

## Why is Meditation necessary ?

By Jayadayal Goyandka.

**T**HE goal of human existence is God-realization. The ways of attaining Him can be classified under two broad heads: (1) those taking God as something different from the worshipper, and (2) those treating Him as identical with the worshipper. These two types of spiritual discipline are meant for two different types of aspirants, although the result achieved through both is the same. It is therefore not necessary that only this one or that one should be resorted to by all. The former type, viz., that which takes God as something different from the worshipper is generally regarded as better and easier for all. The latter type, viz., that treating God as identical with the worshipper is again divided under two sub-heads: (i) that which is represented by the formula 'अहं ब्रह्मास्मि' ("I am God")—*vide Bhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad* I. iv. 10, and (ii) that which is represented by 'वासुदेवः सर्वमिति'

("God is everything"—*vide Gītā* VII. 19). Of these two, again, the latter form of worship is preferable. Instead of merging God within oneself, one should merge everything including his own self in God.

In both these types of spiritual discipline meditation is supremely necessary. Great emphasis has been laid on the practice of meditation in all spiritual books such as the *Gītā*, the *Yoga-Sūtras* of Patañjali, and so on. By laying down that "one should not think of anything else" ('न किञ्चिदपि चिन्तयेत्'—*vide Gītā* VI. 25), the Lord has impressed on us the necessity of fixing our mind exclusively on God. But a large majority of us do not even attempt to attain this state, either because they are too slothful or because they regard it as too difficult. Meditation is rarely practised and the zeal of people in this direction is slackening. Such a state of

affairs is deplorable indeed. One should firmly believe that by diligent and unremitting practice one can surely attain what is known as the 'thoughtless state' ( अविन्त्यावस्था ). There are people who believe that disinterested action is an impossibility and make a sweeping assertion that one's actions can never be free from selfishness. They do not stop to think that when one's selfishness or desire of self-gratification is diminished by unceasing effort and continued practice, it can surely be rooted out some time. That which diminishes also disappears one day. How, then, is it impossible for our actions to be altogether free from selfishness or desire of self-gratification? Similarly, if our mind becomes thoughtless for a moment or two, it can attain that state even for all time to come. Practice is all that is needed in this connection.

One should engage in this practice with great vigour and application. One should not be satisfied if the world slackens its hold on the mind for a moment or two. The mind should be fully concentrated on God. One should not cease meditating and rise from his seat until the mind has completely withdrawn itself from the world and gets fully merged in the Lord even for a minute or two. If one practises meditation with a strong determination, his progress is ensured. By endeavouring to banish all thoughts of the world from the mind one can form a natural habit whereby he will be able to obliterate all impressions of the world from the tablet of the mind whenever he chooses. The state of thoughtlessness is that in which the world altogether disappears from the

mind and only God remains. In this state there is illumination inside, hence the state of mental inertia does not set in. This latter state is characterised by an absence of all thoughts, including that of God, from the mind. The *Gītā* has characterized God as omniscient, beginningless, the controller of all, minuter than the minute, the supporter of all, inconceivable in nature, all-effulgence, beyond the darkness of ignorance, pure existence, pure intelligence and pure bliss, and the very embodiment of knowledge. Thus God should be meditated upon in whatever form one conceives of Him. A vision of the real nature of God will dawn upon his mind as a result of this meditation. That is something indescribable. One should grasp this all-conscious nature of God and forget everything else. Should one find himself unable to grasp this nature of God and meditate on it, let him meditate on Him as something refulgent like the sun. Sitting face to face with the sun with one's eyes closed, one should focus his attention on the mass of lustre that presents itself before his eyes, and forget everything else. This is what they call the meditation of the effulgent form of *Brahma*.

A third alternative is to draw before one's eyes the mental picture of a particular form of the Manifest divine and merge one's mind thoroughly in it, so much so that one should no longer be aware of anything else than the object meditated upon, not even his own identity. One should make it a point not to quit his seat until he is thus able to concentrate his mind on the object of his meditation,

to the exclusion of everything else, including himself (no matter if such a state does not last for more than a minute or two only in the beginning). When one is able to attain this state, he will experience in his mind a peculiar kind of peace and joy, which will automatically attract him more and more towards meditation. Whatever form of the Deity, manifest or unmanifest, you meditate upon, the meditation should be so deep that you should have no knowledge of the world, not even of your own self. Everything else than the object of your meditation should be reduced to nothingness. All spiritual exercises are intended to bring about this consummation; service, prayer and all other spiritual practices are lower in rank than deep meditation. To have one's mind irrevocably fixed in God constitutes the greatest gain. There is no harm even if we entertain a desire to attain this state. Such a desire is preferable even to the desire of liberation. One who is permanently established in such a state can even guide others and suggest devices to attain a similar state of deep meditation.

The state of one whose mind has merged in the all-conscious nature of God cannot be described in words. One cannot know what it is, so long as one does not attain it, just as one who has practised continence throughout his life cannot know what sexual enjoyment is. When it is not possible to describe a particular type of sensual enjoyment, which is only of a momentary nature, how can one explain

the Brahmic state through words? One should try to attain that state in order to be able to know what it is like. Whatever is left as the result of a process of elimination should be recognized as the object of one's meditation and meditated upon. One can attain supreme bliss through such meditation.

Most of us are treading the path of Devotion and even here meditation plays a predominant part. In all those places in the *Gītā* where the Lord has extolled *Bhakti*, He has stressed the importance of meditation in no unequivocal terms. All that one should do is to merge one's mind in the Lord, however this may be accomplished.

The Lord says:—

“And among all Yogīs, he who, full of faith, with the inner self abiding in Me, adoreth Me, he is considered by Me to be the most completely harmonized.”\*

(VI. 47)

“They who with mind fixed on Me, ever harmonized, worship Me, with faith supreme endowed, these, in My opinion, are the best Yogīs”.†

(XII. 2)

“Place thy mind in Me, into Me let thy Reason enter; then without doubt thou shalt abide in Me hereafter”.‡

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- \* योगिनामपि सर्वेषां मद्भक्तेनान्तरात्मना ।  
 श्रद्धावान् भजते यो मां स मे युक्ततमो मतः ॥  
 † मय्यावेश्य मनो ये मां नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ।  
 श्रद्धया परयोपेतास्ते मे युक्ततमा मताः ॥  
 ‡ मय्येव मन आधत्स्व मयि बुद्धि निवेशय ।  
 निवसिष्यसि मय्येव अत ऊर्ध्वं न संशयः ॥

