

16 November 1981

READING 7

(INNER RENUNCIATION – SEQUEL)

About six months after the audience quoted in last week's paper (1981/37) R. put this question into another letter:

R. Would His Holiness say that I can get 'complete union' by continuing the way I am going, or is something else required? In other words (like Prajapati's son Kach near the end of that story) I am at last asking the question. 'Well, if I cannot renounce fully this way, what else should I do?' Am I (like him) holding on to something tightly instead of renouncing everything?

S. (replied by letter)

'Giving up' is nothing except to understand the real meaning of 'giving up'. Ordinarily if we give up something we immediately develop an attachment to something else.

As Kach's giving up was originally a giving up of external things only, he did not get peace even when he gave up all of them. But when he understood the real significance of giving up, he found that by giving up the very 'I-ishness' (Ahankara) of renunciation, the giving up of all the things connected with that 'I-ishness' followed as a natural consequence. That is True Renunciation.

Subsequently, Kach's practical life was that of an ideal man – namely carrying out all the duties and obligations of his own practical life without any feeling of 'I' in his mind.

S. further commented:

At the start, when a man in training goes on duty for the first time he finds difficulties, but with further practice he is able to act naturally and appropriately as his experience ripens, ultimately he achieves purity of motive and mastery in his art. By continuing practice of this kind *we are able to discover our own powers*. This is the advantage to be got by 'giving up' in practical life.

(Record, 4 July 1974)

(Pause for Meditation or Discussion)

The idea of *Renunciation (Tyaga)* as a practical way of going through life has been approached from so many different angles over the years that you may like to hear again those we have found most useful:

S. Restfulness is the very nature of Atman. It is real and eternal; whereas all unrest is unreal and transitory. An apparent state of unrest is created by our treating a disturbing element in the external world as if it belonged to us. When we see a drama we are not upset by its disturbing incidents because we know that we are not involved in them. Similarly, the reality is that all that is happening around us is like a drama, and the individual Atman is merely its spectator. Awakening to the reality of any situation can dispel false unrest, just as a rubber snake, seen in a good light, would not frighten anyone as soon as they know it is rubber.

So the restlessness imposed on the restful nature of the Atman is a passing phase which would die down were it not for our endless mental association with this or that. Hence it is this association which has to be given up.

Q. Is it the attachment to outward forms which must be given up?

S. Partly, yes. But more precisely, the mirror (Chitta) of Consciousness should give up the physical world, and the Atman should give up the reflection in the mirror.

Q. When we give up, is rest naturally provided?

S. With the notion of 'giving up' becoming firm and strong, we simultaneously and automatically pass into the state of rest which is already present. Just as there are waves of varying height on the surface of the ocean, but its depths are calm; similarly the superficial mind (Manas) is subject to various unrests owing to its contacts with the physical, subtle and Causal worlds, whereas the deeper Buddhi can be stilled by contact with the Atman which never moves or changes.

(Record, 21 April 1969)

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