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In this issue...

- ☞ The Equation
- ☞ The Prince & Monk
- ☞ Children's corner
- ☞ Love thy neighbour
- ☞ Tolerance
- ☞ The Heart Intelligence
- ☞ Speak Gently
- ☞ Adoration
- ☞ The ten kinds of mind
- ☞ Recipes by Mother Mangalam
- ☞ Reflections
- ☞ Silence ignites human potential

Festive Greetings

The months of April, May & June 2024 saw festivals such as Good Friday/Easter, Wesak, Ugadi, Vaisaki, Vishu, Tamil New Year & Hari Raya respectively.

We hope you enjoyed yourselves with your family & friends.

Do stay safe as Covid-19 is still lurking around.

Here's looking forward to better times.....



*Rise Dharma, like the sun to end communal strife.
Unite all in ONE and to give us New Life
- Yogi Shuddhananda Bharati*

GURU AND AVATAR

- Mother A Mangalam, 1982

The word Guru has somewhat created a misunderstanding in the International circles today, and this is indeed a very sad thing. Let us analyse the word Guru, 'Gu' is darkness and 'ru' is to remove the darkness which enshrouds the mind. One who is capable of removing the darkness of our mind and soul (or "rending of the veil" as it is described in Christian theology) is a Guru.

Today's subject of mine is the Guru and the Avatar. Now, who is it that deduces as to 'who is the Guru' and 'who is the Avatar'? You would agree it is Man. Man (including myself) deduces out of his limited mind; Who are we to differentiate and establish the qualities of a Guru and the qualities of an Avatar?

However, these two words have already come into the usage of human vocabulary and therefore I am here now to give my limited views on the mission of a Guru and an Avatara.

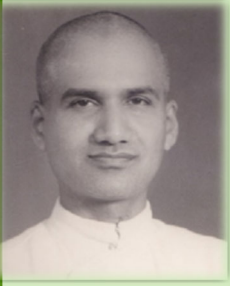
The Guru

Talking about the Guru, God is our Guru, and the light of 'God the Guru' is everywhere. It's up to us to meaningfully recognise It and Its presence everywhere. There is no place that is without the Light that gives us a relative awakening at every stage of our development from time to time. The light of the Guru or call it Intelligence works in several ways to bring home the truth to us. It is not always the giver of joy but sorrows too, for it is in sorrow that we draw ourselves nearer to the Light.

It is not always the giver of strength but also weakness, for we learn to understand others better when weakness sets in us. Therefore, God the Guru works in so many ways through joy and sorrow, through strength and weakness, through friends and foes and every other duality you may think of. Even through the lower animals the Guru reveals himself, if we are wise enough to recognize Him. When you come to reflect on this principle of the light of the Guru pervading in and through all dualities, you cannot, but compare this to the air in the pot and the air outside it.

continued on page 4

Cover page photo: Bird-of-paradise flower, (*Strelitzia reginae*), ornamental plant of the family Strelitziaceae native to South Africa. It is named for its resemblance to the showy forest birds known as birds-of-paradise.



The aim of education should not be merely dry intellectual development with commercial and economical ideas, to trample over the weak, to gain our livelihood in the struggle of competition. On the contrary, the ideal of education should be such as would elevate man from his ordinary selfish animal state to that of the unselfish universal idea of Godhood.

**- Dr Swami Satyananda, JP, 1958,
Founder-President,
The Pure Life Society**



Contents

| | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|------|
| Guru & Avatar | - Mother A Mangalam | - 01 |
| From the Founder | - Swami Satyananda | - 02 |
| The Equation | - Mother A Mangalam | - 02 |
| Editor's Note | - P C Shivadas | - 03 |
| The Prince & Monk | - Master Cheng Yen | - 07 |
| Children's Corner | - Web Source | - 10 |
| Timeless Frames | - Editorial Board | - 08 |
| Love thy neighbour | - Swami Satyananda | - 11 |
| A Tribute | - E S Gangadharan | - 12 |
| Tolerance | - Ravindran Raman Kutty | - 13 |
| The Heart Intelligence | - S Ravin | - 14 |
| Silence ignites | - K Haridas | - 16 |
| Adoration | - Dr K Dharmaratnam | - 18 |
| A Poetic Tribute | - Ravindran Raman Kutty | - 20 |
| Recipes | - Mother A Mangalam | - 21 |
| Saying it in pictures | - Editorial Board | - 22 |
| Reflections | - Swami Paramananda | - 23 |
| Malaysian Speaks | - Editorial Board | - 23 |
| Editorial Information | - Editorial Board | - 24 |

THE EQUATION

*A windfall is the result of a
mathematical equation,
To call this fortune or luck is
immature,
Every action has a reaction,
Every deed has a reward
According to its merit, good or
bad,
If the action does not get equat-
ed
With some immediate result,
The accumulated regard comes
in some time later
Taking the form of a fortune
Or a calamity
According to its merits or
demerits*

- Mother Mangalam, 1976

Backstory: Mother's dad won the lottery and this poem, driven by the delirium of the occasion, makes one rethink the concept of luck, fortune and logic.

What is Purification of the Self? It is from depths of purity that the best amongst creation becomes objects of admiration and also becomes beneficial to humanity (*Buddhi*). Every human being is a bundle of energy with the element of intelligence that moves it. Therefore the human has the capacity to create.

**- Mother Mangalam at a Talk
"Purification of the Self", organized by
UKM, Bangi, 2012**

EDITOR'S NOTE

This is a material world we live in, but we need spiritual guidance for dealing with it for the best possible outcomes. No matter what religion or faith we turn to live our lives, it is all about having faith in what we believe in and practising it with all our heart. Individually we may see our faith as the only path leading to God, but, in all propriety, it is the right of others to practice their own faith. No religion teaches ill will to others, but to believe in God with all one's heart, body and soul.

Malaysia has been blessed with a multi-racial population that moves us to live our lives with due care, consideration and understanding towards ourselves and others. Our different religions and cultures must be recognised as God-given to begin with. The circumstances of our existence in this country did not come by chance. History explains how the different races came together in our context and how living in peace and harmony requires understanding and a spirit of give and take. As a result, we see a bright future ahead of us... collectively, it must be said.

Issues we will have, but how we deal with them makes all the difference between seeing our future with rose tinted glasses or the blurred vision of uncertainty.

If we are at a certain level of development, it's because we have created the environment for it, namely peace and administrative moves that allow us, as a people, to move with the times as best as we can. It is in tandem with the rest of the world that has need for what we produce and the services we provide, dovetailing with the contributions of others on a global scale.

It is taking full advantage of what we, as a country, have in terms of natural resources we are endowed with, people with the right skills to exploit them with due consideration for safeguarding our living space. It is the spirit of win-win co-operation that makes for a secure future.

When problems occur, as they are bound to, finding solutions without exacerbating the situation, calls for understanding and a spirit of give and take. If things do not work out as expected or hoped for, we have ourselves to blame and history at parochial, national and even global levels is replete with examples of how peace and normalcy is finally won. If at a great cost as in the case of world wars, the price for our follies is overcome only by our indomitable spirit as humans.

That is the big picture. There are little pictures that make for the big picture and must be handled with due care and concern. The socks issue that emerged recently has been seen for what it is – one that should be cast into the bin of little consequence.

But having said that it is beholden upon every Malaysian to not do anything that will threaten the peace and goodwill that is being enjoyed and must continue if the promise the country is enjoying remains secure, despite occasional hiccups. Making sure it remains so is a responsibility of every individual who calls this nation Tanah Air-ku.

There is no place for grandstanding on sensitive issues and it is heartening to note the voice of reason ringing loud and clear, more so emanating from no less than our YMM Yang di-Pertuan Agong and other State monarchs, guardians of our national faith.



The analogy goes like this. The reflection of the moon is seen in the water contained in the pot and it is also in the pool outside the pot. The moon is still one, though you see two, for when you break the pot, the moon, that you see is one. The pot is the veil of ignorance that the Guru tears apart and this is known as the "rending of the veil", the terminology used in Christian theology. Therefore the Guru is God and God is the Guru who reveals himself in many names and forms.

When you talk about the Guru you cannot but correlate to Man - who is the most remarkable phenomena in nature and which phenomena is being always taken for granted. Man, the most helpless creature amongst all living creatures at the time of his birth, has developed the capacity to change the whole face of the earth to what it is today. How is he able to do this, if not for the spark of the Guru in him.

The Manifestation of Guruhood

God the Guru manifests in the human form in different degrees of density according to the degree of purity latent in the human form. In other words the pure unselfish soul attracts Divine Grace like a magnet and as a result becomes the channel through which Divine Grace manifests Itself. The human nature reflects divinity.

The divinity in human form expresses itself as the Guru, and inspired by Divinity, guides the aspirants towards their goal with pure love and concern. The magnetism in the Guru is so great and powerful that he or she attracts many souls who are ready enough to receive instructions and guidance.

The relationship between the Guru and the disciple is a two-way traffic. There has to be the search for knowledge by the disciple and the readiness to receive that particular knowledge. When the disciple is ready and earnest in his quest, the Guru just appears as though propelled by some hidden force. The momentous click in TIME when the Guru and disciple meet is governed by karma, time and space, i.e. at a certain moment in a particular place according to the karmic wave. And then rapport is established between the Guru and the disciple. Once the disciple is on his feet the Guru moves away, so that the disciple can be on his own with direct communication with God the Guru.

Judge Ye Not Lest Ye Be Judged

In this manner there can be Gurus and Gurus with variegated potentials to suit the development of each aspirant or each group of aspirants according to the urge and need of the aspirant or aspirants. But we are not to judge the degree of divinity in each of the Gurus for every Guru or Saint, Saviour, Sage or Prophet has a divine purpose to fulfil, according to the need of the time and place.

The degree of force in the Gurus may vary from Guru to Guru in line with Divine purpose. Every teacher cannot be a primary teacher nor every teacher a University Lecturer. And this is a certain disciple who takes to a certain Guru according to his need. But if the disciple has not made the approach in all sincerity then there comes a break because of misunderstanding and impatience. The restlessness of the disciple does not make the Guru any lesser in his purpose or standard. A lot of patience and rapport between the teacher and the pupil is necessary for the pupil's upliftment.

During this process there can be much difficulty, happy times and unhappy times between the teacher and the taught. Sometimes these experiences could be very bitter to the disciple, and if he has the patience and the courage to swallow the bitter pill then he could pass through the several stages of test.

It is during the most difficult periods between the Guru and the disciple that some disciples drop off. These drop-outs are not there because of the deficiency in the Guru or the disciple, but just that they are not suited to each other. Even the selection of the right Guru in one's life is through Divine Grace or the will of God.

The wrong combination comes only when the disciple makes his step forward with motives other than a true and sincere aspiration i.e. to change for the better. In other words, the fuse between the Guru and the disciple is found to be defective owing to incompatibility. But, the ignorant and ego-centric devotee immediately begins his torrential criticism and abuse, whereas the Guru remains calm and tolerant and goes even a step further to bless the disciple because of the Guru's mature understanding of the disciple.

The God of the philosopher need not be the same as the God of the Bakta. The God of the Bakta need not be the same as the God of the Karma Yogi. The God of the Karma Yogi need not be the same as the God of Gnana Yogi.

Similarly the God of the Thief need not be the same as the Lord of the Psychopath. I hope this answers the question buried in each one of you as to who the Guru is and what role the Guru plays in life.

Therefore you see the Guru need not be one: Guruhood can manifest in so many forms according to the need of the individual. It can be person to person and person to groups.

Physical groupings under different names may be necessary because variety of mind-species is part of nature. But division in heart and mind and chauvinistic feelings are not necessary. For these are born of ignorance and misunderstanding. The true Guru does not permit such chauvinistic feelings.

Avatar

The word Avatara is commonly understood as an incarnation of God the Supreme One in all its entirety. But let us analyse the word incarnate, which relates to words such as carnal, carnivorous, carnage, all from the same root 'carnis' in Latin meaning flesh. Incarnate means to come into flesh and reincarnation means to come into flesh again and again.

As a matter of fact, we are all beings incarnate i.e. we are in the flesh or rather "I am" or "You are" in the flesh. Who are the "I" and the "You". This is something that requires reflection by every individual.

The Manifestation of the Avatar

The manifestation of the Supreme One on earth does not happen by magic. It is a definite process. That Supreme Intelligence which rules and controls and directs everything, that Sat-Chit-Ananda (meaning truth, intelligence, bliss,) the underlying principle in all life, descends at the appropriate time to modulate the confusion, brought about by maladjusted human forces. To contain the Supreme Spirit in Its entirety or fullness there should be ready recipient, and an environment, conducive to Its growth and manifestation. The attributes of the recipient should be absolute purity, absolute love, absolute Truth and absolute unselfishness.

But we have to be mindful of the fact that the whole process is governed by a two-way traffic. Such divine incarnations are born only when human beings feel the need for it under the theory of demand and supply. The sincere prayers of the many who suffer, creates a force that attract Divine Grace and Divine intervention like a magnet. Before such divine incarnations take place the ground is usually prepared beforehand to receive under the Law of Natural Selection.

Some selected souls are chosen for this purpose to prepare the way. They are the fore-runners or the people with angelic qualities known as Devas. You have had such instances in the life history of the Lord Jesus and the life of Sri Krishna. With the birth of such avatars one cannot conclude that the God in His Entirety is present in one particular framework of flesh and bones, and that He is nowhere else.

To the monist who believes in uniformity, the ascent and the descent of the omnipresent one is meaningless. They ask questions such as:

- (a) How can the one without the second, the self of all seated in every heart, constrain himself in a form of flesh and bone?
- (b) How can the Unborn Eternal One stoop to the pangs of birth?
- (c) How can the Unlimited Limit Himself in a particular body?
- (d) If God is omnipotent, why cannot He do His will as He is? Why should His Logos descend or ascend?

The atmospheric electricity is not in any way impaired or lessened by its acting upon a dynamo, so the Divine Omnipresent Conscious Force is in no way dwindled by Its acting visibly upon the universal mechanism, i.e. Man and the Earth.

The Need for Divine Incarnations

Man is so limited in his vision that he needs to feel the manifestation of Divinity from time to time, so that he could be brought nearer to feel and realise the presence of that Divinity everywhere. This is why the Hindus deduce that incarnations happen not once, but many times throughout the ages whenever man needs help and whenever nature needs correction from its confused state of affairs, the cause for which is man himself when he gives vent to his ego.

The Purpose of the Existence of Gurus and Avataras

We always say everything is God's will, let His will be done. 'Thy will be done' is the famous phrase used in the prayer by Jesus the Christ. But how many of us are prepared to live the implication of the prayer in our lives?

When a little problem or difficulty arises in our life where goes the phrase 'thy will be done'? We are not prepared to surrender to God's will (*Prapatti*). We blame everybody else but ourselves for any misfortune that takes place. We pray for wealth and power and comfort.

We are not prepared to take what life gives to us. When we are strong, we bully others and refuse to be humble about our strength and prowess.

We assert our authority and blow about fumes of anger thereby destroying the harmony of things. We spoil the weak and the sick, we do not study and try to root out the causes for the unhappiness around us.

We waste and we destroy all the God-given potential in the body, mind and spirit, just to satisfy our sensual cravings. All these that I have mentioned take place at all levels in human society from the man in the street to the politician in whose hands our destiny lies. The result is 'confusion' amongst men in the form of cold wars and 'hot' wars at all levels which upset the order of things causing disharmony. *Satyam, Dharmam, Prema* and *Shanti* become obsolescent. At this juncture the prayers of the saintly ones amongst men materialise.

In answer to the sincere prayers the Perfected Being descends 100% in all Its fullness (*Purnam*), in human form, to educate man and to remove his ignorance. This process can happen simultaneously in

other parts of our earth planet too where injustice and turmoil prevails. We may not know.

Signs of Divine Incarnation

The awareness in a Divine incarnation is so complete that vision of things and happenings in the

past, present and future is clear. The awareness originates from the apex of the triangular pattern of life and therefore we look up to It for guidance.

The qualities in Divine incarnations are:

- (a) They attract multitudes towards them even after their "Death".
- (b) The love that they emanate is pure and unselfish and goes to all pants, animals and men, irrespective of the dualities in nature.
- (c) They speak with authority, e.g. "Consecrate your thoughts, your acts and their fruits to Me; worship Me alone; surrender unto Me alone. Take refuge in Me and act in My consciousness. Then you shall be free and sinless". Abandoning all duties, come unto Me for shelter; sorrow not, I will liberate thee. "I am the Life, the Light and the Truth, Follow Me and thou shalt be free." "I and my Father are One".
- (d) They prophesy events.

In summing up the relativity of the Guru, the Avatara and Man who is made in the image of God, I present herewith the Mantra which is said at the end of the Hindu pooja which goes like this:-

*Om Poornamadah Poornamidam Poornaath
Poornamudachyate Poornasya Poornamaadaaya
Poornamevaa Vadishyate*

OM SHAANTI SHAANTI SHAANTI

The meaning goes like this:-

"That is full, this is full. From fullness has emerged this fullness and it remains full. In attaining Fullness, it merges with Fullness and it remains full".

In scientific terms, it has been proved that what is in the macrocosm is in the microcosm. This applies to the body, mind and spirit. The only short-coming amongst men is that man generally does not make a conscious effort to discover his potential and to develop it to its fullest - to be able to say 'I and my Father are One.'

Though it is possible for us 'to become as perfect as the Father in Heaven is perfect.' It is to help us in this process that Gurus and Avatars appear from time to time to prove to mankind that perfection in human form is a possibility and to create in us an awareness that we need to make a conscious effort in this direction. In simple language, all what has been said only means that we have to do our best whatever we are and wherever we are. □

THE PRINCE AND THE MONK

- *Dharma Master Cheng Yen 'The Master Tells Stories'*

One day, Buddha saw some of his disciples sitting together and talking, so he went and sat with them. A disciple asked Buddha, "Why is it that some people are always grateful to others, and other people aren't? I feel sorry for those who aren't."

Buddha asked him, "Can you give an example?" "Well, there's your cousin Devadatta," he replied.

"He was your cousin before he became a monk, and then he was your disciple. But why does he continuously try to hurt you and destroy the order of monks? Isn't his life bitter?"

"Yes, I feel sorry for him too," Buddha said. "His mind is full of hatred and perplexity. Other people dislike him too, so he's unhappy and has this hatred against many people."

"We don't understand this," the disciple observed. "He has accepted your teachings and understands the foundation of Buddhism. He ought to be grateful. But why can't he be so?"

"He has accumulated these bad habits for a long time. He didn't become like this in this generation. He has been ungrateful for eons. You will understand why after I tell you about one of Devadatta's previous lives."

A long time ago, there was a jealous prince who always treated others with hatred, and he was mean to the servants in the palace too. No matter how kind other people were to him, he never felt grateful, nor did he feel any compassion towards other people. As he grew older, his jealousy, hatred and hostility became stronger. No one in the palace was happy with him, but no one dared to say anything about it either.

Even the ministers knew that the prince was a very hostile person.

One day he decided to swim in a lake. It was already dark and a storm was coming. The wind and the rain grew stronger, and people warned the prince against going, but he didn't care. He still insisted on going swimming, so he and his attendants went to the lake. When they arrived, his attendants, who had been bullied by the prince for a long time, already had a plan. As the wind howled, the rain fell in sheets, and the thunder boomed, they suddenly pushed the prince into the lake and then ran back to the palace.

A minister saw them and asked, "How come you're back? And where is the prince?"

"We became separated in the bad weather," the attendants answered. "Hasn't the prince returned yet?" The minister thought that the prince could be in danger, so he reported it to the king. The king immediately ordered everyone out to look for the prince. They searched for him everywhere, but they couldn't find him.

Meanwhile, the prince struggled in the water where he had been thrown. He touched a log and clambered onto it. A snake, a mouse and a parrot were on the log too. They floated on the lake in the heavy rain and howling wind. The prince cried out with fear, and his shouting was very sad and sorrowful.

A monk lived in a tent by the lake. He heard the cries and saw the bad weather. It was very dark, and he felt that that person's life must be in great danger in weather like this. He ran to the lake and saw the prince on the log. Without a thought for his own safety, he jumped into the lake, swam out to the log, and pushed it to the shore. He first pulled the prince from the log. When he saw the snake, the mouse and the bird, he carefully picked them up and took them to his tent.

The monk lit a fire and treated the snake's injuries first. He then examined the mouse and the bird before he finally treated the prince. The monk also prepared some food. He let the bird, the mouse and the snake eat first, and then he brought a share to the prince. But the prince didn't appreciate his help and was quite angry. He felt that since the monk didn't examine or feed him first, he showed disrespect for his royal rank.

The animals recovered the next day, and the monk told them, "You have all recovered, so you may return."

"I will never forget your compassion," said the snake to the monk. "If you run into any difficulty anywhere, just call 'Snake! Snake!' and I'll come help you."

"I'm also grateful for your kindness and I will repay you," the mouse said. "If you need me, just shout, 'Mouse! Mouse!' and I'll come to you."

The bird said, "No matter where you might be, if you need me, just yell, 'Parrot! Parrot!' and I'll come to you."

The prince also mouthed false words of gratitude. "Thank you very much for saving my life. After I become the king, I will repay you if you come to see me." Actually, the prince wanted revenge against the monk. He went home, and not long afterwards he became the new king.

One day, the monk wanted to know whether there was any difference between a human's mind and an animal's mind, so he went to the city to attend the prince's coronation ceremony. On the way, he wondered whether the snake would appear as it had said, so he called, "Snake! Snake!"

The snake appeared as he had promised. "I'm very happy to see you. Because you're my saviour, I want to tell you that in my past life I hid some gold bars underground. Because of my greed, I was reborn as a snake to guard over that gold. If I give it to you, I will be free from this form."

The monk said, "Since you think this way, then just keep it for me." He thanked the snake and hoped that it would be free soon.

After walking a little further, he wondered about the mouse too, so he shouted, "Mouse! Mouse!" The mouse also appeared as he had promised. "I used to be a good friend of the snake in our previous life. We both wanted to make money and keep it all for ourselves. But life is short and I soon died. In order to guard this money, I was reborn as a mouse. I'm in agony in this life. I hope you can accept this money and I will be free." The monk replied, "Just leave it there and I'll use it later." The monk also thanked the mouse.

After a while, he thought about the bird, so he yelled, "Parrot! Parrot!" The parrot happily appeared before the monk and said, "My saviour, if you need me, I can call upon a huge flock of birds to collect rice seeds to repay your kindness."

"I'm very grateful that you have this kind of strength," the monk answered. "When I need you, I'll call you. I hope your strength will be able to support me." He continued walking into the city and ran into the new king parading down the street after the coronation ceremony. The king saw him and whispered to his guards. "See that old guy? He's a very strange person, so don't let him come near me. I want you to arrest him, beat him up, and then throw him out of the city. Don't let him see me."

The guards went to the monk and started beating him. The monk ran for his life while the guards chased him and beat him all the way out of the city. As the monk was being beaten, he cried, "The old sages used to say, 'Humans and animals have the same mind,' but the man I saved wants me dead!"

The guards heard these words and wondered what they meant, so one of them stopped the others and asked the monk what he had meant. After finding out the truth, the guards returned to the city and announced it to the crowd: the most respectable person was the monk, because he had saved the new king's life, while the most detestable person was the new king, because he hadn't shown any gratitude to the monk and had ordered him beaten! All the people were shocked and disgusted by the king's evil mind.

The crowd dragged the king from his horse and threw him out of the city, forbidding him to ever enter the city again. They also carried the monk back to the city and treated his injuries. When he had recovered, they put him on the throne. The citizens loved the monk because of his compassion.

One day, the monk recalled the words of the snake and the mouse, so he told his people where they could find the money and told them to dig it up. Then he gave the money to all the poor people in the country.

"Devadatta was that prince and I was the monk," Buddha said. "After many generations, Devadatta's hatred is still there."

Buddhism teaches that the mind is always changing. Ideas and thoughts constantly arise and disappear in the mind. In one minute, the mind is filled with the joy of life, but in the next minute, there's hatred or sadness. In this story, the prince first felt gratitude towards the monk when he was rescued, but later on he only remembered that the monk didn't treat his wounds or give him food first, so the prince became angry and hated the

monk. He totally forgot that he owed him his life.

This is how a mind changes. So we have to be constantly aware of our minds.



‘WHAT IS THE GREAT TAO?’

TAO IN RELATION WITH THIS UNIVERSE

- Sourced from Tao the Heavenly Truth to Life and Eternity

"TAO" is universal "TRUTH". "TAO" can also be defined as "TRUTH". However, when joined together, it will be known as "The Way Of Life". "TAO" exists prior to the presence of spirit and Earth. Although, "TAO" is invisible, yet it creates and controls all visible and audible objects. For instance, "TAO" is responsible for the creation of the Earth, Sun, Moon, Mankind, Plants, Animals and so on. "TAO" is something which one cannot really describe clearly because it is invisible and has no shape, smell or sound. Nobody can show or draw for one to see. One must use one's instinct to feel the existence of "TAO".

LaoTze, the founder of Taoism describes "TAO" as "Something complete and shapeless which exists prior to the creation of spirit and Earth. Serene! Tranquil! Boundless! Abiding alone and unchangeable. Extending over everywhere without risk, it may be styled the "MOTHER OF UNIVERSE". However, forcing a name upon "TAO", Lao Tze describes it as. "THE GREAT" and when joined together, it will read as "THE GREAT TAO".

"THE GREAT TAO" is Universal "TRUTH" for without it, this whole Universe cannot exist. In other words, "TAO" is the great creative principle to which all things owe their origin. "THE GREAT TAO" is also responsible for the rotation of this Earth and other Planets which enables Mankind, Plants and Animals to live.

As you know, scientists have the ability to discover and invent things but the question arises, "Who gave them these techniques"? It is "TAO", which implants these scientists with these techniques. "TAO" also creates sound, light, thunder, electricity, rainbow and the formation of rain when clouds are confronted and mixed with cold air.

When "THE GREAT TAO" is alone and in quietness, it is represented by a circle "0". However, when it is in motion, this circle "0" becomes a straight line "I".

When the "straight line" is lengthened, it will become the longest line. So to say, "TAO" can also be the longest of all things. The Chinese character "one" is a straight line. When written vertically, it will become a vertical line. When the vertical line and the straight line combine together, a "CROSS" will be formed. But if the straight line is shortened, it will become a dot. In other words, "TAO" can also be the smallest of all things for "TAO" is formless.

In conclusion, "THE GREAT TAO" is the creator of all things and is of utmost importance in relation to this Universe for without it, this Universe and all living things cannot exist.

Children's Corner

THE MONKEY AND THE CROCODILE

This is a story from Panchatantra.

A monkey lived on a berry tree on the River Bank. Once he saw a crocodile under the tree who looked hungry and tired. He gave the crocodile some berries, the crocodile thanked the monkey and became one of his friends.



The monkey would give berries to the crocodile every day. One day the monkey even gave the crocodile extra berries to take to his wife.

His wife enjoyed the berries but told her husband that she wanted to eat the monkey's heart. She was a wicked and cunning woman. The crocodile was upset, but he decided that he needed to make his wife happy.



On the next day, the crocodile went to the monkey and said that his wife had called him for dinner. The crocodile carried the monkey on his back across the river. He told this monkey his wife's plan.

The monkey had to think quickly if he wanted to save himself. He told the crocodile that he

left his heart at on the berry tree and that they needed to return.

On reaching the monkey climbed the tree and spoke. "I'm not getting down; you betrayed my trust and that means our friendship is over"

Moral of the story:

Never betray someone who trusts you and choose your friends wisely.

- Web Source

LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF

- HH Dr Swami Satyananda, JP, Founder-President of The Pure Life Society, Dharma Essays, 1956

In an age when mankind is in the powerful grip of naked materialism, when nations and groups cut each other's throats for ends ostensibly, just when human society is sorely torn with various strifes, when ideological conflicts loom large in international affairs, when science has been harnessed to the destruction of millions of human beings at a single stroke, when the future of human civilization looks dark, it is high time man turned his attention to a world of higher truth and greater reality, to the way shown by the Buddhas, the Christs and the Mahatmas.

The march of modern scientific knowledge has given man all the amenities of a highly comfortable luxurious and pleasant life. But has man found real peace and happiness through them? The events that are taking place around us and elsewhere definitely reveal that man has not at all found peace and happiness. On the contrary, he is living in perpetual fear of the morrow and of his environment. Men of wisdom of all ages and climes have said that true happiness is not from things - it is not objective but it is something that belongs to our inner nature. It is subjective. As this, however, is a different subject-matter we will not go into it now.

Calm thinking and right reflection will reveal to us that the greed of man, in varying forms and degrees, is the root-cause of all squabbles between individuals and in families, and conflicts amongst communities, nations and blocs. The basis of greed is the ego-sense in man, that is, that sense which makes one feel oneself (either individually or collectively, as in the case of a group or nation or bloc) as a separate and distinct entity from others.

In order to eliminate the ego-sense, a great ethical law has been prescribed, namely, "Love thy neighbour as thyself". The *Tirukkural* declares "those that love not live only for themselves: as to those that love, they will give their very bones for others". What is the rational foundation of this principle of ethics? The *Advaita* system of thought of India, the bold philosophy which teaches unity of life and proclaims with emphasis that this little individual or ego or human being is identical with the Absolute or the Universal Self, gives us, the answer thus - "O little man, do not identify yourself with this perishable body. Give up I-ness and mine-ness. You shall love your neighbour not because he has done some good to you, but because you are one with him in spirit.

Love means expression of oneness. By harming him you harm yourself. If you do anything to hurt anybody or anything to enrich yourself at the expense of others, you are really doing evil to yourself. There is a common self or common consciousness in all. This is the same in a king and a peasant, an ant and a dog, a man and a woman. This is the real immortal entity. The ego sense is the dividing principle. It tempts and deludes. Eliminate this mischievous ego by right meditation and genuine selfless service; control the senses which drag you out to external objects.

Fix the mind in the Source of all Life. Rise, above body and mind, eradicate desires, learn to discriminate the real from the unreal. Identify yourself with this immortal non-dual, self-existent and self-luminous Essence. Behold the one Self in all. See the One in the many. This is the way to achieve individual and collective happiness everlasting. All miseries will then come to an end."

We know that human society is formed of individuals. To transform society, we have to change the hearts of individuals. A change in the hearts of individuals will result in a change in society. A little thought will convince us of this fact.

Huxley says, "the metaphysics that recognizes a Divine reality substantial to the world of things and lives and minds, the psychology that finds in the soul of man something similar to or even identical with Divine reality, the ethic that places man's final end in the knowledge of the immanent and transcendent basis of all beings."

The *Advaita* system of thought, which fulfils the above demands and which is absolutely scientific, should be broadcast and practised, and then only shall we find peace and harmony established on earth. □

A TRIBUTE

DR SWAMI SATYANANDA, JP, FOUNDER-PRESIDENT THE PURE LIFE SOCIETY (SHUDDHA SAMAJAM)

Dr Swami Satyananda, JP, passed away on 9th April 1961. The Pure Life Society received many condolence letters as well as letters of appreciation from people from all walks of life, whose lives Swami Satyananda had touched in one way or another.

REST, REST IN PEACE

- E S Gangadharan, Gen Secretary, Kishan Dial Old Boys' Association

A great soul has been called away! A 'prince among men' has breathed his last! A 'devoted soul' after a 'lifetime of service to mankind, and to Malayan Society in particular,' has been taken away by the cruel hand of death! The great humanitarian, 'the angel of Malaya,' the Saviour of the poor; 'the most distinguished Malayan', Swami Satyananda is no more.

In his fifties, Swamiji or Swami - as he was endearingly and devotedly called, has passed away leaving all who knew him in a state of remorse and pang which only time can heal. The thousands of people with their heads bowed, eyes shedding tears of remorse, that paid their last respects to him as his body lay clad in his saffron robe, solemnized by the chanting of prayers by his devotees, with the smell of incense in the air and the calm and almost spellbound silence, only broken by the occasional sobs of devotees, unable to control their sorrow; gave a unique setting to this sorrowful day and left the nation in sorrow.

This great humanitarian, an orphan himself, took upon himself to right many of the wrongs of Society. In the quest of his ideal of "One World, One God, One race", Swamiji left no stone unturned. It is difficult to describe him in one word, he was a social worker, a philosopher, a religionist and in short, there was nothing that was too small or too big for him to do. Space will not allow nor pen trace the various activities of Swamiji, but a few of the objects he had as far as the Pure Life Society is concerned could be mentioned here.

His objects were so gigantic that many were given to think them as day dreams but the Society with its orphanage, school, printing press, mechanical workshop, temple, etc., are all dreams come true. Had Providence been kind enough to spare his life a few more years, his other dreams would have become a reality. He had visualised the building of a secondary school, a trade school, a library for all cultures represented in Malaya and it is now up to us, his devotees; to carry on his service. He had left the richest legacy and our first and foremost duty to him would be the continuance of his work.

He had the simplicity of childhood, enthusiasm of youth, and wisdom of age, stoutness of heart, of a warrior, the tenacity of a missionary and the ability of a general. He is such a great man; a man who climbed from the lowest rung of the ladder of life-to the highest and loftiest, from where he has taken flight to eternity leaving us to carry on his work.

It is hard to over-state the debt that we owe him, now that the tears have dried, the hearts reconciled to fate, let us as one man do his work, and in doing that, help his able successor and life-long disciple and devotee, Sister Mangalam, to attain the ideals and objects that were near and dear to Swamiji – namely the uplift of the poor, suffering orphans - that is the service every Malayan owes him.

The PROFOUND sorrow in which we are engulfed, should not and will not make us forget the richness of his contribution, the heavy debt we owe him – and to repay that debt, it is necessary that we forget our loss and carry on his mission and let us proclaim to the world and prosperity on this very day, "that blessed is the place that holds his dust, blessed are those who continue his mission of selfless service to humanity".

May his soul rest in peace, peace, peace.



TOLERANCE AND WHY IT IS CRITICAL TODAY

- Ravindran Raman Kutty, a student and protégé of Mother Mangalam, consistently offers insightful commentary on social and environmental matters in prominent local newspapers such as Sin Chew Jit Poh, New Straits Times and The Sun. Recognized by Mother Mangalam as a talented poet, his acclaimed works are frequently featured in the Dharma.

In the grand tapestry of human history, the need for tolerance shines brighter today than it did two decades ago. The world has metamorphosed into a global village, with interconnectedness weaving us together like never before. Yet, amidst this intricate web of diversity, intolerance still casts its shadow, threatening to unravel the very fabric of our shared humanity.

Twenty years ago, our interactions were often limited by geographical boundaries, and the differences between us seemed more distant. However, as we stand at the cusp of a new era, the challenges we face are increasingly global, transcending borders and demanding a collective response.

Tolerance is not merely a virtue but a necessity in this interconnected world. It is the cornerstone upon which we can build a future of peace, understanding, and harmony. As we strive to improve the quality of life, foster camaraderie, and nurture peace among people and countries, tolerance must be our guiding principle.

To cultivate tolerance, we must first look within ourselves. We must strive to understand and appreciate the perspectives of others, even when they differ from our own. As Rumi, the 13th-century Persian poet, once said, "Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and right-doing, there is a field. I'll meet you there."

Religious teachings also offer profound insights into the importance of tolerance. Christianity, for instance, emphasizes love and compassion for all, regardless of differences. In the Bible, *Galatians 3:28* states, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."


In Hinduism, the concept of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, meaning "the world is one family," underscores the importance of unity and tolerance towards all beings. The Bhagavad Gita also emphasizes the need for equanimity and acceptance of different paths to the divine.

Similarly, Islam teaches tolerance and respect for all people, regardless of their beliefs.

Buddhism teaches tolerance through the practice of loving-kindness and compassion towards all sentient beings. The Dalai Lama, a prominent figure in Tibetan Buddhism, often speaks about the importance of tolerance in building a more peaceful world.

To improve camaraderie and overall peace, we must engage in constructive dialogue and seek common ground. As the Buddha said, "Better than a thousand hollow words, is one word that brings peace." Through dialogue and understanding, we can bridge the divides that separate us and forge a path towards a more tolerant and compassionate world.

In conclusion, the need for tolerance today is more pressing than ever before. By embracing tolerance in all its forms, we can create a world where diversity is celebrated, understanding is cultivated, and peace reigns supreme. As the 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, beautifully encapsulates, "Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them, humanity cannot survive."

Tolerance applies first to ourselves, our family, our neighbours, our working colleagues and whoever, we want to deal with, transact, liaise with, work with and live with. Tolerance is an integral part of the human ecosystem which must be practised and wholesomely applied, to achieve camaraderie, peace and an overall healthy ecosystem around you and others. 

THE HEART INTELLIGENCE

- Ravin S, Founder of Karma Yoga of Movement

“The hologram promises that within the realm that the heart operates, if something exists anywhere, it exists everywhere”

The experiences of the world cannot be simply perceived through our minds alone. The human heart can pump about 182 million litres of blood during the average lifetime. And the pressure is at a magnitude that it would be able to raise blood up to the fourth floor of a building. But the fact is, I would say the heart does so much more than just pumping blood.

Over 20 years of research on the effect of human emotions directly on the world, the Institute of HeartMath states there is a measurable electrical and magnetic field of energy around every human heart. The brain does produce the same electrical and magnetic field; however, the heart generates 100 times stronger electrically and 5000 times stronger magnetically than the brain. When we have a feeling in our hearts, we are creating electromagnetic waves from inside our body that extend to the outer world. Scientists have proven that the signal from the heart can be detected at a distance of hundreds of miles away, and probably at infinite distances if looked at on a quantum energetic level.

There is a relationship between the heart and the brain, where the two organs tune to each other in a very specific way. It is the signal from the heart to the brain that tells the brain what kind of chemicals to release into the body. There are 100,000 chemical reactions occurring in the human brain every second. The quality of the signal is called coherence. ‘Optimum Coherence’ is when our heart creates a feeling with high coherence between the heart and the brain, which is at a very low frequency of 0.10 Hertz. During this 0.10 Hertz period, we are functioning optimally. And the reason is that this is the best signal we can create. Our brain will release powerful chemicals in our body via the impulses which move at a speed of 274 km/h, simultaneously creating a super immune response. That is the power of our heart.

Not limited to that, a new science called ‘Epigenetics’ shows that human heart-based emotion is one of the signals that literally influences the DNA in our bodies. We know that many of the systems in our physical body seem mysterious to us.

Normally, we would be looking for chemicals and drugs to turn the systems on. But epigenetics studies are showing that heart-based emotions enable the systems, effortlessly.

One example can be seen in the aging process. Inside the nucleus of a cell, our genes are arranged along twisted, double-stranded molecules of DNA called chromosomes. At the ends of the chromosomes are stretches of DNA called telomeres, which protect our genetic data, make it possible for cells to divide, and hold some secrets of aging. Each time a cell divides, the telomeres get shorter. When they get too short, the cell can no longer divide, so it becomes inactive or finally it dies. This shortening of telomeres is associated with the aging process and a higher risk of death. Interestingly, the human body does have enzymes designed to heal and repair those telomeres, and it is called telomerase. Note that, at least 700 enzymes are active in the human body, but not this telomerase.

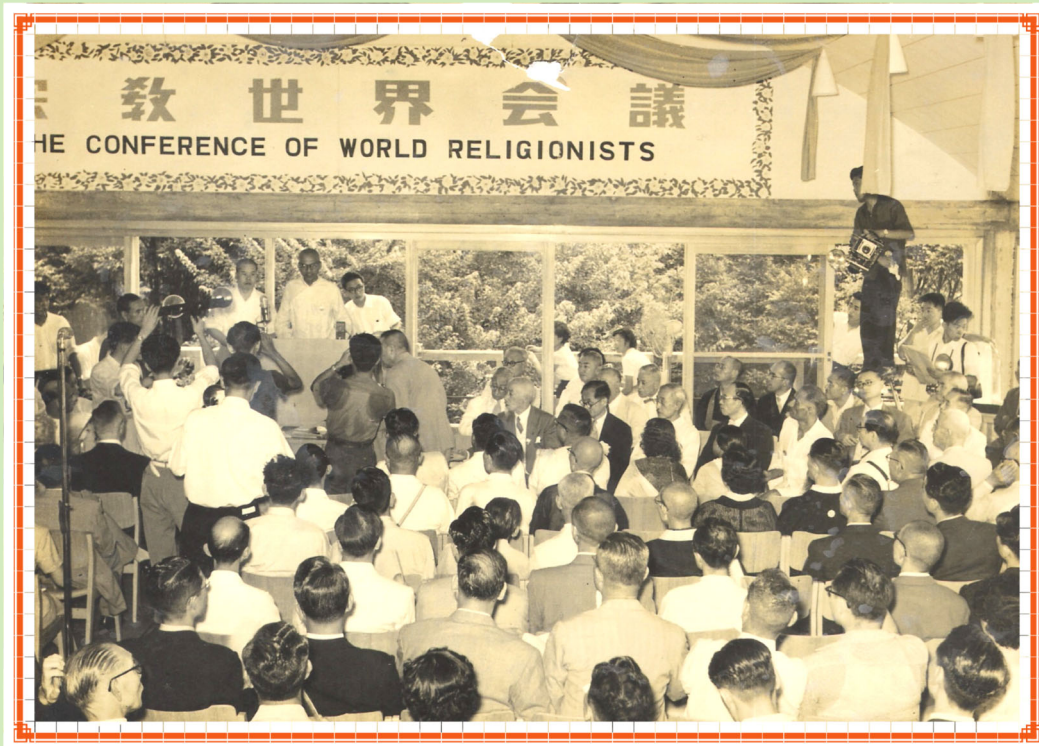
The first question is how do we activate telomerase? The answer is that the quality of emotion between the heart and brain literally can activate the telomerase. These have a direct impact upon aging on our physical bodies.

The second question is what kind of emotions create those effects? The answer is that positive heart-based emotions such as joy, love, compassion, gratitude, serenity, forgiveness, hope, inspiration, appreciation, and etc. Those kinds of experiences that we may have in our hearts literally give our body new life.

Now we see how the heart can slow the aging process. Scientists are stunned with their research findings which confirm the ability to regrow DNA’s age-defying telomerase simply via applying good habits of harmonious acts and practices of *Dhyana* (meditation) - it can even postpone death.

Our inner experiences such as emotion and belief have a direct effect on the outer world. Depending on what we choose to experience in our life, those feelings are creating patterns in the magnetic and electrical fields in our hearts, simultaneously rearranging the particles of quantum essence. This will directly allow the pattern of what we have claimed in our hearts to become manifest in the world around us. ▣

Timeless Frames



Dr Swami Satyananda addressing the World Conference of Religionists in Tokyo, Japan in the 50's of the last century.

SPEAK GENTLY

- Ven K Sri Dhammananda, 'Why Worry'

Humility is the wise man's measuring-rod.

Pride or arrogance is one of the most abominable vices from the Buddhist moral point of view, and it is through these expressions that we understand that Buddhism regards humility as a high virtue. An ideal person, harbours no pride. The destruction of pride is essential to anyone. Down with pride, or the gate of religious life will be shut against you.

Pride is the idea of the egoistic vain glorious person, as this aphorism asserted. It's intention is always concentrated on himself; he is selfish and ambitious; and he does not mind if others suffer on his account. What he thinks is always of himself; he cannot get rid of thinking of himself. If he can abandon this, he will be able to abandon anger, pride, hypocrisy, illusion, covetousness, or all other vices which spring from the idea of self. As long as he cherishes the idea of self, he cannot attain peace of mind. Abandon the idea of self, pride and other vices and thereby mental peace will be attained.

Pain will not fall upon the man who is not bound in the fetters of name and form, and who calls nothing his own. If a man can give up everything he has, i.e. subjective or objective possessions, and declares himself as possessing nothing, he will attain complete humility of mind, and everything will be his own.

Humility is the wise man's measuring-rod for learning the difference between what is and what is yet to be. "The Buddha himself started his ministry by discarding all his princely pride in acts of self-humiliation. He attained sainthood during his life, but never lost his naturalness, never assumed superior airs. His dissertations and parables were never pompous. He had time for the most humble of men. He never lost his human sense of fun."

SILENCE IGNITES HUMAN POTENTIAL

- K Haridas, Member, INSaF, involved in Education, NGOs and CSOs

During the holy months in all faith traditions and other festivals it is appropriate that individuals spend some time in 'Silence'. This vanishing free commodity is critically lacking in today's otherwise busy life.

It is vital for all of us to ask ourselves the question, 'Do I spend alone time with myself'? Sometime daily in the early hours of the day just being quiet, reflecting and introspecting. Capturing one's thoughts in writing and maintaining a diary of reflections has proved to be very helpful both in the context of action, restitution and direction.

Following years of practice, one develops a sense of connection, correction and direction. Elements of such a time would include silence, reading and reflection, review of the day before and the whole notion of reaching out to the other. As is said, "the quieter you become the more you hear".

We all pray at the masjids, churches and temples. Yet this begs the question why is there often a deficit in spending time alone to reflect, introspect and develop ourselves from the inside out. We can only change ourselves and this we can only do through realisations that come from within.

Yesterday I hurt my child, was rude to my wife or husband, disrespectful to my colleagues, did not do what I promised, was dishonest, helped a friend and a whole lot of things that the day held. Daily review and action help in the quality of one's prayer as well.

Listening is the other side of the coin to praying. All communication is two way and many a prayer is left unanswered because I failed to listen. In all traditions, importance is given to contemplation as a form of worship. Otherwise, it is akin to talking on the phone and cutting off when you have finished without listening to the other.

Are we taught to reflect and more so to contemplate and introspect? Do we reflect on passages of holy books and ask the critical question as to what this passage or saying means to me in my life?

Prayer takes the form of a request, an appeal and an expression of gratitude while listening and contemplation leads to action. Contemplating on the signs of God, of the self and of creation remains central to an

individual's faith and is often the source of every-good deed.

Likewise, I have had the privilege of meeting many from different religious traditions who through the practice of what could be described as 'Quiet Time' daily have found fresh insights, change in their conduct, greater self-esteem and maturity.

This one common language speaks to all of us on how we ourselves can be better, change and improve ourselves and mature as life moves on. As our duties and obligations increase with our responsibilities, the need to reflect on who we become gains importance. In silent moments we discover ourselves and gain a greater sense of clarity

Prophets have spent time in the desert, mountains, caves, being alone and some have led us to an understanding of meditation. Ashrams, monasteries and retreats and pilgrimages have given many an opportunity to understand the qualities needed to live a life rather than just to make a living.

There are periods when many fast and reflect and this has obvious benefits both to body and mind. No growth takes place without effort and more so if you and I do not give time for inner realization. Physical growth takes place without much effort but moral and spiritual growth requires both time and effort on our part.

The Golden Rule, like many other tenets,⁰ is hung on walls of schools, temples and mosques. They remain there as ornaments. We celebrate this week as a commitment to action. You become good only as you do good. Otherwise, you are just good for nothing.

Let us all join hands in making 'Silence' an integral part of our culture – 'gotong royong' a do it yourself work in progress. As one who has for some time spent an hour in silence daily, I can tell you that this has added spice to relationships, made me a better person and hopefully grown as a person.

There is much potential within us and we need to give these an opportunity to bloom add fragrance and illuminate us in our journey. ▣



WISE PEOPLE STOP RUMORS

- *Dharma Master Cheng Yen, The Master tells stories*

When Buddha was enlightened, he first took in five monks, and later he took in another fifty young men who had followed Yasa. Later, more and more people came to be his disciples, and very rapidly the total number of his disciples reached more than a thousand. If you read the Amitabha Buddha Sutra, you will find the phrase "together there were a thousand two hundred and fifty people." This phrase is used in sutras to indicate the greatness of the order of monks.

Buddha and his disciples travelled and preached along the banks of the Ganges. One day, they reached the city of Rajagrha. They stayed in a monastery and went into the city to ask for food. But when they were in the city, they noticed that everyone was whispering excitedly to each other. What were they talking about?

Those who feared the coming of Buddha and his monks had started a rumor. The rumor was that wherever Buddha went, many of the best and most capable people, young and old, would become monks. Therefore, parents were afraid that their sons would leave home, and wives feared that their husbands would become monks. The rumor upset everyone in the whole area.

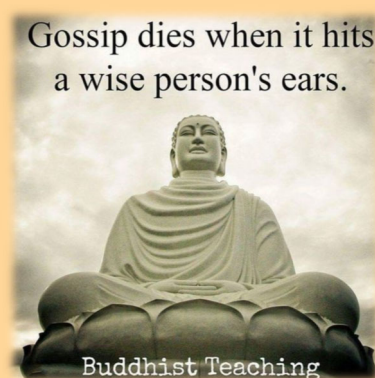
So, when the monks went to ask for food from married women, the women would quickly close the doors. Parents of sons would also shut their doors tight when they saw the monks approaching. It was this way throughout the whole city. The rumor kept spreading from house to house, and every resident was terrified. One morning before they set out, the monks reported all this to Buddha. "The rumor won't last long," Buddha said to them. "It will go away in seven days at most. If we act and speak properly, the rumor will disappear very quickly, in no more than seven days." When the monks heard Buddha say this, they felt better and continued to go out and ask for food.

Seven days passed. During these days, the people of the city saw Buddha's dignified appearance and heard his sermons. Buddha spoke of the four types of disciples [monks, nuns, male and female lay followers] and the regulations of monks and laity. The people were then aware that Buddhists didn't have to become monks. Lay followers didn't have to abide by the 250 precepts of the monks, because the laity had only their own five precepts to follow. They could live a Buddhist family life. There were ways for lay followers to develop spiritually. The people of the city were satisfied. The rumor disappeared, and the locals admired and respected Buddha even more. Once again, they happily gave food to the monks.



From this story, we can see there's a human tendency to believe rumors, and so rumors spread quickly. However, Buddha felt that if his actions, words and thoughts were correct and if he stayed calm and continued to teach patiently, any rumor about him would simply disappear in a matter of time. His actions show how "wise people stop rumors."

Modern society is full of suspicion and conflict. As Buddhists, we should learn Buddha's spirit and act, speak and think correctly. We should also learn that whenever we hear a rumor, we must ignore it and stop it right there. Then our lives will be happy, and we will not get caught up in disagreements. □



ADORATION

- Dr K Dharmaratnam, *Prayer & Its Purpose – the Hindu perspective, reproduced from Dharma Quarterly, Volume 99, No 3 & 4, 2004*

Among the spiritual disciplines filling the void between us and God, prayer is first, as God is the most important entity our life and in the entire universe. Prayer is the outward expression of our religious impulse centered on God, our God-consciousness and faith in God, transmitted to God through sound waves or thought waves (like radio-waves), and is the best form of our reciprocation of God's love for us, which is always infinitely greater than our love for God.

A well-known scriptural teaching is "If we take one step towards God, God will take 10 steps towards us". Everything in this world is closely linked to God, who is the Primary Cause of all good things in life (our misfortunes are entirely due to our own bad karmas).

Prayer is not mere asking for this or that but should be genuine and heartfelt yearning to commune with Him through a constant flow of LOVE and full FAITH towards Him (not of fear), and this love and faith should keep expanding and grow like a young plant watered by '*dharma*' (virtue and righteousness and service to society, and manured by '*jnana*' (spiritual wisdom and knowledge of God), thus reminding ourselves constantly that He alone is our Creator, Preserver, Protector, Constant Companion, Comforter and Consoler throughout our turbulent journey of life.

From God we came and to God we go back. So He is the ultimate Goal.

Prayer should not be haphazard, sporadic or hurried, but must be regular, systematic and become more and more prolonged, frequent and intense as the days go by; and can be by chanting and singing, individually or in chorus (*bhajan*). Singing soothes the soul and is said to be the "food of the soul" and believed to please the Lord. Prayer is best done in one's mother tongue. Mass prayer has proved to be very effective.

An ideal prayer should consist of:

- a) Adoration and glorification of God by chanting God's many names, with awareness of the significance of each name (chanting the names in alphabetical order helps us to remember every name).
- b) Chanting God's *mantras* as often as possible is considered very beneficial by Hindus, There are (a) universal *mantras* (e.g. *Gayatri Mantra*), and (b) individual mantras to suit each devotee, according to his '*ishtadeiva*' (favourite God form). *Mantra* stands for *man* = mind; *tra* = to free.

Hence repetition of a *mantra* helps to free the mind from the clutches of the senses and worldly thoughts.

All *mantras* commence with "AUM", the sound manifestation of the Impersonal God. A *mantra* consists of spiritually charged Sanskrit syllables which, if chanted correctly, frequently and with devotion, will channel our prayers more effectively (through ripples in space, penetrating the barrier between the human and spiritual dimension) to God; and is also believed to catalyse the conversion of our spiritual energy into matter, and even our favourite God form, at least in our mind.

Einstein, the great scientist has proved that energy and matter are inter-convertible according to the equation $E=mc^2$ (E=energy, m=mass, c=velocity of light).

Repeated chanting of mantras has also other beneficial effects e.g. stimulating the brain's pineal gland to secrete 'melatonin' giving a divine glow and spiritual wisdom, stimulating the endocrine glands and the beneficial electromagnetic waves from the brain, etc.

The mantras are in Sanskrit believed to be the language of the spiritual dimension.

- Contemplating silently on God's names, mantra, forms or activities is known as meditation, which is the most important aspect of yoga (in Hindu parlance). Using God's Form, or other aids (temple, mosque, church, etc), helps us greatly in concentration, which is essential for sincere prayer. In such houses of worship, the negative spiritual vibrations are minimized, and God can be perceived through all our senses.

- Chanting or reciting God's '*leelas*' (divine sport), described in Hindu scripture, helps to cleanse our soul and bring us closer to God.
- b) *Expressing our heartfelt gratitude* for all the blessings God has showered on us - creating us as human beings (not animals or plants) without any physical or mental defects, blessing us to think of Him constantly, protecting us from calamities reducing them or giving us the courage to bear or overcome them, for granting us health, prosperity and success in our endeavours etc.

Gratitude is a component of love. "The first step in dharma is gratitude. Ingratitude is the hallmark of wild beasts!", remarked a great sage. The '*Thirukkural*', a Hindu scripture, states categorically that all sins can be forgiven by God, except the sin of ingratitude.

- c) *Begging forgiveness* for our sins and faults committed knowingly or unknowingly; and promising not to repeat them.
- d) *Making offerings* to God. Anything, however trivial, (even a fruit, flower, leaf or even water) will be accepted by the Lord, provided it is offered with true love. These offerings are only 'containers' of love, which is the only commodity God wants from us.
- e) *Making requests*. These should not be for material benefits. Ideally we should pray out of sheer love, asking for nothing, except guidance in our journey of life. "Lead us from falsehood to truth, from darkness to light, from death to immortality", and "May everyone be happy" are ideal requests. We can ask for spiritual wisdom, to be blessed with divine qualities and to be rid of evil qualities (e.g. anger, ego, desire).

The selfish ones ask to be rid of sufferings or for material prosperity.

Even these devotees are accepted by God as they will eventually evolve to the highest platform. The Lord has assured us that He will look after our material needs even if we do not ask for them, provided we surrender our ego and be completely devoted to Him.

- f) *Service to society* can also be considered a form of prayer as we are serving the God in man—"Work is worship, service is prayer"

Thus the purpose of prayer can be summarized as follows-

- i) To establish a constant and loving relationship with God
- ii) To express our gratitude to God for all that we have been blessed with.
- iii) To beg forgiveness for all our sins and faults.
- iv) For making special requests and for protection against calamities. Regular prayer has been proved to create a protective (though invisible) "shield" around us (against all harm) in the form of an 'aura'. This has been photographed by Barowski's 'kirlian' camera. We must have this faith. "Have faith, the proof will come later. Doubts are due only to ignorance," said a great sage.
- v) To constantly remind ourselves to think of God at the moment of our death. We can only do this by constant last thought at death decides our spiritual progress.
- vi) Offering prayers for our beloved departed ones, for the peace of their souls.

"Our hands to work, and head and heart to GOD", should be our slogan.



A Poetic Tribute to my greatest teacher, my
most loving headmistress and
a diving social worker.....
Datin Paduka (Dr) Mother A Mangalam

The journey persists...

Though absent in the flesh, your spirit lingers
near,
No longer do your words fall upon my ear,
In realms beyond, you dwell, serene and clear,
Every day, dear mother, your memory I hold
dear.

Glad in robes of white, an angel at rest,
Blessing us with each sunrise's gentle crest,
Guiding us with the breeze's soft caress,
And adorning the night with stars, your legacy
blessed.

The seeds you sowed, with toil and care,
The wisdom you imparted, beyond compare,
The path you carved, we now faithfully bear,
Blossoms as you envisioned, in the vibrant air.

Your footsteps echo through halls now bare,
Your voice, a melody, beyond compare,
Your gaze, a beacon, tender and rare,
In your absence, life feels incomplete, and we
despair.

We piece together fragments, a puzzle vast,
Following the footsteps of our
matriarchal past,
Each step taken, a tribute unsurpassed,
Hoping to honour your legacy, steadfast.

Though marked by time, a year has flown,
Yet your absence, like an eternity, has grown,
The journey continues, in trials unknown,
But with your grace and blessings, we are not
alone...

- Ravindran Raman Kutty, Dharmarian 1967-1978
Principal Communications Consultant,
Poet, Columnist & Passionate ESG Advocate



THE TEN KINDS OF MIND OF THE BODHISATTVA

- Sourced from *The Great Tao, Tao the heavenly truth to life and eternity*

Firstly, One should cultivate great loving kindness towards all beings with a mind free from injuring and harming.

Secondly, One should cultivate great mercy towards all beings with a mind free from harassing and annoying.

Thirdly, not to spare one's life with regard to all the true Dharmas of the Buddha as well as to rejoice in protecting them.

Fourthly, One should cultivate higher endurance regarding all Dharmas with a mind free from clinging and grasping.

Fifthly, One should cultivate not to desire eagerly for gain; support and respect with a mind that values the pure bliss of mind.

Sixthly, One should at all times cultivate and study Buddha wisdom with a mind free from forgetfulness and negligence.

Seventhly, One should cultivate fairness and treat all beings equally and show respect to them with a mind free from contempt and scorn.

Eighthly, One should not hold worldly discussions but cultivate a determined mind regarding the factors of illumination.

Ninthly, One should plant all good roots with a pure mind.

Tenthly, One should meditate purely and discard all the characteristics giving rise to a mind of continuous recollection.



Recipes by Mother A Mangalam

CELERY CHUTNEY

Ingredients:

| | | |
|-----------------------|---|-----------------------|
| Celery | - | 2 stalks |
| Ginger | - | 3 pieces (thumb-size) |
| Almonds/Cashewnuts | - | 5 |
| Tomato | - | 2 medium size |
| Skin of Limau Kasturi | - | 1/2 |
| Salt | - | To taste |



Preparation:

- Wash and remove the fibre that runs through the celery stalk. Chop fine.
- Chop the tomatoes finely.
- Wash the limau kasturi, cut into half, de-seed it, throw the juice away and cut the skin into slices.

Method:

- Blend all the ingredients.
- Add salt to taste.
- Serve.

MINT LEAVE CHUTNEY (PUDINA TOVAIYAL)

Ingredients:

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------|
| Mint leaves and stalks (tender) | - | 2 handfuls |
| Tomato | - | 2 |
| Scrapped coconut | - | 1 cup |
| Shallots | - | 4 |
| Ginger | - | 2 thumb-size |
| Green Chili | - | according to taste |
| Split Bengal gram (kadalai paruppu) | - | 1 tbsp |
| Black Gram sabut (ulutham paruppu) | - | 1 tbsp |
| Cashewnuts | - | 5 |
| Salt | - | To taste |



Preparation/Method:

- Roast the split Bengal gram and black gram sabut.
- Heat up the scrapped coconut.
- Fry shallots and ginger in a little oil, add the coconut. Fry for a while.
- Put in the mint leaves. Stir.
- Blend all. Add salt to taste.

‘Feed your body with what it needs

Don’t feed the body with what you like’

Saying it in Pictures.....

Temple of Fine Arts hosted lunch for our children at the Annalakshmi Restaurant, in memory of their late Guru, Swami Shantananda.



Our children were taken for a study tour to Kuala Selangor. They visited the gardens, the Fishermen Kampung, Padi fields and Pulau Kelip Kelip, after which they were treated to a sumptuous dinner.



The Alumni organised prayers for Mother Mangalam's 1st Year Anniversary on 29th May 2024, in accordance with the Hindu Calendar.

The Malaysian Speaks

We cannot bring back our old political environment, but we can bring back our multiracial spirit and compassion....Together, let us embrace our diversity, celebrate our differences and work together a Malaysia where every individual, regardless of race or religion is respected.

- Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye, Members, National Unity Advisory Council, "Let's fortify the spirit of tolerance", Your Opinion, The Star, 15th April 2024

To unlock its full potential, Malaysia's education system must move beyond its too narrow "job-ready" focus and embrace instead a holistic "citizenship" approach. The shift is essential to bridge societal divides and foster a harmonious future for Malaysia. Investing in education that cultivates critical thinking, intercultural understanding and civic responsibility isn't a mere add-on but a corner stone for building a vibrant and unified nation.

- Dr Syed Alwee Alsagoff, Fellow, National Council of Professors Malaysia, "Bridging divisions through education", Your Opinion, The Star, 15th April 2024

The voice of unity in Malaysia reverberates heavily with respect and tolerance. Malaysians in general are peaceful people. We are gentle with one another. We must protect our cause. We Malaysians have lived together for so long in harmony, where a variety of colors, voices and human stories have come together in the epic rhythm of togetherness.

Unity in Malaysia tears apart the curtain of misunderstanding, revealing that despite our differences, we are in an irreplaceable symphony on the stage of life.

- Deputy National Unity Minister,
YB Puan Saraswathy Kandasami, The Star,
20th May 2024

Reflections

Salient Thought for the Day

Our prayers are more effective and beautiful when we carry holy thoughts in our mind.

Lines to Memorize

In my prayer I knew not what to ask of Thee,
For my mind was rent with many desires
And my heart was torn with longing,
So I could not pray with a single heart;
But a sudden dawning hath come upon me with a
lightning flash.
Now I sit with but one prayer in my heart:
That Thou fillest me with Thy love first and last.

Lesson

So long as there is much noise on the outer plane, we cannot hear the voice of the subtler spiritual plane; nor can we hope to gain access into the higher realm. When day after day we strive to cultivate the consciousness of our inner being, our prayers grow more fervent and God hears our least call; but our heart must be one-pointed and we must feel that our being is a part of His Being.

Prayer

Make me so humble and free from self-
consciousness,
That my life may be filled with holy inspiration.
May I learn to be refreshed through the sanctity of
my thought.
Thou alone canst sanctify my life .
Make It holy and pure and full of ardent devotion.

- *Swami Paramananda*



Great minds of Yesteryears

It is the Higher Power which does everything, and the man is only a tool. If he accepts that position, he is free from troubles; otherwise, he courts them.

- Ramana Maharshi

கண்ணின்று கண்ணறச் சொல்லினுஞ் சொல்லற்க
முன்னின்று பின்னோக்காச் சொல் - குறள் 184

It is passable to speak impolitely to someone face to face, but never
utter an imprudent word behind one's back.

- Thirukkural

Be a part of Dharma....

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published by
The Pure Life Society, to
encourage inter-religious and
inter-racial harmony.

We would love to have your
contributions.

Come, be a part of us.....

It is better to conquer yourself than to win a thousand
battles. Then the victory is yours. It cannot be taken from
you, not by angels or by demons, heaven or hell.

- Buddha



Dharma QUARTERLY

**Devoted to
UNIVERSAL
RELIGION,
RIGHTEOUSNESS &
CULTURE**

**ONE GOD
ONE WORLD
ONE RACE**

DHARMA Editorial Team

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| Editor | - P C Shivadas |
| Design & Content research | - Geetha K Madhavan |
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Please share your views and perspectives which can be
published in the future editions of the Dharma. Your comments
and suggestions are most welcome. Write, fax or email to:

The Editor of Dharma
c/o The Pure Life Society (Shuddha Samajam)
Batu 6, Jalan Puchong
58200 Kuala Lumpur
MALAYSIA

Phone: + 60 3 7782 9391 / + 603 7785 1087

Fax : + 60 3 7784 6020

Email: info@purelifesociety.org.my

Web : www.purelifesociety.org.my



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Batu 6, Jalan Puchong
58200, Kula Lumpur, Malaysia
Phone: +60 3 7782 9391 / 7782 8303

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No. 23 Jalan Perindustrian Maju Jaya
Batu 14, 46000 Puchong
Phone: +60 3 8068 3561