

THE SPEAKING TREE

How To Fulfil Your Genuine Desire For Bliss

Arup Mitra

We all are striving hard to attain full satisfaction in a persistent manner. In the material world, nothing can give us such ecstasy. Consumption of a normal good is characterised by diminishing marginal utility; meaning that the additional consumption of the same good renders less and less satisfaction. Thus, we get fed up with it and look for another good to give us a feeling of complete satisfaction. But that also follows the same rule. There is no peace.

In the midst of this chaos, the truth is that complete bliss is possible to attain only through this life. Thus, unknowingly at the subconscious level, there is a constant struggle to seek the state of satiety, though we look for it materialistically. The desire to attain bliss is genuine but the mechanisms we adopt to reach it can be faulty.

It is in this context that rationalisation and the role of conscience become important. The Buddha showed the path of withdrawal from indulgence in the material world and the perusal of the ultimate state through a disciplined life. The attainment of nirvana leaves a feeling of complete satisfaction and bliss. And interestingly, all this is possible only by accepting life. As Ramakrishna pointed out, what appears to be an illusion can actually manifest itself later as a part of truth. Thus, Ramakrishna's Vedanta is unique and unravels a realistic approach. First attain it, spending time in silence and isolation, later look at the material world and realise the oneness. A combination of detachment and persuasion unfolds the mystic presence.

Introspection in silence establishes a unique connection between the vast and the individual. Even while one is in the midst of the duties and responsibilities in the material world, a sweeping breeze blows over to touch the mind and takes it away to an unknown state of joy. It is as if you have mingled with ecstasy itself and your every part of existence bears the ultimate happiness. Tagore tried to define it as an embodiment of an unembodied existence in your whole presence. The Vaishnavite simplify it in terms of the music flowing from the flute of Krishn, engulfing the existence of Radha and imparting ethereal joy. For, he stays nowhere but in the company of his devotees.

To an ignorant person, of course, a liberated soul may appear to be wandering aimlessly. But within that wandering, he has actually achieved what cannot be explained in words. His joy is too enormous to be defined materialistically.

The unique aspect of spiritualism is that it takes the individual to such heights that all desires get washed away with the glow of composedness that one is able to acquire. The Buddha suggested that we make repeated attempts to attain nirvana. Using an altered expression, Ramakrishna said that he would like to enjoy the enormity in different forms and in different ways. Thus, one can completely empty oneself forever. Once the lamp is lit in this world, its radiance will be evident in the path of eternity.

The writer is professor of economics at the Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi

