

MAN MUST LEARN HOW TO FACE DIFFICULTIES

By Ven. K. Sri Dhammananda

Man's sorrow is of his own making – not the handing down of a family curse nor the original sin of some ancestor that has returned to haunt him from beyond the grave. Man is his own jailor.

Man must learn how to shoulder the responsibility of his life and to admit his own weaknesses without blaming and cursing others. It is very easy for him to blame others whenever some troubles beset him but he fails to realise that by doing so he invites even more troubles; thus creating more enemies.

One has to remember the old saying: “The uncultured man always blames others; the semi-cultured man blames himself and the fully-cultured man blames neither.” Therefore as a cultured being, man must learn to solve his own problems without blaming anyone. On the other hand if he comes to know that someone has really done something wrong to him he should act like a cultured and wise man without hating and cursing the trouble-maker. He has to realise this other man is intoxicated by greed, anger, jealousy and ignorance, and as a wise man he should try to correct this foolish person by radiating his loving-kindness towards the latter and by advising him. If he could do this, then someday the trouble-maker would repent and be pardoned. This method has been practised by all the cultured and holy men throughout the world to overcome their difficulties and it has been proved by them to be the correct method. Please remember that your tolerance, patience and understanding have some magnetic power over your enemies so as to make them realise that they are in the wrong.

Sometimes you might come across certain people who would try to take advantage of your patience and tolerance. Others may even criticise you for your attitude saying that you are a cowardly person. For all this you should not bother if your own conscience is clear and if you think that your attitude is correct and appreciated by wise and cultured people. If a man does something wrong to you due to his ignorance or misunderstanding then that is the time for you to display your wisdom, your education, your religious background and sympathy. If you are also going to behave like that foolish man by creating enmity in your mind and by trying to take revenge on him by harming him, then there is no basic difference between you and the other man. What is the use of all your education and religious knowledge if you have not learned how to behave as a cultured man at the needed time? Just because others are wrong, wicked and foolish, do you think it is advisable for you also to fall into their fold by acting like one of them?

There may be some people who are good by nature and do not do any harm to others. But even amongst them there may be a few who get blame from others and have to face some difficulties, although they have always helped others. Such people might ask “If good begets good and bad begets bad, why then should we suffer? Why should we have to undergo many difficulties? Why should we get blame from others for our good work? It has to be remembered that we cannot always expect rewards for the good we have done to others. All are not grateful to one another. How nice it would be if you could help others without expecting any reward. If you could do that you would be a great man, you will never be disappointed. However, the day will come when you will be rewarded for your good action whether you have expected it or not. On the other hand, we must also remember that if we get a bad name and have to face trouble on account of our good work it only goes to show that although we are in a good state today, we must have done some bad action during our previous birth and that we are paying for them now but after that we will be free from such troubles. This is the easiest way to make up our mind to continue to do good work. The Buddha has shown a good example to this world by returning good for evil. He said “The more evil that come to me the more good will return from me. “Further,” he said, “evil doers are not wicked people by nature. They do evil due to their ignorance and for that we should not curse them or condemn them into eternal suffering. Instead, we should try to correct them and explain to them that they are wrong. We must have pity on them, for one day they would realise their folly and give up their bad habits. Therefore it is better to give them a chance to be good.

Everybody makes mistakes due to his ignorance or weakness. One should not condemn a person forever for such weakness. Evil-doers must be accommodated in the religious fold and every effort must be made to correct them instead of isolating or neglecting them. Again and again they might commit the same mistake, but each time, as wise people, we must try to correct them. They must be treated as patients who are suffering from a certain sickness.

