

## FATHER'S TEACHINGS: PEACE

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### Abstract

The present paper presents the book *Liniștea (Peace)*, the first of a series of books written by Iacob Ghergheluță, a Roman Catholic priest who uses the ancient technique of answering questions in order to offer the reader a way to achieve peace, happiness, self awareness and help him live a good, peaceful and meaningful life. His teachings are useful not only to the believers, but also to all those who find themselves in suffering and want to restore harmony and health into their lives. This present book is a sort of manual of peace for the ones who want to find it. This is a religious, an ethics book and a psychology book, as the author's experience with people's problems allowed him to make a sort of radiography in order to help solve those problems.

**Keywords:** *peace, aggression, forgiveness, to live in the present moment, unconditional love, breathing.*

Peace is “the essence of the heart.” A way to inspire a peaceful feeling is breath control. Peace is connected with breathing properly. Sometimes breathing shallowly is due to thinking. When thoughts are directed towards protecting oneself, “one builds around the heart a fortress from different thoughts”. Breathing deeply, profoundly and rarely is the way to a peaceful life, it brings comfort into one's life, as where the breathing is shallow, difficult or tormented, one is powerless in the face of problems. “The more someone forgets to breathe, the more the air becomes more toxic and interpersonal conflicts appear” (p. 24). Whereas the one in peace communicates easily, and is understood without words, what he wishes to speak is “carried by the breathe and the wind.”

Peace is within reach for everyone, because the ability to find peace is in everyone, but it is a long process that requires the knowledge that one is always loved (by God) and safe.

Peace is not achievable by accelerating one's life. “Countless people feel that their lives are speeding up, but don't realise that they are the

ones pouring gasoline in the reservoirs.” (p. 24) In order to achieve peace, it is necessary that one should live the present moment and not crave for something different than what is before him at the given moment, does not resist to what is happening to him.

Forgiveness is necessary, both forgiveness of oneself and that of whoever did harm just once. Forgiveness is possible if one understands all the wrong doings as a desperate cry for love. Healing oneself from sufferance is a life long process, but it is possible because the plagues are self inflicted: “if the human being hadn't have caused his own plagues, he would not have been able to relieve himself from them.” (p. 40) But forgiving and loving oneself is necessary in order to begin the healing process. Sufferance is necessary because it is a calling that the human beings become aware of the act of violence committed against them by themselves. If the cause of the sufferance is self hatred, self love and self acceptance is the cure.

Accepting conditioned love in the first place and bargaining love in exchange for safety and approval are what lead to the situations that hurt it. “Love is not a merchandise to sell or buy.” (p. 46). Only unconditional love is true love and one should start by offering it to oneself. Unconditional love is given without expectations. “It asks for no more than one is able to offer. It does not manipulate and does not demand. It accepts anyone as he/she is and offers blessings. (p. 47) If one cannot offer oneself these blessing, one cannot offer them to others.

To be in peace means to love oneself and one's present moment and to accept both as they are. The presence of God in one's life offers inner and outer peace. Peace is not permanent though because there are always lessons to be taught,

but when it goes it comes again and one can rejoin "the dance of universal harmony." Life is a dance and its rhythm beats with every beating of the heart. It is also "the most wonderful gift Life offers." (p. 50)

"Breathing in, a person opens herself to let in whatever comes toward her. Breathing out, she lets all go with profound generosity" (p. 53) One's gifts belong to the humanity and should be shared.

The search for joy is not wrong or selfish, on the contrary, it is the most generous gesture that one can offer, and all persons have something to offer. "If one's life lacks joy, that is because that person has not offered his gift." (p. 56) Sharing the gift with joy, enthusiasm and from the heart, brings joy to oneself and others, and one can thus recognize his gift. Sharing such a gift will always bring treasure back to the giver, but not necessarily what one's ego would expect in matters of social approval of one's talent. Moreover, such a quest of the ego is demanding aggressively love from others and attacking them with one's gifts. Moreover, man is called to offer his gift even when confronted with rejection, but without aggressing others. In fact, one should release the gift freely without concern of how it is received.

One's true talent or gift lies where one feels most joy and enthusiasm. One's gift comes from God and it is "a way of being" manifesting naturally and with great joy. The dedication to one's gift is a metamorphosis of one's life, a way to free oneself and an invitation to others to their own freedom. Self love is an invitation to love the whole world, because one's altruism is an extension of self love.

Moreover, it is not possible to have a contradiction between them, since one cannot be called upon choosing between one's good and the good of others. Sacrificing oneself does not bring prosperity, only love does, thus, one must always take pleasure in one's work, even when that work is serving others. "Nothing thrives if it does not come from love." (p. 75)

"Only the activities one engages in with love and enthusiasm brings one joy." (p. 76) Whatever the work, its spirituality consists of the immense joy, as where there's always duty and self sacrifice, or the quest for money and approval, there is a worldly work and not a spiritual one.

But the quest of spirituality means being patient when confronted with disrespect and respond to rejection with love and serenity. Moreover, when one lets go of the need to control, any work becomes spiritual and the other way around, therefore one should release control of the world around. Only love of the world should remain and its acceptance of it, as it is. The reward of the spiritual man are happiness, joy, love, peace.

We all have been given a gift. No matter what that gift is, one should make it her own and offer it to others.

One should live in the present, by accepting one's experiences, past and present, and reconciling oneself with these experiences, even with the unconscious ones.

Since childhood, man's behaviour becomes artificial, counterfeit, socially accepted, a shield hiding one's shame and pain. Pain is the way the body breaks through the frail layer of the artificial behaviour. Thus, pain is our friend and the body is the mind's friend. Man must reconcile these too, in order to heal. The mind of such a reborn man is a pure mind, in which healing takes place.

He who lives a life of giving accepts his experience as it is and is always present in his experience. Every experience is perfect for the tested person and it is a lesson that she must learn. Understanding these lessons is a lifelong endeavouring.

To be present means to always return to God gently whenever disrupted from Him with the help of peace giving meditation. Meditation means becoming aware of how the thoughts disrupt one's peace of mind and carry one away from the present moment. "In the present moment, the human being only has the possibility to be. There is no need that he/she should be there for someone else. To be there for someone else is a way of not being present. It is appropriate only be there. Nothing more. This is beatitude. It is the joy of divine acceptance." (p. 92)

It is necessary that one does not interpret the events as personal affronts - which leads to blaming oneself as well as others and perceiving oneself as a victim - but let them be as they are. "Once assuming that there is guilt, aggression is inevitable An innocent person cannot be hurt." (p. 98) The cause of blaming is pride and the

assumption that one knows other and their reasons, but one cannot know another man's heart. Moreover, without the assumption of others' innocence, one cannot know his own.

The experience of miracle is within oneself, it is "the very existence of man. Him being there is a testimony of God's love". (p 101) Being in harmony with this love makes life miraculous and every experience is an occasion to love, learn and be fully there in one's life.

One should trust himself, God and life as it unfolds and this is achieved by standing neutral about what is happening to him, not to impose his expectations, nor his imaginary reality, but "to allow life to stay on its normal course" (p. 105) and simply live his life. The part that the human being needs to play is simply to appear, to be there, to allow events to unfold on their own, because it is not up to it to determine how life unfolds, she merely has to fulfil whatever is asked of her in the given present moment. Life does not have to be according to one's vain plan, but according to God's and one must make room for His plan in his life. God's plan is simply love and communion. Moreover, becoming aware of any miracle is sensing God's presence in one's life. True peace is not to be found in this world, but only in one's open heart where infinite love is present. Such a heart is a sanctuary where all humanity is welcome and a temple. Love is the only true miracle from which all others follow as its accessories. Love without expectations offers others ease of sufferance and saving them, one frees oneself.

"The moment a person opens her heart with love, he/she embraces the others in his/her happiness". She must not bargain when sharing her happiness, nor he/she must do so with self sacrifice, because sacrifice is not love. Sacrifice has its price and it is a way of bargaining and control which leads to guilt and bitterness. A wise man avoids those who wish to sacrifice themselves for him. One should not take more than he needs nor offer more than he has. Also, one should learn both to offer and receive gifts with fairness, since all people are equal and share the same pain.

Sufferance is a great equaliser and the greatest teacher on Earth which reveals that the entire humanity needs healing.

A spiritual person surrenders to his/her own experience, and when an attack appears to be upon his/her, she struggles to learn the teachings of his/her experience and to see that value for his/her soul. She understands that his/her sufferance is not from what it occurred, but from the meaning he/she grasps there. Understanding that an attack is a cry for help and love, one can respond with compassion. Also, one must not blame others or God for his/her problems. One shares with God the responsibility for one's experiences, since these are a dialogue between them. Such a person engages in his/her experiences and is present in the moment.

The true prayer is a dialogue where one "surrenders to the mystery of the present moment". (p. 126) He/she asks of God only for the wisdom to learn the lesson embedded in his/her experience and for peace for all those involved. Prayer is entering in God's unconditional love and opening to receiving His gifts, as well as renouncing to negative feelings for himself and others. "Death comes much too fast for those who do not live the now" (p. 116)

Many of the abuses take place in relationships. People who aggress others react to an imaginary abuse or believe that others want to be aggressed and that they do so for their well being. On their turn, those aggressed need the love of their abuser (which is conditioned by accepting the abuse), fear being left by them, believe they deserve the abuse or simply draws it upon them by fearing it. One should not blame the abuser, nor attack him in return, but put a stop to it by simply not allowing the abuse to continue, and, more importantly, put a stop on self inflicted abuses. A spiritual relationship has the purpose of creating a space of love and compassion in which both of them have the possibility of knowing themselves, break the circle of attacks and find the way to peace. The best attitude when one accuses is not blame, nor defence, but listening profoundly and lovingly until the other finds his way back to himself. This is the gift offered by the spiritual being. The gift of unconditional love and acceptance ends all aggressions. "When people will manifest one another the gifts of acceptance and love without expectations, the game of abuse will end." (p. 146)

Breathing consists of breathing in - to interiorise the experience -, pausing - assimilating it -, and exhaling - for letting go of the experience.

Everything that happens is a reflection of what one believes and everything one sees is a mirror that reflects his own convictions. This is why one should just let thing be and, if possible, not judge or opinionate upon it.

The Truth is witness only by genuine love and one's purpose is practicing love and compassion. Love works like God, it heals man and gives him the power to forgive himself and others. "Love one's live is never lost (...) Love is the only instrument which changes time." (p. 149)

There comes a time man can no longer walk the road burdened with the wounds of a bounding past and that is the moment towards which that road took him, the moment when he must stop and join the way of unconditional love.

Only peace holds the answers while a troubled person will never comprehend life. Although life's problems seem to vary and never end, they all have just one source, Separation. Understanding this, the being finds peace. It is peace that one must find and of much help is repeating "I rest in God." (p. 155). Such a man has no worries, no burdens, no regrets about the past, he rests in the eternity of God and time leaves no marks, because his peace never changes.

Forgiveness is the key to happiness and peace, while the unforgiven leaves no room for love of happiness, no hope of salvation and always experiences his own doom. There is nothing in this world that can bring standing happiness, the worldly must be left behind and all that ties one to it. The world's purpose is only to help man go beyond it.

The world of the common man is the cruel and ruthless world of time. "It gives only to have what to take back. It takes away from the human being what he/she held dear for a while." (p.160). One must free himself from what this world has to offer in order to find peace. One will only see in the world what he wants to see and what he sees reveals what he wants to see. Hatred comes from seeing separation, but one should always question whether he would blame herself, too, for whatever he blames the others, and try to practice forgiveness. "One should offer the day to the endeavouring of feeling how he frees herself from

the chains he sought to tie upon the other, but that he only tied herself with." (p. 163) The world of the common man is also one of fear, one that threatens him and from which one must defend himself, more specifically defend his body.

But man will not suffer unless she shall choose this sorrow state himself. Safety is not to be found in this world, thus, peace is not possible, only a vicious circle of preventive attacks and defences which devastate the world. The authentic man who identifies the power of God inside him is never in the state of defence, but in that of "undefence" . This means showing strength and escaping attacks, since undefence is such a great power that makes aggression seem a child's play.

Looking at the world through Christ's eyes is seeing purely the whole world, seeing the Creator's love in each being. Christ's view is a miracle, it reflects eternal love and it is a glimpse of Paradise, since what is seen is a world akin to Heaven. Looking at the world this way is how miracles are born. On the other hand, "the dark mirror" of the worldly can only show deformed images. Christ blames none and loves the entire world without exception. Those who carry out His message in the world carry heavenly treasures and "manage to transform the Earth in a splendid garden, such like the one they came from and to which they return with a suave scent." (p.176) Looking at the world with hatred means wanting to destroy the others, but it also means self destruction, looking at the other with horror means looking at it with hatred and seeing hatred and horror in the creations in God's like.

When one aggresses another, he self destroys. Only one's own thoughts can hurt him and once one can see the harmlessness of every situation, those horrifying things become the source of peace.

Forgiveness is necessary in order to brake free. "Who will be able to release himself as long as he holds imprisoned another? A jailer is not free, since he is bound together with his prisoner. He makes sure he doesn't escape him, so he lives his life guarding him. The iron bars that confine the imprisoned become the world in which his jailor lives, along with him; on his freedom lies the way of breaking for them both." (p. 180) Therefore, one should free and not bond, because

the sword of anger he holds it is upon his own head that he holds it.

Offering one's life to God means escaping fear and finding peace, leaving a whitstander world for a friendly and loving one. Sufferance comes from lack of forgiveness, "there is no sorrow that doesn't hide an unforgiven thought. Also, there is no sorrow that forgiveness cannot heal." (p. 183)

Looking at the world through Christ's eyes means stopping the past from casting its shadow upon the present and glimpsing a peaceful future that is a mere extension of the peace of a free present. We see the world as we choose to.

Forgiving thoughts bring into being a kind world. What one sees in others is what one chooses to see, since no one can truly know another. Who sees the divine innocence in others aspires to gaze upon his own innocence. Only one's thoughts are able to disrupt one's peace, but one can control these thoughts. The thoughts of blame of others mean the end of one's peace. Someone's strength lies in his gentleness, which is the source of his peace and joy.

Sufferance is an option, it means choosing weakness by mistaking it with strength. When the suffering will no longer see a benefit in his sorrow, he can begin the healing process. Malady is the making of the mind which uses the body, more specifically it is the result of one's perception of the world and of the belief that the world has hurt someone.

The end of death is awareness of the innocence of any being and seeing it correctly. Resurrection is defeating death by rethinking the meaning of the world and admitting God's interpretation of it. In this case, the body becomes only a vehicle of communication.

Thoughts are important, because they are creative forces that work on the principle of attraction of the similar and if one wishes to take his life into his power, he must first bring harmony in his thoughts. The mind has an amazing projecting power that can bring the spiritual into matter. This is why the hurt meet more hurtful circumstances into their lives, the mind dominated by horror invites into its life what is feared, while the trust of the optimist attracts the favourable. Whatever happens in one's life depends on one's attitude towards those aspects. In order not to be harmed by the

passing circumstances, one must find complete peace in one's heart and never allow another to seize that divine spot. He who will not be able to control the circumstances, will be their slave in return. Children are most sensitive to fear and often parents inflict it upon them, when they should be doing the opposite, that is inspiring an opposite attitude of courage.

Moreover, the negative states of mind also destroy the body. One should not hate, because one would suffer more than the hated one. Hate is abnormal and whatever breaking of the divine love will bring only sufferance and bitterness for the outlawed. In exchange, one should understand that it is only the ignorance that leads to selfishness and horror, and therefore practise compassion.

One should emanate thoughts of love and tell as often as possible "My dears, I love you!!!" (p. 216). Love is the divine order and "the key of life" and it can change the world. The one who loves will be more beautiful and will receive from the outside the life force which he manifests from within. "As love is an elixir of life, hatred is a potion of death." (p. 220). Moreover, hatred of the others may only be cured with love, as "hate can always be conquered by love." Answering hatred with hatred will only intensify its fire and man will self destruct.

In order to never be disappointed, one must trust God no matter the moment or the circumstances, in sleep as well as when one is awake.

A good sleep is necessary for one's health and one must remember that the mind is permanently active and one draws influences according to his thoughts before falling asleep and therefore it is important that one send thoughts of love in order to have a peaceful sleep.

If one has thoughts of inability, weakness will come from both outside and inside him. Fear draws failure and unfortunately most people live under the reign of horror and attract that which they fear most. On the other hand, the trust will be overwhelmed by the power that he draws upon him like a magnet and all his dark problems will eventually be solved. The believer will live in peace, with no concern for consequences, as he always feels safe.

One must trust that even the most complicated situations are meant to help one to be better off later if one is steady in his good thoughts. Instead of complaining about the situation one is in, one must mentalise a state of peace and joy with confidence. "Even if one were in the claws of a wolf, one has the duty to imagine one is embraced; to look the wolf in its eyes and laugh; to gaze upon the animal's face without fear." (p. 244). One must be aware he owes all outcomes to none but himself. Moreover, he who becomes aware of the inner riches pays little attention to the outside possessions. Man may meet the Creator anytime and anywhere as long as one is opened to His silent voice, like a dam lets the water in the reservoir run upon the crops when opened. One may open his mind and heart when in a moment of peace.

One will be forever happy when one will become aware that one "always walks with God inside". (p 251) When one lives in harmony with the divine order, life is no longer a chore, unjust or strange, but a state of beauty. Moreover, such a being will emanate a special scent that will mesmerise others just like a flower and will inspire peace in others.

In conclusion, the book's main focus is upon the importance of living correctly in the present moment. All sufferance comes from a troubled past that one cannot live behind, nor forgive, or from the concern with the future and fear of it. Even the present is often rejected as it does not correspond to one's desires and plans. It is important that one uses the technique of breathing in order to let go of the tormenting thoughts and replace those thoughts with positive ones and with love in order to achieve peace and prosperity. Moreover, a change of perspective is in order, one should no longer look at the world with the common man's eyes, that see a cruel place, but with Christ's, that is with love. Man has no duty but to be. He must learn how to live in the present moment. He must engage in what he does with love, he must discover his gift and cultivate it. This will bring him and others peace.

This is the first book of the series, but in the next books the author will approach deeper these themes, as well as new ones.

#### **References**

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