
Gems From the Garland of Letters
[Letters of Bhagwan Kishori Mohan]
Discussion on the earth-bound spirit
(8)

*Pranavashram, Kashidham,
22nd Magha, 1345 (Bengali)*

Dear Sarala – my utmost grace on you,

Here is my response to your query regarding non-liberated earth-bound spirits.

Those persons whose mental constitution is marked by an irresistible craving towards material / worldly temptations and absence of a spiritual bend, continue to remain attached to this earth within the realms of attraction towards family and property even after death, and thus, suffer. It is indefinite how long such a person continues to remain shackled within the grip of this bondage. Some of them may get liberated from this state through *pinda daan* (performance of a specific set of last rites) at *Gaya* (a place in Bihar, India). However, even this exercise fails to release individuals whose deeds are governed completely by the mirage of worldly passions. Joys and sorrows are experienced by the limited individual (*Jiva*) as the fruits of his own committed actions. As committed actions have various classifications, so are the discriminations among the experiences of different joys and sorrows. After acceptance of the fruits of committed actions the spirit is either reborn, or transcends to another heavenly dimension (*Loka*). The results of past actions must be accepted and may not be circumvented by any means. There are discriminations within the experienced suffering even when the spirit is not attached to his mortal coil.

The source of the problem lies in the worldly desire or attraction towards particular objects or individuals. This will not happen if the mind is completely renounced from the

external world, *samsara*. All attractions towards the external world and its objects should therefore be renounced.

Ever Yours,
Sri Kishori Mohan

Importance of the Path of Devotion in Kaliyuga
(9)

Pranavashram, Kashidham,
1st Falgun, 1342 (Bengali)

Dear Nagendrabala – my utmost grace on you,

I am prescribing you here a unique path for the attainment of liberation. This distinctive methodology is even capable of kindling the highest form of knowledge, thus delivering liberation. After its discussion on *Yoga, Patanjali Darshan* (the philosophy of sage Patanjali) talks about *Ishwar Pranidhanadhyaya*. Meaning: The path of absolute love-lit surrender at the feet of Divinity ushers in the ultimate liberation through the awakening of knowledge and all the spiritual wealth and metaphysical powers that may be acquired by the yogis may also be obtained through *Bhakti-yoga*, the path of unwavering devotion. This *darshan* further elaborates thus, *the spiritual states which are attained through meditative dissolution by a yogi may be attained through unwavering surrender of the Bhakta (Devotee)*.

Ashtanga yoga is recognized as the path of self-will (*Purushakar*). Establishing oneself on penance and worldly dispassion, the eight-fold path of *yoga* comprising of *Yam, Niyam, Asan, Pranayam, Pratyahar, Dhyana, Dharana* and *Samadhi*, must be practiced. Out of these, the first five relatively superficial components must be practiced till the state of the mind continues to fluctuate through flickers of thought waves. After the mind is steadied into stillness, the three inner components should be practiced. First, the principle of the essential self (*Atma-tattwa*) must be realized through meditation and dissolution on the inanimate principle (*Jara-tattwa*). Although, praying to God forms a component even within the practice of the yogic-path followers, it is part of the superficial module *Niyam* of the eight-fold *Ashtanga yoga*. For the practitioners of the path of *Bhakti*, surrender and prayers dedicated to God forms the deepest inner core. For aspirants with profound devotion and faith towards God, prayers and surrender through *Bhakti-yoga* is the prescribed method. The dedicated pursuer (*Bhakta*) receives the shower of grace from the Almighty through his devotion and prayers. God's supreme grace transcends them even through the profoundest inner stages such as *Dhyana* and *Samadhi* and delivers them the highest enlightenment. Finally, such a devotee attains liberation as knowledge blossoms within. The path of *yoga* is embedded with numerous obstacles. Nine types of obstacles have been mentioned in the *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali. These include Disease (*Vyadhi*), Dullness (*Stan*), Carelessness (*Pramad*), Doubt (*Samsay*), Laziness or Indolence (*Alasya*), Worldly-mindedness or Sensuality (*Avirati*), Delusion (*Bhranti Darshan*), False Assumption (*Alabdhy Bhumikaty*), Fickle Mindedness or Instability (*Anavastitya*). If a yogic practitioner is confronted with even one such hindrance, his progress ceases. Such hindrances however generally do not concern the practitioners of the path of *Bhakti*. Even if such an obstacle ever arises, it is easily controlled by God's grace.

...to be continued

—Her blessed child, **Sri Arnab Sarkar**