

18. Jiva And Brahman Are Like Two Halves Of A Seed

If one moves about in this world without due regard to moral principles and without exercising the necessary self-control, he will be immersed in illusion and ignorance even if he is a devoted person. This is like the fact that one cannot dispel darkness, without the help of a lamp, a situation which is quite natural in the world.

Pavitratma Swarupas, students!

On the stage of the world, everyone has been going through a variety of acts. Everyone is participating in many different types of shows. Every living being from amongst the eighty-four lakhs of *jivas* has been doing this; but in this particular birth of a human

being only, one is trying to earn God's grace in many ways. He is trying to satisfy God and earn His kindness. Alas! In spite of his trying hard, he has not succeeded in earning such grace. The appearances that we are putting out through the songs that we are singing and the words that we are uttering, are really hollow.

In this world, it is a common practice that when a man is carrying a load on his shoulders, he wants to walk fast and reach his house early so that he may relieve himself of the load on his shoulders. In the same manner, if an officer goes to his office in the morning, he will be asking himself at five o'clock and even before that, when he can go home. When you are making a journey in a car, in a bus, or in a train, you tend to ask when the journey will end and when you will reach the destination. While this is so in regard to worldly situations, even after going through many births and deaths, man does not seem to ask himself the question when he will reach his destination, the goal of Divinity.

Today, in the world many attempts are being made to increase the leisure which man can get; but, we are not making the necessary attempts to secure peace. If man does not have peace, even if he gets leisure, he will not get any satisfaction. A *Jnani* or a wise man, will be unperturbed and peaceful, even if he works for all the twenty-four hours of the day. On the other hand, an ignorant person will look very troubled and ruffled even

if he has no work at all and is able to enjoy leisure for the whole day.

Not having found peace on earth, man is flying to the moon. A little later we shall discuss the question of whether or not man can get peace on the moon; but we should try to ascertain what man hopes to get by spending several crores of dollars for the purpose of going to the moon. On the moon, the body may be cool but the mind is in a state of terrible fear. Are we going to attain peace on the moon if we cannot find it on the earth? We are not going to find peace in such places.

We will find it in the innermost heart of each individual. To look for peace outside one's own heart is a great mistake. One should look within himself for peace and do so with a clean mind. It is like our describing something with a very attractive name and hoping that the name will hide the true nature of the contents. When you actually look into a thing of that kind, you will find that there is nothing worthwhile in it at all. We talk of the moon and going to the moon, with acclaim, but what we get on the moon is perfectly useless. It is only the name that is attractive. Instead, if we spend several crores of dollars on people on earth who deserve to be helped, how nice would it be?

In the same manner, every man on the earth wants to have peace. With a desire to have peace, man makes many attempts and undertakes many types of work.

Where there is *dharma* and righteousness in the heart, there will be promoted good qualities. Where there are good qualities, you will find harmony and where there is harmony there will be order. If you find order and discipline, you will find peace in the world. Therefore, peace depends on the quality of the individual. Cultivation of good qualities and virtuous conduct is the path which leads towards Self-realisation.

There is a small and interesting story relating to this aspect. Once God created a soul and told him that he will give him whatever he wants. Immediately, the Goddess sitting with the Lord, told Him that He was going too far in giving such a boon to the *Jiva* for there are no limits to man's desires and ambitions. Man is greedy and if he is given the freedom to ask, he will ask for anything. Then God told the Devi that He is not so careless and ignorant in giving such a boon as she seems to think; because whatever man may ask for, he will certainly not ask for peace of mind. He will have to come back to God at least for his peace of mind if for nothing else. The Devi then asked how such peace of mind could be found. God replied that, man does not have to come to God, because in every *Atma*, *Paramatma* resides. If man thinks and does service in a selfless manner, he will surely find peace of mind.

Today, we are reminded of the adage that the proper study of mankind is man himself. Wherever there is oneness of the thought that comes to one's mind, the

word that comes from one's mouth and the deed that one performs, there is the spirit of *Atma*. If there is no oneness, no unity or co-ordination between thought, word and deed, there will be no peace of mind. At this age, you must understand and give a sacred place to the *Atma* or soul; and you must recognise that the thought that comes from your mind should be pure, the word that comes from your mouth should be true, and the work that you do should be sacred. I hope that you will realise the importance of these statements and give them a prominent place. The predominance of bad qualities keep the good qualities suppressed.

There is a small example for this. If you want light, you require a container, some oil and a wick. These are the three essential things. If all these things are there, then the light that you see will be shining like the grace of God. In this analogy, we have to regard *vairagya* or detachment as the container, devotion or *bhakti* as the oil, and work as the wick. If all these three things are present in a person, then wisdom in him will be shining like a light. If you do not have these three, then God will not be there to light the lamp of wisdom or knowledge.

It may also happen that you have all the three components and yet you do not have the grace of God for lighting the lamp. The container, the oil and the wick may be there; but, will there be light? Flowers, needle and thread may be there, but will the garland come of

its own accord? Gold and precious stones may be there, but will the jewels come of their own accord? There may be intelligence and education but will you get wisdom without a *guru*? You may be very intelligent but when someone writes the letter “A” on the blackboard, you will not be able to find out what it is till someone tells you first that the particular shape represents the letter “A.” Mere intelligence, devotion and detachment, devoid of wisdom, will not help you to attain the desired result.

In this world God is present, mixed up with *jiva*, in every living being. If to some extent, you forget the *jiva* and concentrate on the aspect of God, you will find that there are no obstacles in your life. Between *jiva* and God, there will ultimately be only one that is God. If you take a seed, break it into two halves and put them into the earth you will not get a plant; but if you plant the whole seed, you will get a sprouting plant. In the same manner, *jiva* and *Brahman* together constitute one seed. They are like two halves of the whole seed and only out of the whole seed will life sprout. Each one has no existence by itself.

We are born as human beings. We proclaim ourselves to be Divine. With all this, we do not understand the true nature of human life. When a human being is living as a human being, it gives great pleasure to God. When you are called a human being, you should conduct yourself in a manner that is befitting of a human being.

There is a small example for this in the *Ramayana*. Ravana made several attempts to get Sita for himself. He had put on different appearances. But Sita avoided coming into the hands of Ravana. She was always thinking of Rama. Having realised this situation, Mandodari, the wife of Ravana, told him that if he wanted to aspire for the hand of Sita, there was no use putting on different appearances. She said that the only chance of success is in Ravana putting on the appearance of Rama himself. Then, Ravana replied that if he could really put on the sacred appearance of Rama, he would not get such evil thoughts in his mind at all! When you look like Rama, you will get the thoughts and ideas appropriate to Rama and not those of Ravana.

In this context, if we put on the appearance of a human being, we should have qualities of a human being and not those of a monkey or a demon. The power to distinguish right from wrong, to keep away from sin and to be attracted to good, are the qualities appropriate to a human being. They in turn will lead man towards divinity. Man shares with animal some common characteristics such as eating, sleeping and fearing. The distinctive feature which renders man different from an animal is *jnana*, or intelligence. The animal does not have intelligence.

In the *Ramayana*, we have the story of Hanuman. He sets an example to all of us by the manner in which he conducts himself. When he comes close to Rama, he shows extreme humility and respect. What is the reason

for Hanuman exhibiting such humility in the presence of Rama? The reason for such behaviour lies in the description of “*Ramo Vighrahavan Dharmaha*” of Rama. Rama is the embodiment of *dharma* and therefore in the presence of *dharma*, he shows humility. The same Hanuman, when he went to Lanka, had put himself on a pedestal higher than that of Ravana because Ravana asked him to squat on the floor like a monkey. The reason for this is that while in the presence of *dharma*, Hanuman is humble and obedient, but in the presence of an arrogant king, he would not show any humility. In the same manner, you should bow down to *dharma*, and show respect to teachers and elders. On the other hand you should show courage and prudence when placed in a predicament which is *adharmic*. Even then, you should not take to anarchic methods.

Today, without even making an enquiry as to what is *dharma* and what is *adharma*, people are behaving like monkeys which are in a state of excitement. There is a small example for this. One student went to a hotel and ordered some food. He ate the food and started leaving without paying money to the hotel keeper. Then, the hotel keeper insisted on the money being paid. In such a situation, if students attack the hotel and set fire to it saying that the hotel keeper had insulted one of them, it becomes bad and unworthy conduct. This kind of an incident brings disgrace to the entire student community. This is taking a wrong path while having the sacred Saraswathi, Goddess of learning, in your heart.

Today, even if the cost of something in a hotel goes up by one naya paisa, the students undertake a strike. Even if the bus fare is increased, the students undertake a strike. Taking into consideration the time and place, if Hanuman conducted himself in such an upright manner, how much better should we conduct ourselves when we call ourselves human beings?

The difference that exists between a monkey and a man can be easily understood. A monkey is called a *Vanara* and man is called *Nara*. The only difference is in the additional letter “*Va*” which means a tail. Therefore, one who has a tail is a monkey and one who has no tail is a man. Despite this difference, the behaviour seems to be the same. In a monkey, there are no qualities which can be attributed to man; but in a man, there are some residuary qualities, which are characteristic of a monkey. In order to get over and shed these residuary qualities of a monkey which are hanging on to us, we should go along the sacred path.

It is in the context of taking such a sacred path that the disciples of Sankara spoke about morality and truth and declared that even for one, who gives a considerable amount of charity and help, if he does not have morality and truth, his ignorance is not going to be removed. Vemana has poetically expressed that one who eats or swallows a dog is a knowledgeable person: one who eats or swallows a pig is even wiser and is like a Yogi: one who eats or swallows an elephant is the noblest

soul. Here Vemana used the word dog synonymously with anger and one who can control his anger is like a knowledgeable person. He used the word pig synonymously with ego. Therefore if you can suppress your ego, you are like a *Yogi*. In the third line, the elephant is compared to arrogance. If you can control your arrogance, you become a *Jnani* or a noble soul. He implies that if you can control your anger, ego and arrogance, swallow them and digest them so as not to exhibit them, you become a great *Yogi*. Therefore, young people should make a great effort to suppress their anger, ego and arrogance. You must develop sacred ideas like truth, forbearance and *prema* and convey their sacred ideas to your friends and thereby help to uphold the great traditions and culture of the land of *Vedanta*.

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