

## **Discourses on The Philosophy of Sri Ramchandra's Rajayoga - Lecture -8**

The problem that is developed by Shri Ram Chandraji in the next chapter on the Knowledge is very interesting and, in some respects, very thought provoking. Firstly, all of us hold that knowledge is the goal of Life and secondly, that Knowledge is the only means by which we can cross over our bondages and miseries. It is so obvious a fact that we do not want to question the postulate.

"Jnanath Eva Kaivalyam" - it is only by knowledge that we attain Liberation. This is the sentence constantly heard from the great scholars and perhaps even by saints. Some people of course, have stated that:

"Bhaktya tvananyaya sakhyam aham evam vidho"  
Arjuna

"Jnatum drastum ca tatvena pravestum ca parantapa:"

"Except by Bhakti or Devotion undertaken by you as instructed, that is, according to the principles of Yoga, you will not be able to see and enter into Me" says Sri Krishna.

We find ourselves in great difficulties in the modern world between the people who say that Jnana is very important and the only means, and the others who say

that Devotion is very important and the only means.

Now, Shri Ram Chandraji enters into another problem - the problem of knowledge and ignorance. We all think that we start with ignorance because we are all ignorant. And we want knowledge to remove the ignorance, so that we may be able to act properly, live sensibly and rationally. Ignorance, therefore, is something to be got rid of and knowledge is the way by which we remove this ignorance. Now, these two terms have been used in Upanishads as "Avidya" and "Vidya". Avidya is ignorance and Vidya is knowledge. No doubt, the Upanishad writers or commentators had a different concept of the word Avidya from mere ignorance. I shall not dilate on that just at present, for it will take us off from the main point at issue. In any case we start with ignorance and, in fact ignorance is actually found in our activity, when we do not know how to act properly or adequately to a particular situation. Action done, which is uninformed by knowledge is ignorance. **A man is said to be ignorant not because he has not read. He might have read everything; yet he may remain ignorant because he does not know how to use knowledge for a particular situation.** Now, that is a kind of ignorance that we shall have to counter. Now, we call a man ignorant when he is not able to have proper knowledge to overcome a situation or meet the situation. So, mere knowledge without practice is meaningless and it cannot

apply itself to a situation. So both are, in one sense, ignorant. You can say knowledge is a kind of ignorance, just as ignorant action is a kind of ignorance. Now, we are struggling in modern world to get rid of what is called "learned ignorance". Most of us are learnedly ignorant. I do not think we are ignorantly learned. Now, our Master says, we start with the preliminary ignorance, it is true. And when we try to know the situation what exactly do we do? In order to know a situation we have to get out of the situation and inspect the situation. That is, knowledge involves a divorce or a separation from the object or situation in order to meet it or adequately respond to it and therefore it means, you develop a division between the object and yourself. And so, a knowledge of the situation is always an external study of the situation, not an internal one. So, your knowledge is only limited to a particular purpose, namely, to get food, get clothing, get the amenities of life etc. For this purpose, you get out of the situation in order to inspect it. Therefore, there is a division of the subject and object. And a knowledge is something external to the object which is to be known. Now, this is very limited. Your knowledge, in every case, is limited knowledge. It is a limited knowledge because it is not a knowledge of the thing as it is in itself, but as it is for you to meet a particular situation. All knowledge, therefore, is a limited knowledge. Therefore, we are in difficulties

when greater situations arise. As a matter of fact, in science, we can see that every Law is only true within limits. No law is absolutely working beyond particular limits. When they go beyond limits, you find that your laws do not apply. Now this is very important, remember, because knowledge is in fact, by its very nature, limited and finite. Laws are finite and also as we now find, they are probable but never certain. All empirical laws are probables, in greater or lesser amount, (it does not matter), because if it exceeds the limits, you are in error. That is basically wrong and you have to confess that is ignorance. So behind every knowledge, there is an ignorance and behind every ignorance perhaps there is a greater knowledge. Now this is the difficulty of epistemology or theory of knowledge in philosophy. And the greatest efforts of philosophers and scientists has been to limit or to find out the limits of our knowledge of every kind. This is further shown by our theories of reason which operate within limits. Now, for instance, we think in philosophy and everybody accepts that a thing cannot be both true and false. That is the principle of contradiction. If a thing is true, it cannot be false. If it is false it cannot be true. But the misfortune of our experience is that everything seems to be both true and false. Now how to express this in terms of our logic (Tarka)? So people said it is impossible and so skepticism is the only result. You must confess that you

will have no absolute knowledge and we can have only a little knowledge, knowledge mixed up with ignorance in different degrees.

And what is the distinction between a great pundit and an idiotic child? Nothing except the amount of ignorance that they have got. And, we must know it is better to be ignorant than to be wise, because we can excuse ourselves for our failures, but a wise man gets punished for his knowledge. Now, we have all these things in ordinary practice. But logically, when we find this proposition that is both falsehood and truth can coexist just as Avidya and Vidya can coexist it becomes impossible to explain. If we say so many people laugh at us and say "what is this type of knowledge?"

Here, coming to the real point which Shri Ram Chandraji makes, we hold that our little ignorance can be cleared with our little knowledge, but the vast ignorance that is pervading the whole Universe cannot be cleared with our reason or with our actions. You cannot clear the vast infinity of ignorance. Let us confess that there is vast ignorance which is the Reality. Almost you are seeing that it is a kind of skepticism. You can never have a knowledge of all with the instruments which you now have. This knowledge is something which comes out of the object in order to survey the object. It is, to use the little world, "experience". Ex means 'outside'. It is an experience which is outside, or outer experience. Now

how to go beyond it? The reality of the great ignorance is beyond this ignorance and this knowledge. Master calls it Complete Ignorance. Of course, he says 'I do not find any other word for it'. And we do not have any word in any language in any dictionary. Why not I use the word complete ignorance? I know this is a 'shocking phrase' to us who are thinkers or wedded to knowledge. But a real Jnani is one who would go beyond our little ignorances and little knowledges - finite ignorances and finite knowledges. You do not take into consideration the whole of Reality. Reality is beyond your perception and imperception or reasoning. Now, what is it by which you can know? It can be known only through 'intuition' or vision. Therefore, we go beyond the ordinary Pramanas or instruments of knowledge and the means of knowledge or ignorance whichever you please, and rise to the level of direct vision of Reality and knowing Reality for its own sake, by merging yourself with Reality and not getting out of It to inspect It. In order to know you thoroughly, I must enter into you. By standing outside, I shall certainly find your height, your weight, this and that. Perhaps I may take an anatomic view. But then I may not know you. Even if you survey the whole of the Universe, as you are now trying to do astronomically and otherwise, yet, you will not know what the Universe is. It is an external view of Reality and therefore a false one. Is it completely false? I do not

say so. It is false. It is certainly not the reverse. Now, we have to see whether we can intuit, know the Reality within as part and parcel of it. Of course that is what we are always. For the sake of knowledge we came out of it as fish thrown out of water. You see fishes just jumping out of water and falling back. So we are all coming out of the Being, looking at it and falling into it. Therefore, we are coming out of it in order to get back.

Which is the real life and which is the real death? Death is flying out of Reality and getting back to the Reality is life. We got out of the Being to see the Being and when we merge ourselves in God, we will know Him. Now we are having a very imperfect, very personal, of course useful in a little sense, of the term 'experience'. So, if you want to know Reality, you will have to merge into that Reality which is the Great Ignorance.

Now that means, you will have to cease to be both a subject and object and also vanish. You may all say it is meaningless. But there is no other way or knowing Reality except merging yourself in it, to live in it and be of it and never think of 'knowing it'. Why? All knowledge is a pragmatic reaction or preparation for action in a premature way. Now, this is a very important point undoubtedly made in very theoretical way by some thinkers. But we have never experienced this aspect. We are actually seeing that the Ultimate is beyond both vidya and avidya, beyond usual terms of subject and

object and knowledge. And it can only be known by your merging yourself in it, becoming one with it. By standing out of it, you may see a bit here and a bit there but it is externality. Now, to get back to this original condition of Reality is undoubtedly a kind of leaving all our philosophical attempts or scientific attempts to know Reality even in the best objective point of view. So you have to go beyond science and beyond philosophy. And this experience is available and possible. That is why our people spoke about vision or Darshan of knowing God. Firstly to know and be merging yourself in that vastness with a feeling that you may be nonexistent. What will happen to the drop of water that falls into the ocean back again? The drop may be complaining that it will be lost once and for all just as I find myself complaining if I am in the mass of human beings, I will be lost in them. So, even if I colour myself with a special kind of dress, black or white or red, it does not matter. I will be lost. Even the colours would be washed out in the sea of beings. So also when we merge into the ocean of beings we will be lost. Are you prepared for that? Our knowledge consists in holding on to this ego, identity and so externally individuality develops. When we lose our individuality and merge ourselves in that vast ocean, we get the real intuition of Reality. It is not always knowledge. What should it be called? Master calls it Complete Ignorance.

I wish I could devise another word. But then, every word

I thought in the matter has already been given a bad name, a bad meaning. I think no word is used for realization of Complete Ignorance. It seems to me, after all, it is very nice to call it by very bad name, because that is what makes the people shudder at as Master puts it.

The Upanishads say "Asatho Ma Sadgamaya". It is a very big statement. We go from unreality to Reality. And "Thama So Ma Jyotirgamaya" - we go from darkness to light. Now, we are not going towards light. Light is not our goal. We go beyond both darkness and light.

"Na Thatra Suryo Bhati

Na Sasanko

Na Cha Pavakah".

There the Sun does not shine nor Moon illumines nor the fire burns. In other words, it is neither hot nor cold. Now, if such is the condition, to which you go how can you say that you are going towards Jyoti? Either the word Jyoti has been improperly translated as light or that it emerged when you merge in God. So the word Jyoti is difficult for translation or explanation of the commentators. It is something far beyond darkness and light, something which merges when you enter into the Divine that is the goal. Now, as our Master says, Light is not our goal. Light is equated with Vidya. Darkness is Avidya. Our goal is not within these two terms or the

two experiences. Both of them are experiences in the language in which we use it. We must enter into that and merge in the Divine. Any Which way you cannot say what exactly that theory is. Now, Master says that it is a condition of infant and the infant is ignorant and looks out for knowledge. But is it so? Now, I believe we have gone to a greater infancy. We are in the condition of beyond thought and beyond knowledge. At that condition, what is it to see, to act or to live? You eat as if without thought. You live as if you do not live. Now that is a child and that is the condition of something that is transcending.

"Not until you become a child shall you enter into the Kingdom of Heaven" said Jesus. I would only add "Not until you enter into the Kingdom of God will you become a child".