

Swami Dayatmanandji - Jnana Yoga 17

ॐ नमः श्री यति राजाय विवेकानन्द सूरये ।
सत्चित् - सुख स्वरूपाय स्वामिने तापहारिने ॥

***Om Namah Sri yathiraajaaya Vivekananda Suraye,
Satchit sukha swarupaaya swamine taapahaariney.***

We are discussing the *Maya* concept of God by *Swami Vivekananda*. It is one of the most difficult concepts to be understood by anyone of us. And, yet every day, we are using that word only, *Maya!* Specially, when we go through some difficulties, miseries, suffering, the word that springs to our mind is, that it is all because of *Maya!* And, very few of us really understand, what is *Maya?*

In our last class we have pointed out – *Sri Ramakrishna* very often used this word, *Maya* in 4 senses -

- 1) First of all *maya* means everything is ephemeral, temporary, passing concept.
- 2) The second concept, it is false, *mithya!*
- 3) Third concept, it is the cause of this world.
- 4) And, the fourth concept is, it is another form of God! Nothing less than another form of God.

Our normal concept of *maya* is, that it is something which is dangerous, which misleads man. The cause of bondage is *Maya*. Somehow, it is opposed to God. The very idea that God himself has become *Maya*, and when God is accepted as the manifestation, and is called *Maya*, it is very difficult to understand. Because, *Maya* means duality ! *Maya* means limitation.

And, we want *maya*, but we only want one aspect of *maya*. Which is happiness. Which doesn't bind us. It is heavenly world. 'Oh! God's *Maya* is beautiful, acceptable'. But by its very nature *maya* means, it has the other side. Two sides! That is why it is called duality!

Sri Ramakrishna used this word *maya*, in all these aspects. Both as *Vidya Maya* and *Avidya Maya*, and the 4 expressions that we have as (a)falsity, (b)as *Mithya*. Falsity and *Mithya*, there is a difference, we will discuss this very shortly. And,(c) as the cause of this world and, also (d)as the very power that can liberate us.

First of all, whenever we sit together and ask 'what is *maya?* The one aspect that immediately we have to understand is, - is it a fact of experience or is it our attitude? It is predominantly our attitude, and, this looks like idealism, which *Swami Vivekananda* denies emphatically later on. ***Maya is neither realism, nor optimism, but a statement of fact. Life as it is! The world as it is and what we experience!*** That is called *Maya!*

We are sitting here, and I am talking, you are hopefully listening, and that is called *Maya!* Some of you are listening, few are not listening, some of you are listening partially, and that

is *Maya*! Some like it, some do not like it, and that is *Maya*! Everything in that sense is nothing but *Maya*! So what is *Maya*? Predominantly it is a spiritual attitude.

Why do we need to know that it is a spiritual attitude and not an ordinary attitude? Because, if it is an ordinary attitude, the question of *maya* doesn't arise. A worldly person or an animal, an irrational person, a person who cannot think, the question whether this world is *Maya* or not, that very question doesn't arise at all.

Then what is it that arises? It is reality! This is the only reality. The question of *Maya* arises only when it is contrasted with, - is this reality or is this not real? And, really, truly speaking, let me give this classical ex. When you see in semi darkness something which is like a rope, whatever you call it, something is there. You know something is there, but you don't know exactly what it is. There is a chance of misunderstanding what it is. Mistaking it for something else. (5:07 mins)

When does this doubt come to you, that is it correct, what I am perceiving? Is it true? When does this question come to you? Suppose you feel that it is a snake. Do you feel it is a snake or do you know that it is a snake? You know it is a snake, because, the first reaction is, you simply run away. When does this doubt come? Did I really see a snake or could it be something else? When does that doubt come? When the person becomes calm and quiet, and tries to think, maybe I am mistaken. That state of mind which questions the ordinary experience, the experience as we do of this world, then only - is it real or is it unreal?

The whole fun of it is, that, that question itself is part of the *Maya*!
What part of *Maya* is it?

Maya has 2 aspects - Vidya Maya and Avidya Maya!

Avidya Maya doesn't allow us to question at all. It is the *Vidya Maya* which allows us to question. What is the question? Is it real?

The moment that question comes, we have to think, God's grace is upon us and then only -

- 1) first thing is to think.
- 2) Second thing is to find out.
- 3) Third thing is to know, that it is not possible to find out.
- 4) Fourth thing is, then how to find out?
- 5) The last thing is, yes, God has provided a means for us to know, what is the nature

of it?

What am I talking about? ***Shastra, Scripture!*** Who tells this world is *Maya*? Let me put it this way. Supposing you are born in a place where everybody is illiterate, there is no outside communication, and you are living the life. Does it ever occur to you, whether this world is *Maya* or not.

When does this come? After reading the Gospel of *Sri Ramakrishna*, then you go, - 'the Master is telling true, This must be *Maya*'. Without that Scripture, that doesn't come.

But, there are 2 expressions of a scripture. The first expression is, our day to day life. When everything is going on well, we do not question. When does this question come? When does this unavoidable, inevitable mood of questioning come? When our life is being ground, we are experiencing misery, one question comes - 'Why'? And, that why, is the root cause of

what we call questioning. Whether, 'what I am experiencing is real or unreal'? So, what is *Maya*? This terrible confusion is called *Maya*.

Let us recollect what we discussed last week. *Sri Ramakrishna* used the term *Maya* in 4 different shades of meaning. As implying -

- 1) The ephemerality and triviality of the world and its values.
- 2) The falsity or *Mithyatva* of the world.
- 3) *Bramhan*, in His aspect as power, at which the mind arrives in its search for the cause of the world's spell.
- 4) The expression of the power in the world, as the twin forces, working for the bondage and liberation of the egos, experiencing this world's spell.

Let us elaborate a little further. What is the first one? The concept of *Maya* - that is the transiency, the triviality of the world and its values. Now this is an aspect of *Maya*, we all know - I was a baby I grew up, I was a young man, I was a middle aged man, I am an old man now. My body is going to depart after some days. This, no philosophy is needed. It is the real life experience. This is the common man's view of the world. And, related to it is, that the values we set in this world in our lives, and with our relationships with everybody else in this world, it depends upon how much emphasis we place upon the transiency of this world.

A value always depends upon our concept of reality. I'll give a simple example. A young man, who is in the power of his youth, and he wants money, he wants object of enjoyments. They are all real to him. He will never question, what is the value? I want to get, squeeze from this world, the utmost amount of what we call juice. What is the juice? Happiness in this world! But, supposing he is suffering from cancer, and the doctor says, you have only three more days to live. His whole concept of previous world has changed. Now, what would be the value of money, what would be the value of any enjoyable object in this world? (10:17 mins)

If, we must have noticed, many times in our lives, when we are not suffering from any disease, either physical or mental, then only, we think about enjoyment. Suppose you have got terrible toothache, this is the practical example I am giving. When we are suffering from terrible toothache, would you think of enjoying something? Is it ever possible for you, even to imagine how enjoyable something would be? But, then you see, such is *Mahamaya*, we call it. The moment that toothache is removed, either by extraction or by some other means, instantaneously - 'I have missed for so many days, such nice things to eat, I want to eat'. Is it not a fact?

This view that the world is ephemeral, temporary, trivial, is neither a philosophical nor a mystic point of view. You don't need to be a philosopher to have this view of mind, nor you need to be a mystic. Why? Because, it is a statement of facts. It is what we experience in our day to day life.

To a man, who questioned The Master, as to whether the world is unreal in the sense of *Maya*, *Sri Ramakrishna* replied, 'you yourself know, how unreal this worldly life is. Think a little bit, of the very house that we are in. How many men were born and how many died in it? Things of the world appear before us at one moment and vanish at the next. Those whom you know to be your own, cease to exist for you, the moment you close your eyes in death.

How strong is the hold of attachment upon a worldly man. There is none in the family, who requires his attention, yet, for the sake of a grandson, he cannot go to *Banaras* to practice devotion. What will become of my *Hari*, If I am not there, is one thought that keeps him bound to the world.

Sri Ramakrishna has many many examples. One widowed lady who is brought to *Dakshineswar* by one of the devotees, and, *Sri Ramakrishna* was not introduced to that lady. In course of time, *Sri Ramakrishna* is telling - the triviality, the ephemerality of the world, look at this wretched woman. He did not know, he was addressing that particular woman who was right in front of him, and he did not use yogic powers. It just came spontaneously. Look at this wretched woman. She is a widow, she has neither husband nor children. There is nobody in this world, and, she takes a bunch of keys and ties it to the end of her sari. And her voice! Everybody in the village is frightened of her. And, she says, 'oh! I cannot do any more. And, what can I do? Without me, my *Hari* doesn't get food, my brother cannot get food and nothing takes place in my family. Does this woman think, that if she dies today that the whole world is not going to be affected anyway. Later on the devotee was reminiscing, oh my God! Why of all these days, only today, this subject has come and, *Sri Ramakrishna* is describing vividly the life.

Life of what? Life of whom? Life of us! Life of us right here and now! We think we are very clever. We are not widows, we are not having bunch of keys. We are all under the same situation, only a little bit things, here and there, they change. It could be books, it could be music, it could be children, it could be anybody. Without us the world cannot go on. Just meditate upon it for one day. Without me the world can, not only go on, but it can go on in a much happier way.

Sri Ramakrishna tells - in a *ghooni*, I think it's a Bengali word which means for catching fish, and the way out is always open, if the fish do not get out of it! The caterpillar shuts itself up in it's own cocoon and perishes. Being of such a nature, is not this mundane life, *samsara* (संसार), unreal and evanescent.

Let us remember the 4th commandment of *Sri Ramakrishna* - Always practice discrimination. And, he says, what is discrimination? God alone is real, everything else is unreal. But, He used a special word - *temporary*. It is in that sense, we are using the 1st expression of *Maya*. According to *Sri Ramakrishna* everything is temporary. Unreality comes later on. We cannot understand it is unreal. This table is temporary. *Swami* is temporary. The chair is temporary. This house is temporary, but is it unreal? Do we really feel that it is unreal? We never feel it is unreal! (15:19 mins)

Sri Ramakrishna continues, ' just as you know about the condition of the rice in the cooking pot by testing a few grains, so also, you can know whether the world is real or unreal, eternal or ephemeral, being or non being by examining 2 or 3 objects in it. Man is born, lives for some days and then dies, So to are animals and trees, *Sri Ramakrishna* is explaining. That means what? Anything that comes into manifestation in this world, is bound to go out of manifestation. There is a very funny way of putting it, you know? You go to see a new born baby. What would be one of your questions? How old is the baby? Already the baby has become old.

Sri Ramakrishna continues, 'discriminating like this you come to know that same is the fate of all things endowed with name and form'. What a philosophical statement! Not only human beings. Anything that has name and form! This table has name and form, so it was unmanifest, it became manifest and it becomes unmanifest. It's a matter of time. That is why *Bhagwan Krishna*, tells of this great secret to *Arjuna* - in the very beginning of His teaching -

अव्यक्तादीनि भूतानि व्यक्तमध्यानि भारत ।
अव्यक्तनिधनान्येव तत्र का परिदेवना ॥

***avyaktādīni bhūtāni vyaktamadyāni bhārata,
avyktanidhanānyeva tatra kā paridevanā.***

Unmanifest are beings, and then they become manifest, and then at one point of time they become unmanifest.

Discriminating like this, you come to know, that same is the fate of all things endowed with name and form. Even of the Earth, The Sun and The Moon. Do you not thus come to understand the nature of all things in this universe? No, we don't understand! Why? Because, we lack the sense of discrimination.

What is discrimination? To know, to recognise, not some mystical fact, but the fact of our day to day experience. Everything comes to an end. In fact, when we use the word time - I was, I did, I am, I am doing, and I will. What does that mean? The moment we use '*I am*', what does that grammar say? '*I am*', means '*I was not*'. '*I was*', you say, '*I was*' means what? That state is Different, today's state is totally different.

When you thus recognise the world, - this is *Sri Ramakrishna's* words, '*when you thus recognise the world to be unreal, transient, you shall no longer have any love for it. You will renounce it from the mind and become free from all desires. When you succeed in this act of renunciation, you come to know God, who is the cause of the universe*'. Each sentence, each word of *Sri Ramakrishna* is like a precious jewel.

Let me read again. '*Only when you thus recognise the world to be unreal*'. Unreal means what? Transient! '*You shall no longer have any love for it*'. Supposing a person goes on reading *Vedantic* books, and then at some point of time, the person comes, 'oh! it is all unreal! What *Sri Ramakrishna* said is absolutely true'. Have you really come to that conclusion? Have you understood it, and issuing this statement? Or, you are just doing it because you read it just now - The gospel of *Sri Ramakrishna*.

How do you know? *Sri Ramakrishna* is telling, what is the test. The test is, you shall no longer have any love for it. That doesn't mean you run away. You just use it. You know, a simple illustration is, we are travelling in the aeroplane. Maybe first class seat, maybe you know, beautiful air hostesses, and offering also free drinks. And, then you feel very pleasant. How long will you enjoy it? The moment the plane lands, who will be the first person, if the person in front of you is not hurrying to go forward, what would you like to do? You would like to push him aside, then rush out of the plane. Why do you do that? For 2 reasons. One

reason is if you don't push out, someone else will push you out. The 2nd reason is, that there is something is waiting for you, someone is waiting for you. This is real power of *Maya*.

Even though we are experiencing so much of misery, at this moment, *asha*, hope does not die. We go on thinking about it, 'oh! if only I had.... ' Like that. About whom *Sri Ramakrishna* is giving all these quotations and we are discussing? This is a particular type of mindset called - This is the view of the discriminating mind of the earnest spiritual aspirant, who is after the knowledge of God. Not for us! If we are not spiritual aspirants, longing to go forward to words God, this discrimination doesn't work. (20:27 mins)

What does that mean? Discrimination doesn't come unless we have that spiritual aspiration, and the spiritual aspiration doesn't come, until we have this discrimination. It is a vicious circle, in a way of speaking. We must have both simultaneously. Why you know? What is the proof of the Grace of God? The only proof of The Grace of God is - How does He bestow His Grace upon us? Do you know how He bestows -

ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते ॥

Dadami buddhi-yogam tam yena mam upayanti te.

If any devotee is earnestly praying to God, meditating upon him, leading a good life. That is a very important point, we need to remember. We are all praying sincerely. We are all reading books very very devotedly. But, we are not obeying his commandments that come through the Scriptures. That is most important. Practical. That is why *chitta shuddhi* is obtained only when we practice *karma yoga*. After *Karma Yoga* comes *upasana yoga*. And, *Japa*, meditation, and reading of these books, that is called passed *Upasana yoga*. *Karma yoga* means slowly getting rid of our selfishness, our attachments and relying more and more upon God. This first understanding of *Sri Ramakrishna's* idea of *Maya*, with which idea he expressed very often, or used this word *Maya*, is only for the discriminating mind of an earnest spiritual aspirant.

Then comes the other one, you know we all use this. *Maya* means *Mithya*. We use this word very often. *Maya* means it is unreal. We use that word unreal indiscriminately. Only people who pass the first stage, discriminating stage, they come to this word. The world as false, there is a particular name for it. It is called *Mithya*, Is the second significance of the concept of *Maya* as used by *Sri Ramakrishna*. But, this is essentially, a logical formulation, not a discriminating formal view of an aspirant, but a logical formulation. Only a devotee, a spiritual aspirant will have a discriminating point of view. There are many philosophers who have come to this conclusion, purely through intellectual reasoning, which is called logic.

The world is false, is the second significance. It implies that this world, our experience of the world, neither belongs to the category of absolute existence like *Bramhan*, nor of total non-existence like a barren woman's son. A very famous *vedantic* statement, *Mithya*.

There are 3 ideas about our experience - (a) real, completely totally real. (b) Completely unreal. (c) And, in between something which is neither real nor unreal.

We see every object in this world, so long as we see it, the object is absolutely real, because, we react to it. For a simple example, Vedanta gives is dream. When we are dreaming do you believe that, that is a dream? While we are dreaming, a dream is not unreal. A dream is not a dream. It is absolute reality. When do we understand it is a dream? Only upon waking up. This is the important point here. We use this word, Vedanta very often uses this word, *Mithya*!

The great *Shankaracharya, Advait Vedanta*. Mind you, one more point before we go further. When we are talking about this word, *Maya* or *Mithya*, this word *maya*, is only used in one school of philosophy called *Advaita*. When we come to *Dvait* and *Vishishtadvaita*, they never use the word *Maya*. Because, creation is real creation of God. It is not unreal. This is only *Advait* point of view. But, what *Swami Vivekananda* is trying to reconcile here, is that, even though we may be dualists. In fact we are dualists. We are all dualists. How do we know? Because, if you are not a dualist, if I am not a dualist, I would not have come to talk to you and you would not have come to be listening to me. The very fact we all came together, is a conclusive proof that we are all dualists. For each of us, each of us is real, completely real. (25:22 mins)

What is *Mithya*? That which is experienced, and so while experiencing, we can't say it is unreal. Because, no one can really experience unreality. The example given is the son of a barren woman. Have you ever seen the son of a barren woman? We are using the words. Sounds are there, words are there, sentences are there, but has anybody ever experienced the horn of a hair? Has anybody experienced flowers grown in the sky? Has anybody taken bath in the cooling waters of a mirage? These are words. There is absolutely no meaning at all.

Even magic, you experience it, you see it in front of you, but, you know that it is not real. But, the experience is real and more than the experience, the result of the experience is real. It's a wonderful thing. You know, if you experience something like, somebody killing somebody, as it happened in London few days back. It is horrible. But supposing, Californian governor who was an actor, (I can never remember his name you know), He takes a big machine gun and goes on mowing down, like lawnmower, hundreds and thousands of people. Tell me, are you experiencing it or not? You are experiencing, and the experience is real. The fact of the experience is also real. What is it? How wonderfully this actor has enacted. You are enjoying it. But, when you come out of the theatre, or TV, whichever it is. Then, what is your understanding of it? It is all just a show. It has no existence at all. Now you understand what is the concept of *Mithya*?

What is *Mithya*? That, which is experienced! But, once that experience is over, crystal clearly we know, that this is only an appearance. It has absolutely no underlying authority at all. But, as contrasted - I am seeing you, you are seeing me, I am talking, you are hearing. This is also *Mithya*. From what point of view? Logical point of view, it is also *Mithya*. There is nothing else there. This world is false.

That's why, The great *Shankaracharya* says

ब्रह्म सत्यं जगन्मिथ्या जीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरः ॥

Bramha Satyam Jagat Mithya Jivo Bramhaiva Naapar.

Jiva means all of us. We are nothing but *Bramhan!* But, what is this world? It is *Mithya*. *Swamiji* was trying to clear this point, what is *Mithya*? It is unreality. No! It is not unreality. Is it reality? No! Not complete reality. Because, if it is reality, it would never change. If it is unreality, it cannot be experienced. Then what is this? It is partial experience of reality called *seeming reality*.

Again, many times I explained this, but we need to understand this, again and again. You see something in semi darkness, and then you immediately, because of your fear of snakes, you think it is a snake. Now is it real? Is the snake real or unreal? It is not completely real, it is not completely unreal. There is a common point between the rope and the snake. The rope also is there, the snake is also there. That 'is-ness' part of the rope is real. That is called partial experience of reality. But what is the false thing here? That rope-ness! This is a rope. '*This is*' remains. This is a rope, This is a snake, - common! But, a rope and a snake. That rope, somehow, is imagined to be a snake. Here is an important point. By seeing this rope in semi darkness, do you experience, do you imagine it to be, mistake it, for an elephant? You will never do it. Why? Because, the rope and the snake have a lot of similarities, *a lot of similarities are there*.

There is a funny incident, you know, One American *swami* initiated an American disciple. And, then he told him, this whole world is false. Like when you see in semi darkness a rope, you are likely to mistake it for a snake. He heard it very well. He went out and he saw a so-called rope, and then he went and then put his foot on it. Then it started hissing. And, then he came running to *Swami*, 'what false teaching you have given'. He said, 'stupid fellow for the first fee, only first part of the explanation is given to you. If you want the second type of explanation also, you have to again pay the fee for the second lesson. For one off fee you will get only one lesson'. (30:24 mins)

What is the point here? There must be a lot of similarities, even for mistaking it for something else. The Snake, according to some people is also not unreal. Why? Because, supposing there is a person who had never experienced a snake any time in his life. Tell me, will he mistake that rope for a snake?

Yes! That means there is a snake somewhere. What is the problem now? The memory of that snake is now super imposed upon this present experience. This is called '*khichudi*' or mixing truth and falsehood.

सत्यान्त मिथुनि कृत्य।

Satyaantrita mithuni kritya.

Combination of truth and falsehood!

Somehow it takes place. That is called *Maya*. What is our point here? Only a very great person can come to this conclusion. Whatever is temporary, whatever is ephemeral, whatever is very short lived, it is called *Mithya*. Not non-existence, not existence, but, that which exists only for a short period of time.

I will give another example. Here is a pot. You see a pot. What is the real nature of the pot? Clay! Before the pot came into existence, there was clay. And, now somebody gives it a

particular form, shape. Then, you call it pot. And, after sometime, somebody breaks that pot. What is it that remains, without changing? What is it that changes? Clay remains forever. But, what is called, particular shape and name of this particular clay, it comes and then it goes.

What am I trying to do? To make you understand - that ***Mithya is nothing but Bramhan!***
You remove *Mithya*. Minus name and form, that *Mithya* becomes what? *Bramhan!*
***Bramhan* with name and form is world.**
World without name and form is *Bramhan*.

It is not unreality, but it is partial experience of reality. If we know, when we come to know, that this is not complete experience of reality, but only a partial experience of reality, two things will happen.

1) First thing is our attachment to it will automatically disappear.

2) And, the second thing that happens is, the moment we come to know it is not partial reality. And, when do you come to know it is partial reality? That is the crucial statement.

Only when you know complete reality, compared with that, the past experience, this is true experience, the other experience is only partial reality. That is what is being conveyed by *Sri Ramakrishna* here.

This word *Mithya* implies that it belongs neither to the category of absolute existence like *Brahman*, nor of total non-existence like barren woman's son. This peculiar nature of the world experience is termed as *Mithya*. And, the doctrine of *Maya* in its logical aspect stands for this idea.

But, even this, most important point - Even this logical formulation of *Maya* theory, rests on an experience of mystical consciousness.

Let me re-collect here. Few seconds before I said, when do you come to know that this is a partial experience? When do you come to know? Only when, you know? The word partial, when you will come to know is only when you really experience the total reality. Is it not?

This world is *Maya* is understandable only under one circumstance, only when a person experiences some higher truth, then we come to know about it. *Sri Ramakrishna* gives certain experience of his, to illustrate this point, that only when we have a higher experience, the lower experience stands - 2 things -

a) it gets Updated first of all.

b) Secondly, all the consequences of our lower experience can be annihilated, can be transcended, only when we have a higher experience.

Sri Ramakrishna described a vision of His, and, it is very relevant to this topic. Then, he describes, I will give you very briefly as we all know about that. 'Do you know what I saw just now? I saw a divine vision, a vision of the Divine Mother. I was standing on the banks of the *Ganga* at *Panchavati*. a beautiful woman came out of the waters and she was the most beautiful woman. And, presently, I saw that she was with child and the child grew and grew. And, then, She gave birth to the most beautiful, most adorable, lovely baby. And, This woman started suckling the baby with the greatest tenderness in the whole world. And, next moment she assumed a ferocious form, and, took the child in her mouth and started chewing the child, bits and pieces. And, the child slowly disappeared into its mouth. And, then the

woman got up and again entered into the waters of the *Ganga* and disappeared. (36:00 mins)

What was this vision of *Sri Ramakrishna*?
Every day we are singing -

सृष्टि स्थिति विनाशानां शक्तिभूते सनातनि।
गुणाश्रये गुणमये नारायणि! नमोऽस्तु ते॥

***Srishti Sthiti Vinashanam, Shaktibhute, Sanatani
Gunashraye, Gunamaye, Narayani, Namostu Te.***

Every millisecond, do you know, We are not that much knowledgeable really speaking, you know how many huge stars, unimaginably big stars, are being destroyed, being born and shining for some time, are happening in this cosmos of ours? Our Sun, is absolutely nothing compared to these things. The scientists tell us, we can still see the stars which lived for millions of years, the light that was emanating from those star has not even reached our Earth. You can just imagine! They were born, and they died.

What is this vision about? *The whole universe!*
What is this universe? What is this child? Who is this child? *This world!*
Who are we? *People in this world.*
Who is that woman? *The Divine Mother!*

The cause of all this *Mithya* or *Maya*, falsity is *That Divine Mother !*
The child is the world, subject to all the joys and travails of birth, growth, decay and death. That's why *Vedanta* always emphasises. Oh man! If you want to progress in spiritual life, you meditate upon the षड् उर्मि (*Shad*) षड् विकाराः (*Shad vikaar*), six changes that take place in the life of every single object in this world -

Conception
Confirmation
Growth
Old age
Disease
Death

Shad Urmī - beautiful words, you know, Sanskrit words. *Urmī* means a wave (*Dheau bole*) on the ocean.

How many waves, every millisecond, how many waves are coming and how many waves are subsiding into the same ocean! Do you feel when the wave comes - 'beautiful'. When the wave dies - 'हाय राम (*hai Ram*)! my beloved wave is dead!' Do you ever weep for that? You don't weep.

You know why? Because, at the same time, you are perceiving 2 things. You are perceiving birth, you are also perceiving the death. What is our problem? We only perceive the birth and stability. We never ever, even though in front of us somebody is dying. Temporarily, we shed some tears and after that go and have a cool drink to replenish the little bit of water that came out of us. For most of us, that's what we do.

Maya, when its nature is found out, flees away! The fleeing away may mean, either the total disappearance of the phenomenal world or the perception of it as false.

Here, *Sri Ramakrishna's* words are so deep. He gives the story of a *Brahmin* who is going to another village, and he needed an assistant to carry his baggage. And, then he could not get anybody. Ultimately, he got a cobbler. You know, cobbler is an untouchable? He cautioned, 'you see when we go to our host's place in the next village, do not say you are a cobbler. You say, simply you keep quiet'. So the cobbler said, 'yes I will do the same thing'. They reached the place and the cobbler, behaved in such a way that the other *Brahmin* got a doubt whether this fellow is a Brahman. How to know, whether a person is a Brahmin or not? At least in South India, you know how, whenever a *Brahmin* boy comes from an orthodox family, he holds both his ears, in this way, cross, and then he says, 'I am of the lineage of *Bharadwaja*, or *Gautama*, or *Vishwamitra* etc. And, then he recites, 'my grandfather was this, my father's name is this, and my name is this, I am making *shashtang Pranaams* to you'. And, immediately he makes *shashtang Pranaam*. I know he's a *Brahmin*. This was very common in those days. This cobbler servant. You know, his master instructed him, 'don't open your mouth, just shut your mouth'. He did not come and make this kind of - 'I am of the lineage of *Bhardwaja*' and make *shashtang Pranaam*. That *Brahmin*, immediately said that 'who are you'? And this fellow - master told him - he was just keeping quiet. The *Brahmin* got so angry and said, 'are you a cobbler'? He understood. He did not know whether he is a cobbler or not. Simply a word he uttered, 'are you a cobbler, that you are not behaving like a normal orthodox *Brahmin* boy'? Immediately he lays (that one) and runs away. (40:45 mins)

Sri Ramakrishna tells the story. What is the point of the story? The moment *Maya's* nature is found out, what does it do? It simply runs away. But, there is a secret there. When do you find out the nature of *Maya*? To find out something is false, you must always have an idea of what is not false. Unless we know what is, who is God, you can never understand that this world is false something.

These ideas are most marvellous ideas. When *Maya* is, when the nature of *Maya* is found out, it flees away. And, this fleeing away is of two expressions. Think of *Sri Ramakrishna's*, depth of meaning is here.

- 1) One is the disappearance of the phenomenal world. For a realised soul, this whole phenomenal world will disappear.
- 2) But, for a discriminating person, the world still will be there. He will be experiencing, but what disappears? Attachment or love.

When *Sri Ramakrishna* says your love will die away, he doesn't mean you don't love. It's again a false understanding, misunderstanding. Even if you come to know this world is false, you are not supposed to stop loving it. You love. You do everything.

This is the fifth commandment of *Sri Ramakrishna*. Live in this world like a maid servant. A maid servant is not forbidden to love the house where she is working, the people who are living in that house. What is forbidden? Attachment! The moment you come out, you know that, that doesn't belong to me. I have my own home, I have my own children. What a wonderful thing that is. This recognition that it is false, it is a phenomenal world takes place, only, when a person has higher spiritual experience.

This act of recognising the nature of *Maya*, consists in recognising the reality of God. Or, to put it in other words, in transferring the sense of reality, from the world of *Maya* to the world of God. It's a very important point, because you may talk about this *Maya* for whole life, you will not know it is *Maya*.

When will you come to know it is *Maya*? When do you come to know this is darkness? Very interesting example, you know? Suppose a born blind fellow, you ask him, 'do you experience darkness'? Ask any born blind person 'do you experience darkness'? What would be the answer? Never! Because, He doesn't know what is light. But, if a person has become temporarily blind, or blind after experiencing light, then he knows what he is missing.

So this is the idea - Only when we have higher experience, have we the right to say that it is *Maya*. But, until that time, what should be our attitude? Live like a maid servant. Based upon what truth? Based upon the truth, everything is temporary.

Even, every day, everything is temporary. You know, here is the maid servant, here is the master of her house, which is a very rich man. And, when both of them are, or either of them are in deep sleep, who is the maid servant and who is the rich person? Neither the rich person has a big house, rich man, neither the maid servant is a maid servant. What a grace of God! It is because of this marriages endure.

There are a few parables of *Sri Ramakrishna* to illustrate the second point. A lioness gave birth to a cub among a flock of sheep. We all know that story. The lion cub grew up along with the sheep and started eating like sheep, and bleating like a sheep. Until another grown up lion came, was surprised, caught it by the scruff of its neck, pulled it to the river, and said, 'look your face and my face - similar'. What was the response of the lion cub? It was only bleating. But, *Sri Ramakrishna* was a superb storyteller, you know? He brings a piece of meat and then pushes it into the mouth. The moment the meat touched, instantaneously, it recognised it's true nature, and 'this it's my masala'. It started running after the *Guru*, 'I will eat you up'. That is why *Janaka Maharaj* asked *Sukadeva*, 'you give your fee before the teaching, otherwise once I give you the teaching...' What is the teaching? There is no difference between *Guru* and *Shishya*, then who is going to give the fee? (45:30 mins)

Then, the other story we know very well. I graphically described it. *Sri Krishna* was requested by *Narada*, show me your *Maya*. You know that story? Remember it? Even the most vivid consciousness, of the changeability and triviality of the world, is not equal to the recognition of it as *Mithya* or false.

Very important! We may discriminate a billion times every day, that this is all temporary, it is not going to alter our sense of reality. Because, it is purely intellectual, borrowed from, you know what intellectual means, Borrowed from somebody else. It is *Sri Ramakrishna's* experience. You borrow it, 'you tell me your experience', and we are reading the experience. It doesn't come to us. It is not equivalent to *Mithya*. But, at least, if we can discriminate and say it is temporary, so I should not have 100 percent attachment, let me have 99 percent attachment, is it a spiritual progress or not? Even one percent less attachment is a great spiritual and what a great joy it gives.

Even to say that this world is temporary, is not equivalent to say it is *Mithya*. Because, anyone of us can experience it is temporary. But, only a person with spiritual experience, can know that it is not only temporary, but it is also *Mitha, Maya*. Why? The former. That means, experience of the world as triviality, implies revulsion and rejection. You know, when we know that this is very temporary, we reject it, but our sense, that this world is real has not gone away. Where as, when a person experiences a higher reality, vivid sense of the reality, higher reality, the moment he experiences it, he knows. In comparison with that, this is only temporary. This is permanent, this is only temporary. A person knowing that everything is temporary, that is the first step we have to take.

Even though, it is not our actual experience, we borrow the experience of *Sri Ramakrishna* and practice it. And, that has its own effect. And, also there is a secret here. When does your meditation become truly sincere and absorbing. When? Only, when you come to know that this world is trivial. It happens you know. Supposing, someone is terribly attached to one of the family members. Maybe mother, maybe husband, maybe wife, maybe Child. Suppose that person dies, and then the person goes to the shrine room to get consolation. That particular period of time, that person's absorption in God, is it the same as previous type of meditation or much deeper? Why? Because, now even though we know intellectually what is temporariness, but it doesn't really affect us. Intellectual understanding doesn't effect, even intellectually. But, real experience effects us deeply, but unfortunately that is also temporary.

That is what, Sri Ramakrishna gives a beautiful example. Here is a Mother. She gave birth to the only child, and the child dies after some time. And, what would be her grief? For 15 days she doesn't take bath, doesn't change cloth, cannot enjoy food. After 15 days what does she do? Slowly she takes bath and she decorates herself, and then **यथा पूर्वम् तथा परम्। yatha purvam tatha param**. Like how life was going on before, it is going on even now. That is the effect of *Mahamaya*. She doesn't want to allow.

But lest we may think with this teaching, that *Mahamaya* makes us suffer so much. *Sri Ramakrishna* says, be very careful. Because, *Mahamaya* has how many powers? How many aspects? Two aspects are there. This is Her lower aspect? What is Her higher aspect? **Vidya Maya! Avidya Maya to Vidya Maya.**

Here, let me tell you something very important and close this talk. When we are talking about *Vidya Maya* and *Avidya Maya*, if I put you the question - 'do you want *Vidya Maya* or *Avidya Maya*, what would be your answer right now? I want only *Vidya Maya*. But, can you desire *Vidya Maya*, unless you know what is *Avidya Maya*? Unless you have suffered terribly. When does a person long for *Vidya Maya*? Only when a person goes through *Avidya Maya*, and then, at every centimetre, he is squeezed out like a sponge, and he undergoes terrible suffering. Only at that period of time. Then he knows. 'O lord! I have suffered enough'. Like *Narada* you know, when did he come and request the Lord, 'O Lord! Grant me this boon, that I may never ask you this question, show me your Maya'? Because, even that few seconds of *Maya* lasted for how many years? Aeons it were.

Beautiful stories, parables! When a man experiences temporariness, evanescence, triviality of this world, he can reject it, but that will not make him understand what is *Mithya*. The idea that the world is *Mithya* can come, only when we know the reality. To put it in right

perspective, when does a man who is frightened of a snake understand that this is not a snake? When does he understand it? Only when he actually sees the rope. The light is brought. Somebody, The *Guru* brings the light and he Shines it and says, 'look here, this is what you are talking as a snake'. 'Yes yes!' When does he understand this is a snake? Only when he experiences the real rope.

Unless we have higher experience, we can never get out of it. But what is important point here? *Avidya Maya is as important as Vidya Maya!*

It is only when we first go through *Avidya Maya*, we appreciate the necessity, the value of *Vidya Maya*.

So many things are involved in *Sri Ramakrishna's* statements, which we will discuss in our future class.

ॐ शांति शांति शांति:

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti.

(52:08 mins)