

No Differences Here

The scriptures declare that Brahman alone is—without a second. When Pūjya Swāmī Chidānandajī came here in the mornings, the first thing that he would do is to offer worshipful homage to that Brahman. Sometimes he would add the descriptive words unknowable, unthinkable, unimaginable. But then, if Brahman is unknowable how can we know Him? Pūjya Swāmījī has said that Brahman cannot be known, but can be experienced.

Brahman, however, is not an experience the way that we normally think of an experience, rather we experience It by becoming That. Can that experience be described? The sages say that it cannot, but speak of it as “no differences here.” They do not negate the objects, but there are no differences. Does that mean that it is something like us looking and seeing no differences or seeing a universal presence in everything. What it means is that there is no experiencer of the objects. The objects and the experiencer have become one. So no differences means that there is no difference between that which is experiencing and the experience.

How do they describe that experience besides saying no differences? They say that it is bliss. But then, God is also described as truth, as love, as purity. Is that the same as bliss? Bliss in the state of no differences cannot be described. If we want to describe bliss, love or purity, then we require an experiencer. And thus, Pāpā Rāmdās, who had experienced the Universal following darshan of Ramaṇa Maharṣi declared that he would rather be an ant eating the mountain of sugar than be the mountain of sugar. In other words he would rather be able to see differences and enjoy the differences rather than be in the state of no differences and its non-describable bliss. Thus to know God as bliss, to know Him as love, to know Him as truth, to know Him as purity means that we see a difference even though they all originate in no differences.

The practice of God as love, truth or purity begins with the practice of *ahimsa*, *satyam*, and *brahmacarya*. We have to practice at the moral level if we want to reach God at the spiritual level. The spiritual level is a direct expression of no differences. The moral level is doing unto others as you would have others do unto you. Thus we don't injure others because we don't like to be injured. We don't lie to others because we don't like to be

lied to. And we don't treat others as objects to be exploited because we don't like to be exploited.

This moral position is derived ultimately from the fact that there are no differences, that everything is our own Self. We treat others the way we would like to be treated because they, in fact, are our own Self. Thus, while we may consider *ahimsa*, *satyam*, and *brahmacarya* to be the foundation of Yoga and Vedānta, if we practice them with right understanding, they *become* Yoga and Vedānta and can lead us to the highest goal of no differences here.