

The Path that Never Fades

In a couple of weeks a group of about 15 theological students from Gujarāt will be coming to this area for about a week. Why are they coming? They would like to deepen their spiritual understanding. Perhaps like so many from all over the world, they feel that to spend some time in this area would be a spiritual blessing. And no doubt it will be. They will take something back with them.

But still, there can be a fundamental problem whether you visit this area or whether you reside in this area. The inspiration you receive is likely to fade. It is like having a wonderful meal. You feel totally satisfied, but sooner or later you get hungry again. And it seems that our spiritual hunger is very much like our physical hunger. We seem to satisfy it for awhile and then get hungry again.

Is this meant to be our fate for the rest of our lives? Perhaps not necessarily so. It will be so if we keep going in the same direction, the direction of, "I feel a need which I must satisfy." We will satisfy it for awhile and feel the need again.

One morning here, Pūjya Swāmī Chidānandajī asked, "What are you to be liberated from?" He answered his own question with one word: "Yourself." In other words, the reason why we can feel fulfilled and then get hungry again is that we haven't discovered that the real problem is that part of ourselves that always wants: "I want this. I want that. Now because I see there is something higher, I want God. I want spirituality. I want *mokṣa*."

But the scriptures declare that we are already what we are seeking. So if there is such a thing as *subheccha*, good desires, it shouldn't be for anything new spiritual, but rather to be rid of that which is interfering with our recognition of what we already are. And that means a profound change in our way of looking at things. We have been wanting something new and suddenly we discover that what is blocking us is that which wants something new.

They say that even the desire for God at a certain level blocks us from doing what we must do, which is to rub away the ego a little bit every day. When we keep wanting God as an object, as a possession, we keep strengthening the ego. When we begin to recognize we are always That,

when bit by bit we let go, surrender, acknowledge God, we are on a path that can never fade away, that takes us closer and closer to what we have always been.