

26. Conquest of the mind

ENQUIRY into the nature of the Mind will reveal that it has no existence apart from the thoughts that arise through the sense organs. That was why the sages declared: "*Sankalpa Vikalpaathmakam Manaha*" (Thoughts and doubts constitute the essence of the mind). To bring the mind under control we have to free ourselves from the entire process of mental agitation. If we want to take a bath in the sea, which is agitated by waves, we cannot afford to wait till the waves subside and the sea is calm. Likewise, it will be foolish to wait for the agitations in the mind to cease for experiencing *Aanandha* (divine bliss).

Agitations are of the very nature of the Mind "*Manana sthithihi Manaha*" (The state of cogitation or remembrance is the Mind.) By constant rumination over one's sensory experiences the mind acquires a form. By relating the experiences to the "I" as the experiencer, the consciousness of a distinctive individual (the 'Ego) arises. From that, desires develop and from the desires the mind acquires a form. In a piece of cloth, when the threads are taken out, only the cotton remains and if the cotton is burnt the cloth ceases to exist. Similarly when desires are eliminated, the "I" and the Mind will go.

It has been said that the destruction of the mind is the means to the realization of the Divine. The cessation of the mind can be brought about by the gradual elimination of desires, like the removal of threads from a cloth. Finally the desires have to be consumed in the fire of *Vairaagya* (detachment).

Everything in the world is subject to change

Look upon life as one long railway journey. In this journey it is not good to carry heavy luggage. There are stations on the way like *Aarathi* (suffering), *Artharthi* (desire for objects), *jignaasu* (yearning for understanding) and *Jnaani* (Self-realisation). The less luggage one carries the more easily and quickly one can get through various stages and reach the destination. The primary requisite, therefore, is the eradication of desires.

Everything in the Universe has a form and a name. Of the two, the name is more important than the form. The form is liable to change every moment. The *Vedhaantha* declares that whatever is perceived is liable to perish ("*Yaddhrishyam thannashyam*"). There is nothing in the world which is not subject to change. A man's body also goes through stages of infancy, boyhood, manhood, and old age. *Samsaara* (worldly life) is like a tree with roots, branches, flowers and fruits. The Mind is the tap-root of this tree. If the tap-root is destroyed the tree with all its branches will fall. If the mind goes, the sense of separateness will go.

Man's actions are related to desires and aversions. They are the cause of his joys and sorrows. As the Mind is the source of these actions, it is by cultivating pure and noble thoughts that one can engage in pure and noble deeds. All the world's ills arise from the evil thoughts and deeds of men. It is only when men change that society will change and the world will be reformed.

Nothing can be achieved without faith in God

Man does not use his sense organs in the right way. He has eyes, but does not see what is good. He has ears, but does not listen to what is good. There is only one way of correcting him. He has to be shown the spiritual path and helped to cultivate the virtues of Truth, Love and Self-sacrifice. He must be weaned away from selfish pursuits and from arrogance and pride. His mind, which is the real culprit, has to be cleansed of all evil. He believes in the false and unreal

and does not relish Truth, Goodness and Beauty. He can acquire real peace and joy only when he turns his thoughts to God and away from the petty tinsel of the world. Without faith in God there is nothing that man can achieve, whatever his knowledge and wealth may be.

Modern education does not teach a young man what is essential for making his life worthwhile and meaningful. His mind is loaded with a lot of useless information, but he knows little that is useful for daily living. Even in the spiritual field, there is a wide gap between verbal knowledge and real understanding of spiritual truth. People perform *Japa*, *Dhyaana* and *Bhajana* (repetition of sacred formula, meditation, and group singing of devotional songs), but there is no understanding of their inner purpose or what they are expected to achieve.

All living beings have the *Pancha Bhuuthas* (five basic elements) *Pancha Koshas* (five sheaths) the *Pancha Praanas* (five vital airs), and the *Panchendhriyas* (five sense organs) in common. What is the form of these five elements? What is the power that sustains the five *Koshas* (sheaths)? Man does not enquire into these matters. He lives continuously in these sheaths and functions through the sense organs but what is the purpose of this life? What is the significance of human birth? These questions do not bother him. He is content from morning till eve to acquire one thing or another and is concerned about "My house", "My car", "My clothes" and the like. In this pre-occupation with the "I" and "Mine", the basic truth about the Divine that is the real nature of the "I" is not remembered at all.

Realise that the mind is the cause of "my-ness"

When a man calls his body, "My body" who is the owner or the indweller of the body? If he is not the body or the mind, what is he? Without understanding who he is, is there any meaning in talking about "my body", "my mind" and the like? Is there any sense in seeking to acquire various possessions without understanding who is acquiring them and for what purpose?

Once it is realized that the mind is the cause of this "my-ness", and that it is made up of desires, then one will strive to achieve the state of *Samaadhi* (superconscious state of bliss during meditation) in which all agitations in the mind cease. It may be difficult to achieve this state of *yogic* serenity. An easier way to still the mind is to concentrate all thoughts on God. When that is done, file calmness that comes in the state of *Sushupthi* (deep sleep) will be realised. It is a state of equanimity in which one looks upon pain and pleasure, joy and grief, with equal indifference, unaffected by them either way. In the same manner the identity of the *Jeevi* (individual. Self) and the *Brahman* (Omniself) has to be experienced.

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My desire is that you should not censure other religions. Develop brotherly feelings for all. God is One; there are not many Gods, one for each tribe among men.

Love is One; it transcends caste, colour and creed, if it has to be genuine. Truth is One; there cannot be two. For two can only be one occurring twice. The goal is One; for, all roads must lead to the One God. Why then should men quarrel and fight over the Eternal and the Absolute?

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