



What do we mean by destiny? The term should bring thoughtful reflection. Some people are enchanted by the word, some people are frightened by it. To a poor person the prospective destiny of being a millionaire is wonderful. However, to a healthy man, the words, “You are destined to break your legs,” are miserable.

When a positive destiny is presented, you want it to be true. When it is negative, you do not want the destiny fulfilled. So the concept of destiny with which the human mind struggles must be reflected upon.

Is there destiny in human existence and what is its nature? And if there is such a thing as destiny, who can foretell it? Palmists, astrologers, prophets? Can they tell you your exact destiny?

Ordinarily, destiny brings to mind how much money you are going to make, what satisfaction you

will have in life—fame, prosperity, recognition from society. Although all these form a concept of destiny that seems important to your mind, if you think deeply, that is not your destiny at all.

Destiny is not so ordinary as to point today to a silvery cloud that must disperse tomorrow. Destiny is not a picture of a transient moment. Suppose someone says you are going to be very rich. How long will that prosperity last? A few years? Every happening is only a transient development, a temporary occurrence. Kings and monarchs, mighty leaders and dictators have come and gone. That is not the destiny you are looking for. If not, what is the ultimate human destiny?

From a very practical point of view, your life is fashioned for its maximum unfolding. You have every right to experience all the potentialities and unfold all the latent capaci-

ties you have within yourself. This should be your practical destiny. However, from a more philosophical and Yogic understanding, let us attempt to grasp the nature of the entire universe. Does it even exist? Is something as familiar and commonplace as the sky what it appears to be? Science tells you, “No.” Are the stars as twinkling as they seem to be? Again science tells you, “No.”

Things of the world are not as they seem. We live in a world interpreted by the mind, our nervous system and the limitations of our senses. Also, are we limited entities observing the world, or is the world observing us? Are we being interpreted by the world or do we interpret the world? If you delve deep into these riddles you will discover the intensely mysterious functioning of your mind.

In dream, even though you are not in contact with the objects of

the world, from your consciousness evolves time, space, conditions, pleasure and pain. When you awake that world and its conditions vanish. Back in the waking world, again different experiences unravel—pleasure, pain, gain and loss. Today when you encounter an adverse condition, you feel, “I am a failure and my life is dark.” But as time passes that dark moment vanishes and you again have joy, perspective and hope. Countless such dark moments have come and gone, and so have countless joyous moments.

Deep within, you face two perspectives: 1) Your reality is unaffected by your mental concepts and 2) You interpret yourself through your mind. Since the mind is limited and is itself the puzzle to be solved, it is reasonable to assume that the study of the mind through the mind is never perfect. When we feel we are the most accurate and successful in this endeavor, we find ourselves fooled.

When we feel things are dark and dreary, we do not know what glorious light lies ahead. The limited mind cannot completely understand spiritual reality. Nevertheless, that reality continues. As you continue your process of reflection, your mind is destined to realize this.

The world is a unified existence—an existence without separation. There cannot be separation between man and man today, nor man of today and Sages of the past. Nor can there be a separation between man and the surging oceans or the towering mountains. Nor can there be separation between man and the stars that twinkle in the heavens. The world’s panoramic beauty forms part and parcel of Consciousness—a Consciousness

so glorious that it includes all, unifies all and exists as a non-dual, stupendous unity.

Science continues to explore the perspective that though things seem to be different, there is an underlying unity of energy. People hanker to experience this, negatively or positively. An entire travel industry feeds off this great hunger of man to become one with the world that stretches before him and not remain confined to his own body. The human soul craves to escape a boring imprisonment built by mind.

That craving must be guided and properly directed. Here lies the study of Yoga. Since you are not an individual but cosmic, you have every right to discover that awareness and feel that unity with the entire universe. Sensitivity to this unity grows in the normal course of evolution, but in a vicious circle. You become sensitive to some things and eventually become attached to them. When you are attached to something, you begin to hate the world around you that threatens to deprive you of it. Now your love is throttled by the hatred that grows within you. Ultimately your tender sensitivity is completely choked by a tremendous wall of selfishness the human mind creates in its endeavor to secure the un-securable. Therefore the goal of Yoga is to properly commune with universal life, to universalize oneself with right understanding through a proper course of evolution and a positive process of integration. That is the destiny of Man.

It is your destiny to understand, “I am the Self, the Dynamic Unity that underlies all, not the body, mind and senses.” This Self is all that is good in your life, all that tends to sensitivity and

creativity, the supreme fulfillment of all your urges and desires. This positive, dynamic sublimation of desires, selfishness and hatred contrasts with the passive abandonment, frustration and suppression of desires typically resorted to. This life unites itself with the whole cosmos.

This perspective is very important in Yogic discipline and is the true destiny of Man. This destiny is not to be rich today, only to be reduced to poverty tomorrow; not a destiny to be victorious today and defeated tomorrow. Rather, it is a destiny of victory over matter. Once attained, there is a complete and everlasting victory of the soul over matter and light over darkness.

This is Man’s destiny. You yourself are predestined for this and no less. No matter what you do to get out of this track set before you to Self-Realization, no matter how you try to deviate from your deeper reality, you cannot do so. Circumstances will buffet you in such a way that you must release the clutches of your mind and limited understanding. Your life is beyond your ego and its concepts. Do you, like so many others, view yourself like a wave looking at the ocean, seeing other waves and finding yourself in a whirl of multiplicity and unknown factors? Most people hold this erroneous and limited attitude.

Most start from the erroneous understanding, “I am this physical body.” Therefore you ask others, “How do I look today?” They respond that you look wonderful. You then notice that you don’t feel wonderful. You go to the psychiatrist and ask, “Do I feel wonderful?” He says, “Well, you ought to feel wonderful.” There is this constant

attachment and identification with what you are not—the physical body.

The body is only your instrument. It may look wonderful, but you may be miserable. Your psychological personality again is not your deeper being. Psychologically you may be normal and strong. Mentally you may have a great memory. Yet that wouldn't satisfy your soul. This limited and erroneous approach to life is the basis of the predominant thinking in society today.

So many people live life with a very incorrect understanding: "Since I am this body, certain biological, hereditary factors have been transmitted to me. Therefore I cannot do anything about my condition. If I am lazy and dull, my parents are to blame. If I am frustrated and angry, my parents did not love me enough or this wretched society did not help me and provide a proper environment for my development." Starting from such a wrong basis, the mind

has a thousand excuses. You are not controlled by your circumstances or hereditary factors. You are not this physical body.

Look at yourself as the ocean would look at a wave. Feel, "I am the ocean." Impress upon your mind a sense of universality—"I am universal. I am free from mental tensions, free from mental prejudices. I am That which witnesses the experiences of deep sleep, dream and waking, and remains untouched. I am That which sees childhood, youth and old age, yet remains unaffected. I am That which will not be satisfied with wealth. Only when I have eaten up and assimilated the entire universe will I be satisfied." That is the grand, spiritual feast—a feast in which you devour duality, differences and all barriers laid down by geography, nature and the human mind. Here the soul, without obstruction, communes with all that is.

Unless that destiny is attained, you cannot be happy. That is called Self-realization. It is not a mere postulation of Yoga, but a vivid, solid experience expressed by great Sages. In recent past, when doctors pleaded with Ramakrishna Paramahansa to sustain his life, he replied, "My life flows through thousands of bodies. Why should I maintain and perpetuate this empty drum?...I who live through thousands!" The attachment to this limited body vanishes the moment you realize you are universal. The idea "I will be finished by death" vanishes when you gain the perspective "I am universal."

Your mind develops certain concepts and then pictures your destiny. It conceives what you should be and then projects from consciousness a set of realities.

That is what you are. You are the creation of your own self through your mind. And since your mind is limitless in potential, you can create anything out of that vast universe. You decide to be a god, and so you shall be. You decide to be as you are, and so you shall. If fear begins to torment your mind and becomes real within your unconscious, your whole personality will form around the dark fumes of fear. On the other hand, if joy develops on the basis of integration and philosophical insight, your personality changes accordingly.

There is no limit to your progress if a deeper understanding of the soul can be kept in view. Therefore, through Yoga, you first learn to impress upon your mind the ideal of Universality of the Soul, and then take recourse to various exercises of meditation on that Universality.

Though you are not the physical body, your body is the foundation of these advanced practices. Thus Yogic practice promotes a high degree of health and vitality in your physical body. There again you are greatly helped in that process if you have philosophical insight into the abundant energy within you. Do not be biased that your body is miserably dependent on so many factors of the world. When doctors say a disease is incurable, it is not necessarily so. In Yoga philosophy, you behold your own existence with a free mind, a mind ready to understand its endless potentialities.

With this said, meditation exercises commence with your mind focusing between your eyebrows or at your heart center. Having focused your mind, develop the mental affirmation: "I am Universal." Bring to your mind certain pictures and



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images that give you a concept of expansion. For example, as you meditate upon the vastness of the blue sky, your physical body relaxes. You leave behind the cares of your physical body the moment your mind is interested in something vast, rewarding and fulfilling. You are no longer trapped in the body.

If you allowed yourself relief from your physical body a short while every day, your physical body would take care of itself. Nature would flow into your body with abundant vitality. However, you are constantly hampering Nature's process. It is like a great poet who spontaneously knows how to write, but has a person behind nagging, "Now, take the pen in your hand and write this word." The poet's entire creativity is constantly interrupted by the constant nagging. Much in the same way the body's flow of vitality is interrupted by the constant worrying of the mind: "Have I taken my vitamins? Have I rested enough today? Did I sleep well last night?"

This will not allow vitality to flow freely through your personality and that becomes the cause of great illness and sickness. Through Yoga, you remove worry and prejudice from the mind, not only toward your body, but also towards all developments in your life. With these prejudices towards achievement, success, desires, etc. removed, your mind is free to breathe in the Cosmic Mind.

Let your mind therefore unite with Cosmic Mind. Learn to throw your burden away. Human beings are like passengers in a jet plane who insist on carrying their baggage on their head. They doubt the plane can carry it all so they take it on themselves. It seems ludicrous to doubt the plane's ability to carry

them both. Their strange conditioning is such that they notice the plane moving whenever they put forth more effort in carrying the baggage. Through this perversion, they feel they are supporting the plane instead of vice versa.

Human beings, though, are part of a cosmic movement and naturally enjoy that perspective. Close your eyes for a moment. Feel yourself breathing in cosmic life, pulsating with the universe. Allow that attitude to dawn in your personality.

There are various methods of meditation in Yoga that a student must learn with patience and perseverance. Through them your mind shifts gears from a selfish sense of contraction to a selfless expansion. Gradually your intellect shifts from the sphere of reasoning and mathematical calculation to the inspiration of intuition. That is the process of integration.

As you adjust your life through Yoga to a higher, more profound standpoint, you begin to see yourself not as a wave sees the ocean, but as the ocean sees the wave. You begin to see yourself from a perspective that is cosmic, universal, dateless and unaffected.

That is the destiny of man. Playing a bold prophet, I predict that as your ultimate destiny. No matter what you do to turn away from it, you will not succeed. In fact, I challenge all the realities of the world to counter it.

To an ocean wave, you can say, "One day you will progress toward becoming the ocean!" The fact is, it has been the ocean all the while. The notion that it has been a wave is wrong. No progress was necessary. Equally wrong is the idea that you are a limited personality, controlled by a thousand factors.

There is a humorous illustration of the concept of progress. A man facing east rides on a horse that faces west. He whips the horse and the horse gallops with great speed. This he considers great progress. Where is the horse blindly leading you?

There lies the art of adjustment. To where will you be led? What will be your destiny? Should your destiny be led by concepts of your limited mind—a little wealth, a little recognition? Should the mind continue to limit itself to three days—yesterday, today and tomorrow?

Or should the mind be engrossed in a universal perspective—a perspective of infinite joy and relaxation, a perspective of completely controlling the waves of thoughts and realizing the Ocean of Existence? Ride the horse of your life with your face directed towards this destination. That is true progress. That is the end of all sorrow. That is Self-Realization. That is the Destiny of Man.



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