

FINDING A WAY TO REACH TRUE HAPPINESS

NEW YEAR'S EVE MESSAGE FOR 1972

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Hot-blooded youth often do not remember what is ahead of them. But the warmth of the blood cools down even while one is still a youth, and in moments of frustration, despair and defeat, which one has to face in every walk of life.

We are very learned in matters with which our life is not really concerned. We know the diameter of the earth, the distance between the earth and the sun, and the speed with which the earth revolves around the sun. We have measured even the vast atmosphere of space and the diameter of the universe, and we want to find out what is inside the distant planets, and perhaps inside the sun. This is our technical education – learning what is very, very far away. The farther is the object of our study, the wiser we appear to be.

But with all this knowledge of historical procession of events for thousands and thousands of years, with

the legacy that we have inherited from our ancestors from the Vedas onwards, from Plato onwards, from masters invisible to our eyes, with all this inheritance of ours of which we are so proud, we are today, at the fag end of the twentieth century, in a condition which is likely to threaten the very existence of mankind on earth.

Knowledge has led us to a state of insecurity and, except in moments of false enthusiasm and erroneous understanding, we look small in the face of this mighty world before us. Ignorance is bliss, and the fact that we know not our real position in this world seems to give us a little satisfaction, like the sheep that are fed well the day before they are butchered. The passage of time does not spare anyone, and the fiercest master of all creation, death, is yawning before us. When we enter the jaws of this fierce force before us, we do not know where we are heading.

“Has knowledge given us satisfaction?” is the prime question. Some masters say knowledge is virtue, other masters say knowledge is power, and a third set of seers tell us knowledge is bliss. On a careful analysis of our own personal lives, we seem to realise that knowledge has not brought us virtue, knowledge is not power, and knowledge is not happiness because a learned man does not always seem to be righteous, a learned man does not seem to be powerful, and a learned man also does not seem to be happy. There is a

contradiction in practical life of what these masters have ascertained and proclaimed to us that knowledge is virtue or righteousness, knowledge is power, knowledge is bliss. The reverse is the case. The opposite is what we see in our own lives. The more we learn, the smaller we look, and the more miserable we are because however much we may learn and whatever be the extent of our education, much more seems to be beyond what we have learned and probed into. Like the horizon that recedes the more we approach it, the extent of knowledge also seems to recede from us the more we probe into it.

“Why all this?” is a question that we have to put to our own selves. Why is it that we seem to be pursuing a will-o'-the-wisp? Many of us seated here in this hall are elderly persons, not small children – past 25, past 30, past 40, 50, 60 years. What is our mental condition? What is it that we are brooding on throughout the day, from morning till night? Let each one of us take stock of the thoughts that occur to our minds today, the 31st of December, 1971. From early morning till this very moment, what are the thoughts that have occurred to you? They are all useless, slipshod, chaotic, unconnected ideas, jumping from one object to another with no logical connection, and aiming at nothing finally. How can you be happy?

If at all we have to take a vow on the eve of this New Year, what I would suggest is, we make a

determination to think in a disciplined manner. By discipline, I do not mean the military discipline of body or the order issued to your subordinates. Institutional discipline, political discipline, and social discipline are all things that we hear. But what we are really in need of is psychological discipline. The acquiring of the art of thinking rightly, in a logical manner, should, at every level of its development, bear a connection to the aim towards which it is moving. Every thought of ours should have a connection with the aim that you have set before yourself in your life. The thoughts that are generated by us should not be unconnected with our purpose.

But most of us have no purpose in life. There seems to be no set aim. Though we imagine that we have an aim, there seems to be no definite aim before the mind's eye. It flits from moment to moment, and begins to have a false satisfaction of having achieved a temporary end from moment to moment, due to which it is that we seem to be satisfied somehow in life, while the fact is that our so-called satisfaction of our day-to-day life is born of a forgetfulness of any logical connection between our practical life and the aim of our life, and a temporary receding of thought from its objects on account of fatigue. The mind gets tired of thinking too much of objects, of persons, of things, and of the situations in the world.

The only mental condition when we seem to be rid of all the burden of life is when we are fast asleep. At no other moment of our life can we be said to be really in a state of relief from tension. Only in the state of deep sleep, when every psychological function is tentatively obliterated, do we seem to go into a fool's paradise of satisfaction, and come out knowing nothing of what has happened, and continuing consciously the same thread of the life of tension that we led the day earlier.

We seem to be pressed forward rather than consciously move towards a fixed aim in our life. Like automatons, we are driven forward by impulses, instincts and urges which so get identified with our own consciousness that we mistake them for our own friends and our own selves. This is the reason why we imagine that we are really free, while we are really bound. The bondage consists in our identification of ourselves with the urges over which we have no control. We have no power over the instincts which drive us forward, and the happiness of life is nothing but the moment of yielding to the urge or the instinct on account of our not being sufficiently endowed with the power to resist them. When we yield to an urge or a tension, there is a temporary satisfaction. When we resist a tension, there is unhappiness or displeasure.

This sort of life of tension is what is generally known in the Sanskrit language as samsara. People say

we are in samsara, we are in great sorrow. What do they mean? Samsara is nothing but this pressure that is exerted upon our nerves and the mind by unseen forces which seem to have a sway over us, and over which we have absolutely no control.

What is that urge which makes you grow from childhood to youth and then decay into old age? You do not deliberately grow, saying, "Let me grow." Something pushes you and makes you grow from childhood to adolescence, adolescence to youth, and so on. What is it that makes you feel hungry every day? What is it that makes you feel satisfied with perceptions of beauty? Have you been able to count the urges that operate in your personality every day?

When you begin to analyse yourself psychologically in this manner, you begin to realise that every human being is a kind of puppet pulled by the strings of these urges, and yet not realising this fact, people go headlong in directions of which they have absolutely no knowledge. One goes to the east, another goes to the west; they know not why. What purpose is there behind it?

If you make a study of the psychological history of mankind, you will find that all people passed away in almost the same mental condition, except perhaps a few rare souls. No one has gone with a satisfaction. Everyone has gone grumbling, murmuring, cursing,

and learning a lesson of life, which was, of course, learnt too late.

Now, this predicament of our mind in which we seem to be, in which all mankind is, is the outcome of undisciplined thinking. We think like monkeys, though we are human beings. You do not know what to think. You just think anything that is in front of you. There is an object in front of you; you start thinking it, looking at it, speaking about it, and wasting time over it. If you see a cloud, you have to say something about it. If you see a river flowing, you make a remark about it. If a person is passing in front of you, you say something about it. This is undisciplined thinking. There is no necessity for you to contemplate everything that is before you. It is not necessary for your mind to absorb into itself impressions of all things that are placed before it. You have to be like a judge in a Supreme Court. He is not concerned with all the people who are crowded there in the court. He chooses the persons concerned with the case, and takes evidence from them. He does not take the evidences as they come in the form of a raw material. He sifts through them, boils them down into an essence of judicious judgement, and comes to a conclusion, which is called the final decree.

In a similar manner, we are given an evidence of various facts about life through our sense organs in regard to the objects of the world, which we have to sift

carefully with the power of our understanding, and take in only that which is necessary for the decision of that case which is before us.

Each person has a world of his own or her own. There is a saying in English, "There is a world under every hat." Everyone carries a world of his own and her own, though apparently we seem to be in a common world. This commonness is only artificial. Our dreaming world is a psychological world, and this world is not identical with the worlds of others. Our unhappiness is sheerly due to this segregation of our psychological personality from the physical and psychological lives of other people and other things in the world.

As I mentioned to you just now, we seem to be happy in sleep. Why is it that we are happy in sleep, and not in wakeful life? It is because in wakeful life we are repelled by the psychological constitutions of other persons and things, while this repulsion ceases when we withdraw into our own selves in the state of deep sleep. As there is electric repulsion, there is also the repulsion of animal magnetism. Every human being – as a matter of fact, everything on earth – produces a magnetic force. Every one of us lives in a magnetic field of himself; and inasmuch as the voltage, as we may call it in electrical language, of the magnetic field in each person varies in intensity, each person repels the other. There is no union of one person with

another person. On account of this repulsion it is that you cannot have true friends in this world. There is no such thing as a real friend in the world. It is a falsity because everyone is capable of deserting you at any moment. The reason is simple, psychological, philosophical, scientific. You live in isolated worlds, like silkworms living in their own cocoons. Until and unless the magnetic fields of individuals coalesce to form a one single universal magnetic field, there cannot be true happiness for the individual, just as, as they say, the river has no peace until it reaches the ocean. The river rushes restlessly, meandering and turning round and round until it reaches its destination. Then it is that it ceases its roars.

In a similar manner, there is an attempt of every psychological personality to come in real union with other fields of this psychological constitution. But this attempt is always frustrated. This is the reason why we want to make friends but we cannot really find friends. We want to enjoy objects but they really turn into ashes in our mouth. The objects do not give us satisfaction. We do not come into contact with anything in the world, really speaking, though the thing may be really in the grip of our own hands. Real contact is psychological, not merely physical. We may be physically proximate but psychologically distant in a thousand ways, which make us unhappy.

This psychological attunement of personalities – by personality, I do not mean merely human personality, as the psychological constitution of any unit in the world is a psychological personality, which attempts to attune itself with fields of a similar kind at other centres in the world, an attempt which is daily frustrated due to wrong procedures adopted in the attempts.

So our vow at this moment at the commencement of the New Year should be to find a way of reaching true happiness, and not to accumulate knowledge or learning of facts and figures in the world, whether geographical or mathematical, physical, and so on. Our attempt should be to unite, in the true sense of the term, with the realities that are around us.

We are a hundred people, perhaps, sitting here. None of us has any internal contact with another person, though we may be real kith and kin. It may be father and mother or it may be any relation, but these relationships are really not united psychologically. If two minds unite, there would be no two persons. The very fact that you see two persons shows that they are two different minds. If two persons are to think absolutely alike in every little bit of detail, they will coalesce into one personality. Such a thing never happens because two minds never think alike.

But our saints and sages have proclaimed that such a state of unification of minds is possible, and this ideal

unity of the totality of all minds is what is called the cosmic mind. This is Ishvara, this is God, the Supreme Creator of the cosmos referred to in philosophical language and theological terminology, which is nothing but the internal attunement of all the thoughts, feelings and understandings of the cosmos into a single unit. As many drops make the ocean, the whole ocean can be called a single drop. It is a huge drop that is the ocean. It is made up of many drops, no doubt, but you cannot see the many drops there. Theoretically you can isolate one drop from the other, but really they are so united into a single, indivisible being that you can, for all practical purposes, say the whole ocean is one big drop. Such is the cosmic mind. It is not a bringing together of many minds as in a parliament, in a house or an association. That is not unity. The unity should be such that they all think alike. When one thinks, everyone thinks in the same manner. That single thought is the thought of the cosmic mind. That is Ishvara-sankalpa, Ishvara-drishti, God thought, or God experience, as it is called.

To attain this state of the unity of thoughts, we have to think in terms of all the thoughts of all people. If I want to be really united with you all, friendly with you all, and have control over you all, I must start thinking exactly as you are thinking. As you think, I must think. I must not have an independent thinking. Then, immediately, I begin to control you and put you in my

pocket. You will just do what I say the moment I start thinking exactly as you think. But if I start thinking separately, there is a repulsion of psychological personalities.

Yoga, which means union, is not a union of two persons, two things or two objects. It is only a logical way of expressing the coming together of the centres of consciousness in a single ideal set before them. When you contemplate a single ideal, that thought is supposed to be concentrated. When you begin to concentrate your thought in the process of meditation, you begin to find that the mind jumps. Many people cannot meditate, cannot concentrate their minds. They complain of fickleness of mind, and say, "Oh, it is very difficult. Even for a few minutes I cannot meditate. I begin to think many things."

Now, this difficulty of the mind having to think many things, and thus it being impossible for it to meditate, is only another way of saying that you have not yet learnt what is real meditation. Those objects which seem to be obstructing your meditation have to be brought within the purview of your meditation, and harnessed for your own purpose. If you are to contemplate an object as the ideal of your meditation, and if some other object's form enters your thought, you should not regard it as an obstacle, because the moment you begin to realise or feel anything or anyone as an obstacle, you set up an opposition in

respect of that object. There is a famous saying in the Bhagavadgita which sums up what yoga is: *yasmān nodvijate loko lokān nodvijate ca yah* (Gita 12.15). Is there anything that you dislike? Then you are not a yogi, because dislike is repulsion.

If you have any liking, then also you are not a yogi because that is, again, a segregation of your personality from factors which are other than what you like. When you say that you like something, you imply that you do not like something else, so they mean one and the same thing. Therefore, the state of yoga is not one of like and dislike, which are phenomenal attitudes of the mind, and it is not creating a fissure of the psychological field, but it is bringing together the various fields of psychological constitution, which are the persons and things of the world, into a harmony by an adjustment of thought in such a way that you have nothing to ask nor not ask, want or not want.

It is difficult to agree with others, think like others or appreciate others. But this is the very crux of yoga. If you hold an opinion, nothing prevents me from saying yes to it because that is also an existent form of opinion. That it does not agree with my opinion does not prove its falsity. The facets of universal thinking are so manifold that you cannot set aside any aspect of thinking as wholly wrong or erroneous. Nothing is wholly meaningless, valueless or absurd in this world. Everything has a reality of its own. The very fact that

something exists shows that it is connected with the cosmic reality. Even the ugly things, the evil things, even those things which we regard as unnecessary and absurd have a reality of their own. If you are able to associate your thoughts with the reality of whatever is covered within the universe of your thinking, you would be a very deep thinker. Very deep thinking, or disciplined thinking, is harmonised thinking because yoga is harmony: *samatvam yoga ucyate* (Gita 2.48). But you cannot be in harmony even with your next-door neighbour. The neighbour may be your enemy. How would you practice yoga when there is an enemy next door?

I constantly remember one of the sayings of Jesus Christ, which amounts to the teaching that before turning to God we have to make peace with our brothers. When there is a contending enemy before you in the world, you cannot make peace with God by abandoning that contention because God is not above, millions of miles away. He is just touching your own skin. The God that we contemplate in our meditations is not a distant reality but that which pushes itself forward just here, under our very nose, touching our very skin, with which we are unable to identify ourselves on account of the repulsion that we have set up by individualistic, isolated, segregated thinking, which is the essence of selfishness, egoism, ahamkara.

The essence of your unhappiness and sorrow in life is ego-centred life, affirmation of personality, and a simultaneous and consequent isolation of other personalities from your own. You should not carry a personality with you when you move about. Shed your personality. When you speak, do not speak like a person speaking. When you think, stop thinking like a human being or a person. Let there be no personality for you. Everything is okay. Then things will flow into you. You become like a child. Everyone caresses a child because of the impersonality of nature that is seen in the child, the egolessness of character, the simplicity that is the essence of truth.

But we carry our egoism wherever we go. We frown and fret. We have likes and dislikes, but the child has none. *Pāṇḍityam nirvidya bālyena tiṣṭhāset* (Brihad. Up. 5.5.1), says the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad: Renounce your learning and become a child – a child not in its ignorance but in its innocence, simplicity, egolessness, and impersonality of character. We should cease to be persons. We have to become nonpersons, if we can use such a word. Everything has to fit into you. You must make yourself such a vehicle into which any content can be poured. You are a friend of anyone and anything. With a child, you are a child; with a man, you are a man; with a woman, you are a woman; with an old man, you are an old man; with a young man, you are a young man; with a hungry man, you are a

hungry man; with a happy man, you are a happy man; and with a grieved man, you are a grieved man. You are like a crystal, which has no colour itself. This is simplicity, this is a childlike attitude, wanting nothing, carrying God wherever you go, not your personality laden with the heavy ego.

It is very difficult to live a life of this kind because to shed egoism is like death for us. We always carry a personality of importance. We want to be recognised wherever we go. But let there be no recognition for us. Let there be no asking for recognition. Be the last man always, never become the first. Be the last person to speak, not the first person. Be the last person to ask for anything, be the last person to complain for anything; and when you become the smallest unit in this world, the largest will enter into you.