

DEATH: A PHASE IN LIFE ETERNAL

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EDITORIAL NOTE

In one of his songs, Saint Kabir sings words to the following effect: -

When a child is born,
The child cries
But the world around him doth rejoice.
O Kabir! Live your life thus
That when death comes to claim you
You may leave smiling
While the world around you weeps.

Death is a phenomenon that no human being born on earth can escape. Yet, our present way of life is such that when the end comes, we are ill-equipped to face death.

Even though we hear or see people dying daily, we continue to live our lives as if death is meant for others, not for us.

Almost all of us are afraid of death, and we try to push away from our mind the thought of our death, whenever it arises. Since we do not make the necessary effort to prepare our mind to face this one certainly in life, we also develop many misconceptions about death. For instance many of us feel that instantaneous death is preferable to slow death; or that death is the end of all life.

In this Discourse, delivered through Revered Dadaji, Dr. Dinshah K. Mehta, on March 10, 1974, it is explained that death is a phase in the eternal life of the soul. It is explained how the fear of death can be overcome to a great extent by living life in the right way. Many other misconceptions regarding death are also clarified in this Discourse.

We hope that all our readers will find this Discourse of great help in their personal lives.

—Sundri Vaswani

Death: An End of Life

Death, as known to men, is an end of life. Life, as known to men, is nothing but an existence in Life Eternal. It is a phase, a passing phase, in Life Eternal. It is not possible for any human mind even to understand Life Eternal unless that human mind dies while the human body of the person concerned is still alive.

Therefore, from the spiritual point of view, death is but a phase in Life Eternal. As one grows beyond the matter-bound state of consciousness and transcends it unto spiritual consciousness, death is not there at all. It is eternal life without death.

There is the Spiritual Principle that whatever is in the life spiritual, which is linked with Life Eternal, alone reflects in material life. So, there must be some basis of death in Life Eternal. Otherwise, the death, known to man as an end of life, would not be possible. There are steps for every human mind to transcend unto this foundation in the spiritual life, leading to Life Eternal.

Blocks in the Ascent of Human Consciousness

For transcending unto Life Eternal through the spiritual way of life, if one tries to properly understand before experiencing it, one will find that there are many blocks in the ascent of the human consciousness unto the goal. Each of these blocks at the human levels and planes of consciousness is an aspect reflected from the spiritual phenomena. Each of these aspects can become an opening for death to manifest.

Birth: A Beginning of Death

Take the case of a person born of a mother and a father. The very birth is the beginning of death. Whatever is born must die from the human point of view. Whatever is born is nothing but a vehicle. This material vehicle, which is the human body and mind, is to carry the eternal soul towards the goal from where that eternal spiritual part of the human being, called the soul or *atma*, has fallen. So the material part which is the vehicle, has to carry the soul unto the pilgrimage leading towards the goal that is the Source, and this material vehicle has the foundation of that which is called death in its very own basis at the material level. There is no material creation in the whole cosmos, leave apart on this earth, which has ever been eternally the same. Every material creation has gone on changing from one state unto another.

That change also has many phases, beginning with and nearer that which is called the birth of that matter, whether it be human matter or other than human matter. The phase nearer the birth is full of zest, energy; exuberance. As it spends itself, after a certain state, the same matter declines and ultimately, it becomes an unfit vehicle for the soul, to carry it any further.

Even during the phase when that manifestation is full of energy and zest, it gets arrested either because of ignorance about how to remove the arresting block or, even when one knows how to remove the arresting block, it can be the end. In the physical sense, material sense, the end must happen.

Is a Child's Mind Clean?

Many human minds think that when a child is born, it comes with a clean mind, without any experiences of any nature. The fact is that, in the human sense, the mind of the child is already written on, according to whatever is inherited from the parents and the fore parents. Not only that, but the eternal part of the child, the soul, the *atma*, also has impresses on it and in it of many, many past lives.

No child born of a human parent has a clean unwritten mind. This is so even in case of those who are descending souls, who descend from the Highest of the High Creator, or even the Creator Principle incarnating in the matter that becomes man. If the matter that becomes man is born of human parents, the mind of the child inherits from the parents and the fore parents whatever is transferred in that body and mind from and through the parents.

That is why even though a High Soul that incarnates has nothing material impressed upon it to bind it to the earth plane, this human aspect - physical and mental tendencies - inherited from parents and fore parents become the obstacle for that Highest of the High Soul to manifest through the human body and mind in which it incarnates.

Therefore, in the average human way of life, one has to accept as a phenomenon, that even if the soul is really high, as one grows in physical body, one will come across various obstacles within oneself - at least those inherited from the parents and fore parents.

But, in most cases, the soul is like a spark that has fallen away from the Highest of the High Source. To that extent, it has to empty not only the tendencies the human body and mind inherits from and through the parents, but the soul also has the past and the past, past impresses upon it. They need to be removed in the right way. When these impresses are not removed in the right way, these blocks can end the life not only of an average being, but even of a high descending soul. They can create complications not only in this life but also in the lives to come.

Fear of Death

Most human beings inherit tendencies and also have on their soul and in their soul the impresses of their past and past, past lives, but do not know how to remove them in the right way. The right way is the spiritually right way. Attempting to empty out these tendencies and impresses in a psychological or physical way is not the right way. This is because frequently complications arise within the psychology of the person concerned and through the psychology, complications manifest on the body and in the body. These complications lead to disease and even to death.

This phenomenon of death, though a passing phase in Life Eternal, is fearful to most. Almost every human being is afraid of death, except those who have died when alive. Even they, because they too have to remain attached to the immediate surroundings in one form or another, when they approach the death stage, they feel apprehensive of the approaching death until the soul overcomes their apprehension in the right way through right conditions getting created in the surroundings. The soul then takes over the charge of that human personality.

Till then, even a liberated soul is afraid of death. It may be only momentary, but it is bound to be. Only those souls who have not only been liberated but are also descending souls and have spiritualized not only their mind but also their bodies may not at all be afraid of death and “maybe” is the appropriate word. This is because even the spiritualized mind and body has to remain in matter and when it remains in matter, then, in one way or another it becomes attached, even to some extent, to what are called duties and responsibilities that have to be done. So, thinking about those duties and responsibilities, and the attachment linked with the duties and responsibilities, the mind is not able to turn towards the Source that manifests to fulfill the duties and responsibilities. So, momentarily at least, even the Highest of the High Souls has the consciousness of a slight tinge of fear when death approaches.

First Counter-Thoughts to Fear

It is much more so for the average mind, which, though knowing that everyone who is born has to die, is not able to overcome that fear of death. In most cases when people claim that they are not afraid, that claim is a result of counter-thoughts to death of a certain type and under certain conditions, if not against all types of death and all conditions of death.

Take the case of one who lives a way of life where death has to be faced every day, as in case of battlefields where fighting forces have to face death. So, they counteract the fear of death on the battlefield by counter-thoughts to those conditions, and, living in the counter-thoughts, they manifest the so-called bravery, courage, or fearlessness. But these very people when they have to die under other conditions, the process of death will create fears in them.

There is no human being who can say with certainty that he is not afraid of death, whether momentarily or all the time till death takes over.

Human Ego is an Overcoat On Nucleus of Fear

We have mentioned in previous Discourses on other subjects that the very human nature, the very human personality which includes human nature, is an accumulation over the nucleus of nothing else but fear, fear and fear. **(Refer Living Truth, Vol. 1, Nos. 11-13 dated July 15, 1966 pp. 7-8, Refer also The Discourse, Vol. 2 Nos. 5-6 dated March 31, 1973 entitled “Time, Tact, Experience and Grace of God”, pp. 12-18)* The fear of the unknown and, more so, the fear of the unknowable.

In order to counteract that fear in various aspects, the human mind goes on accumulating thoughtforms of one’s own making and manifests these thoughtforms in words and deeds. These thoughtforms of one’s own making give the human mind satisfaction as long as one lives in them. But, as soon as the mind is taken to the nucleus, which is fear, the fear begins to assert. It asserts under various aspects of human existence but the worst aspect is that aspect when human body and mind is about to die.

Fear of Death: The Biggest Human Fear

The fear of death is the biggest fear that every human being has but this is not because *of* the phenomenon of death. It is because the very nucleus of existence of the human body and mind is fear, fear and fear alone. Fear gets attached at one time to one condition and at another time to another condition in which one lives.

When the human finite self, the ego-self, finds itself in conditions which are fearsome, whether it be death or otherwise, it feels disturbed. It need not be death. It can be some other unpleasant condition that may arise in their life. However, all these other conditions that create fear in the lives of human beings are lesser than the intensity of fear when death approaches, slowly, gradually, step by step; not instantaneously, as when one gets killed in an accident or shock.

Instantaneous Death vs. Slow Death

When one dies in an accident or a shock, the human mind does not know what has happened. This is because the consciousness that persists after the bodily death has the impress on it and that impress haunts the soul for quite some time with the result that, that soul does not know whether it is still in the body or it is outside the body. It takes some time for the soul to get adjusted.

But in case of those who die slowly, by inches, as one may say in the human way of speaking, the fear goes on increasing. But if right conditions are created in the surroundings, particularly spiritual conditions then a stage comes when the consciousness of fear of death is countered by those surroundings. Thereby, the mind is gradually taken over by the conditions created in the surroundings and the death becomes easier. If it is not possible to create spiritual conditions in the surroundings when death approaches, then some so-called religious conditions or a way leading to the spiritual conditions can also help counter the fear of death.

Slow Dying in the Right Way Cleanses the Soul

When one dies slowly, step by step, then at that time, during every moment of approaching death the consciousness becomes so acute, vibrating at such a high level of vibrations that past thoughtforms, causations, or *karmas* as they are called, which have taken years for one to overcome, can go away in a fraction of a moment.

Slowly dying in the right way cleanses the soul quicker and also more thoroughly than instantaneous death. When one knows how to die in the right way, slowly, step by step, then the soul is cleaner after death.

Those who think that it is better to die instantaneously rather than slowly, do so in their ignorance. This is because they think that they will not feel any pain, or suffering other than pain. It is only conceptual and is not a good death. Instantaneous or immediate death is bad for the soul definitely. Moreover to die with a physical or psychological shock is it as easy as one may think and from spiritual point of view, it is a bad death.

Prepare for Death While Alive ●●●

Therefore, first of all, it is good for people to see that when this human body and mind is alive, they prepare themselves every day to be ready to die - not try to escape the thought of death. For preparing the mind, ways are shown by High Beings how to be prepared to die in the right way. For the purpose, the everyday mind of the person concerned must be taken inward.

●●● By Taking the Mind Inward

From the outward way of life or outward manifestations in life, which is existence, take it inward. Do not take the mind inward merely psychologically in the form of what is called introspection, but take it inward spiritually. Then, a stage comes when one transcends, step by step, that which obstructs the flow of the past causations through the veils of the past and the past, past *karmas*. Then, one comes nearer death whilst alive. And, when one comes nearer death and then manifests whatever arises through that death consciousness in the right way, the human mind becomes prepared to face death when it does arise.

But the average human mind has the tendency to run outward into various manifestations of one nature or another. These manifestations may be vocational, professional, or manifestations of an average conventional or even so-called religious way of life, the way of life claiming to be - though really not so - growing unto spiritual through so-called religions or it may be a way of life outside the religions, through spiritual concepts, but not reality. All these outward growth of thoughtforms takes one away from the death consciousness.

Two Usual Ways of Death

When the death arises, it usually happens in two principal ways. One is the natural way when this human body and mind has come to a stage when it has, after its peak, begun to decline. Then, that which is the eternal part in the human personality secedes from the matter that is the body and mind, and the death arises.

The other way is some form of immediate death through shocks or otherwise, psychological or physical or both. If one is not prepared for it, this type of death leaves such an impress on the soul, the eternal part, that it takes lives to overcome it.

The Goal is Liberation of the Soul

Quite often, in a spirit of bravado, human beings do not realize what death means from the spiritual point of view. Ultimately, nothing counts except the spiritual point of view. And in this human existence, there is only one spiritual point of view and that is, the liberation of the eternal part in everyone, that is the soul or *atma*, towards the Goal that is generally called God.

For that purpose, one has to do what is right. and also become conscious of death every day as a part of one's spiritual practice through internal Right Surrender, as we say, and by performing various deeds in the external way of life, but deeds that do not bind and that lead one to emptying the deeds of the past and the past, past lives. Then, a stage arises when the body and the mind, having been used as a vehicle for the soul to be liberated, serve the purpose to grow unto Life Eternal.

In that also, be prepared, even if for a short time, to face death as it arises, with not so-called bravery, but with Right Surrender, with humility and without any expression of the thought of so-called courage or bravado. Then, the soul becomes cleaner at least as it grows towards liberation, if not liberated, in one life-time.

This particular Discourse, though important, is only an introduction to death as a phenomenon of Life Eternal. It is possible that this can be a beginning of a series of Discourses to show what death is in the truest sense and how to be ready to face it when it comes. We shall take up such Discourses on death in future when the right time arises.

God Bless You.

After the Discourse, Cdr. Prabhu, who has retired from the Indian Navy, referred to his experience during the Indo-Pakistan war. He said that driving from his home to the naval dock, he felt that some accident would happen and he would die, but he felt no fear of death.

Revered Dadaji, Dr. Dinshah K. Mehta, replied:

There is no such question. There is not yet a human being born who is not afraid of death, but by counter-thoughts to the death, one is able to counteract the fear of death. Now, you have been in the Navy; many others are in the Air Force, Navy, or Military. They develop counter-thoughts to what they have to face on the battlefield and even in civil life in certain matters linked with conditions of the battlefield. But to say that they are fearless, it is all nonsense.

Under settled conditions, there is no fear. Nobody bothers. Suddenly, suppose there is a cry of a fire or an earthquake, at that time, everyone will feel the fear. Where does it come from? It was not the fire that brought the fear, nor the earthquake that brought the fear. It is inherent and it is only brought out. The fire-brigade people develop counter-thoughts and learn how to fight fire under various conditions. So, they may not feel that fear as others feel when the fire breaks out.

These are some of the relative aspects; to counter the phenomenon of fear by counter-thoughts that one creates for oneself and then says: "I am not afraid." It is all stupid bravado. It is nothing else but that.

Greatest fear is the fear of death. Those who grow towards the liberation of the soul, their fear of death lessens. Still, they feel it just before the body and the soul separate. Only that one will not feel fear who has become spiritualized, not only in the

consciousness but also the body. Such ones smoothly glide into Eternal Life. But, that is not easy. It is most difficult. In the whole cosmic or spiritual way of life, it is most difficult to spiritualize both the body and the mind.

Readers will kindly note that only those Scripts, Discourses and talks of Revered Dadaji, Dr. Dinshah K. Mehta, are authentic which are printed and/or published by the Society of Servants of God, because it has been observed that some people give out their subjective opinions in the name of Revered Dadaji, which are not always correct and are sometimes quite the opposite of what Revered Dadaji has said.