Freedom from likes and dislikes

BE CONCERNED ABOUT BREAKING THE SHACKLES THAT ARE HOLDING YOU DOWN

YOU are always thinking “What I like and what I dislike... it is my freedom.” It is not so.

The beginning of bondage is in liking and disliking. You like something, you dislike something — that is what is limiting you from experiencing life just the way it is. While operating on the physical realm itself, even with your work or family, likes and dislikes make you do stupid things. If you don’t like somebody, even if this person is doing something wonderful, you will not see it. If you like somebody, even if they are doing terrible things, you cannot see it anymore.

If you like somebody, you will exaggerate, if you dislike somebody, you will exaggerate. Exaggeration means, either unconsciously or intentionally, you are deviating from truth. Deviating from the truth means you are working against yourself. One who works against himself does not need an enemy. This is called self-help. That is the beauty of your life.

- you are completely self-reliant. So, your likes and dislikes, are they your limitations or are they your freedom? You can do only what you like — is that freedom or is it bondage? I can do anything that is needed for the situation. That is freedom, isn’t it?

If you settle into any limitation, this life will not allow you to be there. It wants to break the limitation and go beyond. I know a lot of people are happy just eating dosa, drinking coffee and sitting half asleep; that is their idea of happiness. I am not against it. It is just that no being will ever be satisfied with anything limited. After some time, this dosa becomes a cancer in them. Not necessarily a physical cancer, but it bothers and eats them up — just the comfort of life is eating people up.

Affluent people are suffering much more than poor people because the plain comfort of life is eating them up: everybody has this longing to break the limitations and become free. Whatever way they know, they are trying to become free in that way.

Somebody thinks if he gets ten million dollars, he will be free, so he is working towards that. Somebody thinks if he gives away all his money, he is going to become free, so he is doing that. Somebody thinks if they create a proper family structure, they will become free; somebody else thinks if they go away from that, they will become free. There are different ideas of freedom but somewhere, either knowingly or unknowingly, everybody is longing to become free from what is binding them. What you want to become free from depends on what is binding you, but fundamentally, everybody wants to become free.

Recently somebody said to me, “For a long time I was free as a bird, but now I am caught up in so many things.” Now your idea of freedom is a bird. Why? Because you are stuck to the ground, but the bird can fly. But look at the bird’s face and see, is he jumping with joy and freedom? No. He is going about his business flying as you go about your business walking. He is up there looking down at the insects and worms here. If you think the bird is experiencing great freedom, then all the commercial pilots must be totally free, all the time flying. That is not how it works.

Right now, freedom or liberation is something that you do not know. Never think of anything which is not in your experience. If you think about something which is not a living experience for you, the only thing that you have is imagination. Your imagination is always fueled by your past experience of life. You cannot imagine something 100 percent new. You can take something that you already know and exaggerate it in so many ways. All human imagination is either modification or distortion of the realities that are existing right now.

So do not think of anything which is not in your experience. If you want to fly, you do not think about the sky. Your business is how to cut the ropes which are binding you down. If you want freedom, do not hallucinate about freedom.

How to break the shackles that are holding you down should be your concern. If you sit here shackled and keep dreaming about freedom — it is not going to happen. You break the shackles; that is one level of freedom. Perhaps you will realise the next level of shackles, then we will see. Till then, the present shackles which hold you are the reality. Let us break that.

- Ranked among the 50 most influential people in India, Sadhguru is a yogi, mystic, visionary and bestselling author. Sadhguru has been conferred the "Padma Vibhushan", India's highest annual civilian award, by the government of India in 2017, for exceptional and distinguished service.