

The Secret of India's Greatness.

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Adhikari Bheda.

We may, in the second place, take into our reckoning the very significant fact that, while all the other Religions of the world propound only one path for all and make no provision for dealing with, providing for and tackling the tremendous millions of physical, material, mental, intellectual, moral, psychic, spiritual and other innate, inherent, inevitable and often even ineradicable temperamental and other differences between one person and another, it is Sanātana Vaidika Dharma alone that has taken into account, considered and catered for all such differences and made all the requisite provision for every conceivable kind of *Adhikāri*, with the result that no earnest, sincere and honest aspirant for Salvation is, on account of any physical, material, mental, intellectual, moral, psychic, spiritual or other disability whatsoever, declared by Sanātana Dharma to be utterly incapable of treading any and every path to Happiness here, Salvation hereafter and Emancipation from all bondage at the end! No doubt, the paths prescribed are—and are bound to be—many, manifold and multifarious. But there assuredly *is* a path for everybody. This, however, is not the case with the other religions of the world, which can only give to all of us a sort of *Procrustean bed* in the shape of *one path and only one path* into which all persons must fit and squeeze themselves, not merely whether they will or not but even irrespective of whether they can do so or not! Otherwise, they must

go to Eternal Hell (with no rebirth, too)! These proselytising propagandists are not satisfied with the assurance of their own going to heaven; they are not content until they see you, us and all others (except themselves) safely locked up in Hell and that too for ever!

Pseudo Broad-mindedness.

These are days in which all people speak in *grandiose* terms of width of vision, breadth of mind, narrow-mindedness and things of that sort! And because we Sanatanists believe in Varnāśrama Dharma (*i. e.*, differences of caste based on *birth*), and because we do not admit into the Brāhmaṇa and other castes aliens coming from Europe, America or Australia, or even an Indian Musalman, an Indian Christian and so forth, therefore, these critics and 'reformers' from the West (or imbued with Western notions) come and say to us:—"Look here, you are so narrow-minded, you don't admit into your fold people coming from outside. See, how liberal-minded *we* are! *We* admit into our fold any and every person, who is willing to come in; nay more, we go out *fishing* for men and take them inside! Ours is a proselytising Religion, whereas *you* repulse people from outside. This proves how narrow-minded *you* are and how broad-minded *we* are", and so forth! Well, from the surface point of view, this seems to be rather the right way, the reasonable way, of putting things. But it is utterly shallow and superficial. Talk of narrow-mindedness and broad-mindedness,

indeed! The man who believes and declares that each and every faith followed in absolute purity and sincerity of heart will and must ultimately lead to God—is *he* the really broad-minded man, or the one who says:—“Mine is the one and only path to, and I am the only passenger booked for, Heaven; all other paths lead to, and all, other people are destined for, Eternal Hell”?

Inevitable Differences.

It is perfectly true that we do *not* admit people of other castes, countries and races into any particular caste or castes of Sanātana Dharma; but we do not, at any rate, consign all others to Eternal Hell as these self-styled and self-advertised “broad-minded” people do! So long as minds are differently constituted, there *must* be differences of thought and differences of opinion in intellectual matters, especially when such matters are not demonstrable one way or the other by means of the physical senses! Nay more; even on the physical side, we find tremendous differences between the needs, capacities and limitations of different persons. Children born of the same parents, nay, in the same pregnancy of their common mother, are found to differ physically, morally, intellectually, psychically, spiritually and so forth. Can we postulate *anything* for them in *any* of these respects by any mechanical rule of oneness and uniformity or even of similarity? It is simply impossible!

Differences in Medical Treatment.

For example, two persons, suffering from two different diseases, require two different courses of treatment, not merely in respect of the nature and kind of medicine to be administered and the dose thereof but even in regard to the *Anu-*

pāna (vehicle of administration of medicine), Diet and other Rules of daily life; and, even in two different types of the same disease, similar differences in treatment have to be observed; and even in the same type and the same sub-division of the same type of disease, Prakriti-Bhedas (*i. e.*, natural differences in temperament) give rise to differences in treatment. The modern Western Allopathic and other Doctors may refuse to recognise these differences in *Prakriti* (Nature) caused by the comparative preponderance of the three elements in our pulse, namely, *Kapha* (Phlegm), *Vāta* (Wind) and *Pitta* (Bile), which the mediæval doctors of Europe did recognise and had provided for! But, in actual practice, even these *modern* doctors do recognise what they bombastically call “*Constitutional and Temperamental Idiosyncracies*”, on account of which the constitution and temperaments of different persons *respond* differently to, *i. e.*, take kindly to or revolt against, certain particular medicines, diet and so forth! What else is this but *Adhikari Bheda*?

Food Differences.

Why go so far out as the treatment of diseases which are, after all, morbid and abnormal conditions? Let us take the instance of our taking of our ordinary food, which is a normal function of ours from day to day? Is it not a fact of common every-day experience that, even here, there are huge differences between man and man and even between two twins? Not merely are there qualitative differences as regards the kind and the nature of the foodstuffs to be taken but quantitative differences, too, in respect of the volume thereof! Where one of the twins is healthy and strong and the other is weak and puny, the quantity of food which the former can daily take and

easily assimilate will kill the latter off through indigestion; and what will suffice for the latter will kill the former off through starvation! What else is this too but *Adhikāri Bheda*?

Differences of Taste.

Similarly, with regard to taste, even in respect of matters within the jurisdiction of our physical senses, are there not enormous temperamental and cultivated differences of taste between man and man? This applies, equally and uniformly, to all matters, *i. e.*, Food, shapes of Moortis, Music, Literature and so forth, so much so indeed that what is sweetest *Pāyasa* (rice cooked in milk) to one is rankest *Poison* to another! And, as regards intellectual, literary, professional and other studies, it is a matter of common experience that our tastes, tendencies and capacities differ enormously and tremendously and that many persons doom themselves to misery for ever, because of a wrong choice of subjects during their School and College course and of the proper Professional career for themselves thereafterwards!

Psychic and Spiritual Differences.

Such being the case even with regard to physical, material and other such matters which are easily capable of being dealt with and determined intellectually, *i. e.*, with the aid of our physical senses, our minds and our intellects, much more, therefore, must this be the case in matters beyond the jurisdiction and ken of the physical senses, the minds and even the trained intellects of the best of us, *i. e.*, in the super-physical affairs relating not merely to this world but to other worlds and future existences too of ours!

A Hypothetical Case.

To what shall—or can—we compare a "*Religious*" system which professes to

provide for our welfare and happiness in other worlds, too, and yet refuses—or fails—to pay even the least heed to *Adhikāri Bheda*? No correct analogy on all fours herewith being available in actual life, an *अधुतोपमा* (*i. e.*, a purely hypothetical case) may be invented, just merely to show how preposterous really is the position in question! Imagine, then, the case of a Tailoring Firm which has received, from the Government in power at the time, the sole monopoly for the making and selling of gowns, coats, shirts and other such stitched articles of clothing, has a stock of ready-made clothes of all the types required and says to a man who is too tall and stout for the biggest of all the three—available sizes "You must squeeze yourself into some one or other of these gowns, coats and shirts. If you are too tall, cut off your feet or even your head; but anyhow, you *must* squeeze yourself into one of these, not merely whether you will or not but even whether you can or not!" This is the only illustration which we can cite even as a hypothetical simile to the attitude taken up by all the other religions of the world in refusing to recognise the elementary, incontrovertible and universal fact of *Adhikāri Bheda* in all departments of life around us!

The Threefold Path.

We have thus now seen why on the Psychic and Spiritual plane, too, differences of path are natural and absolutely indispensable for people on different rungs of the intellectual, Psychic and Spiritual ladder. Thus, in the third chapter of the *Bhagavadgītā*, we find Arjuna saying to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa:—

तदेकं वद निश्चित्य येन श्रेयोऽहमाप्नुयाम् ॥

[*i. e.*, "Tell me, therefore that *one* path

by which one can absolutely rely upon achieving one's permanent welfare"; but even in response to this specific request of Arjuna's, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa says:—

लोकैऽस्मिन् द्विविधा निष्ठा पुरा प्रोक्ता मयानघ ॥

ज्ञानयोगेन सांख्यानं कर्मयोगेन योगिनाम् ॥

[*i. e.*, There are two different paths prescribed of old by me for the world, *viz.*, the *Jñāna Yoga* for the *Jñānakāṇḍis* and the *Karma Yoga* for the *Karmakāṇḍis*]

In this passage, the *Karmakāṇḍa* and the *Jñānakāṇḍa* include within themselves not merely the *Karmakāṇḍa* proper and the *Jñānakāṇḍa* proper but the *Upāsanākāṇḍa* too, which, as actually including a lot of *ritual* on the one hand and as being a necessary *Sādhanā* or means of attainment towards the *Jñānakāṇḍa* on the other, can and should rightly—from the psychological standpoint—be included under both the *Karmakāṇḍa* and the *Jñānakāṇḍa*.

Sub-Divisions.

But even these three main paths of *Karma*, *Bhakti* and *Jñāna* (*i. e.*, Work, Faith and Illumination) are merely *indications* of the *directions* suitable to each particular *Adhikāri*. Even here, there are subdivisions, sub-subdivisions and so forth in an infinite series of gradations corresponding to and based on the infinitely huge number of minute differences of temperament, tastes, conditions and capacities actually found amongst and around us! For example, even as regards the *Upāsanā Kāṇḍa* in the 12th Chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā* (which deals particularly with *Bhakti Yoga* itself and actually goes by

that name), we have Śrī Kṛṣṇa saying (in verses 8-11):—

१. मय्येव मन आधत्स्व मयि बुद्धिं निवेशय ।...

२. अथ चित्तं समाधातुं न शक्नोषि मयि स्थिरम् ।...

३. अभ्यासेऽप्यसमर्थोऽसि... ।

४. अथैतदप्यशक्तोऽसि... ।

(1) "Concentrate your mind and intellect absolutely on Me alone."

(2) If you are unable to rivet your mind thus permanently on Me, then..... (do so-and-so).

(3) If you are unable to perform even this then.....

(4) If even this you are unable to do, then.....and so on.

Thus, even as regards the path of *Upāsanā* or *Bhakti*, differences of sub-direction, capacity and level in the *Adhikāris* create different problems; and differences in the Problems naturally and inevitably necessitate different solutions! The whole thing is thus a matter of gradation. This is what our Scriptures speak of as *Adhikāri Bheda*—a factor which Sanātana Dharma has taken into account and duly provided for because there is absolutely no possibility of getting over these innate, inherent and (as we have already said) inevitable and often ineradicable limitations imposed upon us by heredity, environment, association, training and various other causes utterly beyond our control! But this has been entirely lost sight of by and in all the other religions of the world, every one of which takes up and persists in the dogmatic attitude that theirs is the one and only true path and the followers of all other religions must go to Eternal Hell!