

Swami Dayatmanandji - Jnana Yoga - lecture 25

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

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

Why is there so much of evil in this world? Why is there so much of suffering? Why is it, that good people suffer so much? Why is it, evil people seem to be prospering so much? This is one of the unsolvable questions, that arise again and again, in this world. *Swamiji* is discussing this idea of evil, and he gave, according to his idea - three ideas. They are not answers - they are 3 types of cues to understand what is the nature of this world.

But, before that, I would like to narrate one incident. You know, *Swamiji - Narendranath*, at one point of his life, he suffered terribly, physically. Just imagine, his family was spending one thousand rupees a month, in those days. The moment his father died, everyone turned against him. That hurt *Swamiji*, even more than anything else. The people, who would have fallen on their heads, to do the bidding of anyone of the family members, the moment his father died, they left as we say, 'As the ants leave as soon as the food disappears'. They just disappeared! Not only disappeared, they turned against him. It was an eye opener for *Swami Vivekananda*. And, he was born with such a compassionate heart.

Very difficult to understand *Swami Vivekananda*. Outwardly, He appears to be hard crust, but inside He was like butter. He used to weep worse than anyone of us. He felt it too deeply. His family was in trouble. They were every good people. They only helped other people, and yet, they had to go through so much of suffering. The question arose in his mind - 'Why in the kingdom, in the creation of this compassionate Lord, that so much of suffering so much of evil has come'? He searched hard everywhere in the world, he did not get the answer.

One day, it was said, he was returning exhausted from searching for a job. And, as he was approaching his house, he fell down unconscious. He had an indescribable experience. We do not know, because he never disclosed what was the experience. He said, 'This is the solution, for this is the answer, for the question, - why is there so much of evil in this world'?

I have been trying to understand, what could be that vision, what could be that answer, that why there is so much evil in this world? I don't know. I have some ideas about it. But, from what I gathered, from *Swami Vivekananda's* lectures, not only *Jnana Yoga*, but all of his complete works; we get three answers.

The first answer is, existence itself is endowed with both good and evil, life and death, good and evil, happiness and unhappiness - it is part of the very fabric of life itself. This was what *Buddha* was talking about, when he said, "life is full of suffering".

But, higher than that, there is something. Something is there. If at all, anything helps us to move forward, through experience we can understand only one thing. What is it? Suffering! Without suffering nobody was awakened. Nobody could be awakened. Strange, paradoxical, but this is the only truth. When we suffer, we are forced to search for an answer. This is the higher level of answer. From that point of view suffering is good.

A student spends what we call midnight oil- burns midnight oil. A mountaineer, climbs with a terrible backpack. You know, sometimes they show their climbing, any mountain- terrible! They are unable to take a breath. And yet, the greatest joy lies in that achievement. This you can apply to any field that we want. Artists, scientists, administrators - everyone has to go through that. Suffering in that sense, at the moment of suffering, it is not pleasant, but the after results are extremely good. Is this an answer? No, that is not an answer.

But, there is an answer which the scripture gives, especially *Advaita Vedanta* gives. I will deal with it from the point of a devotee, and from the point of a man of knowledge. *Bhakta* and *Jnana*. (5:10 mins)

From the viewpoint of a *bhakta*, a devotee, God can be only good. A lover can be only beloved and good, all goodness! For such a beloved Lord, good God, it is impossible to create evil. But, it is like climbing steps that takes us to God. That is the *Bhakta*'s answer, 'why there is an evil'. So that God is hastening us, 'you come to me and you will be free'.

Remember what *Swami Vivekananda* had chanted? He initiated the people of America at the *Parliament of Religions* -

शृण्वन्तु विश्वे अमृतस्य पुत्रा
आ ये धामानि दिव्यानी तस्थुः ।
वेदाहमेतमं पुरुषं महान्त-
मादित्यं वर्णं तमसः परस्तात् ।।
Then comes - तमेव विदित्वाऽतिमृत्युमेति ।

***Shrinwantu vishwe amritasya putrā
aa ye dhamani divyani tasthu,
vedāhametam purusham mahāntam
āditya varanam tamasā parastāt!
Tameva viditvā atimrityumeti !***

Only knowing *That Purusha*; and who is *That Purusha*? तत् त्वमसि - ***Tat tvamasi!***

नान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय । ***Nānyā pantha vidyateayanāya!***

There is no other way!

That means what? You will not get a solution in this world. The answer lies outside the evil. That is what *Advaita Vedanta* wants to say. That is what the *Jnani* wants to say. Looked at from the highest point of view there is no evil.

Now we can quote *Swami Vivekananda*'s answer about what is life, and reconcile from this viewpoint. *Swami Vivekananda* was asked, "What is life?". He gave three answers :-

- 1) The first answer he gave is, "life is a school!"
- 2) Second answer - "life is a gymnasium"
- 3) Third answer - "life is a circus"

They look apparently as contradictory answers, but no! They are all right answers, but at three different levels. From the beginners point of view "life is a school". Means we have to learn hard lessons. Do we learn the lessons? *Swami Vivekananda* Himself says 'No, we do not learn the lessons. We do ultimately, but it takes a long time to learn that. My son, If you want to be in this world happy, this is the lesson you will have to learn. Once you learn the lesson, then you can cope how to be in this world'.

The second answer he gave "life is a gymnasium". Why do you go to the gymnasium? To develop muscles. What muscles? We mentioned it, you know, defining what is education - physical, intellectual, moral, aesthetic, legal and spiritual. So many levels we have to develop. All the levels are necessary, and each higher level includes the lower level. So, life is a school where through experience we learn a lot of things. And, learning means what? We understand this is the nature of the world, and we try to cope with life as best as we can.

But, that doesn't seem to be the right answer, because why should at all there be... 'Ok, I learnt how to cope. Why at all should I be made to go through this rigmarole of coping with it? After all I am a child of the divine"

The third final answer comes, there are two views, we have a *Vyavahārika* level and a *Paramarthika* level. From where we are, 'life is a school, life is a gymnasium'. But, once we go beyond body and mind, then comes the *Paramarthika* level, the spiritual levels.

What is the answer. 'Life is a circus'. In circus, you know, it looks as though, everybody is going through lot of hard work. There is no hard work. Have you ever seen a circus? It's very wonderful you know? A huge man with bulging muscles, he comes forth, grunts and lifts heaven weights, like that, and you are tensing as though you are lending him strength. So that he... He appears to be stumbling also.

Sri Ramakrishna also watched circus, and he gave several examples. One example was, there was an English women, was running on a horse back. And, every time a huge loop comes, she flies through that and lands exactly on the back of the thing. What was his point? That it was all a matter of hard practice, day and night! How many times she must have fallen and broken her hands and legs. That is not mentioned, *Sadhana* is necessary for anything in this world.

"Life is a circus" means what? It is a circus, it is not real. So this fellow comes, grunts and everybody is clapping, 'oh such a huge weight he lifted'. He goes. One *chikkawala* comes, you know, buffoon comes, he puts all those things under his armpits and walks away. (10:10 mins)

From the *Paramarthika* level, from the point of *Atman*, what is the answer? Evil does not exist at all. That is the answer. So where is the question, of answering the question, that why is there evil in this world. You can not question something, which doesn't exist at all.

But, we should not take it from here, by reading a book. We should take it only from our point of view, 'Is there something'?

So, to cope with this, *Vedanta* comes out with three answers. What is the answer? What is the question? 'Why is there evil'? That was the answer we dealt with until now. How to cope with evil, is an entirely different question. So we give.

First comes, if a person doesn't believe in God, the only answer is, well that is the nature of the world. First answer.

But, if someone says 'I don't believe in God, but, I believe in my *karmaphala*'. You know, the law of *karma*, that says, if I am suffering, and then, we are very well aware, even when we are suffering, everybody else is not suffering. There are some people, under the same circumstances, not only do they not suffer, they seem to be positively enjoying, reveling in that situation. So, that means, I must have done some *karmaphala*. This is what Hindus, Jains, Buddhists and Sikhs, we accept that. This is the second answer. What is the question? How to cope with evil.

But, there are people who do not believe in past lives. If they do not believe in past life, there is the question, the question of law of *karma* doesn't arise. But, that does not answer many questions. Why is a child, just born baby, is suffering from diabetes, terrible diabetes, or some limbs are missing, disabled, mentally retarded, autistic? So many things. There is no answer. Parents are good, family is good, environment is good. One child is good, in the same family, while the other child is not good.

Why am I discussing so much about evil? First of all, because *Swamiji* raises, that is what is called *Maya*. This is the, don't forget, this is the topic of *Maya* by *Swami Vivekananda*. First lecture was '**Maya and Illusion**', second lecture was '**Maya and the Growth of the Concept of God**', and the third lecture we will deal with '**Maya and freedom**'.

If there were to be no *Maya*, the question, the idea, the aspiration of freedom also never arises. If you are not suffering, then the question of searching for an answer, how to get rid of suffering, doesn't arise at all.

Is it necessary then? There is no evil, there is no suffering, there is no...where is the wrong? Ahhhh the manifestation of potentiality never comes. That is why suffering is very necessary. So why am I raising? Because we are all in that evil, in that suffering in two forms. Now, that's what I want to clarify before I go further. The moment we hear the word evil, we think suffering alone is evil. But, according to *Vedanta*, not to realise how great you are, because that's what you are, is the greatest evil.

This is what, *Pātānjali Rishi*, helps us in understanding this. So, he gives the definition - what is *Avidya*? He gives 4 characteristics:-

*अनित्य अशुचि दुःखः अनात्मसु
नित्य शुचि सुखः आत्मबुद्धिः अविद्या*

**Anitya, Aśuchi, Dukha, Anatmasu
Nitya, Śuchi, Sukha, AtmaBuddhi avidya!**

There are things which are changing all the time, everything in this world is changing – *Anitya*... Everything in this world – *Anitya*! But, all the time something else is happening. We are slowly growing, manifesting our divinity.

Aśuchi - There are so many things, what is called, we would not consider even touching them, even looking at them. But, so long that we are under delusion, we think everything is *Aśuchi*! Because, even at the moment when it appears to be pure, clean, for example nice *Payas*. (14:45 mins)

Anyway there is a nice story. Just now, suddenly I remembered, you know. A *Guru* was trying to teach his disciple how to be humble, and then he gave the instruction, 'Be humble, and find out everything has some better quality than you. You are the worst of the worse'. The disciple, what he did, 'I think my *Guru* wanted to make me give up attachment to things'. So, he gave up all his property, everything. But, the *Guru* gave the same instruction, then he gave up wearing clothes etc. Then the *Guru* gave the same instruction. The disciple couldn't understand. Then he thought, 'Probably this body is the most impure thing in this world. My *Guru* wants me to commit suicide'. That's what he understood. So, he was about to commit suicide. The *Guru* called him, chided him and said, 'You dull headed fellow, you don't understand what I am speaking to you. You better go and find out something worse than you'

So, the man spent on searching the Earth, the grass, the insect, everything he found out, the moment he started looking, 'Is there something which I do not have, that this thing has got'? He started finding something unique within everything, and he was searching and searching. He couldn't find anything worse than himself. One day, he went out to answer calls of nature, and then he answered the call of nature. Looked at his own feces and said, 'This must be the worst thing in this world. I am better than this. He was about to scoop up, to take to his *Guru* to show, 'I am better than this'. The moment his hands approached that one, a horrible voice came, 'Stop! Don't touch me anymore'. So, he was stunned. Feces was speaking to him and said, 'What is the matter? The feces replied, 'You know, before I came into your wretched contact, I was such a first class *payasam*, fit to be offered to God, and once I came in contact with you, this was what I have become. I don't know what is going to happen to me, if you touch me second time. Don't touch me'. Then, he became enlightened and said that, 'Everything in this world has got something which I do not have'.

Humility is a greatest spiritual virtue. What is humility? See something great in everybody, in everything - that is called humility. In other words, see God in everything! That is called humility!

Anyway, from the highest *Paramāṛthika* level, there is no evil at all. But, we do not understand it, but a glimpse of what it is, we could hint at. When a person, who is suffering from the greatest problems, evil, in this world, even God has blessed him with one particular state. What is it called? Deep Sleep - *Sushupti* !

At that time is he free or not? Does he have a question - why am I suffering and what is the solution etc.? That is why it is called *Ānandamaya Kosha*. It is the sheath of pure bliss. Bliss

means beyond dualities - beyond happiness and unhappiness. Every single day we are going through it.

Now what is *Samadhi* ? Consciously attaining to that state is called *Samadhi*. And, imagine *Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother, Swamiji, direct disciples, Ramana Maharshi, Jesus, Buddha, Rama, Krishna*, all these were such people. Every saint is such a person. When they open their eyes, what do you think they will see? They don't see, as we see ourselves. They see with the eyes of God.

So what are we talking about today? Extensively we discussed, in our past classes what is *Maya*. What is *Maya* ? Seeming suffering - happiness and unhappiness both combined. We call it duality - *Dvaya*. And, it looks as though the goodness, the happy part of it is very less, and the suffering part of it, evil part of it seems to be terrible. And, there does not seem to be any solution. So Swamiji gave this beautiful answer in three stages:

- Here we are, to learn our lessons - life is a school.
- And, then what we learnt, we have to practice in our life - that is called gymnasium.
- And, once we reach God, God realisation, then the whole life is nothing but a beautiful circus, drama whatever you call it. That is the answer He gave.

We will be in a position now to understand the theory of *Maya*.

So, *Swamiji* questions - "In all the religions of the world, the one question they propose to discuss is this: *Why is there disharmony in the universe? Why is there this evil in the universe?*" Remember, when we are discussing this question of evil from *Vedantic* point of view, and that is what *Swamiji* is telling, always keep in mind, by evil is not meant only suffering. Evil is meant duality, good and bad, happiness and unhappiness. When we are happy, we don't raise this question, why is there so much evil in this world? We have to raise - 'So, why is there this duality in this world'? That's what he means. We do not find this question in the very inception of primitive religious ideas. (20:06 mins)

Let me remind you, what are the topic we are discussing, *Swami Vivekananda, Maya and the evolution of the concept of God*. This question of evil, was it there from the very beginning? *Swamiji* says 'No! "*We do not find this question in the very inception of primitive religious ideas*". In the primitive religious man we do not have. First, "*because the world did not appear incongruous to the primitive man*". Primitive man never felt, why is there so much evil in this world. Can we understand this statement? Yes, with one example.

Let me give an example. When we are children, go back to your childhood, when you are two years, three years, four years old, did you ever think, 'Why is there so much of evil in this world'? Never! But you thought of one thing, you know, two things. There is happiness and there is unhappiness. There is pain and there is pleasure. And, our struggle is to reduce the pain or get rid of it and run. Whenever we have problem, you know what we do? We just run to the Mother.

However much we run to the Mother, there are certain things which can not be avoided, even for babies. You know what is it? Suppose baby has got a stomach ache. He is suffering, and he can not explain it, what he is suffering from. So he will run to the Mother. Mother also, of course, she takes the baby in her lap, and hugs the baby. But, the Mother also suffers, she doesn't know what is the reason. That's why even today we don't know, no

mother knows, we have to take to the doctor and the doctor has to find out. So many things. Pain is there.

Do you see what I am driving at? Can the baby understand what is evil? Goodness and evil, happiness and unhappiness, are they same? No! Happiness and unhappiness, pain and pleasure are purely on the physical level, felt by the mind. But, the question of why, when you ask, then comes the question of evil and goodness. Do you see the difference? It's a philosophical question.

For a primitive man, this did not exist at all. Circumstances were not inharmonious for him, for one reason. His whole time was spent only in one... how to survive, how to escape from danger. Only two things, how to be safe and how to survive. There is no time for him to think, what is good, what is evil. But, pain and suffering and unhappiness, that is there. There was merely a feeling in his own heart, of something which said 'yeah', and something which said 'nay'. He says, 'This is good? Yes. Let me go'. 'This is not good? No. I should run away from here'. That much he knows.

But this question of good and evil, why this whole world is suffering, whether there is a creator, and all these things came much later. What are we talking about? *'Maya and the concept of the evolution of God'*

"The primitive man was a man of impulse". Can you understand now? A baby is a man of what? He knows only impulse. That's all, nothing else. And even now we are not better than babies. That's why *Swamiji* coined a new phrase "moustached babies". *"The primitive man was a man of impulse. He did what occurred to him, and tried to bring out through his muscles whatever thought came into his mind, and, he never stopped to judge, and seldom tried to check his impulses"*. *"There was no idea of good or evil"*, in a primitive person.

How wonderful! *Swamiji* is tracing the development of mentality. What a wonderful thing it is! This is the first thing we learnt. What is it? Primitive man is a man of impulse. He has absolutely no philosophical idea. The idea of evil and goodness is a philosophical idea. That idea is not there in a primitive person, in a baby also, even now. But, with the advance of man, came the ethical ideas, and also came the fight. That is where *Swamiji* takes us to the next level of development called *Pravritti* and *Nivritti*.

Let me read *"There arose a certain sense in man, call it the voice of God or the result of past education or whatever else you like"*. There is something, *"but, the effect was this, that it had a checking power upon the natural impulses of man"*. Just as a child, as soon as he grows up a little, then he gets this power of, you know... Do you remember the marshmallows test? Yes! All of us has to go through this marshmallow test. There comes some voice 'No, No, No! Stop! Don't go headlong like an emotional person, impulsive person'. This is what happens, there is one impulse in our minds which says 'Do! That means go and do something. But, behind it, rises another voice, which says 'No! Do not'.

"There is one set of ideas in our mind which is always struggling to get outside through the channels of the senses, and behind that, although it may be thin and weak, there is an infinitely small voice, which says do not go outside". And, there are two beautiful Sanskrit words for this phenomena. They are *Pravritti* and *Nivritti*". (25:28 mins)

“Circling forward” and “circling inward”. “It is the circling forward which usually governs our actions” - *Pravritti*. We are all people. Animals are distinguished from thinking man. Now, what is the animal, and what is the thinking man. You know, *Swami Vivekananda's* contribution? He digested worlds advanced ideas and put it in simple language for us.

Our evolution goes through three stages:-

- 1) instinct
- 2) Reason

And, *Swamiji* used to say, until you develop intuition, you have to be intuition.

L Evolution has to go through three stages- instinct, reason and intuition.

- Approaching truth through instinct, animal stage
- Approaching truth through reason is human stage
- Approaching truth through intuition without the intervention of anything, that is called God realisation/ saintliness/spiritual progress, whatever you call it.

These are the three stages.

But, just because we are born human beings it doesn't mean we have developed intuition. Most of us, even today, are becoming what? Animals you can not blame, but human beings, are they rational?

If you say, Aristotle's words, you know - “Man is a rational and social animal”. I have never heard another irrational statement! How many people you find rational person? Give certificate to one person of the people whom you know, ‘He is a rational person’. All of us, we give certificate, ‘I am the most rational person in this world, everybody else is irrational’. Do you understand, what I am talking just now? I called you irrational. That means what? I am very rational. Do you understand what I'm talking about?

There is an infinitely small voice which says, ‘Do not go outside’. It is, religion begins with this, ‘Do not go outside’. ‘*Do not go outside*’. That is called, in Sanskrit what? *Nivritti*. *Nivritti* means the solution, the answer you are seeking outside, there is no such answer outside. Where is it? Inside!

कश्चिद्धीरः आवृत्तचक्षुः अमृतत्वमिच्छन् ।

Kaschida Dheeraha avritta chakshur amritatvamicchann !

It is a beautiful *Upanishadic Vakya* - *Kaschida Dheeraha* - there was a great wise man, he understood, Going out is no solution. So, what did he do? *Aavritta Chakshu* - He closed his eyes. Means what? He turned his search inside, within. For what reason? *Amrita tatvam icchan* - Desiring immortality! That is the only way. There is no other way.

So, if you are influenced by *Sri Ramakrishna* or by any saint, what do you do? You hear his teaching, you close your eyes. What are you trying to do? Meditate upon That Saint, is it not? Meditate upon God. Meditate upon *Guru*. Meditate upon the saint. Meditate on the Scriptures. Meditation means not going to sleep.

“Spirituality begins with this, ‘Do not’. When the ‘Do not’, is not there, religion has not begun. And, this ‘Do not’ came”, it came - Nivritti came, “causing men’s ideas to grow, despite the fighting Gods, which they had worshipped”. Let me comment upon it. This Nivritti , in course of time, maybe after long time, in the course of evolution, this idea came. The solution is not outside, it is inside, within. We are talking about, the concept of the evolution of gods.

So, our ideas about God also, at the beginning you know, we don’t find them irrational. Only *Indira* comes, *Indira* drinks, *Jehovah*, He bestows his grace only upon one particular person, and he destroys the other person. This was primitive idea. Even now, there are religions which are trying to propagate this idea. Think over it. But still, society, they are people who are in that *Pravritti* state. There are people, a few, in whom this *Nivritti* started. And, there are people, who are growing in the idea of *Nivritti*. That is the idea.

As soon as this *Nivritti* started growing, what happens? Man became thoughtful. As soon as he became thoughtful, his God also has become thoughtful. And as he started growing, the idea of God also started growing. This is what *Swamiji* ...

(29:55 mins)

Then what is the result of it? *“A little love evoked in the hearts of mankind. It was very small indeed, and, even now it is not much greater. It was at first confined to a tribe, embracing perhaps, members of the same tribe. These Gods loved their tribes. And each God was a tribal God, the protector of only that tribe”.*

You see, one of the major religions, they call it covenant. What is covenant? ‘We worship you as the only God, and you protect...’ Complete the sentence, ‘only us’. Not anybody else. Because, we worship you, and you protect everybody who do not worship you also. Then, ‘*Khabardar!*’ This is called covenant / agreement/ contract.

A little lovable. Love means what? That the people who worship this kind of God, that is called a tribe. A tribe always has something to bind them - binding force, and that binding force is a little bit of God. And, as soon as this love came for the God, the same love spread itself to other human beings. This is one of the tremendous ideas - the moment you love God and you say ‘I Love only God, and nobody else’. That’s not love. You know you what is the meaning of God here? God means everything. But, that idea of everything, is confined only to a particular tribe, race, sect etc. That is what happened. When these members of the same tribe, embracing and loving only members of the same tribe, These Gods loved their tribes and each God was a tribal God, the protector of that tribe and not any other tribe.

“So when these tribal ideas began to grow there came a little love, some slight idea of duty towards each other and a little social organisation”. What a marvelous way of developing ideas. Developing ideas, *Swamiji* was developing...

What happened first? This thought came, thoughtfulness came, and thoughtfulness made them expand. Who was the first victim of that expansion? God! As soon as God came, this is the God whom we are all worshipping, and therefore we all belong to the same.... In fact, *Swamiji* says, you know, in India some families claim their lineage to *Suryadeva* or *Chandra*. *Suryavamsha* and *Chandravamsha*. You know, *Pandavas*, *Ramachandra* belongs to which *Vamsha*? And, that means we have to stick to each other. That was the idea that was there.

But, then a little love came, and with the idea of love, grows another idea. What is the idea? Duty towards others. And, with the idea of duty, comes another idea. See, how beautifully *Swamiji* is tracing. What is that idea? Since there would be so many differences between one and other human beings, there should be tolerance. So you see, *Nivritti*, thoughtfulness, and that means that idea is transferred to God.

- And, that idea of God became love of God.
- That love of God became love of tribe.
- Love of tribe became, that we have to look after each other.
- And, that idea brought this - we also have to be tolerant towards each other, because all of us are not the same.

Indeed, we do practice it in our day to day life. A Mother has got three children, one is a baby, another is adolescent, another is grown up boy. She loves everybody, but she has to be very tolerant. If this eldest one throws tantrums and then doesn't make up his bed. How does the mother treat him? Will the baby make up the bed? How does the mother treat him? Yes, do you see? The mother understands these are babies, not grown up. They can not do.

Similarly, this idea you know, we love each other because we belong to the same cast, same tribe etc. And, therefore we have a duty to help each other. And, along with the idea of duty also came the idea of what? Tolerance! What a marvellous idea! Tolerance!

Now let me expand it, in brackets, we are all children of *Sri Ramakrishna*, or the direct disciples of *Sri Ramakrishna*. Because, *Sri Ramakrishna* loved all of them, because they loved *Sri Ramakrishna*, they became what? Brother disciples. As soon as they became brother disciples, mind you they were not all same. There would be, some problems would be there. And then, they developed that idea 'we have to help each other, and we have to bear and forbear with each other'. Very naturally, these ideas will come. *Swamiji* is telling, a little social organisation has come. That is how society has become. What a beautiful development. (35:06 mins)

"Then naturally the idea came: How can we live together without bearing and forbearing? How can one man live with another without having some time or other to check his impulses, to restrain himself, to forbear from doing things which his mind would prompt him to do? It is impossible. Thus comes the idea of restraint. The whole social fabric is based upon that idea of restraint, and we all know, the man or woman who has not learnt the great lesson of bearing and forbearing leads a most miserable life".

(35:35 mins)

Here is a psychological principle. What is that? The law of happiness! What is it? That man or woman, who did not learn how to bear and forbear leads what? The most miserable life! So, what is the lesson? If anyone of us wants to lead a happy life, we have to learn how to bear and forbear.

This was one of the teachings *Sri Ramakrishna* had emphasised again and again in His own 'punny' way – He said, all letters in the Alphabet have only one one. But, there is one letter which has 3 variants in Sanskrit - ष ष ष (ष ष ष). But, in Bengali, all are pronounced- ष ष ष

(sh). So, He made pun and said why there are 3 times this one sho sho sho - bear, bear, bear. If you want to be happy, you have to bear so many things in this world.

What a wonderful thing. Bear what? 3 things you have to bear. What is it, you know? We call it तापत्रय *Tāpatraya* - आध्यात्मिका आदिभौतिका आदिदैविका (*Adhyatmika, Aadibhoutika, Aadidaivika*)

We can have problems from three sources. Body, outside, and divine sources. Natural forces etc. When the Tsunami comes, what are you going to do? When it is winter, what are you going to do? When body falls sick, what are you going to do? When your circumstances are changed, what are you going to do? Do you see what is the idea? Sh - श - bear and forbear!

Here is *Swamiji* telling the most wonderful idea. If you want to be happy, and I can guarantee you, if you can bear and forbear, you will be very happy person. That is one way to be happiest person on earth. Don't go and buy, rush outside and buy self-help book, 'how to be happy all the time'? That is also good.

"Now, when these ideas of religion came, a glimpse of something higher, more ethical, dawned upon the intellect of mankind. The old gods were found to be incongruous". Therefore man gave up these Gods. *"Therefore" primitive "man gave up these Gods"*. But, *Swamiji* is changing the language, *"rather they developed higher ideas concerning them"*.

Giving up Gods means what? They developed better ideas about God. When we develop better ideas about Gods. It is the death of the old ideas. Look at our *Puranas*, look at our *Vedic Gods*, *Rudra*! You know what is *Rudra*? Very ferocious, He will just finish you, smash you, makes you first class chutney. Yes that is... But, that very *Rudra* had become transformed into the modern *Śiva*. *Śiva* means what? Most auspicious. *Most auspicious!* He will grant you *moksha*. That old idea of death, destruction etc. has become, in course of time, it took time, has been transformed into the modern idea. So, the old idea of gods, and the modern idea of God, are not the same.

There were so many gods. Ultimately the 33 crores of Hindu gods and goddesses, coalesced into three aspects of one God - The Creator, The Sustainer, and The Destroyer. Destroyer means what? Going back to the beginning.

Always remember, what is *Srishti*?

Bringing something which remains unmanifest into manifestation is called creation.

Maintaining that is called *Stithi*.

And, what is manifested, going back into its unmanifested state, is called *Pralaya*.

Always remember, it is not death, it is not destruction, it is not non-existence. Merely giving up certain inconvenient formations, or going back! And that is why death has no meaning for *Vedantin*, it is just a transition from one body to another, and from the old body to a new body. (39:35 mins)

And here, somebody asked one of our Swami's, I think it was *Premeshanandaji*. 'Swami, a person lives 90 years, 100 years, his body has become old and worn out, it is very natural

that he gives up that body, and puts on a new body. But, what about the child, who dies at five years old'. He says, 'Yes, for that child, the purpose for which that body has been assumed, that job is finished'. That means that, that is no longer valid. And, he gave a beautiful example. You know, you get into a train at one station. You have work in another station. And, you have got wonderful companions, sitting by your side. And, the train journey, one hour, three hours, whatever; very pleasant. And, you are so happy to be introduced, to be talking, your destiny comes. What will you do? 'Oh my companion are so good, let me continue'. Will you do that? No! What will you do? When some people get down, you also have to get down at your own station.

So, two things will happen, some people get down. Your own companions, with whom you forged a strong friendship, they will get down. Finished. You are never, perhaps ever, going to see them. And, when your time comes, you leave them and get down. Some people leave you and you leave some people. This is how.

But then, I added a little bit, you know. In airports, Chicago etc, there is this, driverless trains are there - beautiful. So, you get inside it. What is the train doing? Going round and round and round and round. That is called *Bramachakra*. In that *Bramhachakra*, some people get in, and some people, all people get in at some station, and get out at some other Station. We are all like that.

In Sanskrit there is a beautiful verse which says that, you know, this life, this world is like a huge stream, going towards the ocean. It came from the ocean, and it is going towards the ocean. And, two sticks, they join and they stick together, and some bush or something comes, they get unstuck. After sometime, they get another stick. Then they stick together, then they get unstuck. This sticking and unsticking is going on and on, until the river takes you into the ocean, and the end of your journey.

This is what *Swami Vivekananda* is saying, As man grows, he gives up these Gods, rather they develop a higher idea concerning them, and the old ideas have been destroyed. New ideas have replaced the old. New ideas replace the old ideas about God. And, as we replace our idea about ourselves, so also, we replace the idea about everything else in this world.

And, I want to give an example. *Narendranath*, *Swami Vivekananda*, he is called *Narendranath*. He was extremely fond of *Sita Rama*. So, immediately he went and brought beautiful images of *Sita Rama*. And, day and night, he was bringing flowers and fruits, and offering to them, and everything. You know, whatever he does he was very intense about it. Unfortunately his ideal hero at that time, they had a coach and the coachman, you know, he puts on that *pagdi* and all that, sits on a high seat in front. And, he was the ideal. 'When I grow up, I want to become like this coachman'. So he, *Narendranath*, was always hanging, and running behind this coachman. What happened, this coachman was a married man, and his wife jilted him, and he developed *Vedanta* idea. And, he understood *Naren* was worshipping *Sita Rama*.

So, he brainwashed him. 'What? You are worshipping those married gods. Marriage is the worst thing anybody can do in this world'. And so much so, that *Naren* was completely brainwashed. He went and one day, threw out the images of *Sita and Rama*. But the coachman, you know, he said. 'Lord *Śiva* - Do you know what he did, he divorced his wife,

went to *Himalayas* and merged himself in meditation'. Immediately *Narendranath* went and bought one image of *Śiva* in meditation, and he started worshipping him.

What happened? The household married God, is not worthy of being worshipped. How his mind was evolving slowly. I just want to know, that this is how each one of us, grow and grow and grow.

Therefore man gave up these Gods, rather man developed higher ideas concerning them. Then comes the idea - Not so many Gods.

Because, as we quarrel, Gods also quarrel. So long as we quarrel with each other, our idea of God also will be like that only - Gods also will quarrel. Until we get rid of the idea of quarreling, our Gods also, will be unable to stop quarreling.

What is the way? There is only one way. There should not be too many Gods. There should be only one God. I can cite so many historical evidences, but I will give you one hint. You know, when *Muhammad came*, what was his first thing he did? Before *Muhammad*, those tribes were worshipping hundreds of Gods. Each tribe was worshipping one particular God. In fact, this present *Mecca*, all the images of big, small, different varieties of figures, were there all around that *Mecca*. What Mohammed did, he wanted to unite all the tribes, and to unite the tribes, there is only one way. He must unite all the tribal Gods into one. And, so He proclaimed. That is why even today, the prayer starts. '*There is no God but God*'.

The first God is lower, small 'g o d' referring to various types of manifestations of God. But, the later on God, what God means, capital letter G. This is called development of monotheistic ideas. There is only one God. In Sanskrit he is called *Devādidēva* - is the God of the Gods. As man's ideas developed, his idea of God also has developed.

We have come, today's talk, up to how the germinal idea of Gods, have coalesced into, 'there must be only 1 God'. But, it created terrible ethical problems, which we will discuss in our next class.

ॐ शान्ति शान्ति शान्ति ।

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti!

(46:35 mins)