

SEED AND THE SOUL (Individual)

(*By Swami Akhandananda Saraswati*)

In the phenomenal world there is no living being-right from the creator Brahma to tiny insect-who does not dislike sorrow and does not make an effort to escape from it. It becomes clear, if viewed analytically that unhappiness is inconsonant with our true nature and contradictory. For this reason, there is a natural distaste for death ignorance, fear etc. without being taught by parents, teacher and without any formal education, training or culture. If thoughtfully considered, there is no problem of escaping for the unhappiness which has already passed; that which is being experienced now is also disappearing; that which is to come in future is unknown; then what is the meaning of escaping unhappiness? Absolute freedom from sorrow or unhappiness for all times, from all things and of all sorts. The natural question in this situation is the cause of misery and the remedy for its eradication.

Pain or unhappiness starts together with the body. Misery is experienced with both birth and death, disease, separation, suffering-agreeable and disagreeable all these occur in connection with the body. Even independance and dependance is connected with it. Duty, action, state, condition are all the progeny of body. This relation with the body is the cause of unhappiness. Let us discriminate our true nature and comprehend ourself as distinct from the body as नाहं नमै "Not I" "Not mine", Enough. Let whatever is being stated about the body be said. Whatever is, let it be. As it remains, let it remain, This is not mine. I am, seen, witness unattached, passive or neutral. I am not miserable with

body's misery neither happy with body's happiness. Material body's death does not touch me. Its diseases and enjoyments do not touch me. I do not follow its control or opposition. It's fatigue and delusion does not disturb, my peace, The material cause of misery is acceptance of body as "I" and "mine" अहम्मानादुत्पत्तिर्द्रव्यदर्शनम् Its meaning is body is sorrow and to accept it as "I" or in the form of "I" is the basis. When the material cause itself is absent where will the manifestation be? अशरीरं वाच सन्तं प्रियाप्रिये न स्पृशतः Certainly, with bodilessness agreeable and disagreeable do not touch the Eternal.

Now listen, from whence has the body come? Rejecting "I"—"Mine" where will it go? What guarantee is there that there will not be the repetition of the same relation with this body again? Let the body be made from one element or many, the formation and construction of material constituents can not be but a result of virtue and vice. Merit and demerit is a result of action. Action is formed by body. In that case, the succession of body can never be destroyed; because just as the previous proper or improper actions have been done and are being done will continue to be done. From body to action from action to body. These two similar to seed and tree have come from an uninterrupted succession without origin. Then is the life of an individual soul a seed life? No! No! there is a difference of heaven and earth between the seed life and the individual life. The individual soul is indestructible consciousness and a seed is destructible matter, come, let us once compare them both.

There is a seed in your hand. Can you recognise of what tree or fruit it is? If affirmative, then you can imagine its past and future form just by seeing it; how it has passed from root, sprout, stem, branches, leaves, flowers. If now sown again it will take similar form. Can all these be perceived in this seed? No, but all these are inherent in the seed. Seed needs earth, water, heat, light, air, and space all these—field, fertiliser, irrigation. It will be moist swell,

sprout and grow. It requires space and time. In spite of all this, it will manifest its form, colour, taste according to its nature. Seed has followed its uninterrupted succession without beginning. It has obtained inside out, up-down motion all through. So long this will continue as long as its seedness is not destroyed by fire.

Now please take an individual soul on your imaginary palm. There in exists a specific form of individuality. It also requires time for its evolution and involution. Space is necessary for appearance and disappearance. Substance is required for constructing varieties of forms. This appearance-disappearance birth-death, and change in form occur in relation with action. Without action raising-falling, living-dying or going-coming can not occur. Only one substance can not change into manifold forms without action. This action alone is called in practical world as reaction or manifestation which produces by a specific process a series of phenomenal forms. This action, because it is performed in this individual world with a sense doership assumes a specific desire generated impression of the memory; thereby it is designated as righteous or unrighteous. Preponderance of consciousness constitutes soul (Individual) and preponderance of matter a seed. Letter V in Jiva or individual soul suggests its inwardness and Letter B in Bija or seed its outwardness. Seed is the means of creation only, but soul of both creation and reason. Energies of seed remain in material substances alone and these of the soul in both material and mental. Outer and inner instruments of soul remain conscious but instruments of seed are unconscious. Creation of virtue and vice is absent in seed. But soul because of its being the basis of evidential thought and freedom in action becomes the criterion of virtue and vice. Seed is preponderantly the enjoyable part but soul is predominantly the enjoyer. Therefore soul's happiness and misery are perceptible and those of seed imperceptible. Soul through its proper and improper behaviour is capable of raising itself up or fall down, but seed is subservient to its natural flow.

Living being also, in the phenomenal realm, are of three types, rising current (Plants), oblique current (animals), falling current (human) beings. Usually first two have material predominance bereft of virtue and vice. But in those having the current flowing downwards (human beings) are complete in natural evolution or progress. He eats from above and crows below. This human species is like this. This species is completely adequate for manifestation of action, knowledge, and love; because for achieving new formulations of activity hand and other organs, for ever new discoveries the intellect, and for experiencing happiness expansion of love is clearly seen. This species is fully competent for experiencing the states of existence, knowledge and bliss. The human being can hold the impressions of knowledge and action in his mind and accomplishment of pre-existent wisdom is also observed. Therefore, full responsibility of righteousness and unrighteousness is evident in human beings alone,

By unrighteous behaviour souls' discipline over the body, organs and mind becomes slack; for this reason it comes under the guidance of phenomenal nature by being born as plants, bugs, eggs, or animals born of wombs other than biped human being having two hands. With righteous behaviour body organs and mind get purified and with increased discipline accomplished fitness to enter the divine realm is obtained. Even in the divine realm in the beginning there is increase of sensual happiness only. But by reflecting on one ideal a oneself divine bliss connected with the ideal other than sensual manifests. There is a variety in the resulting divine bliss due to manifold Mantra (word for repetition) methods and practices. And in devotional field due to one ideal, Mantra, method and conviction in concentration predominantly emotional holiness manifests. The self-effulgent consciousness, a witness of mind (inner instrument) is in no way connected with space, time and substance. By controlling mentations this perceiver alone establishes in its own natural self. Then it emancipates from appearance and disappearance in space, birth and death in time, change of species in substance. Being

detached from conditioning adjuncts this perciver rests in its own nature at that time. But when the absorption of the mind dissolves it again forms mentations. Therefore, with the control of mentations its discipline, birth and death etc. also becomes possible. But after the knowledge of oneness of the Atman and Brahman (Consciousness underlying individual and universal consciousness) as stipulated in Vedanta, space and time are invalidated meaning their falsity is determined. Then birth and death of an individual soul are completely and finally eradicated. As long as mentations are taken as true and identifications with them remain intact, so long the reality of difference of manifold perceivers and the separateness of God no one can resolve. For this reason the succession of birth and death will continue. Seedness being material despite it being without beginning is destructible by material fire; but an individual soul being spirit or conscious is not destructible by physical fire. It is identified through ignorance with mentations originally resulting from impressions of desire seeds. Therefore, without destroying by the fire of knowledge the individuality of the separate can not be eliminated. Individual soul is conscious, its living vitality is without beginning and infinite. It holds within its purview space time and substance. Appearance of space, time and substance is refutable and consciousness in its own nature is irrefutable or uncontradictable. In the realm of experience our nonexistence has no place. No one can ever experience that he does not exist. Therefore, the life of an individual is in essence infinite and nondual. It in its own imagination identifying, with apparent time believes itself to be eternal, with the apparent space believes to be all-pervading and with the apparent substance believes to be all-inclusive. Really, eternality, all-pervasiveness, and all-inclusiveness are also not its proper nature, but due to identification with imaginary appearances. Ground consciousness is really the proper own nature of the individual and in it there is not even a tinge of duality. Refutable appearance has no value whatever. Really, seedness and individuality are

due to ignorance. Existence of seed and existence of individual are non-separate from the existence of indivisible consciousness alone.

Let us once again return to the first problem. Why should multiplicity arise in any one substance? Reaction or Action. Reaction is ordinary or natural, but action is accomplished by an actor. Action presupposes virtue or vice, because at the bottom there is a desire to obtain or reject. Desire to obtain has at its root the superimposition of the good and desire to reject has at its root the superimposition of the bad. With the firmness or slackness of this desire proper and prohibited action is performed. Superimposition is due to ignorance. For this reason so long as ignorance remains as long the superimposition will remain and so long as that remains as long the wheel of birth and death will not cease because of non-cessation of desire. To undo this wheel there is need for the knowledge of Vedanta. If due to predominance of time, birth and death; due to space appearance-disappearance; due to predominance of substance change of species; if result of action was not regulated by God and if this ignorant individual was not compelled to enjoy the fruit, then there would be no necessity for knowledge resulting from the principal statement of 'That Thou Art' etc. and hearing, thinking, and contemplating of Vedanta would be futile. For eradicating this there is necessity of the knowledge of the oneness of spirit (Brahma) and soul (Atman).

Shri Gavdapadachara Maharaj, who has been referred to as 'expert in Tradition' by Shri Shankaracharya in his commentary on Brahma Sutra and as "natura in the essence of Vedanta" by Shri Sureshwaracharya repeatedly in his works states:—

यावद्धेतुफलावेशः संसारस्तावदायतः ।

क्षीणे हेतुफलावेशे संसार न प्रपद्यते ॥

"As long as there is faith in causality, the (endless) chain of birth and death will be there. When that faith is destroyed (by knowledge) birth and death become non-existent."

By not recognising Atman (Soul) as Brahma (Universal Spirit) meaning free from space, time, substance, divisions and differences of species, genus or existing in itself, it is accepted that I am the actor of virtye and vice and enjoyer of happiness and misery, then the worldly existence or transmigration of birth and death progress only. When with the knowledge of the oneness of Spirit (Brahma) and soul (Atman) the ignorance-generated actorship, enjoyerhood metempsychosis (Transmigration), divisibleness ect. are invalidated then only birth-death, re-incarnation etc. and

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futile worldly existance are eradicated. Therefore, to disbelieve re-incarnation and transcendental life prior to the knowledge of Truth is forfeiting the Vedanta knowledge and beguiling oneself in utter futilily.

The fact is entirely according to Vedanta and completely reasonable that the life of the individual soul is indivisible consciousness as existence alone. The delusion of difference is due to ignorance only. Entire defference is only apparent. Difference is not really true. Our Atman (True Self) is the basis or ground. Finally a Veda Mantra is quoted for your contemplation :—

यथा ह्ययं ज्योतिरात्मा विवस्वान् अपो मित्रो वह्यैकोऽनुगच्छन् ।

उपाधिना क्रियते मित्ररूपो देवः क्षेत्रेष्वेवमजोऽयमात्मा ॥

“Ust as the effulgent Sun, due to conditioning adjuncts, reflects in water in manifold forms; so the shining Atman, inspite of its being unborn, as if desires to manifest into varieated forms of innumerable species”