



LOVE

Love and sin

Extract from 20/2/03 Satsang

Om Shri Paramatmane Namaha

Q: As a child, I was educated in the Catholic religion. In this approach there is fear of God and fear of sin. My spiritual path was, for a long time, the path of fear, guilt, and self-hate, even on account of small errors. Could you say something about it?

A: Certain points should be made about this question.

The first point is that the element of fear is not peculiar to one religion only but is found in almost all religions in one form or another. In most religions there is the notion that we should be afraid of God, and that we will be punished by God for certain sins. This notion also has its own usefulness. The vast majority of humanity on this planet has not evolved sufficiently to be able to comprehend the whole of the cosmic play, the play of consciousness, and the relationship between the role of the individual and totality.

Therefore, this element of fear that there is a God, different from you, and that if you commit a sin, you will be punished by Him – this element of fear has its usefulness. Quite a large number of people follow the path of morality, rectitude and righteousness, as a result of that element of fear. They follow the right path because of the element of fear, and in this way evolution happens by compulsion. But human evolution beyond a certain stage does not happen in fear. It happens in freedom.

The true spiritual evolution of human beings happens when they have a choice between right and wrong, and they voluntarily, freely and willingly choose the right and not the wrong.

The growth and the development of love and wisdom happen in freedom, not in fear. In the beginning there may be an element of fear towards God, but ultimately God is not found because of fear. God is found because of love. However, this element of fear remains in the consciousness of some cultures for a very long time. As long as there is fear, there is no blossoming of love in the heart. Saints say that, in fact, true Love happens only after Self-realisation. Even before that, whenever there is an element of true Love, it happens with the help of a spiritual guide. On one side is a person who is seeking, but not Realised, and on the other a person who is Realised. There is Love in the relationship because the realised wants nothing from the seeker. The time must come when God ceases to be the big boss but becomes a friend!

Perhaps the reason why the Bhagavad Gita became influential throughout world, is because the giver of wisdom there is a dancing God – a playful God – Krishna. Though He knows how to fight in the war and yet He is a loving God. That does not mean that Christ is not loving, that Mohammed is not loving or that Buddha is not loving. All the really great men, in all religions, in all countries, are always loving. Whoever is not full of love cannot be considered really spiritual. A fearful God should be replaced by a loving God.

As regards the feelings of guilt, fear and self-hate, even for minor sins, they are also present in a large number of people. There are people who think that one will be punished for all one's guilty acts. They say that if one does not become pure, one does not deserve to be on

the path to God, but one deserves to go to hell. These notions have some meaning, but I do not wish to discuss them now. The valuable point for consideration is how to get rid of this feeling of guilt. Our true Self is always pure and it will remain pure. It cannot become impure. Whenever this is realised we come to know that we are not the doers of actions. The ego of doer-ship goes away. One comes to realise that one is the eternal Spirit that is always pure, and that in the Spirit there is no activity at all. Activity happens only within the domain of nature. When one realises this, all guilt and self-hate goes away.

In the experience of the highest, deepest bliss, there is no place for any feeling of guilt and self-hate. It does not happen in devotion and love.

One of the greatest saints, Goswami Tulsidas says that without love and devotion to God, inner impurity never goes away. As a dirty cloth cannot be washed without water, a dirty subconscious does not become pure without love and devotion to God.

In love, personality becomes nil, and personality is the evil. As long as personality or pride in being 'special' continues, there cannot be Peace, Bliss and Love. The total annihilation of personality happens only in Love. You do not exist then but only Love remains. Love or Bliss and God are one. This inner feelings of guilt, self-hate, fear and all such things, go away not so much through self-effort as through prayer. When evil goes away there remains nothing but love. So thank you for your question. There is no connection at all between evil and love. How can darkness and light be together? One comes to know that one is the eternal light. Then there is no place for pain and guilt.

If we are Self-realised, have known the Truth, and have experienced God – in our unbreakable relationship, the lover and the beloved become one, and only Love remains.

.....