

Poetry Series

arvind chandak
- poems -

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Studied in a Jesuit School, completed graduation - B.A Hons, and post graduation in management studies from XLRI India, I have worked in the Human Resources field since 1981 in India and abroad. While in India I have seen poverty closely while I lead social service activities in villages surrounding the plant facilities where I worked.

The key thought that drives me in my life is to bring about peace and harmony in this metallic and strife stricken world. Personally - I beleive in doing - karma - and leaving it for God to do his judgement. It saddens me when people choose to play God or cut themselves from each other for reasons of each others doing. Forgiveness seems to be serious shor supply today,

An Ode To A Saint Of Peace

An Ode to a Saint of Non-Violence – Mahatma Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi

He came from a non-descript Indian place
A village which would not have a place
In Her Majesty's palace' grace
What could this man for India raise?

When the Indian nation reeled
Under a foreign yoke
This frail man with iron will
Preached a master stroke

He visualized violence was no funnel
To get to the end of the tunnel
That the spring of freedom would gurgle
For the Indian freedom struggle

It is not arms and blood
Or revenge, violence or death
That will get India freedom
From the British kingdom

They can take away our right
They can make their sticks bite
They can take us to gaol
But they cannot take away our soul!

Protests with no violence
Will shake their conscience
It is the only way
For the British to loose its sway

Despite British scorn
And ire of critics
He made every Indian "re-born"
And friends of skeptics

Respect for all and love for mankind
He preached & practiced

He made every Indian aware
And the British beware

When the British enacted suppressive laws
This soul bonded us with his non-violent straw
His simplicity and truthfulness held all in awe
He gave us belief, pride and strength not to thaw

In 1930 Gandhi gave a key freedom call
Civil disobedience was the mantra for all
Salt Tax was the symbol of oppression
That every Indian was to defy and make it fall

Men & women all were one
With Gandhi, they feared none
When Gandhi gave his peaceful protest call
They all rallied behind it like a wall

In Gandhi's belief the nation rallied
Made the British rulers harried
The struggle for the British to leave continued
The voice of India was not to be subdued

The Salt law was broken
It was a challenge in token
The average Indian now believed
That the British could be shaken

The British police rained bullets and blows
Gandhi remained defiant with his followers in tow
Line replaced line as protestors were brought down
Under the bullets and blows of the Crown

A trickle became a torrent
The British blows served no deterrent
Pan India the rallies and crowds swelled
The peaceful voice of freedom could not be quelled

British goods were boycotted
In public rallies, they were burnt
Swadeshi! Swadeshi! rent the air

While the British sirens blared

Civil dis-obedience and satyagraha – grounded
The British were perplexed and confounded
The entire nation rallied to his non-violent call
The world took notice of it all

Came World War II
The Allies were stretched
While the war was won
British revenue coffers were wrecked

The Indian “Golden Hen”
Became a revenue drain
While Gandhi did not give in
His non-violent freedom refrain

Quit India! Quit India!
Unrelenting was Gandhi’s call
While the clamor gathered
The British “will” shattered

The British knew not - how to handle it all
A frail looking man, had challenged them all
Years of supremacy of the British domain
Had cracked up under this non-violent virus strain.

The British empire gave in
To Gandhi’s non-violence spin
India was to become free
Without any violence or fee.

It is to this frail looking man
That the world gives credit
The strong belief in non-violence
He continues to inspire without any edit

To Indian, he is Bapu – The Father of the Nation
To the world he is an apostle of non-violence
And while the world looks on in silence
On still continuing theatres of violence

I pray that conflicting parties learn
No peace comes from the power of the gun
In how Bapu got us freedom – they should learn
Violence - they should shun

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Darfur - A Mouthful Of Silence

Darfur – Mouthful of Silence

Darfur hangs under clouds so dark and dense
The world helplessly watching makes no sense
The people there are scared and at their wits end
Murder, rape, robbery, mayhem, knows no end

As the world gives a well intentioned call
There are no results to stop this mad ball
While Darfur reels in a saga of violence
Why the world shows its 'mouthful of silence'?

If we do not act to break this hell on earth
If we do not break our "seeming" silence
If we do not rise now above our own selfish call
The Darfur like violence will one day, engulf us all

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My Experience

My Experience

I went to the hills
To listen to nature's song
When I reached uphill
I realized man's wrong

The greens of the valley
Away from man's folly
The freshness of the air
Cool wind touching my hair
I stare at the starry sky and wonder
What is there beyond and yonder?

Dawn & dusk
Green fields and stacks of hush
Golden rays in the morning
Crimson red come evening
That is life's song
I can see it in nature strong

Come night as it settles on
Lights, crickets and fireflies come on
White clouds waft by
When I look down
At what I call my town
I see neat rows of street lights
Like diamonds settled down
In mother earth's crown

It is now time to get down
Sleep in my cozy gown
Sleep, sleep my child
Says mother nature wild
The mountain stream gurgles its song
A full moon looks on
In this orchestra, I sleep on

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Naaley

Naaley

Water flows like music.
The sound of stream
The end of applause□

Behind her slanted sunglasses
Her useless eyes were closed,
But she could see the music
She smiled an innate smile

Dreamt of dolphins and a deep barred blue
Barred-blue windows. Barred-blue sky.
The cigarette smoke curled into the night.
And lifted into the air like smoke

Infinite joy.
Love. Madness. Hope.
The man and his little girl lay awake in silence

The train pulled out. The light pulled further away.
Grieving his grief. Grieving her grief.
Their grief. He kissed her eyes and stood up
God bless, my baby. My sweetheart. You will be better tomorrow.
He turned to say it once again: 'Naaley.'
Tomorrow.

She was just the landscape.
A flower perhaps. Or a tree.
A face in the crowd.

The ending is sad if you think of it
But I can't make anything of it.
Sweet, cold breeze
Gloom swallowed the garden.
He sat like a rock wondering,
Does she finally have peace? Is she in heaven?

composed by my daughter Ashita

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The Girl Child

The Girl Child

When a child is to be born
The family wish its a son born
Every visit, every comment
Sounds like a society in lament

Why a son is expected
As if the idea of a girl rejected
Imagine the plight of the mother to be
If not a son, what her inner state would be?

A nine month of sacrifice going down
Suspense about the child to be born
It is a girl No rejoicing at this dawn?
A feeling of let down

Look around at what women have done!
They all have been leaders number one
The likes of Gold Meir and Indra Gandhi
They have all have been a sustained Aandhi

The care and love that a daughter brings
Before and after marriage my heart sings
Does a boy travel in the same carriage?
A girl still cares for her own, post marriage

I wonder why the society still ails
Despite globalization and its travails
Why do we not for a daughter, equally yearn
With a girl so loving, why do we not learn,

When a girl wants to be a pilot
Why should a father get on auto pilot
And direct her in a traditional wane
For his son, would he do the same?
Why is this support not one?
When will we learn?

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We Need You More Now Than Ever

We Need You More Now Than Ever

With our freedom behind
Non-violence was forgotten
With India's freedom gotten
African states also breathed free
On a relatively non-violent spree

Non-violence got us major gains
But as mankind we choose to feign
The benefit of non-violence we gained
In leaders' egos and power we strained

Over many years, peace is gone
As guns boom, the world looks forlorn
Political upheaval, power struggles galore
The world looks like a ship awash ashore.

Diplomatic aggression and violence
Multiple resolutions have touched every shore
Sadly bringing no end to the violence
Now we cannot take it anymore
World leaders and UN must decide
Would history view them as leaders
Or throw them aside.

Nicely worded resolutions have no place
Non-violent struggle must get its place.
Gandhi if you were around
Would you have also gone aground?
Or built a formidable force around
That firmly took a non-violent ground

History has shown
That war brings misery
But mankind's mind is shorn
Of all understanding gone
Be it Middle East, Israel or Afghanistan et al
Have only been theatres of experiment by leaders all.

Alas the truth does not sink
That when we hit the sink
We should all stand tall
In His Holiness's think

Let our generations remember us
For good deeds done
Let non-violence be our sun
Let violence be shun
Let us this mission run!

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May Peace Prevail

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Where Did Love Go

Where did Love Go?

We were a family of five,
Parents and three brothers
Childhood to college, what a life
Amongst us there was no strife

We weathered the storms and rode the waves
In our life there were no dark caves
A caring father, a doting mother
Brothers like no other

It was a life taken for granted
A life I presumed ever lasted.
Till the time we got married
Our equations got carried.

Doting parents on ego strides
The brides were in for rough rides
Every now and then relationships rocked
In a stroke - the "daughter-in Law" docked

Over twenty years now, did we learn?
Our parents and our heart yearns
The divide is done, none of have learnt
In moments of reflection and insight
A feeling of hypocrisy strikes
The heart craves for parental love
Only to be diluted by reality and fears

In my changing world
In a huddle I lie curled
I toss and turn - lie confused
Where has all the love gone?

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Where Did We Go Wrong?

Where Did we Go Wrong?

On the shores of Britain
News Breaks out – a terrorist attack
In British history – another terror storm
An Indian doctor has shown form
Rammed his car into an aerodrome
Oh shame, I hope it is not true
In India – we do not breed a terrorist hue!

The news rolls out a name
The Indian Nation is struck with pain
A family goes numb, with no feel
This could not be true- Oh God, It is Khafeel

Our Khafeel will not dream
To brew this stew
He would not do such a take
There must be some mistake!
As investigations goes on
The young Khafeel has really played "Don"
Oh! Why did he take this "extremist sermon"?

Into the steaming cauldron
Of religious and ethnic flavour
Blind men start hating each other.
For Muslims to hate the West
For West to hate every Muslim
Where trust is gone and violence prevails
There is no let up to our travails

The tuth lies somewhere
In the way the leaders that be
Build and run the world games
Massaging political ends and ego
At the cost of letting - all peace to forego

As the guns boom ever on
And children today grow on

Why wonder" what we did wrong? "
The likes of Khafeel will
Keep getting born!

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