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Vidyankur: Journal of Philosophical and Theological Studies (VJPTS) is a peer-reviewed interdisciplinary journal. It is a bi annual journal published in January and July, seeking to discern wisdom in our troubled times. Inspiring and short academic articles (3,000-4,000 words) beneficial to the educated audience are welcome. It attempts to foster personal integration through philosophical search, theological insights, scientific openness and social concern.

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Published by Dr Kuruvilla Pandikattu SJ, Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth, Pune 411014, India

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Site: www.vidyankur.in

Email: indianjournal@gmail.com

ISSN: 2320-9429

OCLC: 233921404

LCCN: 2008306810

Printed at Kunal Offset 412, Kakasaheb Gadgil Rd, Shaniwar Peth, Pune, Maharashtra 411030



Editorial

Losing the Race and Winning the Life!

We have heard it often of the “survival of the fittest” and the “struggle for existence.” And even of the attitude of “flight or fight.” Somehow it has become part of our present-day mentality that unless we compete, we cannot succeed and enjoy life.

In this context another perspective of the story of the Hare who lost the race, but won the life, which appears on the internet is relevant.

Let the hare himself explain: “Yes, I am the hare who lost. No, I did not get lazy or complacent.”

“I was hopping over the meadows near the hills and looked back to realize that the tortoise was nowhere to be seen. Assured of my healthy lead, I decided to take a short nap under the large banyan tree near the pond.

“The anticipation of the race had kept me up all night. For days, that old silly tortoise had boasted about his ability to plod for hundreds

Cite this article in APA Style: Pandikattu, K. (2019) Editorial: Losing the Race and Winning the Life! Vidyankur: Journal of Philosophical and Theological Studies. XXI/1 Jan-June 2019 www.doi.org/10.5281/zenodo. 4159452 3-5

of miles without stopping. Life is a marathon, he said, not a sprint. I wanted to show him that I could run both far and fast.

The shade of the tree was like an umbrella. I found an almost oval rock, covered it with grass, and turned it into a makeshift pillow. I could hear the leaves rustling and the bees buzzing – it felt they were collaborating and even conspiring to put me to sleep. And it didn't take them long to succeed.

"I saw myself drifting on a log in a beautiful stream of water. As I came near the shore, I found an old man, with a flowing beard, sitting on a rock in a meditative pose. He opened his eyes, gave me an all-knowing smile, and asked: 'Who are you?' 'I am a hare. I am running a race.' 'Why?' 'To prove to all the creatures in the jungle that I am the fastest.'

"'Why do you want to prove that you are the fastest?' 'So that I get a medal which will give me status which will give me money which will get me food...' There is already so much food around.' He pointed to the forest in the distance. 'Look at all those trees laden with fruits and nuts, all those leafy branches.' 'I also want respect. I want to be remembered as the fastest hare who ever lived.'

"'Do you know the name of the fastest deer or the largest elephant or the strongest lion who lived a thousand years before you?' 'No.' 'Today you have been challenged by a tortoise. Tomorrow, it will be a snake. Then it will be a zebra. Will you keep racing all your life to prove that you are the fastest?'

"'Hmm. I didn't think about it. I don't want to race all my life.' 'What do you want to do?' 'I want to sleep under a banyan tree on a makeshift pillow while the leaves rustle and the bees buzz. ...I want to hop over the meadows near the hills and swim in the pond.'

"'You can do all these things this very moment. Forget the race. You are here today but you will be gone tomorrow.'

"I woke up from my sleep. The ducks in the pond looked happy. I jumped into the pond, startling them for a moment. They looked at me quizzically. 'Weren't you supposed to be racing

with the tortoise today?’ ‘It’s pointless. An exercise in futility. All I want is to be here. I lost the race but got back my life.’”

It was Martin Luther King Jr who said, We must learn to live together as brothers [and sister] or perish together as fools. Can we forget our competition and rat race and win life for all of us? Yes! We can. Together! We have not just the technology, but knowledge and wisdom for the survival of our life!

The last article of this article throws more light on this dimension of our life. We are confronted with the crucial choice of Death or Life. Collectively we can become prosocial and altruistic and thus save ourselves by serving the other.

The other articles in this issue of our journal focus on Artificial Intelligence, the Meaning of life, Freedom of human beings and the Depth of our own lives as an ongoing search for TRUTH.

The Editor