



ONCE YOU'RE ABOVE YOUR OWN MIND, YOUR SUFFERINGS END AND YOU BECOME FREE.... WHEN YOU ARE AWARE OF YOUR SINS, YOU ARE FORGIVEN AND YOU BECOME LIBERATED

Finding freedom in forgiveness

By Sadhguru



Every religion, when it started, started out as a spiritual possibility. Slowly as the number of people increased and generations of people passed on, it became more and more organised and more and more distorted. What used to be a spiritual process just became a set of codes and modes to follow. A set of beliefs to

believe in and slowly lost all its original significance. This is bound to happen to anything in the world. To a large extent, today most of the world religions are run on either guilt or fear or greed. Look at all the prayers on the planet. Dear God, give me this, give me that—which is greed; save me, protect me—which is fear; forgive me—which is guilt. We are

constantly nurturing these things. Are they wonderful emotions? Most unpleasant, isn't it? Guilt, fear and greed, all of them are most unpleasant within you. Anything that comes out of it cannot be good. Isn't it?

Religions & forgiveness

If you take the major religions of the world—Hinduism, Christianity, Islam and whatever and make a list of all the things that they label as sin, you will see, just to be alive is a sin. Everything—to breathe and to exist is a sin. Now, it has been distorted like this because this is the only way to keep you going to these religious places. This is the only way to keep the organised stuff going all the time. You must be afraid, then you would go; or if you're greedy, you'll think if you go there you'll get something, so you go. Or if you're feeling guilty about the very life process that you're living, you would go. So you have to go for forgiveness.

When you're happy, when you love, when you're generous, when you're doing things, your life is beautiful. But unfortunately, today every aspect of your life has become unpleasant even in terms of normal living.

A man was walking on the beach one day. A salesperson approached him and said, "sir, toothbrush for Rs 500. The man said, "What! A toothbrush for Rs 500? That's robbery." The salesman looked genuinely hurt. Then he put his hand into his bag, pulled out a packet and said, "sir, homemade

cookies, just for Rs 5." The man said, "okay, that's more like it." He paid Rs 5 and bought the cookies. Then he put it into his mouth and said, "Yuck! That tastes like mud." The salesperson said, "It is. How about a toothbrush, sir?"

You make the very process of living wrong, then you get forgiveness, you get deliverance, you go to heaven and what not. This is just a ploy, a simple way of controlling large masses of people.

The question of forgiveness

When there is no right or wrong; no good or bad; no sin or virtue—where is the question of forgiveness? Say for example, whatever a terrorist does, is it good or bad? You may say bad. In the same situation, who is good and who is bad depends on which side of the border you're on. Is India good or is Pakistan good? You're on this side of the border, so obviously Indians are good; Pakistanis are evils. If you were on the other side of the border, you would be arguing for the other side. It all depends on what you're identified with. Accordingly, you have your 'goods' and 'bads'. You cannot think beyond that. Your thinking itself is limited to your identifications. The moment you identify something as right or wrong; good or bad, you're just dividing the world. Once you divide it, where is the question of inclusion? Where is the question of yoga? Where is the question of freedom?

Do you know the story of Mary Magdalene? Mary Magdalene was a prostitute. She wants to go and see Jesus. But a prostitute going and seeing Jesus, who is

supposed to be religious or spiritual, was out of question. It was considered a sin and was punished by being stoned to death. They were always kept outside the society. Even today it's the same situation. Yet, Mary wanted to see Jesus. She finds a time when there was not too many people and approached him. She held him by his clothes because she didn't dare touch him. She said, "People say that you forgive everybody. Whatever your religion is, is my business a sin? Can you forgive me also?" Jesus did not ask her to do penance for 12 years to get forgiveness, or any such thing. He did not even say I will forgive you. He said "you're already forgiven" because the moment you become truly aware of your sins, you are forgiven. Once you create awareness, there is a separation between you and everything that was past. Only when you're not aware, past is a reality. Once you're aware it is no more a reality; it gets evaporated.

So when you meditate, when



your past activity. This is freedom. Unless you're free from the modifications from your own mind there is no such thing as freedom. Yoga is described as '*chitha vruddhi nirodha*', which means if you become free from the modifications of your own mind, you're liberated.

You must have heard the word 'Buddha'. You may immediately understand as Gautama Buddha. But, there are thousands of Buddhas. In 'Buddha' *bu* means *buddhi* or the intellect *dha* means

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there is a distinction between you and your thought process, the only thing that connects you with the past is the thought process.

Ways of freedom

Once there is a separation between you and your thought process, there is a clear space between you and everything that is your *karma*,

dhada—one who is above. One who is above his own intellect is a Buddha. Once you're above your intellect, which is the manufacturing unit for all the sufferings in human life, you become a 'Buddha'. Once you're above your own mind, your sufferings end and you become free. ▲