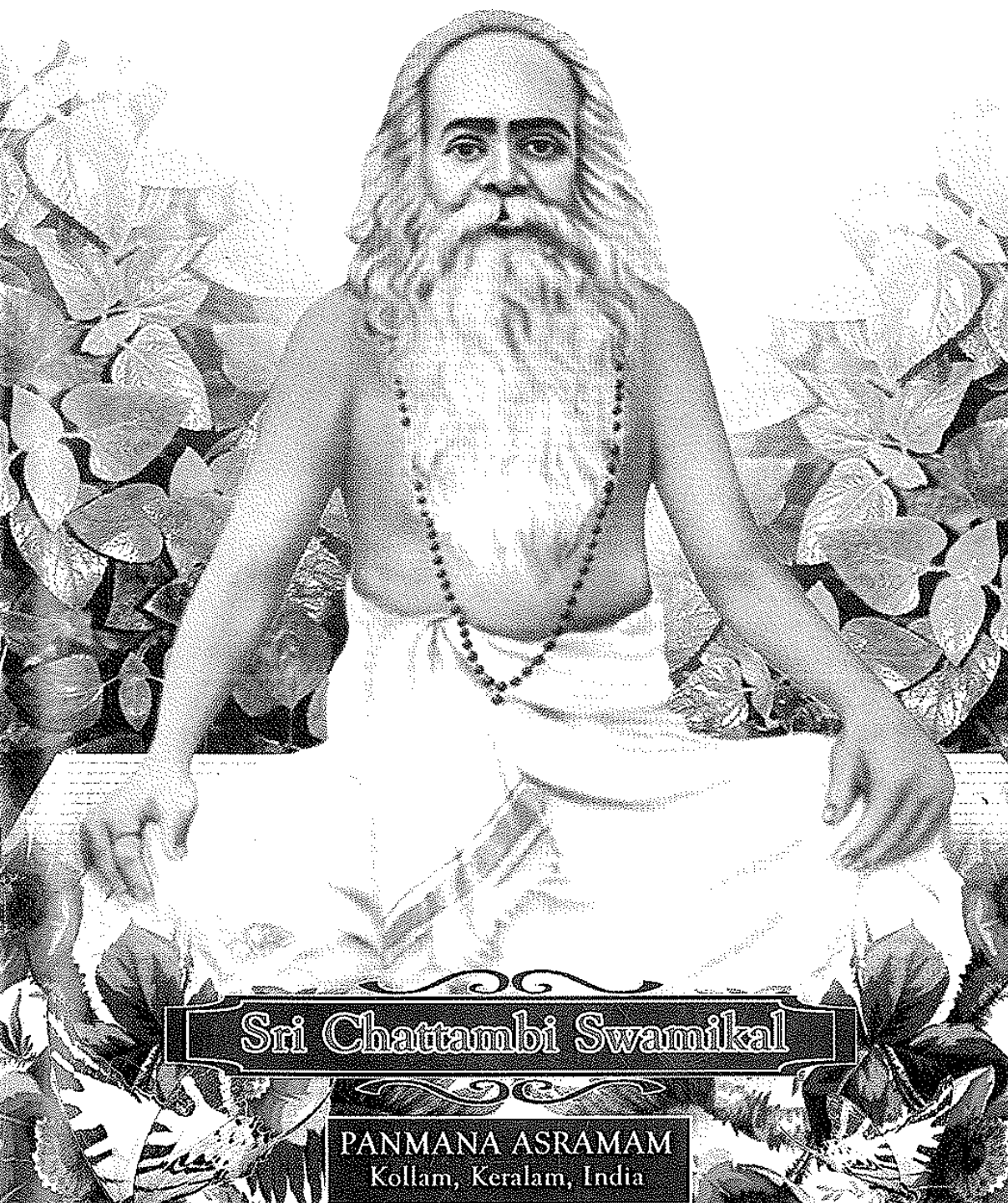


'COMPASSION TO LIVING BEINGS'



Sri Chattampi Swamikal

PANMANA ASRAMAM
Kollam, Keralam, India

'Jiva Karunya Nirupanam'

**'Compassion to Living Beings' – a critical study by
Sri Vidyadhiraja Paramabhataraka
Chattambi Swami Thiruvadikal**

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Sri Chattampi Swamikal, reverently called 'Parama Bhattara Sri Vidyadhiraja,' was born on August 25, 1853, in an obscure village near Trivandrum, Kerala. It was he who heralded the first socio-cultural renaissance in the land of his birth.

A genius by birth with unparalleled intellectual and creative power, he mastered the basic tenets of all world religions and discovered the common thread of universal love in them. He explained in lucid terms and with extraordinary acumen the meanings and purport of the words of wisdom enshrined in the scriptures of India. Well versed in many languages and fine arts, he explicated their ultimate aim of inspiring the aesthetic potentials of the human mind. His love towards all living beings and his yearning for religious harmony were exemplified by the way he lived his life.

He was a consummate yogi of the highest spiritual perfection. He attained Mahasamadhi on May 5, 1924 at Panmana, near Kollam, Kerala.

Jiva Karunya Nirupanam

‘Compassion for Living Beings’

A critical study by Sri Vidyadhiraja Cattambi Swamikal

There is a well-known saying; ‘*ācāryaḥ sarvaceṣṭāsu loka eva hi dhīmatām.*’ ‘In all actions, the world itself is the teacher of the wise.’ Following this, let us begin our study by examining Nature.

The view of the violence-supporter¹

‘Man is a Meat-eater by Nature’

We can see that the physical make-up and inner nature of meat-eating creatures and of vegetarian creatures are different. First let us think; which group does man belong to? Meat-eating animals are seen to have canine teeth, and man also has four such teeth. For this reason, God created man as a meat-eater. God also created animals to be used for man’s sustenance. Foods like meat, fish, and eggs are very tasty. They give strength and pleasure to the body, and are also useful as medicines for curing diseases.

‘Killing is Unavoidable in Society’

Animals are killed for use in different kinds of sacrifices; for example, there are sacrifices to please evil spirits, sacrifices to remove possession of spirits, and offerings to village deities like *Amman*². Meat is also used in the left-hand path of Goddess worship (*vama marga*), and in offering to the spirits of deceased black magicians (*mantra murttis*)³. There are also numerous cruel rituals where animals are killed in offerings to fierce goddesses like *Maruta*, *Ottamulaci*, *Pacchattolatti*, and *Venittu Kuttati*, and to fierce gods like *Ninamātan* and *Śankalibhutattān*⁴. Meat is also used in the ceremony of ‘*tacchubali*’ (a ritual connected to one’s house), and in the ceremony for consecrating sacred vessels of the ancestral family’s house, as well as in the rites performed for the ancestors (found in *Manu Smriti*).

More than all of those, meat is used in the various Vedic sacrifices of the ‘great’ *brahmins*. Besides, there is also the custom of feeding meat to elephants, of eating meat and wine as part of the festival ceremony ‘*katuvāveśa*,’⁵ and of giving meat pieces to dogs and cats that one likes, as well as to drunkards.

In this way, man is killing millions of moving creatures, day and night. Most of this killing is avoidable, yet man continues to do it intentionally. Despite this, has anybody blamed anyone for this? Will there be anybody to blame anyone for this? There is no one to interfere in or control this matter.

'There is Killing in Vegetarianism'

Suppose you are able to avoid these forms of killing. Will that give you the status of being 'non-violent'? Not at all, never. Some clever people may egotistically claim, 'we don't eat meat. We are vegetarians. Plants don't have life, so we are non-violent.' These same people will include in their 'vegetarianism' foods like milk and ghee, but these foods are much closer to meat products⁶. That isn't right. If one can drink milk, one can also eat meat.

Some say that eating meat makes one's nature cruel. That is also wrong. Though the snake is cruel, how much meat does it eat? Doesn't it eat the air?⁷

To say that plants don't have life is also wrong. Scientists have discovered that plants can feel pain, that they have the corresponding reactions to that, and that they experience intoxication through contact with alcohol. Just like the moving creatures, non-moving creatures like the tree, bushes, and grain all have life. In that case, even if one lives solely off of plants, one is still 'violent.'

That's not all. Through daily actions like farming, travelling, sweeping, lighting the lamp, cutting vegetables, husking paddy, sitting, and lying, so many millions of creatures like frogs, worms, and ants are destroyed. Due to even the regular actions like drinking milk, drinking water, inhalation, exhalation, and purgation, countless microscopic creatures are also killed.

‘Killing is Supported by Religion’

There is not a single religion or religious practitioner that doesn't allow violence, prompt violence, or commit violence. We have heard the case of some religious aspirants who were first meat-eaters and then renounced eating meat. They were then advised by knowledgeable monks in a logical and reasonable manner to again eat meat. Acting according to that instruction, some female devotees have said, 'strength of body is needed for *samadhi*. For that, eating meat is absolutely necessary. Those who don't obey this are great sinners, and we are not part of that group.' (Published in *Prabuddha Keralam*)⁸

‘Violence is in All Creatures’

What more proof is needed, in our time now, or for any time, when scripture, logic, and experience support this? Then what if we take a look at animals? The frog captures the fly and eats it. The snake eats the frog, the pig the snake, the tiger the pig, the lizard the spider, and so on. The big fish eat the small fish. There is no end to the cycle, so I am only summarizing the subject. In this way, the countless stronger creatures of land, sky, and water (like the lion, crocodile, and eagle) kill the other weaker creatures of land, sky, and water.

There are some creepers that can extend to nearby creatures or humans and suck out their blood and flesh. There are also some plants shaped like the plantain tree in other islands that expand upwards to nearby creatures, drag them inside, and suck out the blood and flesh forcefully, eschewing the pieces of bone⁹.

Therefore, we cannot see any creature's body as anything else but the food for another creature. When one creature sees another creature, it has the knowledge that the other is its prey. From that, the violent nature to kill arises within. The predator creature is also created with the strength needed to kill the prey creature, while the prey creature is only given the strength for it to be killed, after it experiences tremendous fear and suffering.

'Violence is the Purpose of Creation'

In this way, God, the Creator of everything, has created countless creatures with all of these attributes. Without separating them apart, He has placed them all to live together, on one Earth. In our scriptures, God is described as 'all-knowing,' and 'all-powerful.' If we examine this and our own faith, we can come to only one conclusion of the intention of God's Creation; it is that all places must be constantly filled with horrible cruelties, terrible pain, and cries of fear, without a break.

Then after seeing all of these extreme cruelties of His, or of Nature's, God doesn't feel the least bit of compassion. Instead, he even feels delighted upon constantly watching all of this. So if we fully consider this matter, nobody can avoid killing in any way, in any time or place. Then nobody with any intelligence will try to carry out something that isn't at all possible.

Then you may have the doubt, 'even if that isn't done easily, can't it be possible through difficulty?'

Even if you have this doubt, no matter how much difficulty you go through, it isn't possible to achieve something that you have no right to. So leave behind thoughts like, 'I must try hard to do this,' and 'how can a person say this to someone?' You cannot even think about this. If you try to refute violence, it will be like the ramblings of a mad person; nobody will accept it. Therefore, there is not a single person in the world that can refute violence. Instead, anybody can support violence.

View of the Non-violence Supporter¹⁰

'Killing is Not the Purpose of Creation'

You say that no one is able to not kill anything in any place, in any way, and because of that, the universe was created for the purpose of killing. However, if everybody in the world were to try to kill everything completely in all places, will that be possible, even for a short time?¹¹ No. Also, anything that is subject to birth will die naturally, even if something else doesn't kill it. Therefore, the creation of the universe is not for the purpose of killing.

That's not all. For whatever time one can sit without moving, speaking, eating, and holding one's breath, however little, at least that time one is able to be completely non-violent. All people except for children are able to do this. Therefore, we aren't just able to be violent, but to be non-violent as well.

‘Are Animals for Man’s Purpose?’

Man has the thinking that goats and cattle are for his purpose, and that they are for him to kill and eat. He also has been given the necessary strength for achieving that aim. On the other hand, the other animals are only given the strength to be killed, despite their experience of severe pain and fear, and the desire to escape. For this reason, some say that these creatures were created for man’s purpose, because man eats them.

If that is so, then you should also think that man and other animals are created for the purpose of the lion, tiger, and other stronger animals, because it is their nature to capture and eat man.

That’s not all. For killing, animals like the lion only have to rely on their body parts like claws and feet, without the help of other instruments like guns, swords, or spears. For eating, they don’t have to rely on a stove, fire, salt, provisions, and cooking. Therefore, this is more suitable for them.

Man first feels disgust towards meat, and after long association, gains a liking for it. Animals like the lion aren’t like that. Then why can’t you consider that man is created as the food for animals?’

‘Nobody Can Support Violence’

The violence-supporter here says that only violence is possible, and non-violence is impossible. Suppose this person orders the embodiment of violence (*Himsa*) to set out on a widespread tour. According to

that order, it was arranged that *Himsa* would set out on such a month, from such a date, in these directions, staying in these places. When the people knew that *Himsa* was setting out, the people in those places, from children to the elderly, all ran and hid in the other directions with fear for their lives, crying loudly, before *Himsa* could reach there. Those unfortunate ones who were left behind experienced great suffering and died.

Without seeing even a single creature to greet or give hospitality to himself, *Himsa* saw that in every direction he went, the place was void. With a broken spirit, *Himsa* said to the violence-supporter, 'There is not a single creature that isn't averse to me. The only person on this Earth that supports me is you. Here, you can now receive me!' When *Himsa* said this, approaching the violence-supporter face-to-face, the violence-supporter said, 'Hey! Don't come near me! Please go away!' Crying loudly, he ran, searching for a way to get rid of *Himsa*.

Before, the man supported *Himsa* and told many justifications to others about *Himsa*. However, that same violence-supporter is seen here running away from *Himsa*, without looking back. He was running, searching for *Ahimsa* (non-violence). Thus, there is not a single creature or person on Earth that can support violence. Nobody has the right to support violence. Instead, everybody has the right to refute violence.

In the same way, suppose that the embodiment of non-violence (*Ahimsa*) sets out at the order of the non-violence-supporter. When the people came to know of this, they decorated their homes and streets with colourful banners, auspicious lamps, full garlands, plantain bunches and boxes full of celebratory rice. Then all the people bathed and dressed in beautiful clothes to greet *Ahimsa*, along with 'ashtamangalyam' (eight auspicious things for greeting)¹², a shower of flower petals, auspicious musical instruments, *vāykkurava*¹³ and gleeful cheering, 'victory to *Ahimsa Devi*! Victory to *Ahimsa Devi*!' Thus, the people greeted and performed worship to *Ahimsa*. Nobody felt like leaving that place.

When the non-violence-supporter reached there and saw all of this, he ran to embrace *Ahimsa* with his eyes full with tears of bliss. In this way, all people and creatures search for *Ahimsa*, depend on *Ahimsa*, and constantly meditate on *Ahimsa*. Therefore, it is proven that all creatures support *Ahimsa*.

'Man is the Cruellest Animal'

Now we can look at how meat-eaters and vegetarians are according to worldly logic, and what they fairly deserve. Animal historians have classified meat-eating animals like the lion and tiger as 'cruel animals' and plant-eating animals like the cow, goat, and deer as 'passive animals.'

However, according to their nature, animals like the lion simply must eat meat. No matter how hard

they try, they can only survive off of meat. On the other hand, we humans go through a lot of trouble to become familiar with eating meat, and that is not easy for us to obtain. Man also has the discrimination to know that other creatures feel pain like him

Therefore, the 'cruel animals' are not the least guilty. It is the cruel exploiter man who is guilty of all crimes. In the case where the innocent animal is labelled as 'cruel,' man should be labelled as 'double cruel.' When animals like the lion are hungry, they have to wait for a long time, and they will eat whatever is necessary the moment that they attain it. As for man, he previously brings the animal in his possession through either stealing, force, or by buying it. Then he starves it, makes it perform labour, and makes it suffer, giving it an unfair murder.

In that case, we have to say that man is much more cruel. An animal doesn't advise another animal and thereby make it eat meat. But when another person thinks 'what a shame! This isn't needed!' and he abstains from eating meat, man gives several misguided justifications and prompts him to kill as well. Therefore, we have to give the status of countless 'cruels' to man.

Then we can take the violence-supporter's logic that one should act according to others according to how they act. This person's logic is that there is nothing wrong in man killing the 'passive animals,' and that one can even cruelly kill a 'cruel animal.' In

that case, because man is much more cruel than so-called 'cruel animals' for numerous reasons, even if one were to kill man with extreme cruelty, making him experience pain and slowly kill him, then that still wouldn't be enough. Through this person's logic of violence, it is proven that no matter what violence one does to man, there is nothing wrong.

'Reason and Intention'

Some people argue in this way; 'we use milk. It has been proven scientifically that there are numerous thousands of living creatures in that. Can you avoid killing those? Then suppose you don't use milk. Just like that, there are also living creatures in the air. How can you avoid killing them? Therefore, it is impossible to even think about pure non-violence. However, it must be compulsory that we should not intentionally kill any creature without a reason.'

I don't feel that this is right. There cannot be any intention without a reason. Only where there is a reason can there be an intention. Our teachers from olden times have said, '*prayojanam anudīśya na mandopi pravartate.*' 'Not even a fool acts without a reason.'

Suppose a person with a loaded gun sees a tiger in front of him, while hiding in a tree. He suddenly thinks, 'this tiger may kill me later. If he kills me, then my desire to live a long life won't be fulfilled. So, I should kill him without cause.' Then he shoots the animal and kills it.

In that case, the two thoughts 'it may eat me,' and 'I must live a long life' are reasons. The thought, 'I should kill it' is the intention.

Suppose someone has the desire, 'I want to eat goat meat.' He then goes and kills that animal or has it killed. There, the desire 'I want to eat this' is the reason, and this produces the strong insistence, 'I should kill it.'

Then you may ask, 'children sometimes grab hold of creatures and kill them, don't they? So what is the reason for that?'

If not in this manner, there will still be a strong reason in a different way. Sometimes, children may have the unbearable desire to see the inside and outside of a creature, just like scientists do. This is the reason. Then the thought of the children, 'I should catch this and cut it open' is the intention. The power of the children's intention may even be more powerful than older people.

When it is proven in court that the defendant is guilty of a crime, the judge has the decision to punish him. There, the crime is the reason, and this creates the intention, 'he should be punished.' If it is proven that the defendant is not guilty of the crime, then the intention to punish is destroyed. Then the reason becomes the thought, 'he isn't guilty,' and the intention is, 'he should not be punished.' Therefore, the logic is proven that violence can only come from a person when there is a reason.

‘Unintentional Forms of Violence’

It is true that a person who completely abstains from eating meat and strives consciously to avoid harming any other creature unknowingly becomes a cause for the destruction of many living creatures through inhalation, exhalation, and other daily actions. However, this doesn't become sin like in the case of those who raise or buy animals and have them murdered. Such a non-violent person won't have any kind of reason to kill, like the feeling 'this animal may kill me,' or the intention, 'I should kill this creature.' The violence that comes from such a person is only like a tree that happens to fall on someone and kill¹⁴. There is no way to prevent this kind of violence.

The saying, 'don't harm anything intentionally without a reason' is just empty words. A person cannot have intention or action without a reason. These empty words have been used to support such thoughts like, 'without restraint, harm and kill whatever you like,' and the insistence, 'I want to kill this creature.'

‘Plants and Life’

The violence-supporter said that plants have life, and that vegetarians are also guilty of violence because of this. Some people may be thinking that our ancestors didn't know that plants have life. That thinking is only the result of their ignorance. The time when that was discovered is way far in the past. That is why the name '*carācara jīvas*'¹⁵ is seen used as

a tradition in the scriptures. This is something that Western scientists have only begun to discover. Therefore, nobody argues that plants don't have life, or that vegetarians are perfectly non-violent. For people who have climbed that far in non-violence, it is only said that they are one or two steps less violent than others.

The different creatures are of five types, according to their capacity for knowledge. The first type of creature has only one faculty of knowledge, through touch. These are creatures like the tree and grass. Then there are creatures with two faculties of knowledge, through touch and smell, like the sea coral. There are also creatures with three faculties of knowledge, through touch, smell, and taste. These are creatures like the ant, viruses, insects, and jellyfish. Then there are creatures with four faculties of knowledge, through touch, smell, taste, and sight, like the butterfly and beetle. Finally, there are the creatures with five faculties of knowledge, through touch, taste, smell, sight, and sound, like man and other animals.

Among all of these, only man is able to think about this world, as well as the world hereafter. All other animals are only able to think about this world. The experience of pleasure and pain in trees and other plants is much duller than in the other groups. Because of the differences in their faculties of

knowledge, the forms of pleasure and pain are mostly concealed by the quality of inertia in Nature (*tamas guna*). This makes them dull, compared with their evolution in other living beings.

‘Three States of Knowledge’

Even for a human being with five senses and developed faculties of knowledge, he doesn't know anything in the state of deep sleep. Beginning from that state, man experiences three states of knowledge: the state of void, general knowledge, and specific knowledge.

Suppose someone calls to a person in deep sleep two or three times. Still, the sleeping person doesn't know anything. When the person calls again, the sleeping person hears without any feeling of meaning. When the person calls for the third time, he hears with the feeling of meaning and begins to act.

First came the state of void, where there is no knowledge. Then came the state that is separate from void, where the person is in general wakefulness through the sound, without awareness of meaning. Third is the clear state of specific knowledge, where the mind is joined with awareness of meaning. These are the three states of knowledge. In this, we can imagine that plants like the tree are in a state that is at the end of the state of void, with a tiny portion of the state of general knowledge.

'The Experience of Pain in Plants is Dull'

If you cut creatures like the worm in two, or if you cut the tail of a scorpion, we can see that both parts continue to move. However, if you cut part of the body of a human or other more developed body, the part connected to the heart will be moving, and the removed part unmoving.

When one has to cut off part of the leg or hand due to disease, a man uses chloroform to avoid experiencing the pain. There, the person goes into a state without the before-mentioned specific or general knowledge¹⁶.

Compared with moving creatures, the physical structure and evolution of plants like the tree are very undeveloped. Because of this, and from their extreme lack of knowledge, it isn't possible for plants to have any instrument for thinking. For these reasons, the capacity for trees to know pain and pleasure from things that are favourable or unfavourable can only be very dull.

In the situation of an operation, before the chloroform takes full effect and just after it wears off, the inner consciousness is aware, without experiencing the pain of the surgery. If that is so, then in a physical manifestation that is under-developed like the tree, without the capacity for knowledge, knowledge can only be extremely dull.

'Reactions seen in Plants'

When plants like the tree have contact with other things, we see that there are different reactions, like sounds and shaking. However, we can only consider those as like the changes and movement that happen when something comes into contact with a dead body. Those are activities caused by touch.

In some plants, we can see reactions that make it appear that they can know pain. For example, there is the '*totavati*,' or 'touch-me-not plant.' When one goes near that and gently touches it, the leaves of the plant droop down. There is also the '*tozhukani*,' a plant that clasps its leaves together when one speaks near it. Then there is the '*azhukani*,' a plant from which small drops of water come out. (People say that it cries)

But what about when we put a *papadam*¹⁷ in boiling coconut oil? From seeing the reaction of the *papadam*, we say, 'Oh, it's in pain!'¹⁸ So, even if it doesn't know pain, it is a natural thing for anything to give a reaction when it comes into contact with something else. To show this, there are numerous examples.

'Blood is Necessary to Know Pain'

When we feel pain in a wound somewhere in our body, that sensation is carried to the brain in order for us to know it, like in a telegram. If the pain doesn't reach that center, then we don't know the pain. In order to know pain, one must primarily have

blood. If there is no blood, then one cannot know pain. That blood must also have a specific ratio of ingredients. Only then is it proper blood. If there is a shortcoming in any part of that ratio, then there will be a defect in the blood for giving knowledge

If we try to gather fire, we will burn ourselves. However, if one places fire before a rheumatism patient and he touches it, he may be numb to the sensation. In that case, we can say that he isn't capable of knowing the heat of the fire.

The blood of plants is not powerful enough to communicate pain. When the soul takes birth as a moving creature, this knowledge within is developed more and more.

'The Defects of Killing'

There are two kinds of defects in killing. One is making the creature feel pain, and second is to delay its path to Liberation. Within those, making a living creature feel pain primarily applies to moving creatures. The delaying caused to the creatures is applicable equally in both moving and non-moving creatures.

We said before that when we compare the differences of knowledge in the moving and non-moving creatures, we can relatively consider that the non-moving creatures have no pain. The disagreements and sadness of people are not about the delay caused to creatures; instead, it is about causing them pain.

Suppose there is a place where whoever goes there at a prompt time will receive benefits for securing their future, suitable food, friendly companions, and very pleasing sights. Men and women, from young to old, went in search of this place. Midway there, they heard that a tiger grabbed and killed two people. That area was also filled with forest.

Then isn't it certain that the travellers will renounce all the other benefits that awaited them at the place and stop their journey, without even staying there?

In an operation, a person doesn't have the mind to experience the pain of cutting a body part, so he takes chloroform. So, from these reasons, the delaying of the journey for the travellers, the cutting of a body part that is diseased, the taking of chloroform to lose consciousness – from these, can't we understand that everybody is averse to death and pain?

'The Delay of Creatures towards Liberation'

Now we can look at the matter of delaying the living creatures. When we roll a ball of wax over metal particles, the particles become absorbed in the ball of wax. Likewise, the specific *vāsanās* (subtle impressions) of all souls are absorbed in Primordial Nature in the time of dissolution. When the creative process begins again, each soul accepts a body according to those *vāsanās*. All of these souls travel with the desire for the supreme bliss of Liberation.

The body that each soul is born with is manifested specifically for that soul's upwards evolution. If we destroy that body before its intention is completed, that soul will have to again accept the same class of body and spend a lot of time there. This creates a big delay between the soul and its goal, preventing its path.

'The State of Vegetarians'

Great souls see even this as violence. They do try to avoid this violence. Because of the unbearable pain inflicted on creatures through violence described before, the great souls have the intention that 'one should not inflict harm on any creature, from those with only one faculty of knowledge to those with all five.' They also feel that just avoiding killing some particular creatures is not perfect non-violence. Because of this, they said the great proclamation, '*ahimsā paramo dharma*' - 'Non-violence is the highest righteousness.'

Now we can look at what level a vegetarian is on. According to the reasoning of Western scientists¹⁹ and the knowledge passed down through tradition, the violence from a vegetarian is only towards the creatures with just one faculty of knowledge. Thus, the vegetarians are freed from the violence towards the other four classes of creatures. To suddenly attain this great accomplishment is not easy.

In this way, a person striving to attain the high status of being non-violent must quickly attain progress

towards that goal by renouncing violence to all classes of creatures. Those who have progressed three or four steps in this direction are vegetarians. Then we may ask, 'what is the next step?'

'Ultimate Non-Violence'

Through the perfect knowledge that there is violence in eating plants, through developing the strength to withdraw from that, and through great enthusiasm in spiritual practices, a person may limit eating to just dry leaves and fruits. Then, seeing that there is even violence in that, one may go to just relaying on water to live. Then there can also be violence there, can't there?

After that, one may live with just the air as food. It is when one reaches this level that one is called a 'Yogi.' Then fearing that there is even violence from depending on air, if one gains the strength to even withdraw from that, one keeps the vital breath within the body and relies on absorption in Self-Knowledge. There, one attains the state of Supreme Bliss, the state of Liberation, which is proclaimed in all our scriptures; the state beyond the feeling that one kills another and another kills oneself²⁰. Along with that, one attains the status of being perfectly non-violent.

This is how great souls in the past have instructed and practiced non-violence. Without understanding this true principle, some meat-eaters

who are under the grip of base and sinful *vāsanās* say, 'Hey! Because plants also have life, those who eat those are also violent, just like us! Non-violence isn't necessary!' In this way, such people give misguided justifications and ramble senselessly. However, if one pays no mind to that and practices as described here, one can attain Liberation.

'Food and Character'

Some great souls have given the opinion that one's diet affects one's character, and that eating meat makes one's nature cruel. In America, Swami Vivekananda said, 'if you just go to a zoo, you can directly understand the differences caused by diet, and that one should eat foods that purify the mind.'

Then what if we look at the connection of diet with the intellect? In that matter, we should understand through looking at the lives of some geniuses with great intelligence. Professor Neumann, who attained great fame through his work in the fields of philosophy, math, and literature, said, 'I have never felt that eating meat is favourable to the development of intelligence.'

A famous scholar and vegetarian, Professor John Ibimier has said, 'eating meat is never necessary for maintaining health and strength of body.' One famous orator and truthful man, with an expansive heart, Edward Battsar has said, 'one food that is suitable for

man's constitution and provided by Nature is plants.' Like this, numerous great people have expressed similar views, like Sri Buddha, Pythagoras, Milton, Sir Isaac Newton, Saint Peter, Saint Matthew, Saint John, etc.

'Meat and Diseases'

Famous English physicians like Dr. Hague and French doctors have proved logically that eating meat causes several kinds of terminal diseases. They say that meat doesn't have the capacity to reduce a special enzyme in the body, 'uric acid.' Instead, meat makes that grow even more. Such diseases caused by this are rheumatism, headaches, muscle disorders, asthma, epilepsy, depression, mental retardation, diabetes, rectal prolapse, etc.

When the great Dr. Robert Bell researched the cause of breakouts of Cancer in England, Scotland, Ireland, and other areas, he proved that the primary cause is eating meat, and that eating wheat and other vegetarian items instead of meat caused a decrease in the disease

'Similarities of Man and Animals'

Besides the fact that the teeth of both man and meat-eating animals are white, there is no other similarity. That's not all. In whatever way that animals use those teeth as instruments, man doesn't utilize them in the same way. The teeth in the mouths of

men and animals are seen to be very different. However, the front and molar teeth of man and the monkey, as well as their instruments for digestion are seen to be very similar.

Because of this, out of experience, it is very contradictory to compare human beings with meat-eating animals. The small intestine of meat-eating animals is seen to be very short, only six times the size of the animal's trunk. The large intestine in them is very soft. Because of that, the essential part of the food that is separated is processed in a moment and only stays there for a short time.

The small intestine of human beings is twelve times the length of the trunk, and the large intestine is like a long bag. The food there stays for a long time, and only then is digested. Therefore, because the essential parts of digested meat are separated from it within mere moments, meat is not in any way natural or suitable for human beings²¹. Besides, that also becomes a cause for numerous destructive diseases. This opinion is proved very logically by famous biologists, such as Professor William Rollins, Prof. R. S. Baron Curare, Sir Charles Bell (F. R. S), Richard Charles Darwin (L. L. D; F. R. C. S.), and others. Because of this, the argument that man is a natural meat-eater is proven wrong.

‘Existence and Destruction of Creatures’

Now, we can consider which is longer; a creature's sustenance or its destruction. For any creature, or any thing, the time of destruction of that thing is normally seen to be very insignificant in relation to its sustenance. A creature that lives for ten years is destroyed in only a minute. No matter how you look, it is directly evident that the time of existence of anything is longer than its destruction. We can also see that Nature has provided the things necessary for sustenance in their environment. Therefore, it is shown that Nature has given more length of time to the sustenance of living creatures²².

‘The Duty of Man’

Now we can speak about plants and animals. It isn't correct to think, ‘the animals eat meat, so we can too.’ We spoke before about animals that eat meat by their own nature. For now, let these wicked people have their logic. We can also see natural vegetarians among the plant class and the animal class. For now, leave behind the logic that human beings are natural plant-eaters. That's not all.

This human body is far superior to other animal bodies. The less developed creatures have an inert intellect. They are primarily created from the *tamas guṇa*, and are not able to have any of the high thoughts of the more developed creatures. This has been said by the great soul Swami Vivekananda.

In another circumstance in America, he said, 'a big part of the human species is not far away from animals, and in some aspects, the control power of the human being is not much more developed than the lower species of creatures. Our control over our minds is very small. We must try to gain that control.'

From these words of great people, we should know that the nature of animals is to follow the mental modifications that are according to Nature. Any fool can accomplish that. Those people who have faced that and moved forwards are those who have been praised in the world. It is clear that we are following them in the same way.

Don't we constantly abide by the different relationships like mother, sister, wife, and other women? Don't we make sure that we don't transgress those distinctions through mental disturbance? Don't we know about the sufferings of those who acted opposed to these boundaries? We don't see any such things in the animal class. Therefore, it is clear that it is man's nature to restrain the mental modifications of instinct, and that indeed is what man must practice.

NON-VIOLENCE AND RELIGIONS

The Hindu Faith

Because this belief in non-violence manifested in religions, we can enter them for a brief study. We can see that it isn't necessary to do so much research on how the Hindu religion speaks about eating meat. All of our great teachers have opposed eating meat.

It is said, '*Nākṛtvā prāṇinām hiṃsā māṃsam utpadyate kvacit, na ca prāṇivadhasvargyaṃ tasmāt māṃsaṃ visarjayet.*' 'It isn't possible to eat meat without killing to living creatures, and it isn't possible for one who kills living creatures to attain Heaven. Therefore, relinquish eating meat.'

'*Dvāraṃ kim ekaṃ narakasya hiṃsā yā svargadā prāṇabhṛtām ahiṃsā.*' 'The one door to hell is violence, and the one door to Heaven is non-violence of living creatures.' In the Tirukurall, it says '*Kollān pulilaimaruttānai kaikuppi ellā uyirum tozhum.*' 'All living creatures will salute a man who does not kill.' (Many other quotations should be added)

The Jain Faith

The manifestation of this religion was in 490 B.C. The founding teacher of this religion was Vardhamanamahaviran, the son of a king in the land Raisāliya. The primary principles of his were good character traits, like purity. However strict the prohibition of violence to creatures was in this religion then is followed by Jains even today.

This is shown through each of their practices. Thinking that many creatures may die through their inhalation and exhalation, they normally wear a netted-cloth to cover the mouth and nose. With the intention of not killing any creature through walking, they even use peacock feathers to clear the path of living creatures²³. After sunset, when the lamp is lit in the house, they don't eat. The reason is because some creatures may go near and then fall in the lamp. From these matters, it is clear that this religion does not allow the eating of meat or the killing of living creatures.

The Buddhist Faith

The founder of this religion is the well-known embodiment of compassion, Sri Buddha. This religion is the closest to the Hindu faith, and has been spread to countries like Japan and China. That's not all. This religion strongly argues that there is no God, and that all experiences are the fruits of one's own actions.

Even today, the founding teacher is considered as an Avatar, or Incarnation. The most primary practice in the life of this great soul, as well as the primary principle in his religion, is the duty of non-violence. Through Sri Buddha's logical reasoning and his capacity for showing the greatness of compassion to living creatures, many kings who previously held all sort of sacrifices with the killing of animals did away with those and destroyed the sacrificial grounds. They then prohibited violence towards living creatures in their own lands. The number of such kings is innumerable.

One king among these is Ashok. He constructed the first hospital for animals that suffer from various ailments. This gave the necessary arrangements to give

treatment to animals and restore them back to health. If we look according to this religion also, eating meat is completely not allowed.

The Christian Faith

This faith has become the religion for a huge number of people, and through its development, its strength, and its prosperity, has reached a high level. The founding teacher of this religion is the great devotee and most compassionate Jesus Christ. He divided the primary principles of his religion into ten main parts²⁴. He accepts as a primary principle of his religion the important restriction on killing.

The main Christian religious scripture is the Bible. There, in the Book of Genesis, it is said that after God created Adam and Eve, he says to them when He decides their food, 'Then God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you!" (Genesis 1:29)

Here, it doesn't ordain meat as a food for man. That's not all, In the Book of Genesis, chapter 9: 3, 4, it says, 'May all the creatures on the Earth give you food. But flesh with the life thereof, [which is] the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.'

Then we can look at the Book of Ezekial, chapter 4: 14-16. Christ says to God, 'O Lord God! behold, my soul hath not been polluted: for from my youth

up even till now have I not eaten of that which dieth of itself, or is torn in pieces; neither came there abominable flesh into my mouth..' After Christ says this, it says that the Lord blessed Christ.

In the Book of Matthew, chapter 5: 18, it says that when Christ was travelling along the sea of Galila, he saw Peter and Andrew catching fish, along with two other brothers. He then made then withdraw from there, saying, 'now you come to me. I will give you human fish.' We see that Christ called to them, brought them away, and made them into his own disciples.

Like this, in several parts of the Bible, we can see Christ opposing violence of living creatures and the eating of meat. There are numerous examples of how Christ never gained the lowliness of killing or eating flesh. His main disciples Peter, Matthew, John, and other great souls followed him in this way.

If there is anything seen opposed to this, then that is only because of the wickedness and selfishness of some people who misinterpret the Bible. Also, it is proven that Jesus and his disciples never ate flesh by great Christians and Christian historians like Hegel, Clement, Augustine, Philo, and others.

Up until the year 1692 A.D., the wrong custom of eating meat in Christian churches was never seen. After that, for some unknown reasons, Christians from the Western parts of Europe began to accept animal flesh. Seeing this, there was a big conference held in

the city of Constantinople, called the 'Trin Council,' in order to hold a debate on this subject. In this conference, there were more than 200 prominent disciples from places like Constantinople, Alak, Sandiriya, and Antiyak, and several emperors, all seated together.

In that circumstance, that great committee made a decision, written below; 'From now on, if any priest makes the blood of any living creature flow, he will be thrown out of the church, and if a householder does so, it is declared that he is excommunicated.'

We can see that the Christian churches in Eastern Europe still follow this as a practice. However, when it was seen that many people in Western churches were acting opposed to this, the righteous religious leaders had to hold their silence towards them. Anyway, let that be. There is no use in even thinking about those who act in a way opposed to one's own religion. Because of the aforesaid reasons, it is clear that eating meat is opposed in this religion.

Om Tat Sat.

¹ Sri Cattambi Swamikal begins by giving all of the justifications a meat-eater can give for the killing of living creatures.

² At the time of writing this, many village people of Kerala would perform such rites, which may include the killing of a chicken, etc.

³ It was believed that the spirits of the deceased black magician could benefit others through his powers, if the people offered to him.

⁴ These are all tribal family deities.

⁵ In this, people dress up like tigers and dance. In old days, some people included the consumption of meat and alcohol along with this.

⁶ This is because milk and ghee come from the cow, which is an animal.

⁷ In old days, people believed this, because the snake is seen sticking his tongue out, as if it is eating the air.

⁸ These words were taken from a publication by the Ramakrishna Math in Kerala.

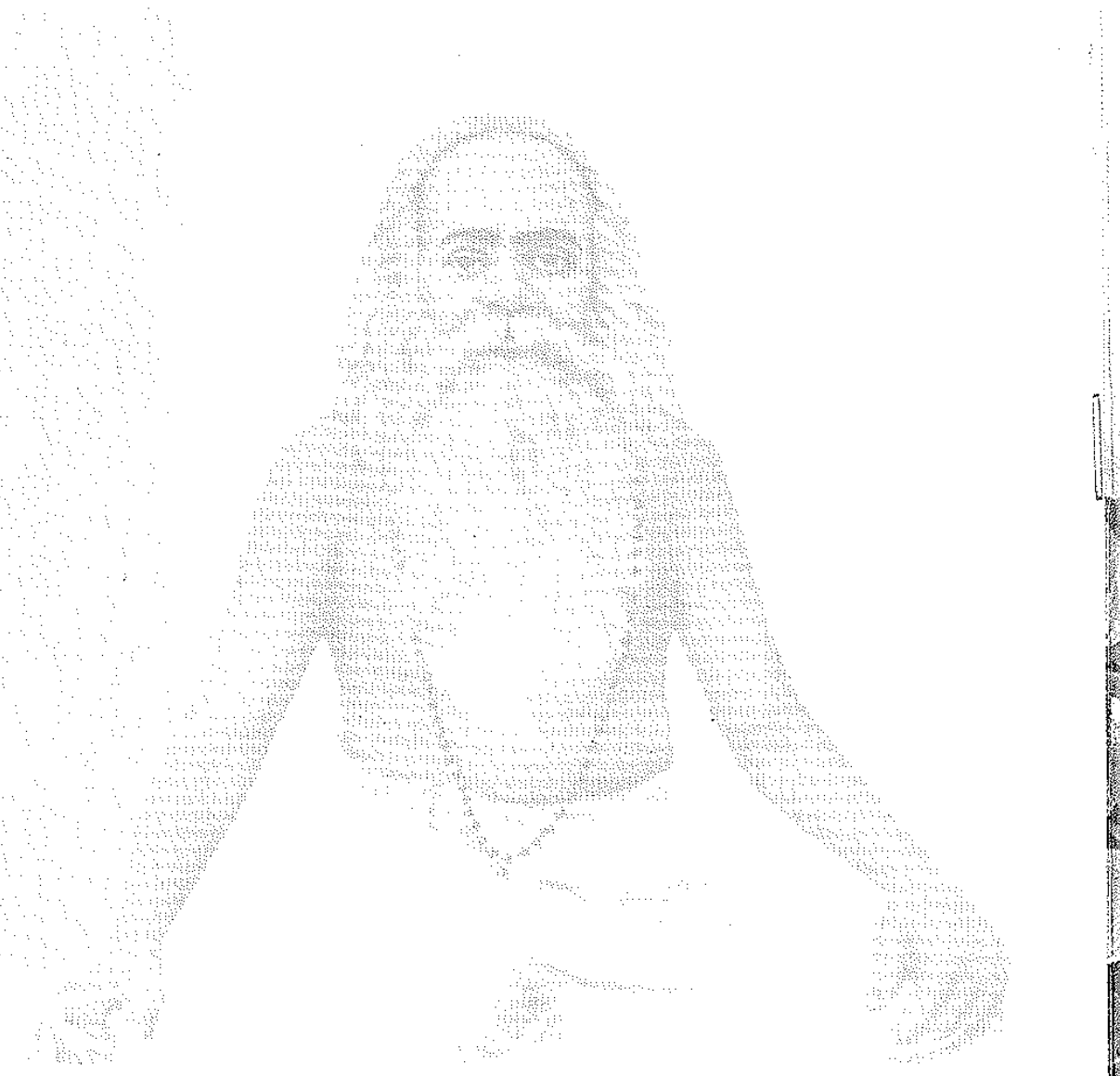
⁹ This refers to plants discovered in Africa.

¹⁰ Here, Sri Cattambi Swamikal refutes the previous arguments and proves the duty of non-violence to living beings. The coming arguments are all replies to each part of the arguments of the violence-supporter.

¹¹ This is because there would be somebody left, even if everyone else is killed. This refutes the idea that the purpose of Creation is for killing.

¹² These are a brahmin, a cow, fire, gold, ghee, the sun, the king, and water.

- ¹³ In a celebration, the people make this loud noise.
- ¹⁴ The tree doesn't have any kind of reason or intention when it falls.
- ¹⁵ This means 'the moving and non-moving living beings.'
- ¹⁶ This may be compared with the experience of pain in lesser developed plants
- ¹⁷ A fried Indian snack
- ¹⁸ This is because of the movement and sounds seen in the papadam when it is being fried.
- ¹⁹ The reader should bear in mind that the scientific findings quoted by Cattambi Swamikal are from the early 1900's.
- ²⁰ This refers to the verse in the Bhagavad Gita; 'nāyam hanti na hanyate' – 'he is neither the slayer nor the slain.' 2.19
- ²¹ The digestive instruments in meat-animals are suitable for eating meat, while man's digestive instruments are more developed, and suitable for plants.
- ²² This shows that the purpose of Nature's creation is not for killing.
- ²³ Through sweeping in this way, they avoid killing many creatures from stepping on them.
- ²⁴ The ten commandments



As an expression of his love
for living creatures,
the great saint Sri Chattampi Swamikal
composed this extraordinary work.
Here, he establishes man's duty
of non-violence.