

### 38. Not above, but around

NO other human community has gone so deep into the problem of birth and death, of thoughts after death and the continuity of the consequences of thoughts, words and deeds, as the Hindus. The solutions they discovered and verified are so universal, so convincing and so beneficial for individual and social uplift, that they have stood the test of centuries of critical assessment by scholars and sages of all lands. One commendable feature of this investigation is that reason has never taken a second place. At every step, the *saadhana* is to be reinforced by reason. The *saadhana* (spiritual discipline) is the drug, the intelligent appraisal of the results and difficulties is the regimen. The disease of *Ajnaana* (spiritual ignorance) is cured by the 'tablet,' *Prajnaana* (science of the spirit); that is to say, the damaging consequence of Ignorance is cured by the Higher Knowledge.

But spiritual progress is not merely an intellectual exercise. It is right living, good conduct, moral behaviour. These attitudes are the automatic consequences of belief in a good, just, compassionate God, Who is watching and witnessing every act. So, faith in an Omnipresent, Omniscient, Omnipotent God is the first pre-requisite of a good life.

#### All impulses sprout from within the mind

Start the practice of goodness with the mother and the father. Serve them, please them, bring honour to their memory, become worthy of their gratitude. Expand the love and the service until you bring within its horizon all living beings, for all are altars of the self-same God; He is described in the *Vedhas* having a 'thousand heads.' So do not adhere to the 'aloners' in religion, who say the 'He alone is God'; change over to the 'also-ers' who know that 'He also is God.' Every head before Me, all the fifteen thousand, is My Head; for, it is the head of God, as mentioned in the *Vedhas*. Every bulb is illuminated by the same inner-flowing current. Let not the bulb think that it is shining through its own will; let it be humble that it is but an instrument, used by the current, to shed light.

If each one follows his own nose, there will be chaos. If each one decides to pursue his own wish or even his own reason (for after all, reason may be used to justify one's own predilections and pet prejudices), man will descend to the level of the apes or worse. So, man has to be guided by the wisdom of the past, the bounds prescribed by his well-wishers, the sages, the *Shaasthras* or moral codes laid down to map the conscience in him. The *Shaasthras* only channelise the urges that arise within men. Like the seed, which can sprout into a plant only from under the soil, all the various emotions, feelings and impulses sprout only from within the mind of man. If the mind is steady, nothing can shake you into indecision or indifference.

When Thukaaraam came out of his hermitage, one morning, for *Suryanamaskaar* (ceremonial prostrations before the rising Sun), his eyes fell upon the palanquin, orchestra, and the royal paraphernalia that Shivaji had sent to take him to his court. He told the messengers of the emperor, "Why have you brought this hearse? No one is dead here. I can still walk. Tell the Emperor that the need is not yet."

The Lord is neither up nor down, He is within Faith in God must induce you to run and fall at the Feet of the Lord, irrespective of what others might say or even what might happen to you. Look at the moth; it sees the flame; it is drawn irresistibly by the inner urge to escape from darkness; *thamaso maa jyothirgamaya*; it dashes into the flame and dies. Look at the bee; it discovers the nectar in the lotus; it settles and sips in untainted bliss; it is unaware of anything else; the sun

sets, the petals close, the bee is imprisoned, though it does not know it. It dies before the lotus blooms again with the dawn. But, the lives of both moth and bee are -fully worthwhile. For, this is the merging of *Jeeva* and *Brahmam*.

*The Jeeva* struggling to merge with *Brahmam* wails plaintively, as the pilgrim to Thirupathi wails, "O, Lord! You are atop the Seven Hills, I am on the plains below." Therefore, it is said, the *Jeevi* must either rise up to that level or he must, by his prayers, persuade the Lord to come down to him and bless him, by His Presence. This is a wrong inference. The Lord is neither up nor down. He is within, not seen because the heart is unclean. Engage in *Karma*, until this cleansing is accomplished; then, when the Lord in you is cognised, all your acts will promote the welfare of the world.

Some people say that they will believe in God only when they are afforded some experience of Divine Will. How can faith arise in the Will for those with such an attitude? They have no keenness to experience; how can examples help? Of course, if some have no faith, the loss is theirs. The Lord is unconcerned. Two and two make four even if some swear that they will not believe it.

*Prashaanthi Nilayam, 14-10-1967*

*Be devoted to Me and receive power from Me. To the extent to which you enthusiastically quicken up this process of give and take, to that extent you will be successful and happy. Deliver all your anxieties, troubles, travails and desire, to Me and in return receive joy, peace and strength of mind from Me. During this Advent, only spiritual aspirants and righteous persons are relatives, friends and recipients of My Grace.*

***Sathya Sai Baaba***