

### 43. Let go the ego in order to reach the goal

Look at the blossoms in the garden! When the gardener plucks the flowers, the buds exult that tomorrow is their turn to be gathered into the gardener's hands, and their faces are full of joy when they unfold in that hope. Do they feel any sadness? Do their faces droop? Are they any the less bright? No. The moment they know that the next day is their turn, they make themselves ready with great gusto and excitement.

In the same way, be ready on the path of spiritual practice, enthusiastically remembering the name of the Lord, without worrying and feeling sad that your turn is tomorrow or so because someone died today.

The body is like a tube of glass. Inside it, the mind is ever changeful and restless. Seeing its antics, death keeps laughing. The bird—the individual soul (*jiva*)—is in the nine-holed pot. It is a wonder how the bird has a body; how it came into the pot, and how it rises up and goes. The gods, the sages, and people (*naras*) of the nine continents (*khandas*) and the nine divisions of the terrestrial world (*dwipas*) are all undergoing the sentence of carrying about with them the burden of the body. Now, of these, who are the friends and who the enemies? When egotism dies out, all are friends; there are then no enemies. This lesson has to be remembered by all.

People experience joy and misery through the ear. Therefore, avoiding the cruel arrows of hard words, one should use sweet, pleasant and soft ones—and with that softness, add the sweetness of truth. Making the word soft by adding falsehood only clears the way for more misery. A person who has become a spiritual aspirant should use very soft, sweet, true, and pleasant words. Such a person can be recognised by their good qualities. Thus, of those who have become spiritual aspirants, the mind (*manas*) is Mathura (birthplace of Krishna), the heart (*hridaya*) is Dwaraka (Krishna's capital), and the body (*deha*) is Kasi (Benares).

It is possible to realise the supreme Effulgence (*Paramjyothi*) at the seat of the tenth gate. But all efforts are of no avail if the heart is not pure. Look at the fish! Living as it does perpetually in water, has it rid itself of its foul smell to any extent? No. Inclinations (*vasanas*) won't disappear as long as one's heart is full of the illusion of egotism, even if one is immersed in many heart-purifying spiritual disciplines. Such people, if they want to get rid of the feeling of "I" and "mine", must worship the Lord (*Hari*). They must become spiritual aspirants, without likes and dislikes. Modifications (*vikaras*) like these can't coexist in the same heart with the aspirant's nature. Light and darkness can never coexist at the same place, at the same time, right?

One whose heart is ruled by the group of six passions can have only ego (*ahamkara*) as counselor (*manthri*)! Those who have such a counselor are worse than foolish, however great they claim to be as pundits, aspirants, or renunciants (*sanyasins*).