

Basic Study Course

Class 3

Purification and Gratitude

Please write your name: _____

1. The Law of Purification

All suffering is a process of purification. This truth applies to all suffering, not only, as you may think, to sickness. The underlying cause of all pain and suffering is the process of purification. To be cheated and suffer a loss, to suffer damage by fire, to be injured or robbed, to encounter family bereavement, to suffer business setbacks or failure, to lack money or fall deeply in debt, to argue with your wife or husband, to be alienated from your parents or children, to be on bad terms with relatives or friends—these are all without exception examples of this process of purification.

— *You Are Free to Make Your Own Destiny. Essential Teachings of Meishusama*

One thing that should be clearly understood is this: it is a universal law of nature that if pollution gathers in any spot, then it will be cleared away and that spot will be purified.

— *A Third World War Can Be Avoided. Essential Teachings of Meishusama*

2. Various Types of Purification

In many cases this process of purification takes the form of sickness, but it can manifest itself in a great variety of other disasters and misfortunes.

- Sickness

Sickness is a process of purification. It is a cleansing process that occurs as a result of toxins that are knowingly or unknowingly taken into the body. While one may take a shower to wash away impurities on the surface, the body itself naturally removes toxins to a certain degree in a process that is often termed “sickness”. Sickness frequently takes the form of a cold with a fever, sweating, running nose, coughing, phlegm discharge, and diarrhea. Because sickness is accompanied by pain and discomfort, it is often not welcomed and the symptoms suppressed with medications. However, viewing the symptoms from a spiritual standpoint, purification is a good chance to cleanse our body of toxins. We are healthier when we occasionally have such purifications.

— *A Third World War Can Be Avoided. Essential Teachings of Meishusama*

A cold, therefore, is a process of elimination of toxins. If you patiently put up with the slight discomfort, and trust yourself to Nature, the toxin will be discharged with no problems, the inside of your body will be purified, and you will arrive at a state of such good health that you can truly be considered cured. A cold is a very simple form of natural regulation. It is a divine arrangement. People who do not realize this and don't give heartfelt thanks to God, seem to

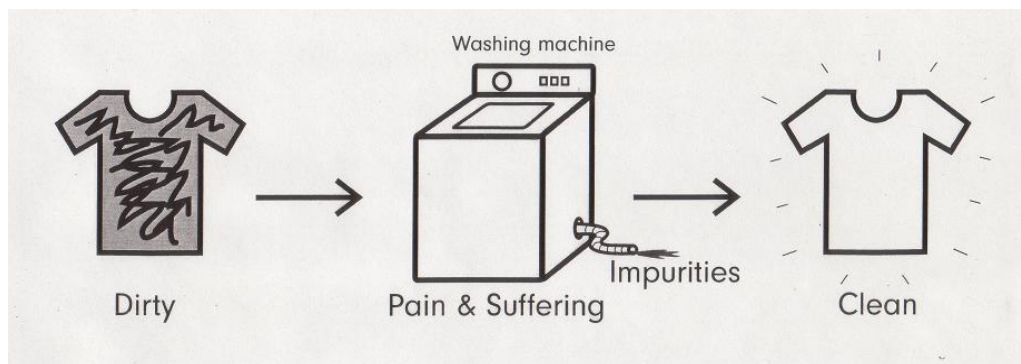
interpret the significance of the discomfort of the purification in a negative way, and decide that they should try to end it. This way of thinking brings about medical science, that great source of error.

— *What is Illness? Essential Teachings of Meishusama*

Meishusama explained that all sickness is a process of purification and that the cause can be found in the amount of clouding that is present in the spirit.

Sickness, as I have previously explained, is suffering brought about by the removal of clouding that has accumulated in the human soul. No matter what kind of suffering people undergo, the causes can always be found in the clouding of their souls. In simple physical terms, their suffering represents the removal and clearing of toxins in the body. To eliminate all suffering, a person must avoid the accumulation of spiritual clouding and remove what clouding may have already taken place. There is, naturally enough, no alternate method of dealing with the problem.

— *A Third World War Can Be Avoided. Essential Teachings of Meishusama*



- **Storms**

The causes of the actions of wind and water are to be found in the process of purification in the earth and sky. This is brought about when impurities are accumulated in the spiritual world; that is, clouds form in the world invisible to the human eye. These impurities are blown away by the wind and washed away by the rain. This is the cause of storms. Negative thoughts such as discontent, hatred, malediction, jealousy, selfishness, falseness, deceit, vengeance, and so on, cause the spiritual world to become cloudy.

Words can have a similar effect. When people express discontent with nature by complaining about bad weather, unfavorable climates, or poor yields in their rice crops, and similarly, when they criticize and attack others, find fault in them, ridicule or deceive people, tell lies, express rage, or grumble, these are all examples of utterances caused by

one's lower tendencies. They move from the spiritual realm of thought into the spiritual realm of speech and cause more spiritual cloudiness. When the total of all these different kinds of clouds surpasses a certain amount, it brings about a kind of spiritual toxicity that interferes with human life. As a result, natural purification takes place. This is a law of the universe. — *The Three Great Disasters and the Three Lesser Disasters. Essential Teachings of Meishusama*

- **Fire**

There have been many occasions when fires occurred in our neighborhoods, and for some, flames even came as close as the building next door. When people transmit Jyorei, however, the wind changes directions and their building is saved. The reason for this is as follows. — *Fire and Jyorei. Essential Teachings of Meishusama*

(There is a Japanese proverb, "After a fire, you will be richer." One who has lost a house due to a fire often builds a larger one in its place. Looked at spiritually, a fire reduces the spiritual impurities of the house and thus improves the conditions for rebuilding. Purification is often painful and difficult to undergo, but afterwards, good fortune follows. When one understands the law of purification, one can accept it with gratitude and a positive outlook.)

- **War**

War is, of course, the armed struggle between two or more groups. In the past, humankind has seemed to prefer this kind of struggle to peace. This is not only a problem between nations. Look at any part of any country and you will be sure to see this kind of struggle taking place. Local governments, businesses, labor unions—in any kind of group at all, subgroups will form and carry on continuous feuds, criticizing and shunning each other. People who work together fight each other; members of families fight each other, brother against brother, parent against child; friends fight each other. People really do like fighting. So much so that it is not worth describing in more detail how much fighting and struggle there is in human life.

— *The Three Great Disasters and the Three Lesser Disasters. Essential Teachings of Meishusama*

- **Financial Loss**

Every kind of misfortune and disaster is a process of purification. But, as is to be expected, the process of purification takes different forms according to the causes that make it necessary. For example, take spiritual clouds connected with money and other kinds of property. Many of these, such as theft, embezzlement, dishonest dealings, and living beyond one's means are often eradicated by subsequent material losses.

— *Awaken to the Will of God. Essential Teachings of Meishusama*

3. The Causes of Purification

As I have written in previous articles, the clouding of people's souls increases in direct proportion to their wrong thoughts and wrong actions. And when this clouding reaches a certain density, a natural process of purification comes about in order to clear it. This is an iron law of spiritual affinity and no one can escape from it.

— *Spiritual Clouds and Sickness. Essential Teachings of Meishusama*

Spiritual Clouds

Spiritual clouding is the cause of the purifications we experience in the physical realm. Clouds are similar to stains on our spirits. Just as a stain quickly sets in on clothing, our negative thoughts, words, and actions quickly stain our spirit. When people commit a crime or destructive action they are creating a heavy stain that is very difficult to remove. Even people who have small negative thoughts every day are creating stains that become dense and dark over time. What are these negative thoughts and speech?

- **Negative Thoughts:** Discontent, hatred, jealousy, envy, selfishness, falseness, deceit, vengefulness, anger, negative attachment, stress, anxiety, depression, and so on
- **Negative Speech:** Grumbling, complaining, lying, arguing, blaming others, yelling and expressing rage, threatening, criticizing and attacking others, etc. Even complaining about poor weather or poor yields in food production are negative forms of expression. People create minor spiritual clouds every day.
- **Negative Behavior:** Stealing, cheating, adultery, vandalism, violence. The best way to avoid these actions is to cultivate positive thoughts, words, and deeds.
- **Food, Water, and Air:** Unhealthy food and pollution in water and air all add clouding to the spirit. So does radiation from cell phones, computers, x-rays, smart meters, and power plants. Conventional farming that uses many chemicals is a major cause of unhealthy food, soil, water and air. Meishusama promoted Natural Agriculture as a way to eliminate the use of chemicals and manure, and to maintain a healthy relationship with nature. Meishusama also talked about the toxicity that can occur from the use of medicine.

The reason why medicines are in fact toxic is that the things that humans could possibly try to eat were all given life at the same time as the creation of humans. These are what we call food. The two types of food—that is, one that should be eaten and one that should not be eaten—are naturally separated. Simply put, things that one should eat have a flavor that is pleasurable to the sense of taste of human beings. If people eat those things that they find enjoyable, they will receive adequate nourishment. — *What is Illness? Essential Teachings of Meishusama*

Environmental pollution continues to rise and create spiritual clouding. Industrial and automotive pollution, electromagnetic radiation, nuclear radiation, conventional agricultural chemicals, genetically modified crops, and all unnatural technologies create health problems and produce spiritual clouds.

4. Acquired Clouds and Inborn Clouds

In each and every person is a certain amount of polluting toxins. Some are inherent and some acquired after birth.

- 1) **Acquired Clouds:** thoughts, words, deeds, food, water, air, family, society
(Occur during our present physical existence)
- 2) **Inborn Clouds:** previous lives, ancestors, DNA
(Driven from our previous lives or are inherited from our ancestors)

A. Spiritual Clouds from Previous Lives

We reincarnate many times and pile up many spiritual clouds over time. While we are in the spiritual world, our spirits are purified to a certain degree, but not completely. If we have very strong spiritual clouds, or stains, upon our spirit, then there will be unavoidable purifications in this life. This can also be referred to as having negative karma to fulfill.

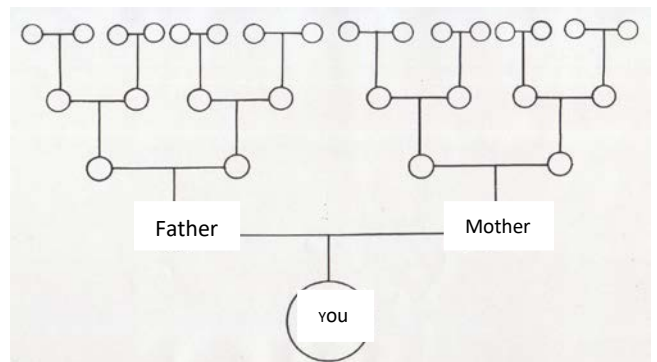
Diseases that are not physical in origin but stem from deep spiritual clouds are extremely difficult to cure and require treatment over many years. Diseases that manifest the symptoms of tuberculosis, bone decay, cancer, and so on are of this type. — *Spiritual Clouds and Sickness. Essential Teachings of Meishusama*

B. Spiritual Clouds from Ancestors

We are connected through spiritual cords with our ancestors dwelling in the spiritual world. If their spiritual clouding is strong, then we and our decedents inherit this clouding. We also inherit their accumulated **Toku Energy**, which is spiritual energy, or grace, from God.

We have so many ancestors:

When we go back 10 generations, the total number of our parents is 2,046. If 20 generations, then it's 2,097,150 (about 2 million). If 30 generations, it's 2,147,483,646 (about 2 billion).



5. Spiritual Lifestyle and Gratitude

“The Secret to Human Happiness”

[In light of the Law of Purification], we can see that good things are, of course, pleasant, whereas bad things are only periods of purification, and it is definite that they in turn will lead to good things. So whichever you encounter is essentially good. This is indeed perfect peace of mind. This peace can only be attained by having deep faith in God. —

Awaken to the Will of God. Essential Teachings of Meishusama

“You Are What You Think”

Gratitude breeds gratitude; discontent spawns discontent. This is the truth.

— *You Are What You Think. Essential Teachings of Meishusama*

The Rationality of Faith

When a person offers sincere thanks to God, the amount of the offering, be it money or anything else, is not important. God knows absolutely everything, and so He allows this without any need for people to offer beyond their means. Furthermore, if you work for the welfare of others, which includes helping them spiritually, and if such kind deeds result in them becoming members of our organization, your work will surely deserve God’s favor. In a nutshell, the important thing is to express gratitude to God by your actions, not just your thoughts.

— *The Rationality of Faith and Re-purification. Essential Teachings of Meishusama*

Purification after Entering the Spiritual Life

Some people encounter suffering after they have found and entered the spiritual path. Sometimes this suffering will get progressively heavier as the person's faith begins to grow. Then, some whose faith is still too shallow and wavering will reach a point where they begin to doubt. This is an extremely important time. What is happening, essentially, is that God is eager to reward the person’s newfound faith with blessings, but the person must first be purified of his remaining impurities. It is a process of purifying the vessel so that it will be fit for the grace of God. If the person holds fast to his faith and endures the suffering steadfastly, once it has passed he will find that he is showered with wonderful blessings beyond his wildest imagination. — *Awaken to the Will of God. Essential Teachings of Meishusama*

Ways to Purify Spiritual Clouds

There are two ways to purify spiritual clouds: 1) Through pain and suffering (**Reactive Purification**) and 2) Through working deliberately to enhance one’s spiritual level and accumulate Toku Energy by doing such things as sharing Jyorei, creating beautiful art, eating healthy food, and helping others. (**Proactive Purification**)

Although both forms of purification discharge spiritual clouds, one is better than the other. Reactive Purification does not automatically change the negative behavior that generates the spiritual clouds—this requires personal choice. Thus it merely slows down the descent into sickness and pain. Proactive Purification, on the other hand, eliminates far more spiritual clouds because it derives from positive behavior. Thus it leads to greater health and happiness.

The best way to benefit from Reactive Purification is to feel grateful for the purification despite whatever suffering may come up. Also, it is important to learn from our mistakes so that we don't repeat them over and over again.

The best way to benefit from Proactive Purification is to feel grateful for the healing and growth it provides us. Gratitude puts us in harmony with the forces of purification, rather than in opposition to them.

The Glory of Faith

The purpose of faith should be the attainment of peace of mind and joy in everyday life. Those with faith should be filled with jubilation. This will allow them to fully appreciate such things as beautiful flowers and trees, carefree birds with their myriad songs, gentle breezes, distant rolling hills, and the pale glow of the moon. Such beauty is made by God to please and comfort humankind. True faith teaches people to be thankful to God for the blessings of food, clothing, and shelter. In this way, people feel a close communion, not only with their fellow humans, but also with all the numerous forms of life that share this wondrous globe. This is a state of spiritual ecstasy. To reach this state, you must have perfect trust in God, doing what you can as a mere mortal and leaving the rest up to the Divine.

— The Glory of Faith. Essential Teachings of Meishusama

6. Discussions

- What are spiritual clouds and how do they affect us?
- What is purification and how does it function?
- What is the relationship between suffering and purification?
- What is the difference between Proactive Purification and Reactive Purification?
- What are the benefits of gratitude?
- How do you generate gratitude in your daily life?

7. Assignment (Essay writing) for Online Course participants

Please write a short (one page-length) essay on the following question:

- How do you generate gratitude in your daily life?