

Guns and Religion

There is an apparent problem in the world today, and while words are thrown around in court houses and public schools, nothing much is happening to solve the issue. Guns. In America, guns are supported by the Bill of Rights when it states that a man has a right to bear arms, however, nowhere does it explain how the arms should be used or regulated. And this remains a giant problem that has taken over not just America, but the rest of the world as well. It is mind-numbing to open a newspaper every day and see gory images of bodies being shot through and read stories about massacre shootings. It is unfair, unjust, and simply unacceptable and people need to take action to save lives- the lives of those with the guns and the lives of those victimized by the guns. Every human being has a duty and reasoning of why they are in this world, and by picking up a gun and misusing it, people are often at fault of their duty to others. Adi Shankaracharya explains in his teachings that Sanatan dharma is the only path for people to perform their duties as well as really communicate with the Gods. Dharma helps man pick his direction in life and through Sanatan dharma, he or she can utilize their devotion to God as a way of passing through their days.

Sanatan dharma is a way of life and when people break loose from those social rules, it is dangerous for the others in the world to survive. Whether it is the case of Trayvon Martin and George Zimmerman or it is large shooting in a Kashmir protest, a life is still a life and as humans, we need to perform our sanatan dharma, duty to protect one another. Our duty is never complete, no matter how great of a feat we accomplish, because there will always be a need in the world and there will always be hands to help. In the Vedas, there is a verse that states, "That is whole; this is whole; From that whole this whole came; From that whole, this whole removed,

What remains is whole.” This means even if you take something from infinity, our duty, the remaining is still infinity, this our duty to the world, to nature, and to human kind still exists.

Gun violence is often caused by troubled people who cannot tolerate the surrounding environment or unable to release their emotions in any other form, so they resort to using guns to alleviate their pains. But it is an unacceptable method and it seems to be a growing trend in today’s culture to just shoot and rob people. We need to be kind to one another and be open about our tensions and conflicts. To show a good example of this, the Mahabharata displays Karna as being the strong one yet also the giving and kind one. The most tragic incident for Karna is at the battlefield when he stands in between his promises and dharma values to secure his own life. At the Kurushetra War, Karna is fighting with flying colors until he meets Arjuna, whose chariot is driven by Krishna. Arjuna, who is initially hesitant to fight his family members, fights with such valor against Karna. When Karna asks Arjuna to show some dharma and not fight when his wheel was stuck in the ground, Krishna asks back why they should show dharma when all Karna’s done is show adharma. This adharma also causes his chariot to sink into the ground for he was cursed by a sage for killing a holy cow. This seems to be a turning point in Karna’s life because he comes to full realization that he has committed so many grave mistakes with Duryodhana. Karna finally opens his eyes, beyond the friendship which has been blinding him for so long, and he sees the mistakes he has committed and the lives he’s affected. The Mahabharata, though gruesome in many ways, shows how important the value of a life is and the significance of Sanatan dharma is shown through Karna’s actions.

Every single person’s life- no matter how socially important or unimportant they are- is highly valuable, because it is our right to live in this world. In the vedic verse, “In the beginning was Brahma, With whom was the Word. And the word was Brahma,” we can see that life itself began

with Brahma who supervises all the dharma in the world. So, to cure all gun control issues in the world, people simply have to follow their dharma and Sanatan dharma values in everyday life.