

7/2/13
Verse 25

What is good for one person and brings misery to another
such actions are opposed to the self, remember!
those who give great grief to another
will fall into the fiery sea of hell and burn.

Free translation:

What is good for one and might cause disaster to another is opposed to
the unity of the Self. Those who grievously hurt others will
consequentially bring upon themselves pain like hell fire.

Nataraja Guru's:

What spells benefit to one, while to another distress brings,
Such conduct is one that violates the Self; beware!
That spark of pain intense to another given
Into inferno's ocean it falls, there to burn its flames.

Another perfect evening cloaked us in soft, warm light, the
lingering twilight of the far-enough North. The relative simplicity of the
subject lent itself to a positive engagement, despite the whiff of hellfire
present in the text. We all know perfectly well that hell is experiential
rather than geographical, and its antidote is unitive understanding. Still,
there are several caveats worthy of close examination.

Bill reiterated the verse's assertion that if you do something that's
good for yourself and hurts someone else, that's negative. It's a measure
of your responsibility to notice that you are creating a negative karma. If
you see someone else as part of yourself then it's much harder to push
them away. Laughing ruefully, he added that hell is not at the bottom of
the earth but at the bottom of your psyche. We all agreed with him that
we have multiple opportunities every day to choose a healthy direction,
but several of us admitted that we don't always take the high road, even

if we mean to. As Joanne said, letting go of irritation is one thing but seeing the other person as part of you is much more challenging. Yet knowing that all our feelings are within us and basically affect us more than anyone else, we can at least surrender our petty jealousies for our own benefit.

This doesn't mean we should become meek and mild, necessarily. Paul remembered that in his childhood church he was taught to turn the other cheek in the face of hostility, but most of the time that didn't solve anything. Sometimes you have to stand up for what's right, and not let bullies push you around. (Of course, Paul is definitely going to Hell for saying this.) Bill recalled Nitya telling him that getting angry was counterproductive, and that's certainly true. But Nitya occasionally did act angrily, if it served to bring an important point home. It was always for a good cause. He remained grounded in peace, even as he blasted folly. It made his words even more effective, because humans can sense if other people are disturbed, and will simply shut them off. They turn the other cheek, confident they have scriptural backing.

Patrick Misson's recounting of Nataraja Guru's attitude in the latest Gurukulam (Spring 2013) is a perfect example of this subtle—to all appearances—distinction. Although it was minimal enough, Nataraja Guru slapped a boy because he was angry, and not as a reasoned response, and so made a serious apology to him. It's a very moving story, which I'll reprint in Part III in case you don't receive the magazine.

Because Nitya examines evil in some detail in the commentary, we batted it around quite a bit. It's a prominent feature of most people's thinking, of course. But evil is baldly dualistic, so in Advaita it is downplayed. In Vedanta, the more unitive concept is ignorance. Like a shadow where light doesn't fall, but even that is too dualistic. Narayana Guru based his whole philosophy on the universal quest for happiness. It gets diverted into many false pursuits based on ignorance, and these have a painful and deleterious impact on the world as well as us. But we can trace any and all of our activities back to a primeval motivation of seeking happiness. This simultaneously provides unitive understanding and implies a means of correction. The Atmopadesa Satakam is a broad-

mind means of correction for our ignorance. Ignorance takes the form of seeing everything as separate and unrelated, and thereby ripe for exploitation, and its cure is the intuition (the indwelling apprehension) of oneness.

One fertile source of confusion is that the concepts of ego and free will are associated with our wakeful consciousness, but their roots are set very deep in the unconscious. Our conscious mind is basically a spin doctor, putting a socially acceptable face on our behavior, no matter how selfish it may be. Everyone believes they are acting admirably, even as they blatantly excuse their less than admirable traits. We mean well, but that's just the window dressing of our true motivations, which we are barely aware of, if at all. Yogis seek to become much more aware of what is going on within them, so as to minimize self-delusion.

The verse implies a kind of deconstruction of our motives. We believe we are good, and bad resides elsewhere. We have to realize that our actions inevitably throw off a wake of both good and evil, and that unless we closely examine our lives we will remain ignorant of our real impact. We will automatically choose our happy-faced image over an accurate self-assessment, meaning we're no different from all the other fools of human history. Nitya offers a caution about this:

Man should learn how he can exercise a true free will, which is when he is freeing himself from the clutches of his sensuality, from the demands of his *vasanas*, and when he is seeing the oneness of all from inside. Only after getting free of these conditionings does true freedom of will come. Otherwise, you think you have free will, but you are a slave to your senses and your urges. You make your reason a kind of donkey upon which evil rides to its own destruction.

For many of us, the experience we've had of actual hell fire is the motivator to take a serious look at ourselves. We've been riding that donkey a very long time, and getting away with murder. Until we get burned, we're likely to keep up the masquerade. But when we find ourselves on the ground, on our ass so to speak, we think, "Wait a

minute. I guess I'm missing something." Then we start to shrug off the pretences and peer into the gloom. Our gloom.

The class felt that what inspired people in the presence of the Dalai Lama and other saintly types is that they are totally unpretentious. In a world of endless pretension, its absence is so startling and refreshing that it brings many people to tears. The tears are the cries of a stifled soul catching a glimpse of its true nature, surely the essential call to seek restoration of our authentic free will. Try as we might, no amount of pretense can ever add up to authenticity. We might as well give it up.

And how do we go about this restorative endeavor? Nitya advocates experiencing beauty as an excellent technique. He means really experiencing it. Paying attention to beauty energizes our whole being to come alive to our unitive core. Nitya says:

To have a comprehensive vision of the Self, one should experience the overwhelming beauty of the Absolute in both its manifested and unmanifested states. When there is a deficiency in this vision, ignorance is casting its shadow on us. When the shadow of ignorance becomes more and more pronounced, we see less of truth and become increasingly identified with our physical entity, which separates us from our divine nature.

Our physical entity is obviously different from the next person's, so the more we focus on it, the more separated we will feel. Mick reminded us that this was the mid-semester exam posed a week or two back: how do we bring about or at least explain the restoration of oneness, when everything we see and experience is different from its neighbors? Difference is perceptible with the senses; unity is not. This is why sages instruct us to transcend sensory awareness. Not that we should kill the joy of experience, but to overcome the dominance of superficial perceptions to reclaim our universality.

Unfortunately, many preceptors teach exactly that: we should kill the joy, because it distracts us from truth. Narayana Guru's uplifting vision, as translated by Nitya, is to look for truth right in what we find most fascinating, gorgeous, inspiring. Swami Tanmayan sent out an

apposite quote last night that fits in well with the subject, from H.L. Mencken: “For centuries, theologians have been explaining the unknowable in terms of the-not-worth-knowing.” Excellent. If what you’re investigating doesn’t ring your chimes, lift your heart, or make you feel like your floating up in the air, in a long-lasting fashion, something important is missing.

This doesn’t mean that not seeing beauty is evil in itself. The Guru’s point is that when we are closed off from the wonder of the Absolute, we turn toward separateness, which opens the door for harmful actions. It is possible to be saturated in separateness and still retain an altruistic attitude, and this is an eminently worthwhile interim perspective. But the only thoroughgoing cure for our shortcomings is to reconnect with the universal aspect, which Mick described as the childlike, spontaneous, part of us.

Life itself is the whole point. We exist. We are aware. And we care. That miracle should be cherished and handled with great care. Along the line we learned we are supposed to prove ourselves, to justify our existence. It made us begin to feel like interlopers, that we can never measure up to the impossible standards of theoretical perfection. But this is exactly the false sense of self we need to transcend. Like a child, we need to know we don’t require any justification other than being alive this very moment.

The work we’re undertaking is to restore the spontaneous beauty that is an intrinsic part of us. This is not done in a day, sad to say, because our spontaneity is overlaid with whole continents of tangled karmic strains. Vedanta is about intelligently untangling ourselves. If we just sit and pretend we’re free, we stay tangled. We have to work hard and intelligently toward understanding.

Jan was moved by the poetic ideas of St. Augustine, that seeing with the mind of the creator allows us to appreciate the moment and discover the beauty in it. She is always trying to connect her experience with her heartfelt desire to uplift those around her, and hopes that that kind of example will eventually spread. On good days especially, Jan’s joy is contagious.

Yet Nitya cautioned us that negativity is as contagious as beauty—often much more compelling. Why is that? When we are focused on differences, fears and paranoia can rapidly be blown out of proportion. What the ego sells as a logical inference is really prettified panic and hysteria, which we climb aboard and ride to our own destruction. A yogi must take a serious vow to not buy into it.

Susan, the mother of two young adults, brought up a great example of the clash between perception and insight. She well knows that teenagers are negative, that they love to gang up against an “other,” often their own parents or teachers. It looks like they are hostile by nature. But on closer observation, they are desperate for a sense of community, of being loved and appreciated, and the only way they know to get it is by disdaining fools. This is easy, since there are plenty of absurdities to make fun of, and lampooning them draws you into a ready-made affinity group. The insight that those who appear on the surface as different and a threat are just like us takes a lot of persistent effort. Adults are not much different than teenagers, but we hide our disdain better. We are more sophisticated. Like them we tend to hang out with people who share our prejudices, which is very comfortable, and avoid those who disagree, which is highly discomfiting.

In sum, as Narayana Guru pleaded in Verse 6: Who is there to comprehend reality’s one changeless form? It looks like it will always be a rare accomplishment, and so the chaos and conflict of human society is a long way from being tamed. But this is our resolution in the Gurukula class, to uphold these high values, even if in so doing we don’t always get our own way. It’s a joy to be part of a rare group dedicated to honesty, and willing to own our weaknesses, which is a true strength.

These are deep waters, and hopefully we will hear more about them. I’ll add more later about the pop quiz on explaining oneness to a world of dualists. Your contribution is assuredly welcome.

In closing, Nitya’s final paragraph sums up the whole complicated business better than I could ever hope to do:

With this verse and the previous one, Narayana Guru gives the world his contribution of social ethics based on Self-realization. It

should become a cardinal principle of our own lives. It is not confined to any creed. On the positive side you are asked simply to see the Self in all and befriend it. From the negative angle you are told that if you make your own Self alienated from you, you will cause a boomerang of the same evil upon you. Thus, for your own peace and unbroken joy it is necessary to contribute to the general good every day and every moment. We take upon ourselves unlimited liability to bear the cross of all; we commit ourselves to be our brother's keepers. The best teaching of all the world's scriptures is epitomized here in eight brief lines.

Part II

Neither This Nor That But . . . Aum:

We live in a beautiful world. Every morning the sun rises in the east like a golden disk. From the ocean to the mountains and from the mountains to the ocean soothing winds blow. Mother Earth is never tired of producing crop after crop. At home and in the neighbourhood we have people to love. Talented artists, poets, musicians and actors reveal many shades of beauty to bring us endless inspiration. Saviours, prophets, wise men and philosophers have enriched the heritage of man with their wisdom. Among us there are many dedicated workers who are trying to make this world a lovable place. In spite of all this, life on earth is not considered a very happy experience. Jesus referred to it as a world of crosses. Buddha saw nothing but pain. In the Gita, Krishna speaks of the world as the abode of sorrow. In ancient myths and legends we read of hell fires and purgatories. When America dropped atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, what we saw was not a mythical hell, but, to our horror, a literally burning fire. Only recently the demons of science invented the neutron bomb. America, the USSR, China, France and England have stockpiles of deadly nuclear weapons which could end life on earth. Fear

dominates the lives of people holding the reins of power. National schizophrenia has become a universal menace.

It is in such a world that an individual has to care for his happiness and be responsible to his brother as a loving neighbour. The self of man is not a private spark embedded in the human skull. It is the one existential truth that permeates everything, including what appears to be lifeless and inert. It is the intelligence implied both in the structure and function of things. The harmony of its laws is experienced as beauty, peace and love. Realization is the experiencing of one's own unity with the all-embracing Word. That is why in the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna asks Arjuna to raise the self by the self and never to let his own self down. In Plato's dialogue Charmides, Socrates proves that the self is the source of both goodness and evil. According to St. Augustine the desertion of oneself from God and the loss of the power to see goodness and beauty are the characteristics of evil.

When we grab what rightfully belongs to another, we think it is unimportant. We try to forget our evil deeds, but in spite of all our rationalizations we experience the prick of our conscience. Accumulated feelings of guilt make the mind smoky and ultimately cause such opacity that the mind becomes too benumbed to appreciate any value. This can be called the cancer of the soul. A pinprick in any part of the body makes the whole body shiver with pain; like that, the pain and darkness of the venom of an individual's negativity can spread through the whole social body. The very first step one can take to redress the world of its misery is to make one's own life righteous.

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Nataraja Guru's commentary:

VERSE 25

What spells benefit to one, while to another distress brings,
Such conduct is one that violates the Self; beware!

That spark of pain intense to another given
Into inferno's ocean it falls, there to burn its flames.

FURTHER implications of the same subtle reciprocity of the Self and the non-Self are here unitively developed from the negative side. Like the quality of mercy, kindness has to be conceived as a double blessing, and its absence as a double disaster. The non-dual way is the only escape when conflicting interests develop in a given situation due to unilateral action. Favouritism is a form of duality, to whichever the side the favouritism might be applied. What is evil is the duality implicit in the unilateral interest that is taken.

Ethics is not to be conceived as depending on the conduct of a good man taken by himself, it is to be understood as a double-edged situation cutting both ways. It has to be conceived not as a lame or one-sided affair, but as a process in which donor and beneficiary belong to a unitive and universal context. Violation of the unitive self-hood on the one side is equated here with its dialectical counterpart of a general fire of inferno for which the spark of pain given to a single individual could be the partial stimulus to create a wholesale reaction. Just as intense pain in the tip of one's toe would suffice to upset the balance of the whole person in suffering, so the subtle reciprocity implied here, when the slightest discrimination is made between favourites or enemies, brings unforeseen quantitative or qualitative effects. Consequences flare up into a general conflagration. The sum-total of human suffering consists of small sparks of partiality shown by men somewhere or other at one time or another. The general cause of war should be thought of in this way. Like one spark setting fire to the neighbouring faggot, the continuity of the process of evil effects is to be imagined as operating ceaselessly in the world of human relations. Clashes of clan with clan, time-old feuds, racial, national or other rivalries, and preferential pacts, all work together

to keep the flames of inferno constantly fed with fuel and burning incessantly.

When the dualistic attitude has once been abolished and generosity spreads evenly like sunlight on all human beings without distinction, even on the publican and the sinner - that kind of generosity belongs to the context of the absolutist way of life, and is one that, in the context of Self-realisation, is very important to keep in mind. The Self can itself become the worst enemy of the Self. This has been brought out with the full force of delicate dialectics in the Bhagavad Gita (VI.6).

Part III

Here's Patrick Misson's account of Nataraja Guru's total honesty, from the Spring 2013 Gurukulam. This happened at the Fernhill Gurukula, and the neighboring village is Manganakorai:

One afternoon I came down to the main building to see if it was teatime and saw a bunch of small children come haring out of the door and off down the hillside. When I went in I saw that a lot of books had been pulled from the shelves and flower vases overturned etc. The Guru was standing there and he told me that he had woken up on hearing a noise and had come out and discovered some local kids trashing the place. He had told them off and had grabbed the cheekiest boy and given him a two-fingered slap on his hand to chastise him, and the kids had run off. The Guru then said that, although he had only smacked the boy's hand lightly (he demonstrated – just enough to sting), he had done it because he had lost his temper, which was incorrect. We had our tea and then the Guru assembled the dozen or so disciples, put on his coat, took his walking-stick and we processed down the hillside to the nearby village.

Now you must understand that the Guru was 70-something years old; he was a very famous person, and held in awe by the local people as a great holy man. Also, the neighbouring village towards which we were heading was an untouchable settlement – these people were the lowest of the low in Hindu society and were forced to live in this filthy ghetto – their touch and their very presence were polluting to even the lowest-caste Hindu. So when we started processing down the one sordid street, the entire population came out of their houses and stared in silence and apprehension. The Guru called someone and asked them if they knew where was the house of the little boy he had smacked. He went up the path to the house where the parents of the boy were standing. They had their hands joined in namasté and were half-bowing to the Guru, obviously fearful of what would happen after their child had disturbed the great man. The little boy came out, cowering behind his parents. The Guru said that he, the Guru, had acted wrongly. Then he went down on his knees and performed the full prostration – the ultimate traditional Hindu gesture of debasement – that is, he lay flat on his face on the filthy ground and, with his hands joined in supplication, he touched the feet of the little boy and begged his forgiveness.

Why was he my Guru? Because when I saw this kind of thing I knew that this was a real man; this was what human beings were put on this earth to be – and if I could not become like him, I would at least serve him for the rest of my life.

* * *

Okay, on to the quiz. Just how do we discern unity in the face of diversity? John H sent this:

I am reminded of Arun Gandhi's discussion on an object's genealogy of evil. He pointed to a particular pencil and said that in itself, it was harmless, but that the wood from the pencil had

come from political prisoners' labor in Burma - and that the poor peasants who mined the lead were inadequately paid - and moreover, the men moving the freight had been underpaid. The total profit for the sale of the pencil goes into the cash register of a company that also makes ammunition.

The point being that every thing is interconnected. The self is not a self, as it were, and the exterior world isn't exterior, either. That our awareness of every act, no matter how seemingly meaningless, has consequences for good or for evil.

And should we remove the question of good and evil - the basic undertone still remains, that every thing is interconnected and that for every action there will be a reaction.

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Mick gets full credit for being the only one who actually remembered there was a “quiz” on, not to mention thinking about it and talking it over with his wise wife. He came in with an analogy that the Absolute is like a tree in the desert, throwing cooling shade in the midst of broiling hot sand, and every creature could take respite under it—nasty, biting bugs and snakes, gentle deer, rooting boars, Adam and Eve, any and all. There is no exclusion. If you are the shade giver, all creatures, large and small, stinky and sweet, can come to you to rest. It brought to my mind a terrific song of the Sixties I’ll tuck in below.

Mick added an important corollary. Since we are all the Absolute in essence, there are no bad people, only bad actions, and we should distinguish between them. I would add, even if we have to punish someone, we should let them know that we care very much about them, but we just can’t accept their behavior. Which of course is the polar opposite of modern criminal “justice,” where society does its utmost to make miscreants know they’re utterly despised and rejected. Destroy the spirit and you make a good citizen? I don’t think so.

However, while Mick's is a nice and important analogy, I don't think it quite addresses the issue. It is a theoretical tree, after all. Where do we unequivocally encounter unity, not just as an idea, but as a living truth?

Happily, Narayana Guru seems to have anticipated this conundrum, and the next verse meets it head on. Both Nitya and Nataraja Guru cast a lot of light into the fog. I think they'll inspire some creative thinking, and hope that some of you will weigh in on this matter.

I didn't say my bit in class, but here it is. Every minute of our life has been different, unique and unrepeatable, yet we have a sense of our self that has remained consistent throughout. Its beliefs and attitudes have changed as we grew older, but the core sense of self has remained as a solid platform for all the changes. In meditation we can learn to distinguish our external ups and downs from our core beingness, and as we do we may be able to intuit that other beings have a very similar sense of inner cohesion, Barring a transcendental experience, we may have to theoretically grant that we are not unique in having this neutral core, that others probably have it too, and that it is a meeting ground of all life. It's not such a leap of faith, if we come to know it in ourselves first. As Nataraja Guru points out in his Verse 26 commentary, such a democratic ideal is the basis for the perception that "all men are created equal," which is the very foundation of modern civilization.

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I'll close for now with two excerpts from the glorious song *Maya*, by The Incredible String Band, recorded in 1968. You can listen here <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SCRVkyt74Ig>. Youtube cuts off the bird songs that follow the final chorus, so you have to imagine them or listen to the album:

The great man, the great man, historians his memory
Artists his senses, thinkers his brain
Labourers his growth
Explorers his limbs
And soldiers his death each second
And mystics his rebirth each second
Businessmen his nervous system
No-hustle men his stomach
Astrologers his balance
Lovers his loins
His skin it is all patchy
But soon will reach one glowing hue
God is his soul
Infinity his goal
The mystery his source
And civilisation he leaves behind
Opinions are his fingernails

Maya Maya
All this world is but a play
Be thou the joyful player

The great ship, the ship of the world
Long time sailing
Mariners, mariners, gather your skills

Jesus and Hitler and Richard the Lion Heart
Three kings and Moses and Queen Cleopatra
The Cobbler, the maiden
The mender and the maker
The sickener and the twitcher
And the glad undertaker
The shepherd of willows

The harper and the archer
All sat down in one boat together
Troubled voyage in calm weather.

Maya Maya
All this world is but a play
Be thou the joyful player

Part IV

Jake's interpretation (coincidentally shared this American Independence Day) includes a warning against independence as separative. Spiritual independence means extrication from entanglements that block the unity, paving the way to a fuller recognition of our interdependence:

With this verse, the Guru and Nitya conclude a four verse section in which they have explored the issue of ethics. In this twenty-fifth verse, they focus on the problem of evil, a distinctly social phenomenon. As they made clear in the previous verses, morality does not appear where only one existence is manifest. (This is the very reason that the Absolute transcends notions of good and evil and the reason that a proper social morality—a redundant phrase—does not constitute the final purpose of legitimate spirituality which incorporates that social morality as a step or part of a whole cosmic process.)

In the transactional world of necessity, however, evil certainly does develop as a consequence of our perceptions of objects and others and as a consequence of our being asleep and thereby losing sight of the divine both within and without. Again, this type of narcolepsy becomes seductive when, especially in contemporary America, we are exposed daily to a media drumbeat of secular atheism or a “one-life-you’re out” theology held, more

or less, by most American religious institutions.¹ In both cases, collectively or individually, the impulse to observe boundary between the Absolute and the Self is implicitly (and explicitly) encouraged thereby offering us the default position—the ego—which is firmly rooted in its death-fear (because it, the mind, and the senses will all go to the grave most definitely) and dependent on its clear boundaries between itself and others. With ego-attachment now elevated to its invalid position of pre-eminence (completely beyond its legitimate and necessary role of dealing with the work-a-day world of ever-present arising), the self replaces the Self and one can act socially in an autonomous manner thereby objectifying others and authorizing the manipulation of them in terms of the ego's relative position. Those closest can be afforded preferential treatment that those further removed can easily be denied.

In psychological terms, this compartmentalization and the identifying oneself with the ego, the relative self rather than the Absolute Self, means that the non-self (other) is now outside the ego, where all value now resides, and constitutes a threat to it because it is on the other side of the boundary. Moreover, the only character or quality that the other could possibly present that is recognizable to the ego's mind will be that which is constructed out of that ego's experience and history. Projection, then, carries the day as the little self locates its own construction of danger in others because danger is ever-present in the world of necessity, a world that most definitely will cycle everything living into death—and life and death. Out of touch with the Absolute Self, the little ego-self perceives only what the mind and senses tell it.

¹ For a thought-provoking study of reincarnation conducted and written by an American professor of psychiatry, Ian Stevenson (M.D.), see his *Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation* or his more reader-friendly text, *Children Who Remember Previous Lives: A Question of Reincarnation*. Another intriguing book that deals with a very similar subject in the context of the holonic universe is Jenny Wade's *Changes of Mind: A Holonomic Theory of the Evolution of Consciousness*.

For the ego-self the world and the cosmos is a collection of shadows, of experiences, that the fear-driven share and that can easily balloon into national programs. History offers a horror-show of a catalogue. Nitya points out that such excesses are expressions of a free-will that have been put in the service of the ego, “cut off from the light of the spirit” (p. 181). Waking up, he notes, is an exercise of free-will unencumbered by the ego and the camouflaged agenda of the vasanās.

As he concludes his exploration of free-will and evil, Nitya offers St. Augustine’s comment that the inability to perceive the esthetic beauty and grandeur of the Absolute in all of its forms is an indication of the loss of the Self and the victory of the ego. Perhaps a most obvious field in which to consider this loss in American culture is its present art scene and its fixation on self-righteous social messages as the measure of any presentation’s value. Rather than attempting to present a glimpse, however trivial or mundane, into the Absolute as it dances in the immanent, the contemporary honoring of social engineering as art’s highest message indicates the extent to which relativism has triumphed over absolutism. We live in a holonic cosmos in which all systems are part of systems that contain systems. Declaring independence from that reality is the first step to imbalance, to the creation of evil—more often than not done with the best of intentions:

If we consider all the actions that we do in life and their virtues, we may be filled with a sense of self-righteousness and see injustice in our suffering for things which we have seemingly never done. This is a linear vision, and karma is not to be understood as linear. It is highly complex. Our actions make one composite whole, and our responsibility to each other is unlimited. If we do not understand our unlimited liability to each other and make it a partial one, then our thinking becomes relativistic. Our understanding is no longer that of an absolutist. (p. 182)

[1] For a thought-provoking study of reincarnation conducted and written by an American professor of psychiatry, Ian Stevenson (M.D.), see his *Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation* or his more reader-friendly text, *Children Who Remember Previous Lives: A Question of Reincarnation*. Another intriguing book that deals with a very similar subject in the context of the holonic universe is Jenny Wade's *Changes of Mind: A Holonomic Theory of the Evolution of Consciousness*.