

Compassion and Humanity

It is understood in both literature and the physical world that compassion, or lack of compassion, can corrupt or strengthen all that mankind has achieved. It is this balance of compassion that will undoubtedly affect every being who walks the earth in one form or another, a ripple that can either disrupt or sooth.

Elie Wiesel speaks of all the good that comes with compassion, saying that "... it is possible to create light and share warmth with one another...". While it is true that it is both light and warmth that compassion is based upon, it is also important to understand the chilling darkness that inspired the light to shine and the warmth to glow.

This corrosive darkness can be observed in William Golding's *The Lord of the Flies*. The main victim of the dark is Jack. Born with no heart for the weak, Jack becomes corrupted, stabbing his knife into a stump while promising, "Next time, no mercy." As in real life, the abyss that swallows Jack soon extends its reach to the other inhabitants of the ruthless island they are stranded on. While utter darkness looms, light is created. This light, though shining, is still no match for the darkness channelled through Jack, and all but one of those who are touched by the light are either destroyed or overwhelmed by the dark.

It is our duty as humans to maintain our compassion for one another or else we face the consequences. As the boys in *The Lord of the Flies* saw, without compassion man is lost, our humanity is lost, and we become something unrecognizable even to ourselves.

Elie Wiesel learned this lesson in a much, much less pleasant way than most. Elie Wiesel was subject to human corruption first hand.

After WWI, Germany was in a grave state until Adolf Hitler arrived promising a better future. What no one knew was that Hitler's plan included the Holocaust, the largest genocide in history. It was because of the simple decisions people made that Germany transformed from an accepting country, to one where innocents could be killed for believing in one faith.

Along with Jack, Adolf Hitler had no compassion for the weak. Adolf Hitler had no compassion in general. It is this lack, and his ability to take compassion from others, that ultimately led to the events of the Holocaust.

While it may not be pleasurable to learn of the horrors of man, it is untold how valuable this information is. It is this knowledge that keeps compassion from leaving our hearts. It is this information that guards the innocent from another Holocaust.

This is why Elie Wiesel is talking about his "... dreams of compassion" so that we know to share it, nurture it, keep it close to our hearts, and share it with others. The more compassion in the world, the stronger the barrier that protects us from the darkness that brings corruption, decay, and rot.

But of course, when light is shown, a shadow is casted.

This shadow has no other definitive form other than harm to all mankind has achieved. The shadow lies everywhere, and pools and collects in very obvious locations.

While we are safe in our sanctuaries of light we can at times fail to look upon all those who struggle, and most importantly, we fail to help. What good is our compassion if we don't share it with others? Elie Wiesel's message did not only retain to our localized areas, but rather to the world.

If we don't share it, what is going to stop another Holocaust from overrunning other areas of the world? Just because we aren't harmed does not mean it does not affect us all and does not mean we should ignore consequenceless death and murder.

The compassion of others will affect all of us in one way or another, and it is this message the Elie Wiesel was trying to convey. For compassion is not only a human right, but rather a human necessity.