



## 'I' is The Greatest Bondage

The entire question of Bondage and Liberation, of human consciousness and Divine Consciousness, of sorrow and Joy, hinges upon this crucial point, namely, what is your relationship with the mind? In the ultimate analysis, your entire life and its struggle is in this area only. The outer manifestation has its root and cause inside. So, ultimately, it is only the solution that is inside that will have a lasting effect.

The ancient Buddhist texts say: "Mind is the slayer of the Atman, Slay this slayer and attain the light." This means that we are all prey to the tyranny of our inner, latent tendencies, which are the very essence of the individual's behaviour pattern. The mind is only a bundle of *vasanas*. The crux of the whole problem of Bondage and Liberation is explained in a simple way in Yoga Vasishtha: "Liberation is attained when there is *mononasha* (the cessation of mind activities)." When the *vasanas* are dormant, the mind is not there. The mind sinks and subsides in the state of deep sleep. 'I' is eliminated together with the mind. 'I' is the mind; mind is the 'I'. In deep sleep *vasanas* are in a state of dormancy. When the latent tendencies are in a state of dynamic manifestation in the active state, you find that the mind becomes a tyrant. Vasishtha has summed up the whole process of Liberation as a process of destruction of *vasanas*. Ultimately, the final blow that is given destroys the mind itself. People will say, "Oh, that is a very fearful prospect. With what will I think I think 'I am'?" This is a great delusion. We cling to this delusion, this evil, this little filth of limited consciousness. The annihilation of the 'I' is the grandest and the greatest and the greatest good fortune. The best thing that can ever happen in life is for 'you' to be gone. You are the kingpin of the whole problem of Bondage.

'I' is the greatest bondage. It is the opposite of light, bliss, peace, perfection, wholeness, truth. The practice of Yoga, results in gradual thinning of our *vasanas*, which spring out from this little I-consciousness, and ultimately the mind itself vanishes. Mind is the myth. But when it is there, it seems to be everything. Your essential being is Satchidananda. You are a wave of Ananda upon that ocean of Paramananda. That is real identity. It is pure Consciousness. This pure Consciousness, disassociated from any limiting adjunct, is pure bliss. "I am Existence filled with awareness. I am this wave." The wave is never apart from the ocean. Merge into the vastness and become one with the vastness. "I am the ocean, immeasurable. My depth cannot be fathomed."

God Bless You!

■ Swami Chidananda