Long Handled Spoons- Author Unknown

Swami was having a conversation with Lord Shiva, and said, “Lord Shiva, I would like to know what the land of happiness and the land of sadness are like.” Lord Shiva led Swami to two doors.

He opened one of the doors and Swami looked in. In the middle of the room was a large round table. In the middle of the table was a large pot of stew, which smelled delicious and made the Swami’s mouth water. The people sitting around the table were thin and sickly. They appeared to be famished. They were holding spoons with very long handles that were strapped to their arms and each found it possible to reach into the pot of stew and take a spoonful. However the handle was longer than their arms. They could not get the spoon back into their mouths. The Swami shuddered at their misery and suffering. Lord Shiva said, “You have seen the land of sadness.”

They went to the next room and opened the door. It was exactly the same as the first one. There was a large round table with a large pot of stew, which made the holy man’s mouth water. The people were equipped with the same long-handled spoon, but the people were well nourished and plump, laughing and talking. The Swami said “ I don’t understand.” It is simple said Lord Shiva. It requires but one skill, “You see then have learned to feed each other while the greedy think only of themselves.