

THE REAL HUMAN BEING

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There is an aspect of life called materialism, from which the West is trying to awaken itself by reorienting the perspective of life. This is a happy idea indeed, and I have also been trying to find out what it actually is that prevents us from this awakening. It is not easy to find out by ordinary types of investigation what hinders us in our progress. If it had been such a simple thing, we would have been moving towards the goal of our lives by leaps and bounds. We seem to be chained down to the earth in spite of our fast movements ahead, and it is not infrequently that we realise, to our own surprise and discomfort, that after the so-called progress that we seem to have made throughout our lives we are in the same spot from where we wished to get up and move onward. It is something like a person dreaming that he is flying in a fast-moving plane, not knowing that he is lying on the bed all the while. He

has not moved an inch from his bed, but yet he is moving very fast in his dream consciousness. The entire flight has been a phantasmal structure in his own individual constitution, a fact that he realises only after he awakens to the consciousness of his being in the bed. As long as he is dreaming, he feels that he is actually progressing, moving, flying, etc.

This may be our fate also. Our progressions, whether historically, culturally, technologically or even religiously, may be only phantasms. They may not be real progress at all because we may be on the same spot. On a very thorough diagnostic analysis of the case we may realise this is perhaps the fact. Humanity has not really progressed qualitatively or tangibly for the past 2,000 years. Merely because our ancestors travelled in a bullock cart and we fly in a plane does not mean that we have really progressed in life. We have only increased our problems and bound ourselves with more knots, and have been living a very complacent life of an imagined progress through what we call the civilisation or modern culture of mankind.

We have to study the human being in his essentiality to find out whether we have really progressed through the centuries or not. What progress has mankind made? Let him declare it in a very specific manner, logically and scientifically. To increase one's desires and to implement more and more instruments for the fulfilment of those

increased desires cannot be called progress in culture or civilisation. We have manufactured more instruments and more weapons, more technological devices, which are identified with progress in culture and civilisation, but all these have become necessities merely because of our increase in desires. The greater the intensity of the disease, the more is the need for medicine. Just because we manufacture more medicine, we cannot be called progressive because it only means we have also increased disease simultaneously. We are very sick, and our sickness has gone so deep that we have to invent more and more medicine. Well, we can pat ourselves on the back by saying, "I have got thousands of antibiotic factories," but it is not progress. Why should there be antibiotic factories if we have no disease? Our disease has become so complicated, so deep-rooted and so awe-inspiring that we have to manufacture more and more virulent poisonous drugs and complicated devices for the satisfaction of desires which cannot easily be fulfilled.

Now, all these are at the background of our so-called human progress through the march of history, and if we medically, psychologically or psychopathologically examine human nature as such today, we will find we are the same brutes that we were centuries back, and it is not very difficult to demonstrate this truth. As an old saying goes, "Scratch a Russian and you find a Tartar." We have

only to be scratched to find out what we are, and occasions arise when we thus come into confrontation with the realities of life, and then our real nature comes out. We are brutes, and are not in any way cultured in the real sense of the term.

A human being who cannot see any value in another human being cannot be called a cultured person. If we take another human being as an instrument for our satisfaction, if we regard another human being as our servant or subordinate, if we regard another human being as our enemy or and an obstrucater, well, we have not understood what humanity is. If this is the case, if this is our psychology, if this is our inner structure and pattern or makeup, what advance or progress in culture has been made?

What is this that separates one human being from another? It is fear, and a subtle desire to exploit another human being. That is at the background of this so-called culture behind us. Why do we fear one another? Why is there agony and anxiety when we go to bed at night? We have a subtle anxiety in our mind when we sleep that some unexpected event may take place. Somebody may pounce upon us, war may breakout, a theft may take place, burglars may enter, enemies may attack. All these are fears arising from our peculiar notion of our relationship with humanity.

Here is another interesting thing. What is it that actually causes our fear? It is mankind – not the lion, not the tiger, not the snake, not the scorpion. If we are afraid of anything in this world, it is mankind. We are afraid of another human being. We are not afraid of anything else – not the tree, not the mountain, not the ocean or the river. Well, the ocean is so big and so high. The ocean can rise up a hundred feet and swallow us in one minute if it wants, but the ocean does not do that. The tiger does not jump upon us. Even snakes do not bite us. It is man that attacks us, so we are afraid of man. What can be a greater travesty than to feel that man is the enemy of man? That is one aspect of the matter.

And we are working hard for whose sake? We are working for mankind who is the source of our fear. Is it not a contradiction? This is the tension that we have. We are unhappy because there is a difficult knot in our own psychological structure which we cannot easily untie. We have a contradiction in our nature. We love mankind and hate mankind at the same time. If there is war, it is man attacking man. It is not lions attacking man, not snakes attacking man. Therefore, it is man's attitude towards man that is the source of our fear, and yet we work for mankind. We sweat, toil without taking a minute's rest from morning till evening working for mankind, and yet

mankind is the source of our fear. This is the psychological difficulty, about which very few may have time to think.

Another aspect of the matter is that we are not sufficiently educated. We are educationists, psychologists, professors, vice-chancellors, but we are ignoramuses of the first water as far as the real truth of life is concerned. We cannot be happy by being vice-chancellors of universities. We can wear gowns that trail behind us as if we are important social units, but underneath our hearts are sorrowful and grieving. Our education is a husk if we actually go deep into the matter. What is the value of our education and knowledge if it cannot save us when we are in danger? If you are confronted by a lion in the jungle, your degrees will not help you. Your certificate is not going to be recognised there. The lion will care a hoot for your certificate. Even a cobra can terrify you and turn you out. You may be a graduate of Harvard or Yale or Oxford or Cambridge, but what does it matter?

Hence, we have got subtle difficulties which can threaten us, and the greatest threat is death itself, the great fear of mankind from which one tries to escape by hook or by crook. We are inventing enzymes, elixirs and medicines to prolong our life, but for how long? For one year, two years, three years, four years, ten years? After that, what will happen? Well, the reality of life will pounce upon us like the wild animal in the jungle, and we cannot escape it.

The reality of life is staring at us even now, and we want, ostrich-like, to thrust our heads into the sand of the desert and think it is not there. This is how we are living in this world. We are very important people, but we are fools if we really go into the deepest truths of our nature. We appear to be important in the midst of people who are not willing to accept the realities behind the human relationships. We shake hands with one another, we drink tea at the same roundtable, but we dislike one another.

If this is the truth of the matter, man cannot be happy. So are we to live in this world merely by somehow or other getting on by artificial relationships, shaking hands, cups of tea at the table and drugs in the night for going to sleep, or are we going to find a real solution from the deepest roots of the problems of life?

If you have discovered the secret, you are a really cultured and educated person, and I would say you are a real human being. Where there is brutality at your base, where the animal is still lurking at your subconscious and unconscious levels, where you can hate and pounce upon another, there humanity has not fully manifested itself. If you cannot be really human, how can you be divine? To be a divine being is the step above the level of the human being, and are we really human beings?

Well, we can call ourselves human beings if the antagonistic instinct of the animal is completely absent in

us. Anger, for instance, is an animal instinct, and are we free from it? We show our teeth at our own friend if we are rubbed hard, when our desires are opposed or crossed. There cannot be harmonious relationships; and what is peace but harmony? *Samatvaṁ yoga ucyate* (Gita 2.48): Yoga itself is harmony. Harmony is to be established in every level of life. When it is physical harmony we call it health, when it is mental harmony we call it sanity, when it is social harmony we call it political or social solidarity, and when it is spiritual harmony we call it salvation. So ultimately, it is all harmony in every level of life, right from the physical, the vital, the mental and the intellectual to the social, the cosmic and the spiritual.

This is to be the metaphysical or philosophical background of all educational psychology and the basis of even our practical day-to-day existence, which is what we are living. This is to give a little idea of what we have to ponder over deeply if we are not to go from this world crying like babies, if we are to leave this world with a happy smile on our faces, with the satisfaction that our life has been lived for the purpose for which it has been intended, and not merely for falsely demonstrating to others a feature which is not there. Life has to be real, and the reality of life is nothing but the adjustment, or rather the capacity of adjustment, of our personality with the environment outside.

With these few words I invoke the blessings of God upon you all for a happy journey and for achieving the goal of your life. God bless you.