

To Know Your Self is to Know God

[An English translation of a discourse by Maharshi Mehi Paramhans ji Maharaj delivered at Haridwar, Uttaranchal, India in the afternoon of the 8th June 1968.

- Translated by Pravesh K. Singh

Revered Great Souls and Devout People,

I don't nurse the ambition of preaching the great souls present over here. I come here to learn from them. What can I tell the persons who are themselves so knowledgeable? It (whatever I am going to tell) might help those who know refresh their knowledge. And those who know a little less would be able to understand (what they should know). The main thing in this Satsang is the worship of, or devotion to, the God. For worshipping God, it is essential to acquire knowledge about the God. If a traveller keeps on walking without knowing his destination, he will keep on wandering and get exhausted. Similarly, he who begins worship without having learnt about the true form or nature of the God is bound to go astray and exhaust himself.

I will tell you briefly about the nature of God. Keep it in your mind, if you like it. We have got five (sensory) organs to identify or to know about the objects of the world. There is no one organ among these five with the help of which we can know all the objects in this world. There are a lot many substances in this world, but it is pretty good to know about them in short. Firstly, we have an object that is called '*drishya*' (which can be seen) or 'with form or shape'. Second, we have '*ras*' or '*swaad*' (taste). The third is '*gandha*' (smell), the fourth the '*sparsh*' (touch) and the fifth is called '*shabd*' (sound). These are the five objects. These are called the five '*sookshma padaarth*' (subtle substances or entities) or '*tanmaatras*'. Only these five substances are there in the world (i.e. the whole of the world is formed of these very five substances). The ability to grasp the objects with form (or to see) rests only in eyes. Ears, nose, tongue and skin do not have the capability to grasp or see the visible substances. The nose does not possess the faculty to grasp anything other than smell. The ears are not capable of perceiving any object other than '*shabd*' (sound or word). The tongue is not empowered to know anything except the '*ras*' (taste). The skin does not have the ability to grasp any object other than '*sparsh*' (touch).

What I mean to say is that every organ has the power of perceiving only one object. The maximum reach of these organs is thus limited (as mentioned above). Our mind keeps on roaming within these five organs (and the objects perceived by these), keeps on reflecting or pondering over these very five objects. Our 'buddhi'(intellect) also keeps on analysing these only. Intellect, however, is extremely potent. It thinks or feels that there is something which lies beyond these five objects. It thinks "*O Jeevaatma (Individual Soul)! I know that you exist, you are very much there, but I do not recognize you, (or I have not seen you). I know about the existence of God, but do not recognize Him*"

"Raam swaroop tumhaar, vachan agochar, buddhi par

Avigat alakh apaar, neti neti nit nigam kah"

(Goswami Tulsidasji)

[O Lord Shri Ram, your true form is indescribable in words, is beyond (the reach of intellect). You pervade everywhere, are invisible and infinite. Vedas are not able to cite anything similar to you]

This (God) is an entity which is beyond intellect. True form of God is not perceivable through organs, mind or intellect. Shri Ram had explained to Lakshman,

"Go gochar janh lagi man jaaee.

So sab maayaa jaanahu bhaaee"

(Goswami Tulsidasji)

[Whatever comes within the range, grasp or reach of (our) organs and mind should be considered as delusory, illusion or `maayaa'.]

Having known everything as `*maayaa*' (illusion), it is also essential to know that which is beyond *maayaa*. People try or yearn to get or acquire true happiness or bliss, but are not able to get the same. In fact, God Himself is the truest bliss, real bliss epitomized; and nothing else in this universe (can yield true bliss). Without having realized Him, true bliss can not be had. Who will know *jeevaatmaa*? None of our organs can know Him, neither can the intellect? Who will know Him? The *jeevaatma* (soul) that lives in this

body possesses the power of knowing and all our organs, mind and intellect derive their power (to know) through this power (of soul) only. Direct knowledge of *jeevaatmaa* can not be had by remaining in the knowledge of organs. Then? Can't the *jeevaatmaa* recognize itself? Yes, it is the *jeevaatmaa* only which can perceive itself –

"Aatam aapako aapahee jaanai" (Sant Sundardasjee)

[The soul alone can know itself]

However, the *jeevaatmaa* is not capable of gaining awareness of itself while remaining in the knowledge of the *indriyas* (organs). How will it then know God, when it does not know itself? The *aatmaa* (liberated soul) stays in the form of *jeevaatmaa* (unliberated soul) only so long as it remains associated with the mind and intellect. On getting detached from these (organs, body, mind and intellect), will it be able to know itself. And only then will it get to know the God.

A devotee is driven by an intense zeal to see God. That alone is the ultimate goal. The *jeevaatmaa* would identify itself and the God with the help of, or through, itself, but only after getting detached from the body, organs, (mind and intellect). We should learn the way to get detached from the body, organs, mind and intellect, the way to identify our own Self. The practice (of the method thus learnt) should be so vigorous that we can lift ourselves beyond body, organs etc; so that we can abide within ourselves as well as identify God. Sants have taught the way to this. For instance, what is '*roop*' (form/shape)? That which can be known with eyes. What is '*shabd*' (sound or word)? That which our ears can grasp. What is '*ras*' (taste)? That which can be perceived by the tongue. What is '*gandha*' (smell)? That which can be detected by the nose. What is '*sparsh*'? That which is discernible through the skin. Likewise, what is God? What are you within yourself? The answer to both these questions is the same: that which you (the soul) can identify within yourself. God is perceived through perception of the Self. Whatever is perceived by the conscious soul, transcending all the domains of '*jad*' (ignorant or devoid of consciousness) is God. What is God? That which is knowable only to the pure, conscious soul. The method or the means, through which the conscious soul can separate itself from the body, organs, (mind, intellect etc) and can keep it with itself, all alone, is the (truest or genuine) worship of God. Please keep this in mind.
