

CHOICE LESS AWARENESS

K. Dinakaran

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Humanity is passing through a very difficult time. Fragmentation of minds and its results of war, ethnic cleansing, religious and communal conflicts, ideological differences all these divide man from man. Man made divisions like casteism, nationalism, regionalism, discrimination based on colour, race etc. are order of the day. Humanity is divided into various compartments of religions and nationality. In these context the teachings of Theosophy and J.Krishnamurti are more relevant than ever. Krishnaji never claimed that he is a Teacher or *Guru* but he identified himself as a passerby. The generation who were able to listen him personally are really blessed, because his words have deeper meaning than we find in the books or audio- video tapes. Krishnaji raises some pertinent questions . What can one do, as a human being, in a world that is torn a part , in a world where there is so much despair and sorrow? What value has individual change? How will it affect this whole mass of human existence ? Krishnaji says they are wrong questions, because one does not live and act rightly for the sake of somebody else, for the benefit of society. It is we ourselves that have to change, not society. Krishnaji was presenting Ancient Wisdom or Theosophy in a unique way. One may find his teachings more or less the same as the teachings of Lord Buddha, Krishna and Christ. But the terms he used to express his philosophy is quite new to the modern world. His statements like “ Truth is a Pathless Land”, “You are the World” , ‘conditioning of the mind ‘etc.. He pointed out the fallacy of clinging to a particular system or method aiming to achieve something. Krishnaji questioned the traditional approach to Meditation, Religion, Religious mind, cultivated virtues , Self-knowledge , Education, Charity, awareness and Love . But the core of his teachings are centred around understanding oneself in the light of wisdom. He used the term “*Choice less Awareness* “ to describe it. It is easy for one to understand the verbal meaning of this expression but not easy to follow it in daily life. Because we are conditioned by our own surroundings, cultural, social and political circumstances which molded us. But it is not an impossible task . The moment one becomes aware of one’s own limitation you are free from these clutches. Krishnaji’s mission during his life time was to ‘ set man absolutely, unconditionally free’ which was declared by him in his famous talk dissolving the *Order of the Star in the East*.

By Choiceless Awareness Krishnaji means to be aware without any choice, desire or memory .Which will enable us to see the extraordinary beauty of Nature. We should be aware of the world inside us and the world outside us. There is no difference between inner and outer world. On the other hand when one tries to concentrate, effort and control is

necessary and controller and the controlled will be always conflicting which will lead to division. According to him for beauty to come into being, the mind must be choicelessly aware of its own pettiness, there must be an awareness in which comparison has wholly ceased. Choiceless awareness means attention not cultivated. When observer is absent there is choiceless awareness. This condition is only present when the everlasting struggle of conditioning ends. Krishnamurti asks "Is it possible to observe, watch, listen if there is already a conclusion, if there is already a formula from which I am watching, a memory which dictates my watching, or a previous experience through which I watch? When there is already a conclusion, when already a judgment, when we have already an opinion about that which we are going to watch, it is based on memory, memory from which thought arise. J.K asks "Does a free mind choose? A mind that sees very clearly does not choose, there is only action. So when there is watching with thought, there is no watching at all. We must notice that these are very practical things we have to apply in our daily living .

Limitation of Thought

Human beings are violent because there is conflict in thinking, saying and acting. Krishnaji asked "Can you think clearly if you have a prejudice, particular belief- that is, if you think as a Hindu, a communist or a Christian? You can think very clearly only when your mind is not tethered to a belief as a monkey might be tethered to a stake." Our minds are caught up in the idea of achievement, climbing higher and higher, that is, in the idea of choosing between the essential and the non-essential. We try to fill our emptiness with action born of choice, like trying to fill a pot without any bottom." . He concludes 'Thinking cannot solve our problems'. He adds Thought has not created nature, the tiger, the wolf and the marvelous trees and flowers. But thought has created division between man and woman. Though biologically they are different. Society is what we have made of it. With our greed, with our ambitions, corruption competition and all the rest of it."

Self Knowledge

To J.K Life is relationship. He asks 'if you can look into the mirror of relationship exactly you look into the ordinary mirror, then there is no end to self-knowledge. It is like entering a fathomless ocean which has no shore. But most of us want to reach an end and to achieve something. He requests us to look at ourselves without condemning what we see, without comparing ourselves with somebody else, without wishing to be more beautiful or more virtuous; if we can just observe what we are and move with it, then we will find that it is possible to go infinitely far. There is no end to that journey and that is the mystery and beauty

of it. He adds “Without self-knowledge there is no release from confusion, without self-knowledge confusion is like a wave eternally catching you up. The moment you understand confusion you are free of it.”

Krishnaji’s statement “*Guru* destroys the disciples and disciples destroy the *Guru*” was a shocking one to many who believed in the ‘*Gurudom*’ and guidance on religious life. He was a vehement critique of religious hierarchies. He stressed the need of self-enquiry rather than clinging to someone or any philosophy to show the Path. In the modern world we can see many examples of this mutual destruction, which fully approves JK’s statement. The “Key” is with us but we search for it every where.

Theosophical Society also endorses the view of Krishnaji by giving complete “Freedom of Thought” to its members. The text of Resolutions passed by the General Council of Theosophical Society printed on every month on the inner page of the ‘Theosophist’ states “No Teacher, or writer, from H.P. Blavatsky onwards, has any authority to impose his or her teachings or opinions on members. Every member has equal right to follow any school of thought, but has no right to force the choice on any other.” The whole Theosophical literature is presented before us for consideration and examination. Everyone is free to accept it or reject it.

True Religion

What is Religion? H.P. Blavatsky in her essay “Is Theosophy a Religion?” says “A Religion in the true and only correct sense is a bond uniting men together—not a particular set of dogmas and beliefs. Now religion per se in its widest meaning is that which builds not only all men but also all beings and all things in the entire universe into one grand whole.” H.P.B.’s definition of Religion is not different from Krishnaji’s approach to religion.

God Concept

In Mahatma letters it is said “The God of the Theologians is simply an imaginary power—Our chief aim is to deliver humanity of this nightmare, to teach man virtue for its own sake and to walk in life relying on himself, instead of leaning on a theological crutch that for countless ages was the direct cause of nearly all human misery. Krishnaji in his simple statement said “God is confusion.”

For him there is no “right” leader—all leaders are wrong, what you have to do is to clear your own confusion. And confusion is set aside only when you understand yourself; with the beginning of self-knowledge, there comes clarity.

Krishnaji cites the example of a Painter and says “ You know, most of us want to acquire wisdom or truth through another, through some outside agency. No one else can make you an artist, only you yourself can do that. That is what I want to say” I can give you paint, brushes and canvas but you yourself have to become an artist, the painter. I cannot make you into one. Theosophy also proclaims the value of Self-knowledge rather than ready made answers to questions. Every Theosophist is only a student of Wisdom. In the Three Great Truths it is stated “ Each man is his own absolute lawgiver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself; the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment.

Meditation

The Choiceless awareness is the core theme of Krishnaji in every aspect of life, whether it is Meditation, Freedom, Inward Revolution etc. Because a mind caught in the web of thought is never free, it is just looking through a coloured glass which distorts the true vision. For K Meditation is a way of life, it is part of daily existence, and the fullness and beauty of life can be understood through meditation. Meditation of the heart is the understanding of daily problems and not an escape from it. He states “You cannot go very far if you don’t begin very near.” According to Krishnaji Meditation itself is timeless, it is not a way of arriving at a timeless state. It is, without a beginning and without an ending. He always reminds us to have sensitivity and if we have this extraordinary thing going in your life, then it is everything, then you become the teacher, the disciple, the neighbor, the beauty of the cloud, you are all that and that is love. Being sensitive means sensitive to everything around one to the plants, the animals, the trees, the skies, the waters of the river, the bird on the wing; and also the moods of the people around one, and to the stranger who passes by. This sensitivity brings about the quality of uncalculated, unselfish, response, which is true morality and conduct. If you don’t know the meaning and the beauty of Meditation you do not know anything in life. If your meditation is only a personal matter, a thing which you personally enjoy, then it is not meditation. Meditation implies a complete radical change of the mind and the heart. This is only possible when there is this extraordinary sense of inward silence, and that alone brings about the religious mind. That mind knows what is sacred. Krishnaji often asks “Have you ever paid any attention to the ringing of the temple bells? We rarely pay real attention to anything and J.K says it is important to find out what it means to pay attention. If our mind has space then in that space there is silence and from that silence everything else comes, for then you can listen, you can pay attention without resistance. That is why it is very important to have space in the mind. Then we will know what is meditation.

Be a Lamp unto yourself

Echoing the message of Lord Buddha Krishnaji says “If you are inwardly a light unto yourself, you will never follow anyone. You follow out of your confusion, and what you follow,

you follow out of your confusion, and what you follow must also be confused... therefore , first clear up your own confusion become a light unto yourself and then the problem will cease. In Theosophical literature also we can find the same message *Light on the Path* says “ For within you is the light of the world- the only light that can be shed upon the Path. If you are unable to perceive it within you, it is useless to look for it elsewhere.” We cannot achieve or attain it. Krishnaji always points out our desire to achieve a goal , position or result. But Truth or Light is beyond us as *Light on the Path* states “ It is beyond you , because when you reach it you have lost yourself. It is unattainable, because it for ever recedes. You will enter the light ,but you will never touch the Flame.”

Life is a challenge

Human beings throughout the history faced challenges from the groove of habit which is respond to the terms of acceptance . We always meet the new challenge with our old conditioned mind. Krishnaji says “ If each one of us could understand the problem of struggle and conflict then I think we would be able to live effortlessly, happily with a smile on our face.’ Ceaseless strife dissipates energy. The man who is joyous, really happy, is not caught up in effort. To be without effort does not mean that you are stagnant dull, stupid , on the contrary it is only the wise, the extraordinarily intelligent who are really free of effort of struggle.” Our envy greed, ambition, our competitiveness leading to ruthless efficiency- these are obviously the factors which cause us to struggle , whether in this world or in the world to come- so we don’t want to study psychological books to know why we struggle, like the boat which was moving with the wind, can the mind be without struggle. J.K points out if you Love there is no need for discipline. Love brings its own creative understanding, therefore there is no resistance, no conflict, but to love with such complete integration is possible only when you feel deeply secure, completely at home, especially when you are young.

Struggling to achieve success

In *At the Feet of the Master* it is said “Men who do not know work to gain wealth and power, but these are at most for one life only, and therefore unreal. “ Krishnaji in later talks mentioned “ As long as you pursue success in any direction, you are bound to be in strife, in conflict. Even when he arrived at the point of success or goal he is not happy but try to achieve higher and higher. Only to desire to be more – a mind craving for ‘more’ is not a healthy intelligent mind, because its demand for the ‘more’ implies a constant struggle in terms of the pattern which society has set for it. We are struggling after something and we have never paused to inquire if the thing we are after is worth struggling for.” Here is the fundamental teaching of Theosophy and J.K’s message to the world meets.

When we say we are seeking truth ,or we are seeking God- if we are religiously minded or we are seeking a perfect life and so on, we must already have in our minds an image or idea- which means that we have already known it, that all we have to do is to go after it and search it out.

Oneness of Life

Theosophy proclaims the Oneness of Life. Krishnaji through his talks reminded the Unity of Life from a blade of grass to the mighty mountains. When he says observe nature, the rain, the wind, the chirping of the birds the burble of the river, he was trying to convince us the oneness of life which we can realize through a choiceless awareness. H.P. Blavatsky in the Secret Doctrine says “ The radical unity of the Ultimate essence of each constituent part of the compounds in Nature- from star to the miner atom, from the highest *Dhyani-Chohan* to the smallest infusoria, in the fullest acceptation of the term, and whether applied to the spiritual intellectual, or physical worlds, this is the one fundamental law in Occult Science.”

Theosophy teaches us the evolution of life through mineral, plant, animal and human kingdoms and it also says the ‘growth and splendour of it has no limit.’

Torch Bearer of Truth

In the conclusion of the Key to Theosophy H.P. Blavatsky states “ Through the spread of Theosophical literature through the Theosophical Society will find numerous and United body of people ready to welcome the New Torch Bearer of Truth. He will find minds of men prepared for his message, a language ready for him in which to clothe the new truths he brings an organization awaiting his arrival which will remove the merely mechanical, material obstacles and difficulties from his path.” We can see that H.P. Blavatsky’s prophetic words proved perfectly suited to Krishnaji’s life and message and he was the Torch Bearer of the 20th century. But many could not digest this idea. Dr. Besant was the only one who sincerely believed that ‘K’ is the expected vehicle of the Great Teacher. She was ready to leave everything and sit at the foot of Krishnaji and listen him. She even closed the Esoteric Section and asked members to listen Krishnaji .

The modern world needs the message of ‘K’ more than anytime. Human brains are replaced by computers robots and man has become a slave to artificial intelligence and its multi faced entertainments. He is slowly drifting to the position of a second hand human being. Only Choiceless awareness can save humanity from this mechanical stereotyped living. We should be more close to Nature, environment and ultimately life in every form. We have no other path to go.
