

## **Differential Notion - the first and last Obstacle in Spiritual Pursuit**

*Prabhaata-rashmih*

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*Harih Om Tat Sat. Jai Guru. Jai Guru.*

For one or two days in the evening satsang which I held in my own office I was speaking about the first and last spiritual struggle namely differential outlook and vision. Differential outlook and vision. This is the first and last obstacle in the path of spirituality.

What does this mean? It means that you always look at God and the world in two different ways. God is God, world is world the two are not together alike or one. In the same manner you feel your body, the bodily personality, the inner personality consisting of mind, intelligence and ego this is also part of the world. You separate between yourself and the world. Whenever you think of the world you feel it is world minus myself. I stand separately. So the differential outlook is pronounced between God and world and between world and yourself. With the result that God is different for you from yourself as well as from the world. This is the basis on which a devotee starts worshipping God, thinking about God, contemplating upon God. I always say a worship can never be except when it is addressed to God. And which God or which God are you worshipping? You are worshipping a God who is invisible first and infinitely distant. This is the way all worship is.

Whether God is to be worshipped or something else is to be done with you. One. Secondly does he require the type of worship that we are giving? Or is he an all filling, self-sufficient, self-filled person. No thought about God is fostered. Whether worship is relevant to him is necessary is that the right attitude etc.? No thought is there had at all. Worship is more a practice, more a practice than a pursuit of knowledge or introspection. This being so the right way to overcome these or to get to the right type of approach towards God is to think about what is this God, what is this world, can there be a difference between the two, can there be a difference between the world and myself, unless the differential outlook is submitted to a close examination, examination, a close evaluation and assessment, this obstacle will never get removed from your life.

What does this mean? You should rise above the ordinary levels of physical worship and install your spiritual pursuit in the form of an enquiry, examination, evaluation and assessment. What does that mean? I am using a new phrase called introspection, infusional introspection. You should take to introspection over the subject. Over the subject means what? Over the very differential outlook that you have. God and world are different, I and the world are different, I and God are different, this kind of a differential-ness which overtakes you or which overpowers you will have to be subjected to an intelligent examination.

People are given to introspection particularly professional, teachers, research people and the others. But they are introspecting over the object details. What is an atom? What does it consist of? What is meant by a wave? What is a particle? Ultimately what are these? Is there any God-particle? Where can we find? All these are objective or object based examination and enquiry. In infusional introspection the whole introspection is taken up with a view to bring about changes, improvement and qualities in the very inner personality. Do I have a mind? What is it like? What are the type of thoughts that emanate from my mind? Are they good, are they bad? How is it that the same mind produces good as well as bad thoughts? What is the role of bad thoughts and what is the role of good thoughts? Will I be able to overcome bad and only have good or as long as the mind is capable of producing bad thoughts and good thoughts I am likely to fall a victim to that. So wherein lays my salvation? What is meant by bad? What is meant by good? Are they authentic? Are they well based? Will good and bad go on changing from place to place person to person, from stage to stage?

For the little child playing with the mother, suckling openly touching any part of the mother's body playing with her, calling her, asking her to give a bath, all these are very much free and permitted. But when the same child particularly a male child goes then the mother herself says, "No you go and have your bath yourself, you are grown up. I will not come." The child also says, "No, No don't touch my body. I will look after myself." In this manner this is a very common example. In the same manner will good and bad change according to the age of a person, circumstances in which he is? So the whole process should be subjected to an infusional introspection. Why I call it infusional because this introspection is meant to generate salutary, sublime effects on your mind, its functions, intelligence, its reasons, ego, its function etc.

Now one differential outlook that the ashramites is likely to have is that with regard to the work they are doing. Our ashram has got different sections of work. We have publications here. Two periodicals are published from here every month. Then at least one or two books in a year we are publishing. We have a number of letters to be written. Nowadays some emails also are going out from here. We have a website, it has to be updated. Now what kind of a work will you call it as? These are all disseminational work, direct work. The entire ashram is meant for dissemination, spiritual wisdom is disseminated from here. And the actual dissemination is in the form of letters and words either spoken or written.

Speaking we do, writing also we do. There are some people who help us. Vicharasetu is looked after by Satish, Vicharasarani is looked after by nowadays Sumesh and Arpitha. Medhini also takes part and from Trichur three women are there. Indira is there, Geetha is there, Anitha is there. All these people are involved in Vicharasarani publication. In Vicharasetu Satish is involved, Prabhakaranji is involved, Prasanna is involved, Binita is involved and Nutan Swamiji is involved. All these people are involved in Vicharasetu publication.

Now we have one important item of hosting the devotees and visitors who come here. Hosting consists of what? First of all receiving them properly, directing them to the rooms or the places of stay. Before their arrival setting up their room, setting up their bed, everything keeping ready. Then when they come to the dining hall give them food properly look after them. Now this is something to be done, it is an exclusive job. Arranging transport if necessary when they go back and also for them to come either from the railway station or from the airport. Now this is another

section. Then before articles arrive at the dining hall ready for serving the cooking has to be done. I think we have early morning tea, breakfast, then the mid-day meal, afternoon tea and dinner. So five times the meal has to be served. And this has to be regularly made in the kitchen. So to look after the kitchen is very important. Then we have another item, house-keeping. That is another important item.

I am having my food where I stay, I don't come to, Ma and Nutan Swamiji also do not come to the dining hall for having our food. We have our food a little different and it is being cooked by somebody exclusively. So looking after the kitchen above and also serving food to us it is another. And doing a little more of personal service.

Now if you think that these items of service are different in their priority, importance and adorability this differential outlook is dangerous. Absolutely wrong. Look at our own body. Our body consists of ten organs. Five are knowledge organs. Eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin. Can you say the eyes are more important than the skin? The tongue is lesser important than nose? All the five together constitute our body and our function and life. So the importance is equal to all.

Then we have five *karmendriyaas*, action organs. The action organs are not less in importance to the knowledge organs. Both are equal. Then these are employed by the inner mind which is directed by the intelligence and which is coordinated by the ego. Now can you say the senses are inferior to the mind? And the mind is inferior to the intelligence? I draw a comparison to say relatively the powers of each, potentials of each, but every organ has got its own importance and place. Our body, mind, intelligence and ego. In the same manner our feet, head, hands, no organ is superior in place to the others.

In the same manner the kitchen is as important, holy and sublime. The dining hall is equally so. The reception is equally so. Hosting the devotees is very important, looking after the guest houses etc. then coming, receiving the post, looking into them, answering them, distributing them, taking action, then Vicharasethu remittances, enrolling the subscription, correcting their addresses, printing the labels, posting, Vicharasarani also, looking after the kitchen above, looking after other things, now if you differentiate between any two items of work I think you are gone.

So the first importance will be we have got a shrine about which I did not say. That shrine is to be looked after, kept clean, the morning and evening prayers are there, that is also important. Then we have got midday lecture or forenoon talk and evening *satsang*. These are also very important. So arranging the whole place Vijnana bhavan for it. Every work is equally important but I am afraid that the inmates have a feeling of differentiating between these items of work and then say, "I am doing a lesser important work. She or he is doing something more important." Gone. You have fallen.

So the first place the area where you can put your mind into test is what is your assessment about the type of work you are doing or you are in charge of? Do I differentiate it from anything else? Try to look at the kitchen. And feel sublime. As sublime as you will feel when you go to the shrine. When the kitchen is kept clean, everything is orderly, and when you look at the kitchen. Ah! This is what gives us food. And this food is served to all. It is this food that gives the energy. If the kitchen does not work and the food and nourishment are not provided I will never be able

to go to the shrine even, take my bath even. So is the kitchen more important or the others? That is why our *shastras* say

*Annam brahmedi vyajaanaath*

Understand *Anna* food to be Brahman. Brahman is not an internal product. Brahman is not a subject of contemplation. Even *anna* is Brahman. *Vaak* is Brahman. *Mana* is Brahman. *Buddhi* is Brahman. Ego is Brahman. Everything is Brahman. In this way, when you start thinking in this manner you know what happens? This is what I wanted to say I may elaborate it perhaps tomorrow that you are installing your spiritual practice from the sensory level to the mento-intellectual level when you start introspecting in this manner. Unless you are able to elevate your *saadhana* or your effort from the physical sensory level to the level of mind and intelligence you can never progress in your seeking. Start looking at the kitchen and feel as sublime as in the shrine. Start looking at your bathroom and feel as sublime as any other place like kitchen and shrine. Put it into your mind. Instead of going to the shrine one day you go to the bathroom stand or sit there and then start praying. You must be able to feel as sublime as in a shrine. The same applies to all other places including kitchen and dining hall.

*Harih Om Tat Sat. Jai Guru.*



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