heart? What are you willing to sacrifice it for? When are you willing to lie What? When are you willing to, you know, to steal? From what circumstance probably, I suspect most of you would not be willing to steal big time. But maybe there's small things you would like to steal for that doesn't matter, you know, just do this. You know, what are you willing to sacrifice or overlook? Or, or be a little, the ethical sensitivity that you have? And everything everybody has probably most people unless you're fully enlightened, have some place where it becomes kind of shaky. You know, maybe look at this, and maybe this situation, you know, I'm willing to lie, you know, but what's interesting is that I find is that you find human beings a range of commitment to their own ethical purity. And there's some people who you meet, who, for example, have such a commitment to truth, to being honest, that almost nothing will cause them to violate their dedication to being honest and truthful. And just kind of rubber. And you see that and sometimes it develops very early in life, maybe there are people, some people are born that way, some children, they just, you know, they're going to be honest, there's kind of, they feel so violated, they violate themselves, if they're going to try to say a lie, but they just simply can't do it. spiritual practice is meant to kind of enhance our ethical sensitivity. So that there's less that we're willing to sacrifice for it. Because when we sacrifice it, we're sacrificing something which deep inside of us is something really beautiful. And as the quote, said, it's a form of well, that no one can take away from us. It's a source of security and safety, which you carry with you even when you go to jail when you go to all kinds of situations where that we normally would think, you know, it's not so safe.

Now the perfection of virtue, the virtue when it's apparently one of these qualities there. It's there are two guidelines or supports or motivations for living an ethically pure life as a protection. One is its connection to compassion, and the other is connection to liberation. And these were very well together, when our motivation to be ethical is based on compassion and liberation together, to to support balance and correct each other, from being unbalanced. So combative question then becomes very important. How is my behavior compassionate? How does it alleviate suffering? How does it respond to the suffering? And how does it help? How does it cause less suffering? And this is where we're concerned for others becomes very important in Buddhism. That our own ethical depth, their own depth of sensitivity to ourselves, is connected to our ability to be compassionate, to cultivate compassion. And out of the compassion then becomes the guideline for making ethical decisions more than a fixed rules. and compassion is not always so black and white. What is the compassion response in different situations? Some people would say that's it's kind of depends on the situation. in different situations, the opposite response would be the compassionate appropriate response. So when Buddhists look at what is it that is, that is the ethical thing to do. Often falling back and asking instead, what's the compassionate thing to do here? And that's okay. And the second thing is the connection is to liberation. How does this behavior that I'm about to do? How does my actions, my motivations, my thoughts, how are they connected to liberation to becoming free, to becoming expansive, to become to having the heart or the mind? relaxed, at ease? uncontracted spacious? How does it help that? And so then the question is looking at our behavior, looking at our intentions. What is it that moves us in that direction? What is it that supports that? If we're looking at only at compassion, we might somehow Not take care of ourselves well and well enough, and then up become an end up becoming contracted. If we only focus in ourselves in our own liberation, then I don't think compassion can really do its job very well. You need to have both working together. So ethics in Buddhism is something which is connected to the depth of our hearts, something connected to the core values of the tradition, compassion and liberation. And ethics is something that is the foundation for being able to go deep into the Buddhist spiritual life. So, those are my thoughts for today. We have 10 minutes. And now I hope that you'll have some, either some interesting questions or Some interesting comments. What would you like to say? For those of you, this might be relevant.

Your thoughts? Yes, please.

I received a traffic ticket in Oregon.

It was a speed trap.

And

when I got home, I couldn't make the ticket. He said \$37 or 237.

And I was supposed to respond to this by tomorrow.

What is the ethical

someone said phone call. I mean, I think I think I think the right thing to do is try to find out more information, try and find out. Yeah, you know, look on the web, maybe they even the county maybe even has a list of traffic violation costs, you know, in the website. You know, so I would try to find out, that's what I would do. And, you know, sometimes sometimes the ethical thing to do is to get more information or more. laziness is a obstacle to our ethical theory. And not not not coming back. You just I just remembered.

Does that relate at all this has been a struggle of mine. A small rap for the law.

Well, that's a huge topic. There is this idea that the people who have claimed the big raft for themselves, they're the ones who say the others have a smaller raft. The smaller, less big raft is one that can carry a lot of people ferry a lot of people across to safety, deliberation. And a smaller raft is so small that you can only get you across. That's it. That's what the big people say. And people who are saying our raft is bigger than your raft. And, and I think that mostly the people who have the so called Big raft, and never had any contact with the people who have a smaller so called smaller raft, so there's like a straw man. So historically in Buddhism, When the Mahayana was criticizing the earlier traditions, the so called Hindi on Earth, it was they were mostly criticizing a straw man, somebody didn't actually know. And actually, the further apart historically they became, the more vehement The Critic criticism was so much that I when I was in Japan, practicing the Zen teacher their practice for a while, and then went to Thailand in practice for a while, and Thailand belongs to the small raft school kind of me, that's what we're told. Then, I went back to Japan, and told my teacher, I'd been practicing in Thailand, and he said, Oh, you've been practicing with the devil. And he'd never been to Thailand, no contact with that tradition. So you know. So we don't, you know, people like to kind of, you know, use the other as a way of helping to find themselves. And so Buddhists have done that to down through the ages. So it's a huge topic, and I kind of wrote my dissertation on this topic, so

But both are needed. And, and the early tradition, the early tradition would not agree with the criticism that their raft is self centered. But there is a little bit more emphasis on. There's some truth to it. And, but it's overdone. And so this kind of teaching about the connection between of compassion and liberation and working together is so pretty central to the Paragon tradition.

And

the it's a little bit hard this discussion because in early Buddhism in a kind of way, they didn't have the same sharp dichotomy between self and other that this raft analogy depends on and so it was kind of understood that we benefit ourselves, we're also benefiting others. If we're benefiting others, we're also benefiting ourselves. And so there's no hard and fast distinction between it. And, and there's something we're, you know, if, if someone wants to become a doctor and help a lot of people, they in a sense, can look like from outside for seven years or 14 years or 70 years how long it takes to get trained as a doctor in America long time. They have to be very selfish, you can kind of sit there kind of not always, but to kind of focusing and studying and taking the exams and a lot of it's a very, very intense kind of thing. And then once they get their medical degree, then they can go out and they can help a lot of people. You know, the most people don't push the analogy, it's kind of help us just go along with me. And, and, so, the, in the, in the, in the, in the early Buddhist tradition, they had this idea that if two people are stuck in quicksand. They can't help each other out. One, well, you know, if one pulls the other one, one pulling is going to sink down further. So one person has to get up on the dry land, and then they can pull the other one out. So there's some sense of, it's really important for each individual to practice as deeply as they can, because then they can be more helpful to others. But the motivation for practicing is partly out of compassion so you can be more helpful to others. So, this is a huge topic and it's an interesting one, but maybe another time.

I remember what I said exactly, but if you don't, if a person doesn't know themselves very well, it was near the end in the beginning of the talk

in the middle If

the

if the person doesn't know themselves very well, then when they're following following ethical rules, for example, then they don't really know what's motivating them. And they can use them in in in horrible ways. You know, they can be filled with hate, and they're using an ethical standard to beat people over the head with or so that's one thing they can do. So you have to understand what's going on inside of you. Also, if a person doesn't know themselves very well, then they don't have very deep sensitivities or resources inside of themselves, in order to be able to understand the situation around them. You can't really understand a situation outside of us, I think, ethical situation, without really understanding ourselves that well also, or to say differently. The two I believe, to really understand our situation and us in a situation. We have to have a very deep sensitivity to all the information missions, all the sources of understanding that exists within us. That person doesn't know themselves very well. It's anonymous with not being so sensitive, not having those those intuitions or those intelligences operating.

Yes, please.

I'm in a situation right now, where I'm having an ethical dilemma, so to speak. I'm a private piano teacher who was invited to teach at a school. And so for three weeks, everything's going along smoothly.

There's another teacher that teaches lessons in school.

I was told at the very beginning, that that was, that was okay this person in the group, I do the private lessons.

When this person found out

that I was there, and I was doing this.

Now granted, she had been there for six years and had never offered private lessons. So when she saw that I was there, my flyer was up. She went into orbit, so to speak.

And is absolutely She wants me out of there.

Okay, and her

reasoning behind that is the fact that

she feels that I'm stealing

students from what could be per group per program.

And it was I have an advocate in this this is the higher the boss who's in charge of this program said no.

Jennifer was hired

to be the private teacher you are.

Well, to make a long story short, this has been going on now for a month, where this person has gone behind this other person's back to try to get students they have continued to stir up trouble. Okay. My dilemma is

on the one hand, I feel for this person that she was there first.

Yes, I The students that I am taking

came to me with, I didn't you know, with the understanding that I was

so this person is just

that I'm there.

So my ethical dilemma is on the one hand I feel like

I don't know. I mean, I think it speaks for itself. I think it speaks for itself. So it's

part of me feels like I should just back out of the situation and let it be. Let her have. Okay. The other part is like, No, I didn't do anything wrong. I was asked by parents.

That highly recommended me to go into that situation and Already have relationships with me.

So, yes, Sounds Sounds tricky. So a few things, few things I could say is it was always a huge issue I suppose to explore. And I'll usually take something like that and look at it from look at a number of different responses, not just one way of responding but look at different areas of simultaneously to

respond. But I think one of the first things I think in Buddhist practice what a person would do would to look at themselves like you would look at yourself and, and, and see what needs to be liberated inside of you. Is there fear in you? Is there anger in you is there you know, what are some what are some things that you feel hurt? What are some of that you don't have to answer now, but what are some of the things going inside of you that makes this a distressing situation for you? You don't explain to swear What's going on? Yeah, we're gonna have a lot of time are supposed to end this so I want to just is the with the first first things really look and see Is there anything extra any kind of contraction that you have, that you can liberate, you can free now, some Buddhists will only do that part and never step into the conflict and work with it directly. Just Oh, it's about me I have to find some way to let go and just be peace and, and then and that's not very healthy just to only do it that way. But it's a very good as a first beginning. Because then you can get settled and get liberated yourself and kind of liberate yourself from whatever is distressing you in some kind of unnecessary way. Then there's a greater clarity in all directions understand what to do next. And then when we do go into the conflict, we're less likely to be reactive in situation. And some people neglect that personal part to jump into the conflict of the run away without first settling themselves in a situation. And so for people meditate meditating is really helpful way doing that. The second thing is, is, you know, has has to do with compassion. And that is, you know, what is the compassionate thing here and you seem to express some compassion and concern for her. And you have to take her situation into account. And that is both what's what could be considered reasonable and unreasonable. Sometimes when people are totally unreasonable in their demands and their way they see a situation, sometimes when you realize they're incapable of seeing it any other way, and they're so hurting so much inside, sometimes we'll just bend over for them or Okay, you do it, you know. And sometimes that's the wrong thing to do. Sometimes we have to make strong boundaries. And I don't know this person having met this person, so I don't know. The fact that you were invited into the school to teach, it wasn't exactly your choice. They said you were invited. And in some sense, it's not exactly your responsibility. You know, it's for you to go to your supervisor and say, you know, this is it acceptable for me to continue here in this situation? And some, you know, please Something has to happen here. And you might offer to meet with a person in mediation. So maybe maybe three of us can meet with her. And maybe we can have a kind of, you know, and I'm a great believer in conflict, whenever possible for everyone involved to talk together. But hopefully only after they've had a chance to settle themselves, at least one party one person.

So

So,

so as you as we leave now, and now, I don't know if I've managed to convey this at all today. But what I'd like to, free to leave with is the idea that the ethical core ethical sensitivity, the ethics, virtue, that within our hearts, is something that can bring us a lot of joy, and delight and happiness, and something that offers a very, very deep and abiding satisfaction and value to our lives. And Something to be kind of dismissive of or overlook and, and think it's kind of heavy and somber, but rather, it's something that really is, you know, brings delight and peace. So may you all reflect on this wonderful perfection of virtue over

the next month. Thank you