

A CONVERSATION

with

SWAMI KRISHNANANDA

The Divine Life Society
Sivananda Ashram, Rishikesh, India

Website: swami-krishnananda.org

(Dr. P.C. Rao, Judge on the International Tribunal of the Law of the Sea, Sri J.S Verma, Retired Chief Justice, Supreme Court of India, Chief Justice of Andhra Pradesh, and Swami Krishnananda are present.)

Dr. P.C. Rao: Yesterday the definition you gave of a judge.

Swamiji: Judge is an impersonal existence.

Dr. P.C. Rao: It appealed to us greatly. Perhaps you mentioned that because the three of us happen to be judges. (The Chief Justice of India, J.S. Verma (Retd.) was also sitting.)

Swamiji: The Chief Justice of India is all the national principles of justice compressed at a single point. It is the whole nation speaking, it is not Mr. So-and-so; there is no Mr. So-and-so in the Chief Justice. He is not a human being at all. It is the whole nation speaking. Now, I go beyond the nation—the justice of the Cosmos. What would be the proper thing in the light of the justice of the Universe? Instead of seeing with two eyes, one sees with millions of eyes; then there will be no partiality or even duality.

‘Impersonal’ means that one does not belong to any side, nobody is your friend and nobody is your enemy. The universe has no friends and enemies, because the so-called enemies are inside it only and the friends are also inside; so, to whom does it belong? It is like electricity—is electricity a friend of anybody or an enemy of anybody? It can cook your

food, heat your stove and move the railway train, but it can also destroy life. God is not merely creator Brahma and protector Vishnu but also destroyer Rudra. God can do anything. He creates this beautiful earth and maintains it in a gorgeous manner and destroys it also by flood, ravaging earthquake, tempest, high waves of the sea—thousands dying. Then, what is the work of God, what are his functions? We do not have to give any credit to Brahma who created the world, nor praise Vishnu for maintaining it, nor curse Rudra for destroying everything. If a case goes in favour of somebody, we cannot say that the Judge is a kind man because the person who won the case will think—“very kind Judge, very wonderful Judge”. Suppose the Judge passes a death sentence on someone—“horrible, horrible” will be the cry.

Now, what is the nature of this person who is giving acquittal to somebody and granting the wish of somebody and wanting to remove the life of somebody, also? What kind of person is he? Is he a good man or a bad man? He is not a man at all, the whole point is this; he is not a man. Is the sun a friendly being or an inimical one? Without the sun we cannot breathe, we cannot exist without the sun. But he can create sunstroke and kill someone, also. Now, why does the sun kill a man thus? The sun's existence itself is a protective function, but he never asks anyone to walk in the hot sun and get sunstroke. Whose mistake is it? You curse the sun because you had sunstroke. The Judge is a symbolic embodiment of law. There is a policeman who puts on one kind of dress, a Judge puts on another kind of dress, there is a Collector who puts on one kind of dress—but they are not human beings but functionaries varieties in law. We have an inveterate habit of looking at things from a personal point of view. The policeman is the embodiment of a function. He is a function only, he is not a man, you should not call him a man, it is an operative force working through a particular individuality because the force cannot work without some medium, just as without a wire, electricity cannot work. It

does not jump on our head directly, it wants a wire connection.

Swamiji: Is the country progressing?

Justice Verma: That is what I would like to ask you, Swamiji. What's ultimately the future. This is a great country.

Swamiji: You have seen as a judiciary, everybody, all kinds of people, come to you seeking advice and judgment. What kind of people are coming to you?

Justice Verma: Very few of the right persons. That is what is very distressing. So, ultimately, since I believe that this is a great nation, and ultimately everything right should happen with men like you still being there to guide people. But the degeneration is so fast that it is not clear what is in store for the country as a whole.

Swamiji: I don't think any trouble will come to the country; it has been existing since centuries, it will exist further, also. It has experienced travails of invasion right from the time of the Greek Alexander onwards; many invaders came here but they could not uproot the country and make it their own.

Justice Verma: Swamiji, personal aggression one can understand, but here the degeneration is from within. The falling of values, I think, in general, at every level and more so at the highest level—so-called highest level. That is what is more troubling.

Swamiji: The answer to this question you will find in a very interesting book written by Sri Aurobindo, *Foundations of Indian Culture*. Why India is continuing in spite of all these faults that you have pointed out, and why India is not succeeding as it ought to succeed in the comity of nations?

The reason for this, as he has pointed out, very wisely, is the dichotomy created by the human perception of values, between God and the world. No Hindu, no citizen of India can give an answer to the question: in what way is God connected to the world? It also means to say, in what way is an

individual connected to the Creator? Let any religious man answer this question. “God is very far away”, people will look up as if God is sitting in the skies.

People there are who say that they have renounced the world. What is this ‘leaving’? What is the meaning? If you have property, you can abandon it, but do you think the world is your property? What kind of feeling, unnecessarily, ‘I have renounced everything’. This is the kind of religion that we are practising. Because *duniya* is a *chhodne layak cheez hai*, we have no interest in it, let invaders come and spoil it. We shall reach God, Moksha. What does it matter who tramples over the earth?

Right from the Vedas onwards, throughout the history of India, there was not even one person who could vanquish the Muslim invaders, or encounter the British forces. How did they become so strong? How did India become so poor and so weak? Because the invaders had a real God, whereas the Hindus clung to an unreal God—unreal God, because God is somewhere, far away, But the British God is here, just now. Allah, the very word, binds all Muslims. And the British see their aim in their action. The Hindu’s aim is an otherworldly God-realisation, while action is in this world, and there’s no connection between God and the world of action. Christians succeed better than Hindus in their enterprises. Christian colleges and Christian hospitals show a better performance than Hindu colleges or hospitals, because the Hindus have their God above in heaven, and He is not in the hospital or the college—“Why should He come here to serve people? This is all no good, one day we have to leave this, so we let the patient die, it doesn’t matter. The world is unreal, *Maya*.” But there it is not like that. What they think and see with their eyes is the God for them. They are doing ‘real’ work in a ‘real’ world. We are doing what is unreal, because the world is not real. The ‘unreal’ God of the ‘unreal’ world cannot face the ‘real’ God of the ‘real’ world. Feelings have been instilled into the minds of the Hindus that the world is unreal. Who told them that the world is unreal? That also nobody knows! Some bogey is sitting inside and telling them ‘the world is

unreal'. So why should you take any interest in the events of the world?

The Hindu military system was not strong, because 'why do you want a military system?' We have our soul inside, it goes to God. This is why India is what it is. It has a *soul within* and a *God above, and the soul continues and is surviving. But it fails in the world.* Does it mean that in order to succeed in God we have to fail in the world? No; only a person who has conquered the world can reach God. A coward cannot reach God. People run away from the world saying that it is evil. This kind of philosophy will not work because you thereby cut off the connection between God and yourself and cut off the connection between God and the world, also.

Actually, today, the Hindus have no philosophy, and no religion. People cry "Hindu religion, Hindu religion", really it doesn't exist at all. It is a kind of chaos and a mess and a mass of superstition, ultimately. We might have heard people quarrelling—this caste, that caste, and go on blabbering; and afterwards somebody else comes and attacks. The third battle of Panipat took place and the Marathas joined together and were deliberating a day before. There were the Peshwa, Gaekwad, Holkar, and Bhonsle from Poona, Baroda, Indore and Gwalior. Inside they were quarrelling among themselves. And the next day Ahmed Shah Abdali made his attack, he was on the free field and they had to face him. There was internal schism "What do you think you are!" There was no unity among them even one day before the battle. The other side cried "Allah"—and everybody rose up into action. "Allah is in danger, oh!" But among Hindus, who is in danger? Nobody. And Ahmed Shah vanquished the Marathas, and the Maratha empire ceased to exist in its glory, the empire of Shivaji was split in different directions. Look at the unity of purpose and the system with which the disciplined army of the British and the Mohamedans could act like steel and fire, and no Rajah, prince or king of India could resist them. It was the British who achieved the impossible—integration of the whole country to a single unit of administration—India. Why did

not the Hindu kings join and work this miracle, and why had they to wait for the coming of the British?

Tipu Sultan had his own powerful army, but a few soldiers from the British side ended him, because the latter force charged forth with concentrated action while the other side was not so disciplined. Two people among us cannot be friends, whereas they have Allah, who brings them together, or there is the British empire as the aim. Whether it is a Middle East man or American man or any *mleccha* to the Hindus, they had all a unity of purpose.

You must read this book of Sri Aurobindo. His language also is so energising. Even from a literary point of view it is an entertainment. His writings are mighty. Mighty writings, indeed. He was a great brain. And his understanding of Hinduism is surprisingly wonderful. He got to the very root of it. Hindus are clinging to their soul and losing the world as if the soul is somewhere else and the world is outside!

What is forgotten is that the omnipresent consciousness which is the soul is also in the world. When you protect the soul you have to protect the world also. A great Saint and Sage is also a soldier, as Lord Krishna was. No Sannyasin can equal Lord Krishna in renunciation. No soldier can stand before him. No householder can equal him. No Yogi can compete with him. He is a true Hindu. He brought together all the forces of India and gave us 'Bharat'. The first great integrator of Indian forces was Krishna. Do you call him a householder? Do you call him a Sannyasin? Do you call him a warrior? What do you call him? The Almighty was working through Him. Is the Almighty a Sannyasin? Is God a householder? What do you call him? Such impersonal force incarnated itself through this personality of Krishna and won victory everywhere. His mere presence was a power, people would bow down to him everywhere. Beauty, grandeur, majesty, power, wisdom; everything was combined in Krishna. Can India produce one person like Krishna? Quarrelsome politicians there are; flimsy talks everywhere.

India is now in this condition—total dichotomy between God and man. There is nothing to cement the two together. One does not know which aim one is pursuing, which side. Are you to pursue your own self, or world, or God? Nobody knows—the whole structure collapses in utter ignorance. The entire thing is in shambles—this is Indian religion today. There is no education. The great Vedas and the Upanishads cried hoarse—the language of confidence. It is a surprise that such people lived in this country and today we are having shells of people. Why is it like that, such deterioration?

People say “Kali Yuga, Kali Yuga,” and all that—there is no use of talking these empty words. There is no use of saying anything. We require today collective action. India should stand together as one person, not as Tamil, Karnataka, Andhra and Punjab and so on. I should say Nehru made a mistake in creating linguistic States. Each one is now chauvinistic, each state has conflicting ideals. “My country, my, my, my, my,” people say. During the British regime there was no “my”, because there were Bombay Presidency, Madras Presidency, etc. There were no linguistic States. We require some power to make the country a single integrated force. The whole of India should stand up, not as Tamil Nadu standing, Karnataka standing, etc. No. “India is standing up as one power”—can anyone declare thus? Is there any person in India who can bring together the whole of India as a single force which can face the world?

Truth triumphs, and the truth is that God, world and individual are one Integrated Reality. There is no preference of the one to the other.

This is my little message. I do not know whether I am a warrior or a spiritual man or what kind of man I am. (*Laughter*)