

New Year Message to patriotic Ethiopians

Always keep a diamond in your mind!

By Leoul Mekonen

As the New Year of 2010 approaches, I am triggered to write something to my beloved patriotic friends and comrades whose love and devotion to Ethiopia is as strong as diamond. For many reasons the year 2009 has immensely inspired many patriotic Ethiopians to take uncompromising step in the struggle for territorial integrity, freedom and Ethiopian unity. Though patriotic Ethiopians have been in the battle for the last 19 years, even though we feel our country has been taken by traitors and tribalists, still we live with the undying spirit and courage to take back what has been stolen from us. What has been stolen from us are our country, our national and territorial integrity, our unity, our flag and above all the spirit of Ethiopianness in our own soil. We have been humiliated by Meles Zenawi and his tribalist politicians, soldiers and supporters since 1991 to this very moment.

Even though our country and people have been constantly exposed to the evil plans of the Woyane invaders, we are always armed with courage and knowledge which the Woyanes, their supporters and infiltrators among us hate to see in us. Courage, fearlessness, love and devotion to our country and integrity are the things Woyanes couldn't destroy in the heart and minds of patriots. Since patriots don't sell themselves and their principle, the only strategy Woyanes devised to weaken Ethiopians is by attracting non-patriotic Ethiopians whose interest is only getting advantage like money, a piece of land to build house and the freedom to do business without obstacles. No matter what, patriots are unbreakable and unalterable. Patriots prefer to die standing with their integrity than living on their knees.

These days I felt deep inside the urge to write specially after I heard the song "always keep a diamond in your mind" a song usually played during Christmas. The song of Tom Waits has bear a strong message which might enrich our soul and enable us to receive the New Year with positive thoughts, plans, feelings and optimism.

*Oh always keep a diamond in your mind
You gotta always keep a diamond in your mind
Wherever you may wander
Wherever you may roam
You gotta always keep a diamond in your mind.*

When I heard the song, the first question that struck me was "where and when a mind has become a jewellery box?" This song made me ask deep questions about what it means to keep a diamond in a mind and how we can turn our mind into a jewellery box.

Looking for an answer for the question ‘what it means to keep a diamond in a mind’, I ventured to think deeply about the qualities and characteristics of a diamond. The name diamond is derived from the Greek- adamas which means “Unbreakable”, “unalterable”. Diamond is renowned as the hardest natural crystal in the world. Beside, it has a great optical characteristics and high ability to disperse light of different colours. The transparency, luminous nature, hardness and the radiance of beauty has made a diamond the most expensive and precious jewellery in our planet.

It is quite common to hear people say: “think positive”, to someone who feels down and worried. I have experienced many times that many people including me don’t take these words seriously, as many of us don’t know what it really mean or don’t consider it as useful since we have many problems in our lives. When one is faced with many challenges and threatening situations, it is difficult to understand the meaning of positive thinking.

In many ways the human mind is as clear as crystal, transparent and radiant like a diamond. Many years ago I heard from one martial art instructor that our mind is like a lake. Water in a lake reflects a moon which is millions of miles away from the earth but if we drop a little stone in the water the waves will disturb the reflection and we can’t see the clear picture of the moon. As the wave from a little stone damages the reflection, negative thoughts damage our self-esteem and prevent us from being aware of our potentials, opportunities and strength to face challenges and problems effectively.

What many of us ignore is that, our thoughts and emotions, affect all aspects of our life. As Mahatma Gandhi said “A man is but the product of his thoughts. What he thinks, he becomes.” Learning to be mindful of our internal dialogue will help us recognize thought patterns and how they may be affecting the way we handle situations in our daily life. Thoughts like, “I could never do that”, “I am not good enough”, “I have no influence” , “What if I fail?”, “what if my compatriots betray me”, “what if my friends don’t like my action and turn against me” can seriously impact the way we behave. The stress associated with the negative internal dialogue, in turn, affects every aspect of our life. Sometimes our inner negative thoughts and feelings leave us with feelings of self doubt; sometimes it will make us feel negative and critical of others.

When we dwell on negative thoughts it will separate us from our best self as well as from others. In my opinion our best personal selves come from a place of self love and acceptance. When we can truly love and accept ourselves we can also see other patriots around us as collaborators on our path of personal growth. The way I see it, it is love for our country, people, culture and religion which brings us closer and saw the seed of creativity in us. And it is love that takes us to a place where we can grow, learn and share the fruits of our labour with others.

Thinking and thoughts are powerful because human development is a direct result of thinking and thoughts. A very good example to this would be the invention of aeroplane which once was considered as foolish idea and unrealistic. We learn from history that thinkers like Leonardo Da Vinci had a vision of making flying machines in 1500s. At that age their idea was nothing more than wish and fantasy.

Even today many of us say “If I were a bird, I would fly” as if we couldn’t fly using heavy machinery that carry hundreds of people and tons of goods. Thinkers like Leonardo thought the impossible which was materialised 400 years later by other thinkers and visionaries. The thoughts and ideas we conceive today will slowly but surely bear fruit as long as we are consistent and determined to materialize them. When we look how the western countries support Meles Zenawi today and prolong the oppression and sufferance of Ethiopians, we may think that it is impossible to get rid of him. But getting rid of Meles and his tribalist regime is not as hard as making aeroplanes, what we need first is a vision that assures us the downfall of TPLF oppressive regime. We need a vision which brings all patriotic Ethiopians together for a common goal. When we think positive, most of the time we harvest positive results, the impossible becomes possible and we move forward with new thoughts and ideas. It is only then that we realize that “if I were a bird, I would fly” thought is not merely fantasy but tangible reality.

In my opinion positive thinking and great vision are diamonds in a mind, they are unbreakable, unalterable, they make us shine and glitter, drive us to think and act and inspire us to make a difference in our and others’ lives . When we are occupied by positive thoughts and attitude we entertain pleasant feelings and constructive images, and see in our mind’s what we really want to happen. This brings brightness to the eyes, more energy, more determination and perseverance. We walk tall and our voice becomes powerful like the trumpets which destroyed the walls of Jericho. Our body language also displays the way we feel inside.

When I summarise my experience in 2009, I wish to call 2009 the year of empowerment and ‘can-do attitude’. I have never seen in my life when the “yes I can, yes you can and yes we can” attitudes were reflected among individuals, friends, politicians, journalists and preachers. As bread and water nourish our body, great visions nourish our mind and heart. What we conceive in our mind and heart is what we are going to receive. We harvest what we produce in our mind. If we foster an image of defeat and failure, then we are going to live with defeated mentality. But if we develop an image of victory, success and determination, nothing will be able to keep those things away from us. Positive thinking, positive attitude, enlarged vision and willpower are diamonds we need to keep in mind. Then it is not only the diamond which shines but the jewellery box that contains the diamond is as precious and glamorous as the diamond it self.

Then, my friends before I say Merry Christmas and happy New Year I would like to remind you to always keep a diamond in your mind!

A person, people or nation without vision is like a boat on a dry land.

I love you!

**Leoul Mekonen
Leoul.mekonen@gmail.com**