

## 11. Diminish desires

Man fills his days with unremitting labour; he is immersed in perpetual anxiety and worry. Busy beyond description, with no time to stand and silently contemplate God's handiwork, he is troubled by strange inexplicable misgivings; he runs helter-skelter after hollow comforts; he is blinded by hate and greed. Caught in this toil and turmoil, man has lost knowledge of the one anchor that will save him from the tornado, namely, discipline of the vagaries of the mind.

That discipline has to be learnt and practised as early as possible in life; it is not to be postponed to old age, when the physical equipment with which man is endowed has become worn out and weak. There are many who try to warn their children away from holy men and sacred books, for they fear that they may develop a taste for these disciplines too early in life; but there is no "too early" in this matter; it is always "late", whenever you begin. For, who knows when the span of life is brought to a close.

Spiritual discipline is based on faith in the unity of all beings on the basis of the all-pervasive immanent indwelling *Aathma*. There are thousands here before Me, listening to My words, but fundamentally they are all One; for they are but a thousand waves on the face of a single underlying Ocean. Food earned by all the limbs and organs of the body making co-operative effort to procure it and make it ready for consumption is converted by the stomach and other organs again by co-operative effort into strength which is shared by all the limbs and organs. Not one part is neglected. You are all the limbs of that One Cosmic Body, the *Purusha*, who is far more expansive than the Universe, this Universe being but a small fraction of His Splendour. Individuals--as individuals--may be deluded into the belief that they are different from the rest. But the *Aathma* in each is the *Aathma* in all.

### Divinity flows through everyone

In this garland, quickest to strike the eyes are the flowers, while the thread upon which they are strung has to be inferred; it is not so patent. But, without it, they will all fall off. So too, without that bond in *Brahmam* (the Supreme Absolute), you will fall off as unrelated entities; in fact, you are entities on account of the Divine spark within, the Divine current that flows through each and activates each, On that Ekam (one), all this *anekam*---is strung (many); On the One, the many secure support.

The sages of this land knew that the mind is an instrument which can bind man or release him from bondage. One has to understand its working technique, as well as its potentialities. You must learn how to wield it, rather than yield to it. It is the mind that weaves the pattern called the 'I'. The way in which it establishes this ego and elaborates it into a multitude of shackles is called *Maaya* (deludious force). The mind prompts the senses to project into the outer world of objects, for it builds up notions of pleasure and pain, of joy and grief and constructs a whole array of urges and impulses. It resists all attempts to escape into the Eternal, the Universal, the Absolute. It protests when the individual is eager to become conscious of his identity with these; but when it finds determined opposition to its tactics, it surrenders and disappears.

When this handkerchief is recognised as a mere arrangement of yarn or better still as mere cotton basically, the warp and the woof disappear from the consciousness. The mind is composed of the warp and woof of desire; when man is established in the experience of the ONE, there is no desire, for who is to desire for whom or what? So, *mano layam* or *mano naashanam* (dissolution

or destruction of the mind) is accomplished. So, man has to diminish desire to become free from delusion; desire comes of attachment; deliverance comes from detachment.

### **Attitude necessary for developing detachment**

A little reflection will give the attitude necessary for developing detachment. You have a house in this city; you have lived in it some years; you call it yours; you are proud of it; you protest angrily when a poster is pasted on its walls; you have taken great care to see that it is comfortable, charming, impressive. Then one day you sell it. It is no longer the object of your attachment. Even when lightning strikes it, you are not disturbed. Now, the fields you have purchased with the sale proceeds become yours and they attract all your attachment. When flood waters invade those fields, you are very concerned and you run hither and thither trying to save them from harm. Next, you sell them too.

You call the money yours; you put it in a bank and you become attached to the pass book issued by the Bank. You keep it in an iron safe and scan its pages lovingly. The money you gave the Bank may be loaned by them to some one you do not like, but you do not care. You have the pass book with you. Now what exactly is yours? To which were you attached so deeply? The house, the fields, the money, the pass book? To none of these things. You were attached to prestige, comfort, show, greed: things that arose in your mind as desire, as urges; to your own ego, basically. That was the thing which induced you to claim these things, one after the other, as yours!

### **Come out of the well of ego**

Each of you must take up some spiritual effort in order to cleanse the mind of lust and greed, of envy and hate. Come out of the well of ego into the sea of the Universal Spirit, of which you are a part. Force your mind to breathe the grander atmosphere of the Eternal by reminding it of God and His Glory, every second, with every breath, when you repeat any one of His Names.

Or, engage in some work which will take you out of your narrow self into the vaster magnificence; some task where you dedicate the fruit of *karma* to God, where you devote your time and energy to share your joy or skill or knowledge with fellow-men.

Or, keep yourself surrounded always by persons devoted to the higher life; persons who will encourage you to move forward along the road towards the goal. By these means, you can achieve *chiththa shuddhi* (cleansing of the mind), so that the Truth can be clearly reflected therein. *Sath-sanga* (company of pious and holy men) leads gradually to withdrawal from the entangling activities. When a cold bit of coal is placed in the midst of glowing cinders, and when the fire is fanned, the coal too gets glowing with fire. *Jnaana-agni* or the Fire of Wisdom operates similarly.

### **Virtue and faith needed to win God's Grace**

Individual effort and Divine Grace are both inter-de-pendent; without effort, there will be no conferment of Grace; without Grace, there can be no taste in the effort. To win that Grace, you need only have faith and virtue. You need not praise Him in order to win His favour. For example, I did not like the fulsome praises with which you flooded Me in the address which was read when this meeting started. I am yours and you are Mine. This is a family gathering; as a matter of fact, all gatherings that I meet are family gatherings. The entire mankind is My family. It sounds very improper when a member of the family is extolled by another before the rest. This is a habit, a ceremonial, that is borrowed from political life, where ministers are given addresses

wherein they are praised so that some benefits may accrue to the place which they are visiting and which present those praises.

The present decline in spiritual progress that is so marked among the heads of monastic institutions and leaders of orders is due to this indiscriminate flattery heaped upon them by fawning groups. Praise feeds the fire of egoism and fogs genuine faith. The disciple or pupil should not flatter the *Guru*, nor should the *Guru* flatter the pupil or disciple. The relationship should be like that of father and son. If the son flatters the father or if the father fawns upon the son, it would be ridiculous.

Knock: the doors of Grace will open. Open the door-the sun's rays waiting outside will flow silently in and flood the room with light.

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