

THE BHAVANA OF THE DAWN

Reality is far, far bigger than you. The manifestation of nature, life itself, perception, activity, encounter, engagement, demonstrates a power utterly beyond you, beyond any attempt you can make to control it. You are not in control of it and it is a mistake to believe otherwise or to fight against this. There is also no need to fight against it. Acceptance, devotion and surrender means being O.K. with what is and seeing the beauty in it whilst all forces of ambition, productivity and evolution towards the good take care of themselves.

I do not want to change what I am, for what I am is whole and stunning but I must change the beliefs I have become for it is they that are old and limiting. This belief change is not an act of intellect or logic. Intelligence and discrimination are in it but it is not realised in thinking. In fact, an approach wholly dependent on thinking is bound to lead to more thinking, more concepts and endless doubts. Alongside intelligent observation there must be bhavana. This is not easy to describe, it is in the realm of feeling, appreciation and acceptance; it is the flow of love, a presence, or more directly, the sensing of being, the insight of being.

Inevitably, practice starts as a line of thought, as a mental process. It may even seem limited or dry, ineffective perhaps. All kinds of resistances and frustrations may emerge as characteristics of conditioning assert themselves. This must be endured and practice must persist through it. Progressively and with patient alertness, the surfaces of the mind are left behind and a deeper quiet is attained. Bhavana emerges at this time. It can be compared to the qualities of the dawn rising. This is a patient thing, a subtle thing; it does not happen all at once and because of its slowness it is not dramatic. Despite occasional examples of incident and rare exceptions, this is the way of it for everybody.

Even though it is not dramatic, it is immensely significant. Consider what the dawn does. It utterly alters the whole landscape, it reveals, it warms, it lights, it nourishes, it shines, it enables infinite potential, it overwhelms the night, gentle fingers proceeding powerful, all-encompassing rays. As the physical dawn is the output and presence of the sun, so the spiritual dawn is the output and presence of the heart. They are both spontaneous and eternal powers, completely beyond the small assertions of the separate personality and the sense of will that shapes but only seems to direct the life of men.

As bhavana arises and thought diminishes, a blended condition emerges, a sensing awareness. Not a feeling, not a thought; although both these perceptions are within it, instead, we come to know it as the space of being, it reveals itself as that. The remaining categories of mental habits that have directed thought for so long may persist but they are learning to diminish in the acceptance, acknowledgement and willingness to submit to the spontaneous space of being.

It is this transition which defines the re-orientation of I; from that set of limitations which declared themselves as I (the I thought), to the space of being which shines as I (the I am). From this part the only progression is "From where has this I arisen"?

and that progression is not, in fact, cannot be directed by will, for will must recede into it and be overwhelmed by it. This is what surrender means, this is what devotion means; absorption into the spring of being.

This is what practice is, a rearrangement of understanding, perception, habits and tendencies, so that confusion is removed and clarity is no longer resisted. Faculties remain, productivity remains, senses, perception and memory remain, creativity and the ability to operate as a human being remain as nature intends. Freedom and enjoyment prevail in the spontaneous love of the moment in all its variety and play.

All the abilities, sparkling, dancing and tenderly responding, both from and in a vast yet intimate space, untouched by anything, secure and self-sustaining, whole and complete, in which the moment is effortlessly displayed. This space is not distant, it is neither a vision nor a void, it is the all, the display of the moment, the love and freedom of being the heart. Satchitananda.

Oh, a beauty
Oh, a wonder
Progress the Atma Vichara
Realise the Self