

### 53. External and internal disciplines are necessary for one-pointed devotion

Many argue about how this discipline can result in the dawn of knowledge. Aren't these mere bodily limitations, they ask. Knowledge can arise only by the realisation of the principle that guarantees self-realisation. How can something that does not contain this principle be called knowledge, they argue.

But this line of thought is based on a big mistake. Through these physical regulations, traits (*vasanas*) are destroyed and concentration is established. The *Upanishadic* statements serve to foster and strengthen this one-pointedness, step by step—the experience of the *Upanishadic* maxims alone will bring about the dawn of knowledge. Aren't the *Upanishads* the very knowledge itself? With that embodiment of wisdom (*jnana-swarupa*) as companion, realising It in one's own experience, what need is there to search for knowledge elsewhere? One-pointedness is essential to establish spiritual wisdom firmly in the heart, and this one-pointedness can easily be gained by the above-mentioned bodily disciplines and austerities (*tapas*).

External control helps internal control in many ways. To succeed in external controls is more difficult than to achieve success in controlling the internal! A turn of the steering wheel in one's hand in any direction makes the wheels of the car, which are not in one's hand, move in the same direction. The wheels won't turn in one direction when the steering is turned in another. The introspective wheels are based on the extrospective steering itself!

It is the natural basis. Sometimes, when the steering is turned one way, the wheels may drag another way, but this is due to the giving up of the natural characteristic. The internal wheels, if they have no air, which is the true essence, may behave as if there is no relationship with the steering. But they can't go beyond the bounds of steering. The steering in the hand is related to the wheels below. If there is no such relation, the journey becomes impossible. The connection is inevitable. Therefore, for the one who has struggled with and conquered the external tendencies, the internal tendencies become easily controllable.

The external tendencies have name and form and are attracted by becoming objects of experience. So, to overcome them is a matter of some difficulty. But internal tendencies have no form even though they may be endowed with name; they are also experienced as spiritual bliss (*ananda*), so they can be overcome more easily. They can be tamed with greater ease.

The bother is more for external conduct and behaviour. These are associated with taste, form, and heaviness. The internal tendencies have no form, taste, or weight. Pure water has no form, taste, or heaviness. Impure water is different in all three. So, to clarify impure water is indeed difficult, but pure water can be given any form required, with very great ease.

Similarly, the difficulty is all about purifying mental behaviour, which is spoiled by the delusions of the world. There is no need to set right mental behaviour that is free from such delusions. Delusionless behaviour is necessarily pure. It is without any trace of defect and doubt. Why should it be set right? Therefore, if people first control and conquer external delusion as much as possible, the internal tendencies will easily move in the direction of *Atmic* bliss (*Atma-ananda*).

*Yoga* and penance (*tapas*) are only other names for the path of the control and conquest of these external tendencies and delusions. The rules of forest-dweller (*vanaprastha*) are but methods to succeed in this *yoga*. When one subdues delusion of all types in the forest-dweller stage, the journey ends in liberation (*moksha*). But we cannot say that liberation has only this one path. Through whatever path grace is obtained, that path may be chosen.

Liberation is achieved by these rules and observances of the forest-dweller stage; it can be secured by following this path. It also makes a person delusion free. It gives them one-pointedness.