

FIVE FORMS OF VIOLENCE

-- Brahma Kumaris, Mt. Abu, Rajasthan

Violence has pervaded all levels of society today. From wars, clashes, terrorist attacks to individual crimes we are witnessing increasingly shocking act of violence these days. All forms of violence we witness in this world are the manifestation of the violence within ourselves.

There has been much introspection and study on the factors that lead to violent behavior - social, political, economic, psychological etc. Poverty, lack of employment, lack of education, alcoholism, drugs, sexual perversion, money, power are many of the factors that are cited as reasons and motives for violence. But violence is much deep rooted. It stems from a far greater ignorance than humanity is aware of. The genesis of violence is very subtle and deeply seated in human consciousness.

Violence originates from vices. When human souls forget their true identity and begin to identify with their body, their roles and material assets, they come under the influence of vices. To think and act under the influence of vices is to commit violence because the soul is violating its true nature of peace, joy, love and power.

The five forms of violence committed by human beings are to indulge in five vices - lust, anger, greed, attachment and ego. All vices are connected to the feeling of wanting or desiring. All desires keep us in the illusion of fulfillment that is gained only for a fleeting moment.

LUST - has been considered as the greatest enemy of human soul. Lust destroys all purity and power in the soul. It is a great deception. Lust is not just to indulge in physical pleasures. People often spend their lives lusting for money and power. Lust is an obsessive or addictive desire to seek support, fulfillment, happiness and self worth by indulging in pleasures that finish all inner powers and dignity of the soul. It creates endless cycles of desires and indulgence. It makes a person extremely selfish and finishes all clarity, sensitivity, love and truth in the soul.

ANGER - is a fire that burns the self and others. When desires or expectations are not met; when situations or people don't our way we become angry and react. Anger blunts our discernment and decision-making powers. We are not able to think and act rationally when we are angry. We are totally overpowered by negative emotions and we use emotionally charged words or actions to force others to meet our expectations. Anger always makes a soul subservient to other people's behavior and situations. Anger can lead to destructive behavior that can cause great damage on large scale such as war, terrorism, murders etc.

GREED - is another word for insatiable desires. A greedy person is always poor and empty inside even though he may have lots of material assets at his disposal. Greed keeps one in a state of continuous seeking and chasing desires. Greed inevitably leads to unrighteous and corrupt practices. It makes a person very unhappy, fearful, dishonest and irresponsible. Greedy people can never enjoy life as they always want more. Greed can lead to total imbalance and exploitation of man and nature which can result in wide-spread damage.

ATTACHMENT - is a subtle but deep-rooted vice. Many saints have pointed out attachment as the root of all suffering. Attachment comes from the need to feel supported and valued by people, objects and roles. It makes one selfish and creates strong sense of false support and

identity. Attachment keeps one entangled in the web of 'mine' and the need to hold on to whatever one is attached to. Attachment makes one selfish petty and narrow-minded.

EGO - is the subtlest enemy of the soul. When we are under the influence of ego we are totally disconnected from our true self-respect. In ego, we fabricate and identify ourselves with false self image. Ego thrives on attention and an egoist person always feels insecure and seeks attention. It is said - if it hurts it is ego. An egoist is always influenced by praise and defamation. Ego keeps one under deep delusion and falsehood. It isolates a person from others and sets up clashes, discord, hatred and blind competition.

All the bad things happening in the world today can be traced to these five forms of violence. When we understand our true spiritual nature - that all souls are pure and peaceful beings whose innate nature is divine - we can make a choice to live by our truth and not to violate ourselves. When we violate ourselves we are violating eternal spiritual laws that are needed to sustain peace and harmony in this world.

God Himself is now reestablishing a new world where 'ahimsa' or complete non-violence will be the supreme dharma or way of life. He is imparting true wisdom to overcome these vices. Violence can only be eliminated by following spiritual principles and by becoming voiceless through Rajyoga - spiritual communion with God*.