

In a country like India, steeped in its mysticism and spiritual inheritance, it is not difficult to understand its reliance of fasts and prayers. The TV serials constantly place before our eyes the visuals of these practices in the lives of our people.

Lent is the time in the Christian faith, that allows its followers a time to reflect and pray. It has its counterpart in the month of Ramadan, in Islam too. These practices came from ancient Hebrew customs and religious practices, which again were the inheritance of the Middle Eastern ancestors, closely linked with the Indian sub continent. Today, we do not see Christianity as a Religion having its roots in the Middle East, but link it with the West from where many of our Indian adherents of the faith received the same. Today Christianity is synonymous with Valentine's day and Santa Claus which are a corruption of the original religious thoughts which gave rise to them. Today they have been hijacked by the commercial entrepreneurs, to churn money and fill the coffers of the banks.

Seeing the negative aspects of these practices, there has been a reaction in our country against them, and one should understand it, in the light of the religious past of this country where Vrat and Pooja is sacrosanct. Fast and Prayer which were among the fundamental weapons offered by Jesus to his followers to vanquish the power of evil which engulfed them.

The Power of Evil, has raised its head first in the West, and we have seen its effects with the bankruptcies of Iceland and Greece. The fountain head of this evil was centered in Wall Street, which usurped the place from the power base of Industry which was meant to generate physical assets. It turned these assets in the East, and banked on notional wealth, in the form of Investment Bonds, and the Western Media Moguls hand in glove with the bankers which were funding their enterprises, clouded the minds of the millions of people who banked on the principle of Debt and Credit in the place of Asset and Earning of Income as a result.

Just imagine, if a telephone company can charge Rs 3 per SMS it does not pinch the pocket of the individual. If millions of people are given the mobile telephone and asked to send the SMS then the money that pours in the coffers of the telephone company will be huge. This potential is used in the TV reality shows, which ask the viewers to send the SMSes and the Prize offered is a portion of this income. These surplus funds go to the Banks and they offer Credit and again the people are encouraged to create a debt and consume merchandise poured into the market, by this same credit, and you get a fiction of wealth around you. Then you are asked to invest your wealth in Investment Bonds, which are supposed to appreciate in value, again by the power of the Media you are told that the Stocks are going up and down, and you have a plethora of experts and advisers to guide you. All this has already happened in the West, and they are reaping the benefits in Recession, joblessness, and outsourcing. For a further study, please log on to <http://www.littlesis.org>

Those who want to research into the origins of this malady, have only to study the history of the West after the first world war. Until that time, the world followed the old accounting practices of Assets and Liabilities. Generation of wealth was based on land, and means of production. Today, all these means of productions have been dismantled in the west, and moved to China, the Far East and developing countries by these very Financial Wizards from Wall Street. From

their names you may judge they came from Germany after the first world war. Why had they to leave Germany and find sanctuaries in England and United States is a matter for you to investigate. What we have to contend with is the results of the actions of the few, all have to suffer and pay for.

I did learn this when my Grand Father's coffee estates were auctioned in 1934, the year I was born, as a result of recession in United States during the Depression Years, when coffee exports fell. No one answered why the American Banks went bust. I later found that the Ottoman Empire had to be dismantled in order to make a homeland for a people who were ousted from there 2000 years ago. To fund this adventure one needed funds which were not available in the regular way. A whole movement took place, which resulted in the loss of monarchies in Europe, supplanted by "Democracies" which took their place, made laws, and governed the wealth of these countries. These representatives would be rotating and be funded again by the new wealth barons. You can guess who were the real Masters and who were the Slaves. To fund a war, you need wealth. To fight a war you need weapons and to fund these weapons you need wealth. This wealth, has been created by fiction, and trust. Millions of people pour their hard earned money in banks and then the fiction continues from there. Just see the trail of blood and you will discern the roots from where the journey started. Again I remind you, go to <http://www.littlesis.org>

If all this pain has been due to our excessive consumption of assets generated by this wealth, and the media has been bombarding day and night through their advertisements that our happiness lies in the acquisition of these products, we would take credit, create debt and enjoy this wealth, which the characters in the movies seem to enjoy. The difference is the TV characters are figments enacted on a TV screen, and what humans go through is real. The palaces the TV characters live are sets made in Film City, and the 9x13 rooms we sit in and watch the TV are real.

The answer my friend is in the Wisdom of **Fast** and **Prayer**. It is in austerity and temperance and now is the time to think about them. We should move from the Carnival, which ushers in the Lent, to the forty days that follow and end with the Resurrection of Christ which is triumph over evil, then we should spend part of our time pondering over the usefulness of the life we seem to relish. Perhaps if the time comes when we have to suffer, the blows will be less hard to bear if we learn how to fast and pray. Do not forget to go and read <http://www.littlesis.org>