

PROCESS OF SPIRITUAL PROGRESS

– B. K. Vijay Bhasker, Bhubaneswar

In the process of spiritual progress, there are three stages which one has to pass through:–

- ▶ **Bhakti** (Devotion)
- ▶ **Gyan** (Wisdom/Knowledge)
- ▶ **Vairagya** (Detachment).

As revealed to us by Incorporeal God Shiva through Prajapita Brahma, the Time Cycle of one Kalpa (5000 yrs.), comprises four main ages i.e., *Satyuga*, *Tretayuga*, *Dwapara-yuga* and *Kaliyuga*. During the first two ages, called Golden Age and Silver Age respectively, all human beings are virtuous deities. There is only one religion, called 'Aadi Sanatan Devi Devta Dharma'. There is complete purity, peace and plenty. People do not have any desires or wants, because everything needed in their lives, is naturally available in abundance. Since there is no desire, there is no worry for anything. Desire in man is the seed of all vices. Desire is the root cause of the loss of divine virtues in man and subsequently for the downfall of the human society.

As the people in the first two

ages live their lives in utter peace and bliss, they do not have the need to remember God or worship Him. They do not require any wisdom or *gyan*. They are all soul-conscious and not body-conscious. This period of complete Happiness, Bliss and Peace is the first half of the *Kalpa*.

The second half of the *Kalpa* consists of *Dwapara-yuga* and *Kaliyuga*, called Copper Age and Iron Age respectively. The above mentioned three stages of spirituality are applicable to mankind, in the real sense, only during this second half of the *Kalpa* which is full of sorrow and disquiet. As man became body-conscious, he totally forgot the truth that he is a soul and not a physical body. He identified himself with the name, given to his body by his parents. He developed attachment to all those persons and possessions that belonged to him. To overcome uncertainties of future, he started accumulating wealth and

hoarding materials. Then he thought of safe-guarding his possessions. Slowly he developed a group of people, whom he believed to be faithful to him, to protect him and his property from unforeseen situations.

As man became more powerful and grew more selfish, he stopped bothering for the welfare of others. Soon various factions and groups were created on the earth. Every leader of the group claimed certain territory under his command and started dictating terms to others in that area. Persons opposing him were dealt with very severely. This situation led to rivalry and caused frequent fights and wars among different groups. Many a time, it caused warfare on a large scale. Thus, the whole earth got divided into different nations and various kingdoms, so much so that boundaries were demarcated in skies and seas also to indicate their sovereignty. Peaceful living got vanished from the world.

During this period of crisis, certain great souls arrived in this World to guide the Mankind on the path of righteousness. Abraham, Gautam Buddha, Jesus Christ etc. gave the message of unity and universal brotherhood. Adi Shankaracharya initiated

the path of *Sanyas*. Many other holy souls followed. All of the holy souls preached:—

- ▶ The Supreme Father or God is one.
- ▶ We are Immortal Souls, not the physical bodies.
- ▶ We are the Children of that One Supreme Father and so we are all brothers.
- ▶ We must love all and hate none, and so on.

But the mankind missed to understand their message and the decline of *Dharma* continued unabatedly. People following different faiths could not be convinced of the Common Fatherhood and Universal Brotherhood, as preached by their respective spiritual heads. They completely forgot the innate powers of the Soul and felt totally helpless. As the power of soul diminished and misery and sorrow increased, the souls began to seek Divine Intervention. Man sought the help of The Almighty through the path of devotion. However, he did not attain spiritual evolution, rather devolution took place. Of course, technologically, scientifically and commercially, the world advanced remarkably, but spiritually the mankind became bankrupt.

As we entered Kaliyuga, the Iron Age, the moral and

spiritual deterioration of mankind continued. Even the worship became polluted and selfish. As a result of this spiritual degeneration, the World has become a virtual Hell now. God has declared, “*Sambhavami Yuge Yuge*” in the **Srimad Bhagwad Gita**. It means that whenever there is total decline of Dharma in the World, He will descend on the Earth to re-establish Dharma. Hence God incarnates on the Earth only once, near the end of the Cycle when the **Confluence Age** starts. He reveals the Knowledge about the Soul and the Supreme Soul and about the relationship between the two. He enlightens us about the Soul-Consciousness and teaches us the true nature and meaning of *Bhakti*. He liberates mankind from useless rituals and traditions. In our last 84th birth, He elevates us, i.e., ‘soul’ to the level of ‘deity’.

Now comes the third and the last stage, that of disinterest. This is the supreme stage in one’s life. After knowing the Truth about the Self (soul), the Supreme Soul and the relation between these two, one loses charm in the physical cravings of life. He slowly gets detached from all the bodily relationships and fulfils his duties selflessly, as a trustee.

He stops differentiating between Thine and Mine. He develops Love in his Heart and becomes soft and sane in his behaviour.

True detachment or disinterest never demands one to abandon the society, the Hearth and Home, and run away into the forest, neglecting one’s responsibilities. On the contrary, it **teaches** Man to live in the society like a **lotus** in the muddy pond, yet remaining unstained and pure. In the **path of total detachment**, there is no need of worshiping, performing rituals, keeping vows and fasting, singing hymns and chanting of mantras etc. All these activities are the stepping stones to reach the **ultimate stage of disinterest**, where only love, peace and bliss exist. The person who attains this level is the real saint. He is unaffected by any external circumstances. He is always tranquil in mind and full of love at heart. His looks and words are soothing and they bring solace to the suffering mankind. He is ever **introverted** and silently contemplates the **Supreme Father**. Such spiritual aspirant is really loved by God and indeed a great inspiration for the fellow beings. ●