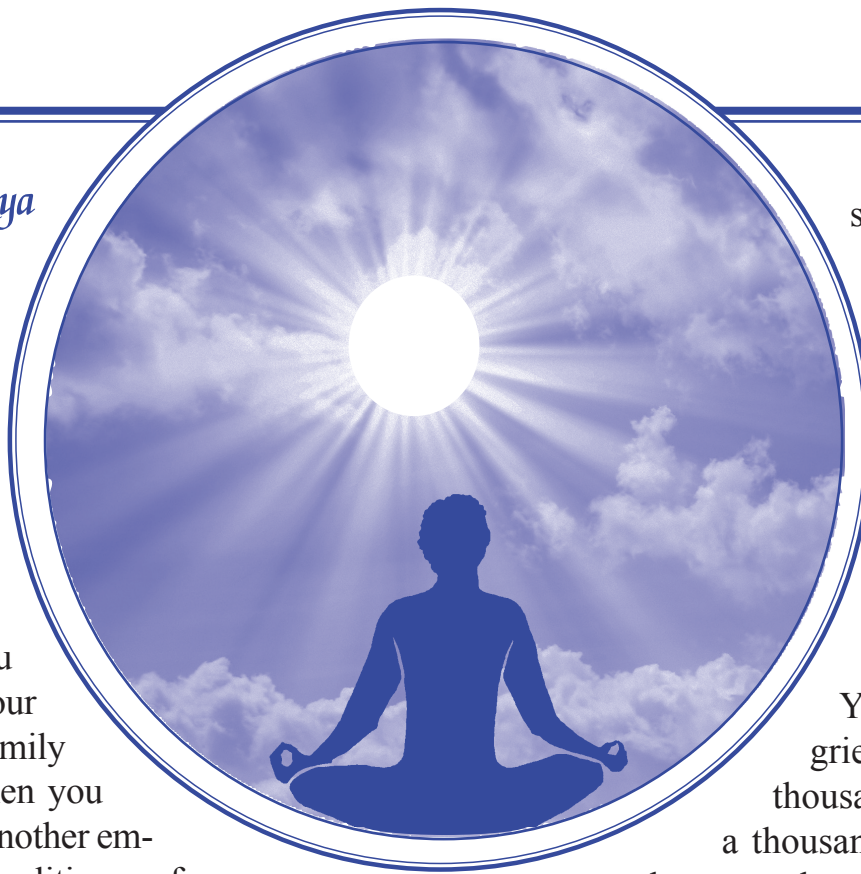


The Story of Punya and Pavana

In each embodiment you view yourself as born into a particular family with a particular history of prosperity and adversity. As you grow you build your own empire of family and friends. But when you die and move on to another embodiment, all those realities are forgotten and new ones take their place.

In Yoga Vasistha there is a story of two brothers, Punya and Pavana, who were sons of very saintly parents. When their parents died, grief invaded their minds. However, Punya was older and had studied the Vedic scriptures. He began to reflect upon the teachings that he had received from his father and he attained Enlightenment.

Pavana could not give up his grief, so his elder brother, showering his compas-



sion, said, “My brother, why are you grieving? You are grieving for our departed parents, but what about the parents of your previous embodiments?

You should be grieving for a thousand fathers and a thousand mothers! We

have not lost just one father and one mother. In every embodiment

there were parents who were just as dear. Why aren’t you grieving for all of them?”

In other words, in each of your thousands of embodiments you had so many people you loved and depended upon, so many who depended on you. Then, when you moved out of each embodiment, you left those realities completely behind. Now in your present embodiment, you might have been reborn in the very same town in which you had previ-

The Art of Positive Feeling Part Eight



Overcoming Delusion



by Swami Jyotirmayananda

ously died, and every day you walk by your old house and see your grownup sons and daughters. But now you simply pass by disinterestedly, and you have nothing to do with their problems. New attachments have taken their place.

Breaking the spell of delusion is the purpose of existence. Unless you break it you cannot enjoy the blessings of God that pour down at every moment in this world. Divine Grace pours down like monsoon rains, but if the cup of your heart is inverted due to *moha*, not a single drop goes into it. Straighten it up, and surely you will find that “your cup runneth over.” That sound of your spirit overflowing with Divine grace is the most beautiful sound imaginable!

Hear the Splashing Waters of Eternity

Once a man crossed the desert in the hot summer, parched with thirst. He came upon a high stone wall and climbed to the top. Looking down, he saw the surging water of a beautiful river.

The sight of water was so delightful to his mind; but how, he thought, could he get to that water from the heights of the wall? Suddenly he realized that the wall was not so strong, and he could loosen its stones and throw them down. He started doing that, and each time a stone fell the water splashed. With each sound of splashing water, great joy entered his mind.

The river below called out to him, “Why do you pelt stones at me?” He said, “Do not

be angry with me. As I break these stones the wall is coming down and I am coming closer to you. The splashing sound is very pleasing to my ears because I know that soon I will drink your water.”

Like the man in this parable, everyone has been travelling through the desert of the world-process and has climbed a high wall of illusion. Whatever happiness you have experienced is a kind of mirage.

When you become aware of your real predicament you realize how thirsty you are, and you begin to understand the value of breaking the illusion. When you have philosophical insight, the breaking of illusions is not the painful process that the masses consider it to be. Rather, it is like the tumbling down of the wall in our parable. The falling stones allow you to listen to the splashing water of eternity. They remind you that the world of time and space is not your real and permanent home. Therefore, you must live your life in such a way that the world around you does not cripple your mind. Allow your mind to expand as the breaking illusions bring you closer and closer to the water of eternity.

Overcoming Moha

In Chapter Seven of the Gita, verse 14, Lord Krishna says: “This Divine *Maya* of Mine, composed of the three *gunas*, is difficult to cross over, but those who surrender to Me, they alone are able to cross it.”

This world of *Maya*, of *moha*, is like an ocean in which everyone is bobbing up and

down, driven from one whirlpool to another. One who surrenders to God has found a ship and is being taken on the right course towards life's destination: Self-realization. When the surrender reaches a higher level you have found a jet plane, and when it becomes still higher, a rocket carries you irretrievably beyond the world's gravitational pull.

Because of *moha*, you turn away from the Divine, although the Divine is the very fabric of the universe, the very reality behind all things. As you turn away from God you are whipped by the delusive force of *Maya* more and more. On the other hand, when you come closer draw nearer to God, the force of *Maya* diminishes and you begin to enjoy a sense of equanimity at all times. When you are imbued with Divine Love, the force of *Maya* will not delude you. The very same world of *Maya* begins to show you the right path.

Of great importance in overcoming *moha* is *satsanga* or good-association. In the Ramayana, Saint Tulsidas says, "Without *satsanga* and without listening to the glory of God, *moha* continues. But if you enjoy *satsanga* and listen to the Divine teachings, then *moha* begins to diminish. If *moha* still clings to you, you do not enjoy profound devotion."

Thus, overcoming *moha* requires a profound process of Yoga that includes devotion to God, repetition of Divine name, good association, meditation, profound reflection, selfless service, and a great change in your attitude towards others. While serving or loving a family member or friend, try to understand that you are worshipping God through that person. The idea, "He is my son, or she is my daughter" should not cripple your mind.

Through every soul you serve, you are serving God. Through every wave you are looking at the ocean. As these attitudes develop, you make decisive strides towards breaking the fetters of *moha*.

In your zeal to break these fetters, be careful not to break the *moha* of others with a hammer. Be gentle toward the delusion of others and do not force them to give it up, although you may try to persuade them in a loving manner to do so.

However, have no respect for your own delusion. Get the biggest hammer possible and go on breaking it down, eagerly listening to the joyous sound of the splashing water as illusion after illusion falls into it, freeing you of all limitations and leading you to eternity.

*Divine Grace pours down
like monsoon rains,
but if the cup of your heart
is inverted due to moha,
not a single drop goes into it.
Straighten it up,
and surely you will find that
"your cup runneth over."
That sound of your
spirit overflowing
with Divine grace
is the most beautiful
sound imaginable!*

