

What is "Love" ?

Written by W.J.Pais

They say our way of life is evolving, and on closer introspection, it might be quite true. I started with the thought of Love, a frequently bandied word, and often mixed and interchanged for lust, a base human instinct, wanting to quench the thirst of sexual craving.

It lead me to thinking, of my own evolution and understanding of the word in my own life. At an early age, it was a spiritual gift, and we asked for it, as an act of Divine Love, called "An Act of Charity". Our society was quite closed one, where boys were segregated from girls, in schools, in the church, and in our home society. Our interaction was on a familial basis. Indeed, we were attracted to girls, but could not express it.

This lead me to think, how my father met my mother in the 1920s. She was young then, aged 18 and she once told me of that memory of him, a young man who came to meet her father, but more details, I failed to ask, as I was young myself, but this recollection, I have at the age of 80. The marriage proposal was vetted by my grandfather, and grand mother, and they agreed, after reviewing the usual factors, family, financial security, etc. The two were betrothed, and wedded, and there one by one the seven of us entered the world, which was in those days, India, under the British Empire.

In the sixties, my own time came, to settle down. At that time, "Love" did not play a factor, but the need of companionship, was relevant, as I was working in a desert, in Qatar. Of course the world had advanced, and we were exposed to societies, other than our own, and saw movies, for which we had to go out of town, to an Oil workers' camp, where we saw, western movies, like Red Indians and Cowboys, and our immature minds thought life was all warfare and "love" as was shown by the Americans and the British. The workers were from different parts of the world, Arabs from Palestine, Lebanese, Indians, Egyptians, and others from the Middle East, all coming from conservative societies.

The exposure of western ideas, to the youngsters of the closed societies was like opening a pandora's box. The "new" trying to nudge its nose into the well entrenched nooks and corners of the "old". Our minds started thinking like the West, and by the time I was 50 I came back to my conservative land like a Rip Van Winkle, and found life was changing here as well.

Our children, were trying to get their feet settled in a new environment, and I started watching our progress, on our cable television which had come of age. In those days, CNN and BBC both western mediums of information, were beamed at us, and through some good luck, Internet too came in as a special gift to young students, offered by our National Agency, the VSNL.

The Western world view some how looked incomplete, and I could not put my finger on the stories, as I had met people from the Middle East earlier, and they used to speak of Zionism, Balfour Declaration, how they were thrown out of their homes, and I did not have any way to confirm their stories. Now in 1989 onwards, on the Indian television too I heard the western point of view, but our Government was a staunch supporter of the Non Aligned Movement, and I

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could not figure out why.

It was at this time, I started using the internet, to find more details of the past. The thing about this medium is it contains information written not to indoctrinate, but is a result of studies compiled by those who have devoted their lives for a subject, and most of these websites have a suffix, with .edu which means an educational website.

It is from these websites I tried to find out answers to my old questions, what was Zionism all about, and which the Palestinian friends spoke about, and I also wanted to know who Hitler was, and why he hated the Jews so much. Studying the Jewish story, it took me back 20 centuries, of their being thrown out of their homes, in 70AD, and a new Empire, decided to sign an agreement called the Balfour Declaration in 1917 which opened the way for them to come back and settle in their old home land. The empire was hesitating to displace the existing population, but by 1948 things had changed from bad to worse, and things favored the Jewish immigrants, and the local populations had to vacate these lands, and we see the result of that today. Some how, injustices of the past, have had a time limit of 12 years, but in this instance the clout of the Jews prevailed, and they got rehabilitation after 20 centuries, and this drama started with the end of the first world war, with the dismantling of the monarchies, and introduction of the new mantra "democracy" in which the rich rule over the poor in their name as "representatives of the people" but their true color every one knows what it is.

Every day, the can of worms bursts, and new worms creep out for you to see.

Thus, I started with the thought of "Love" which is a divine attribute of God himself, but how the information traffickers, have managed to influence our thoughts and our way of life may need some introspection. We are still seeing in our TV stories, a dichotomy of the ancient and the modern. We have the Saas - Bahu culture in its primitive form, with red sarees, rituals, sangeet and dance, and old fogies, soaking in their dream world while we have the young modern teen agers, out of the clutches of their eldes, gloating about "pyaar karna tho darna kya" - and what is "pyaar", it is not the scriptural view point, but the language of lust, which is seen in the news stories erupting as scenes of rape and helpless women at the hands of crude men.

Is it possible to reverse this trend, and will sensible thoughts prevail, or have they advanced too much into the future, that only a tsunami can wash out all the unwanted filth.