



Message given by

Daaji

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From Neither Here Nor There to the Lap of Eternal Now

Trishanku was a noble king of the illustrious Ikshvaku dynasty, also known as the Suryavansha or the solar dynasty. It is the dynasty to which illustrious names like Lord Rama, Dasharatha, Harishchandra, and others belonged. Trishanku was known for his intense desire to reach heaven in his mortal body. Such a desire defied natural order. Yet, Trishanku sought the help of the wise sage Vasishtha. The sage refused to grant such a request, explaining that such an aspiration was unnatural. Defiant, Trishanku approached the sons of Vasishtha. They also refused his request and were angered by his persistence and perceived disrespect. In their anger, they cursed Trishanku to be shunned by his own people.

Such extreme rejection only strengthened Trishanku's resolve. He turned to the powerful sage Vishwamitra, whose singular desire was to prove his superiority over Vasishtha. Driven by personal ambition, Vishwamitra agreed to help Trishanku. He conducted a grand yajna and, using his powers, began to lift Trishanku toward heaven. As Trishanku ascended, the gods, led by Indra, opposed this disruption of cosmic law. They denied Trishanku entry into heaven and sent him plummeting back to earth.



Angered by the gods' actions, Vishwamitra used his formidable powers to halt Trishanku's fall. Not only that, he created an alternate heaven (Trishanku Swarga) and let Trishanku settle in that space. In this liminal space, neither here nor there, Trishanku lay unfulfilled and unresolved. The legend goes that through penance and repentance, Trishanku understood the guidance of his teachers. Enlightened by correct understanding, he experienced the higher dimensions.

This story evokes many pertinent questions:

Am I suspended in the liminal space of my desires?

Am I following the real aspiration of my being?

Am I asking the guru for the right thing?

Above all, the moral is that someone has to intervene; to take us out of this middle world of neither here nor there, and fix us in a stable position. Someone is needed to help us arrive at that balanced condition where one can remain steady without additional inputs of energy.

A state free from entropy. A state of Sthitha Pragyā forever.

Aspirations and Choices

We may think that Trishanku's story is an extreme case. But the reality is that we all struggle with the spaces (beliefs) that confine us. The most obvious is our toil between religion, religious values, materialism, and materialistic comforts. There is nothing wrong with materialism. It grants us comfort and, at times, gifts us much-needed time to do what is necessary.

A case in point is Artificial Intelligence. Many have asked about the evils of AI and automation. There are challenges with AI, but remember, AI gives us the freedom of time. Materialism, AI, and so on are not the real challenges. Our real challenge is making the right choices—choices that help us evolve, thrive, and walk the path of wisdom.

But a meditative mind need not worry. One who meditates on the heart discerns better. The more one meditates, the more refined their discernment (Viveka) becomes. A discerning heart gives us the time to reflect on the choices in front of us. With such refined discernment, we make evolutionary choices. We make choices that ennoble our growth.

The Shackles of Desire

What prevents us from growth are the shackles of desire, whether for this world or the other world. Religious people, so-called religious people, also have some level of desire. They suppress those desires by adopting extraordinary penances like pursuing celibacy and other unnatural means. They think the greater the level of torture, the better will be the heaven in the afterlife. Whether it's the pursuit of the religious or the material, desires prevail.



Fulfilling desires in the material world, like making money and having creature comforts, makes one oriented towards divinity only when the idea arises: “What next?” A man starving for food will not pursue spirituality anyway. There is nothing wrong in making money if we can use it wisely. An individual with a meditative heart and an awakened mind can use money for the greater good. I often say that if good people do not harness the energy of money, its energy will only be misused by the bad ones.

Before we go further, let’s begin with a clarification for those wondering: “Daaji, are you suggesting that we give up all desires? Are desires inherently bad?” No. We all have desires and aspirations. Desire, when understood well, is an expression of the soul’s yearning for transcendence. But because of samskaras, the conditioning we carry, the energy of desire is misdirected toward lower aims in life.

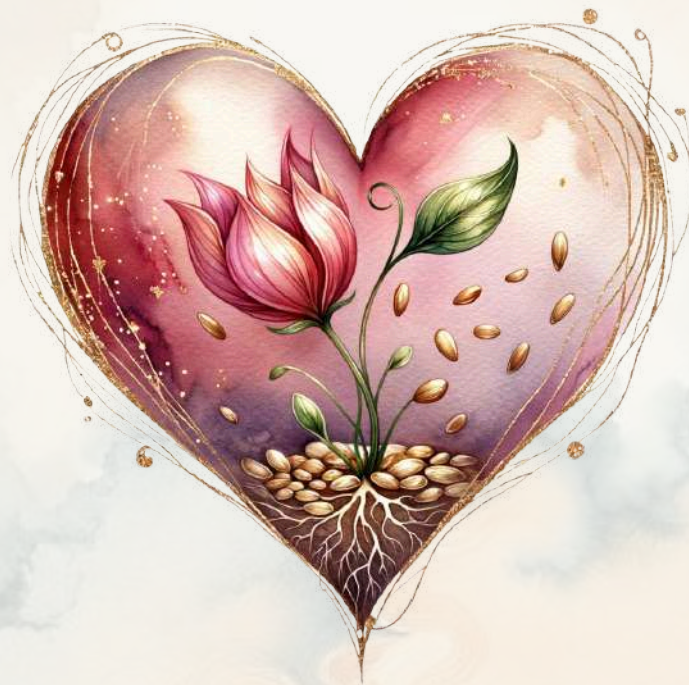
Attaining happiness through the fulfillment of desires is an impossible exercise. It’s as if a piece of iron is placed next to a compass and skews the true north. In the case of the soul’s true north, the compass is cluttered with iron filings of samskaras, leading us toward different directions instead of the polestar of the soul pointing toward the Ultimate.

Understanding the Chain of Desire and Witnessing

Desire is the energy created by lack. Desire starts with a simple wish. From wish, it moves to desires; from desires, it moves to expectations, which leads one to demand that their expectations must be fulfilled. Demands then lead one to insist, “It is my right.” When you start demanding, you fall—you literally fall—in your own eyes. The story of Trishanku is a timely reminder for all of us.

That’s why, if you notice, the prayer in Heartfulness has the line “wishes putting bar to our advancement.” The wisdom behind this line is to address the root cause: our wishes.

Understanding the flow from desire to demand to deserve (and the accompanying guilt) helps you arrive at the right understanding.



When we understand the nature of desires, the seeds of spiritual wisdom begin to take root in the heart. We realize that a materialist craves happiness “here.” A religious person craves happiness “there.” Spiritual wisdom says crave for “neither here nor there” but just be. A realized state of one’s existence. As a result, while the religious and material approaches hanker after more and more of more and more, the spiritually sound crave more and more of less and less.

This journey towards such spiritual wisdom is the essence of the holy scriptures, especially the Bhagwat Gita. There is a great emphasis on Karma, the action, and the knowledge of the field of action (Kshetra and Kshetrajna). One can identify oneself in the field of action in many roles, the key ones being: the doer, observer, and witness.

As a witness, we narrow down the multiplicity in the field of action. We are now only cognizant of the task at hand. And that too as a witness. Witnessing curbs the ego as the doer and the observer are both absent. As a result, one can enjoy the culmination of one's heights. But while performing an action, witnessing your joys and pain is not possible. One has to be completely in the flow of action to transcend the action. Just as lover and beloved become one and what remains is love. Observer, observed become one and observation remains. But there is something beyond witnessing also. It is the stage of merger. The merger of the lower with the highest is the culmination where one goes beyond here and there.

Let me explain with an analogy. The doer remains miles away from the flow of the river. The observer remains nearer to the bank. The witness is standing at the bank. The one who is merged is flowing with the river, one with the river. From neither here nor there to just be. Just flow.



Conclusion Leads to Flow

How to flow? The act of conclusion leads to flow. The importance of completing tasks conclusively, whether you fail or succeed, brings peace. When you succeed, you feel joy. When you fail, you may feel sad. But more important than success or failure, joy or sorrow, is to flow.

Consider this: You are in love with someone, and that person also loves you. But no one expresses their love towards each other. Imagine such a scenario. It remains inconclusive despite the love between the two. Now imagine another scenario: You love someone, and you propose, and the other person says no. In this scenario, even though you are hurt, it brings you some peace because there is closure. But in the previous scenario of unexpressed love, you are neither here nor there. Inconclusiveness only brings you restlessness, while conclusion brings closure and, over time, peace. Where there is peace, there is flow.

An inconclusive mind is neither here nor there. It remains confused all through life. What brings closure is understanding. One arrives at understanding through experience. Experience is the key. When we experience, we understand the why, what, and how of events and circumstances. Experience gives us the understanding to rationalize with our minds and respond with our hearts. It helps us move forward to the next step. The greater the experience, the deeper the understanding, the better the clarity, the faster the closure.

Emerson is believed to have said “you sow an act, you reap a habit; you sow a habit, you reap a character; you sow a character, you reap a destiny”. When we ponder over our journey in Sahaj Marg, the wealth of experience over the years distills into the wisdom that “you sow nothing, and you reap eternity.” But when “you sow dogmas and belief systems, you rape eternity.”

A meditative mind guided by the protective guardrails of discernment and loving detachment inhibits you from violating eternity. The experiences and resulting conditions unfurl the wings of your soul. With these, one takes flight to one's real destiny, transcending heaven and hell to the shores of reality and beyond. From liminal spaces to the golden fields of the Brighter World. From neither here nor there to the lap of the eternal now.

With love and respect,
Kamlesh D. Patel
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