Tranquilizing in the rainy season

Posted on

Rain is not a strange thing to human life. As our earth exists, so does the rain. Without rain, no human beings or vegetation exist; they all will die without water. As well as food, rain is essential for the human world and all beings' existence.

The biggest water resort in the world is the Ocean, consisting of four Oceans: Atlantic, Pacific, Indian, and Arctic, but the Southern Ocean is recognized as the fifth, the newest Ocean.

There is another Ocean in Sri Lanka. It is none other than the Parākrama Samudraya (Parākrama Ocean). It is named an Ocean, as it is a large reservoir in the country. Kelani River and Kalu River are also significant and beautiful, pleasing rivers flowing down from the 'Sri Pāda' mountain passing some serene jungles and mountains. If someone asks you to empty a river by drinking all the water? Isn't it a funny question? If so, how many glasses of water should you drink per day?

According to medical science, there is an average percentage of water in the human body. ‘Medical News Today’, a newsletter in my mailbox, says, “Most of the human body is water, with an average of roughly 60 percent. The body’s water changes slightly with age, gender, and hydration levels.” It further states the necessity of water for the human body: “Water is essential for health and numerous bodily functions. These include: Temperature regulation; Cellular function; Removing waste by urination-sweating and bowel movements; Lubricating and cushioning joints; Protecting the spinal cord and other sensitive tissues; Formation of saliva and mucus; Delivers oxygen throughout the body; Boosts skin health and beauty; Cushioning the brain, spinal cord, and other sensitive tissues; Digestive system depends on it; Flushes body waste; helps maintain blood pressure; the airways need it; Makes minerals and nutrients accessible; prevents kidney damage; and Weight loss.” It emphasizes that by drinking fluids throughout the day, people can also maintain the water balance in their bodies. Also, they may need to drink water after exercise, during summer, and in hot weather.

> According to the Buddhist calendar, this is the rainy season; it includes three months beginning in Esala month (æsalə-July). According to the Buddhist history and vinạyạ or discipline rules, all monks should observe ‘Vas’ or rain retreat, for three months, from July to October, annually. We should review the Vas observance to understand this ritual.

According to this newsletter, water exists throughout our body; cells contain 60 percent of all water in the body. And some organs have much more water than others, like the brain and kidneys, while teeth and bones possess the lowest proportion. In detail, the water percentages required for body parts such as the brain – 80-85 percent, kidneys – 80-85 percent, heart – 75-80 percent, lungs – 75-80 percent, muscles – 70- 75 percent, liver – 70-75 percent, skin – 70-75 percent, blood – 50 percent, bones – 20-25 percent, and teeth – 8-10 percent. Regardless of percentages, all body parts need water to function correctly. Therefore, water is essential for humans, animals, and all plants. Besides that, they emphasize how to maintain a healthy percentage, for that ‘The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)’ recommend carrying a water bottle for easy access, choosing water instead of sugar-sweetened beverages, choosing water when eating a meal out, and adding a wedge of lemon or lime to water to improve the taste.

Mainly they have given some tips for older adults such as not waiting until feeling thirsty to drink fluids; drinking a glass of water before and after exercise; taking a sip of water between each bite of food at meals; drinking a full glass of water when taking medication. But you cannot drink too much water for your goodness; there is a limitation to daily carrying it. Not only that, the amount of water needed each day varies from person to person, and no fixed amount of water must be consumed daily, but there is a general agreement. The recommended is for men: around 3.7 liters or 125 ounces; For women: about 2.7 liters or 91 ounces.

Although water is essential, there is a hazardous side to it. If you jumped into an unsafe large water reservoir, sea, or river, you would run the risk of getting drowned. In cases of a flood, tsunami, or disaster, there is a risk too. Though it is a valuable resource, you must use it cautiously and stay safe in the rainy season. According to the Buddhist calendar, this is the rainy season; it includes three months beginning in Esala month (æsalə-July). According to the Buddhist history and vinạyạ or discipline rules, all monks should observe 'Vas' or rain retreat, for three months, from July to October, annually. We should review the Vas observance to understand this ritual.

When the Buddha was alive, this Vas observation rule was imposed in the rainy season. Once, Buddha had heard that some people accused monks of stepping on grasses and small insects while others avoided them. Therefore, to prevent monks from being accused by people, The Buddha imposed these discipline rules. Accordingly, all higher ordained monks are entitled to observe the rainy season observance. But this is not a strict rule, as it could be observed willingly. On this occasion, devotees of some temples invite the monks for the Vas observance. Whether they are invited or not, monks observe Vas independently.

Since meditation is the primary practice in Buddhism, this period is suitable for it, as the Buddha emphasized it as the only way to purify the mind (ekāyanō maggō). It is better than rituals like pūjā or praying in front of statues, processions, and almsgiving (dansals). Studying Dhamma improves one's mind, and engaging in Dhamma discussions and meditation practice as we do at our Siriwardhanārāma Buddha Dhamma College is also beneficial. Meditation is not for the next birth life but for this life to prevent some mental health problems and physical illnesses. So many internationally erudite meditation teachers teach meditation scientifically in some Western countries, like Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn. I've received a newsletter from such an association from America regarding the scientific result of meditation. Its heading was "Reversal of Aging Process Through the Meditation." There are five

groups: “Physiology: When a person is aging – his blood pressure goes up while hearing, eyesight, functioning of the heart and nervous system, and blood flow to the brain decreases; Biochemistry: improves cholesterol level and haemoglobin concentration reduces; Psychological: incline to anxiety and stubbornness; Power of Creativity and the wisdom reduce; Mind-Body Coordination: Response to something increase, and IQ will be shortened. Health: Heart and nerve-related illnesses, emotions, asthma, insomnia, and depression increase and reduce the activity of the immune system and the quality, but there is no need to be afraid. Western scientists and psychiatrists have shown a miracle medicine for those troubles. That’s none other than mindfulness and meditation practice.

It’s not a miracle, but a real practical one. The answer to these problems is in your hand; that’s not “The answer is blowing in the wind,” my friend.

Ven Diyapattugama Revatha Thero

(B.A., M.A., M.Phil.)

Expert Psychological Counselor and

Meditation Instructor

Siriwardhanarama Buddha Dhamma College

Mano¯daya Meditation Center

Mano¯daya Asapuwa (Facebook)

Siriwardhanaramaya, Temple Lane, Kollupitiya

sirirevathad@gmail.com

dhammavedi.com