

Gururaj: "I think we can start off as usual, and perhaps your questions, your earth-shattering philosophical questions.

Q: Can you talk to us a little about crime and punishment? It seems so many people do so many things wrong today and so many people want to punish them in some way, saying that they have committed crimes - but what is a crime and what sort of punishment should they have, if any, and who are we to decide?

GR: A beautiful question. Now, this question of crime and punishment can be answered from so many different aspects. The question of crime and punishment can be examined from so many different angles. Of course, one of the angles would be the sociological angle and that is what most people are concerned about. Then, of course, there are metaphysical and philosophical angles in which we can examine what crime is and what punishment is and who should mete out punishment and who is a criminal.

Now, according to the laws of sociology, the laws of sociology are based on one principle and that is to preserve some form of stability in society. Now, to have this stability in society, limitations have to be put on people's actions. So, as we know of sociologists, it is normally done with a stick. The stick is held there like a school master would - my apologies to the school masters-the stick is there and thereby fear is instilled into people's minds, that "If you do this, you will get that". But the funny thing is this - that if a criminal steals a million pounds he will go to jail for 6 months and if he steals an egg he will go to jail for a year. Why is this? Psychologists will tell us that the person that has embezzled a million pounds has used far greater brain power in his planning. Now, is that planning to be appreciated in lowering the sentence? What a funny business.

It brings to mind a wonderful story written by Victor Hugo "Les Miserables" - the miserable life - where this man, because of his wife and children starving, went to steal a loaf of bread and stealing that loaf of bread got him into so, so much trouble - was it justice then?

So people that formulate laws in our sociological systems could not always be right. There are a lot of discrepancies in their judgements and the whole background that brings about these laws. But the basic thing is that they have to instil fear into people's minds so that they don't do wrong. Now, while you are driving, if there is a traffic cop behind you, you are going to be careful not to infringe any traffic laws. So likewise, with all forms of criminality, if this stick was not there people might go haywire, they will perpetrate all kinds of things which would be harmful to society and harmful to themselves. So these laws are necessary.

How these laws are brought about and how these laws are promulgated and put into practice might need a lot of reforming, might need a lot of reformation. For punishment to a criminal, though it could be a curb on other people trying to embark on that path, but how is it going to help the individual? The greatest amount of criminals born in this world are made in jail. If a person is convicted, that person will be put into touch with other people of like sort and with the exchange of ideas and views they come out not as better people. So, in many cases, in most cases, if the crime is not severe, what should be done is rehabilitation whereby the criminal's mind could be altered, his old mental attitude, his concept, can be changed where he can try and live a better life. And this can be done by meditational means and by knowledge given to such people that are in jails.

There are other methods. Many people that become policemen become policemen not because they want to uphold the law but it is because of a personal vendetta. In their childhood - we don't say all, but many of them - in their childhood they have been so oppressed by their schoolmates, their friends, their environment, that they grow up and say "Let me become a policeman and I'll show them". So they become policemen. A criminal becomes a criminal because his upbringing has also been such that he has a grudge against society. So what is happening here, that the criminal has a grudge and the policeman has a grudge and the two negatives can never make a positive.

I was speaking to a group of policemen, I was invited to talk to them recently, and if these very policemen could be put through a course of human psychology, could be put through the knowledge of how a human mind works, then they could reform the man and not deform his mind more. So far as laws go, there is a lot left out that is to be desired. But punishment has to be there to preserve a certain stability in society, that is from the sociological point of view.

Let us examine this: crime and punishment from the philosophical point of view - what is crime? What spurs a person to perpetrate a certain act. Are there any karmic values that might extend further than his childhood? Can we say that all the tendencies of the grown up person comes from his childhood or does it go even back much further? Tendencies are not things that could never never be rubbed out, tendencies can be overcome. Perhaps this person in previous lives might have lived such a life whereby a certain tendency, a certain impression, has been formed in the memory box of his mind and that he has taken another birth to manifest that tendency and by manifesting that tendency he is trying to overcome that tendency.

Now, if everyone tries to manifest their tendencies then this world will be in chaos because there is not a single human being in this world that is not partly animal, partly man and partly God. So, every human being has these 3 aspects in him - he has come through the process of evolution a very far way through thousands and thousands and perhaps millions of births. He has accumulated experiences, right from the mineral kingdom to the plant, to the animal, and within his mind he carries with him all the impressions that he has gained. When he was an animal it was his nature to kill. It is not wrong for a tiger to kill, it is the nature of the tiger to hunt for its prey to feed itself. A tiger never kills for fun, neither any other animal. The beast of prey would never kill for fun, it kills for necessity. But that killing still remains in the human mind the - impression still remains there.

Now what happens in a criminal is this -that he allows his lower nature, as we call it, to dominate his life. Now, he comes with this tendency, the animal tendency, and then the principle of heredity comes in and the principle of training the child comes in. Now, when the person comes with that tendency, we said that the tendency cannot be rubbed out, the tendency will manifest itself. Now here comes the parents' duty, that should the tendency manifest in a retrogressive way or a progressive way? Should it be devolutionary or evolutionary? It depends a lot upon parents, how to teach the child to sublimate that tendency. Because in any good deed or bad deed it is the same energy that is used, it is a matter of direction.

All problems in grown up days is caused only because that direction is wrong. That is one of the principles of our Meditation Society - self help - where we, through our spiritual practices, are brought face to face with our problems and our weaknesses and we, with effort in daily life, try to overcome them. Now by overcoming these tendencies we are working out our Karmic debts. So when a person is born with criminal tendencies it is due to Karmic debts, his past Karma, the actions in this life and previous lives are all brought together and they would boil up and boil up and boil up so that it could take a wrong turn, it could take a destructive turn. It does not take a constructive turn.

As we said just now, that in destruction or construction the same power, the same energy, is used. Now, when a person embarks on a destructive course we say that "SATAN has possessed him", and if he goes on a constructive course we say "He is goodly and Godly". There is no goodliness and no godliness here, it is what he has done and the tendencies and the pattern he has formed. That energy is a neutral energy, it is a neutral energy, and that neutral energy, that Divine energy which is neutral, can be used by Man because he has free will.

So now, for example, the parents did not have the knowledge of how to teach the child, to direct his tendencies in a goodly, Godly way, has missed that opportunity. Now the person grows up and those tendencies are running rampant in him. What must he do? That is the question. If we meet a person who has criminal tendencies, what can he do, or what can we do for him? Now, I know of one power that works that is infallible. I have spoken to people in prison and I have found that if we create through our meditational practices, if we uplift our own vibrations, and when we speak to such a person inevitably it has an effect on that person. And that is why it is said in the Bible "If they smite you on one cheek, give the other". "Love thy neighbour as thyself". So must I look upon the criminal as a criminal, or should I look upon the criminal as a human being that carries within himself a Divine potential? Who is here on earth that is NOT a criminal? Who is here that is sinless? But we condemn, we condemn, because we are trying to cover up our own faults and the best way to cover our own faults is to find the fault in others. And by finding fault in others we forget our faults and that leads to condemnation, where we look down upon a criminal, we look down upon a criminal.

But if we can show that same person love and care and give that person some understanding, then we are not passing Judgement, we are helping, we are rehabilitating the person, and by doing that who benefits most - WE benefit most. Because by showing that love, by showing that understanding, by recognising the Divinity in that person, we are understanding ourselves better, we are overcoming our crooked tendencies also at the same time by helping another. See how beautiful it works, it is so simple. I wonder why there are criminals on earth. By showing this understanding and by having understanding you have sympathy. When you have sympathy you have empathy, when you have empathy you have compassion. Now, aren't these all the virtues taught by all the Scriptures of the world, and that is why Christ said "Judge ye not, that ye be judged". He said that, and when the prostitute came to him, he said "I forgive you, my daughter, but sin no more, sin no more".

What great love and what great compassion was shown, and that very love and compassion that was shown, which not only Jesus could do but we could do, too, in our daily living, perhaps in smaller measure. So where is the question of punishment? When you love you don't punish.

Sometimes punishment is necessary. The child is naughty, you pick up the strap, but even picking up the strap is done with so much love, that even the pain inflicted in the child will produce pleasure in him. The child will say "Oh, I must have been naughty, I must have been naughty so Mummy picked up the strap". So even punishing a child should be done with such love that although the body stings, but the heart feels love, the heart does not feel hatred and yet the backside smarts. (Laughter).

We were talking about the wrong doings of people and someone mentioned to me promiscuity, so I said "Well, you stop, don't 'promiscuitise'!". (Joke - promise cuties). (Laughter). So therefore, when it comes to the level of the heart we do not see crime, we see a wrong doing, we guide the person onto a better path and we can only do it if we know ourselves, if we recognise Divinity in ourselves through our meditational practices, then we can recognise Divinity in others, and by recognising Divinity in others then we don't see the faults.

When a woman loves her husband or a husband loves his wife, there can be many discrepancies in the wife or the husband. But because she loves, and love is divine, she does not see the faults, neither does he see the faults. But if there was no love then those little faults, those little molehills become mountains, while where there is love, mountains are reduced to molehills. That is the power of Love, that is the power of understanding and all this brings out the greatest virtues in us and the greatest of these is compassion. We don't hate, we just love.

If you have committed a crime who am I to judge you? How do I know that in my previous lives I have not committed worse crimes? You are a thief now, I might have been a bigger thief.

There is no sinner that has not a future and there is no saint that has not a past. Remember that. Now, by understanding these very few simple principles we start loving, we transcend the improper actions of our brothers. Now it is so easy to love thy neighbour as thyself if all our neighbours were good, but love thy neighbour as thyself whoever they are. They might even be emptying their dirt box over your fence, but if you really love them they won't do it, that's a promise. If you really love them they don't do it.

Now, that love and understanding also has to be demonstrated; it is no good just feeling it inside, demonstrate it, demonstrate it. And there are millions of ways of demonstrating love. Love can be walled up. Get rid of the walls, get rid of the blocks, and meditation and spiritual practices are the surest means of breaking down the walls and opening the heart so that this heart can flow in its own Divine glory. And it flows, and each and every one of us can do it and because we don't do it, because we don't want to consciously break down these walls, what will happen is that the love will stagnate and when love stagnates it affects not only our bodies but also our minds, and stagnated love, when it affects the mind, it brings quirks into the minds and turns us into bigger criminals than those we regard to be criminals.

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So when we love it is not a question of punishment - kill if you want to kill, but kill with love. That's the greatest atom bomb in the world, the greatest hydrogen bomb - the "love bomb".

So, spiritual seekers do not think in terms of punishment. The wife has done - let's get down to home life, all philosophy should be very practical. Let me tell you a little story. There was a village and the city was on the other side of the river. Now there were no industries in the village so people had to travel by ferry boats across the river to go to work. Now the ferry boats have all kinds of people. Nevertheless, as we take trains to work at 3 minutes past 8 every morning, or 5 to 9, whatever the time table is, so like that the ferries operated on time tables. Now in this one ferry there was a peasant that used to be on this ferry all the time to go to the city and there was a Pundit. Now a Pundit is a man who is learned in scriptures, but he was a vain man, he knew all the scriptures and that produced vanity in him; he was proud of all the books he read and all the studies he has made. So on this ferry the Pundit used to ask the peasants with him "Have you studied the Vedanta?" They said "no revered sir". "Have you studied the Sankhya Yoga?" They said "no, revered sir". "Have you studied Patanjali, the Vedas, the Upanishads?". They said no. And he used to boast - that's the word -vain, show-off, "I'm a learned man". So everybody called him 'Sir'.

But one day it so happened that a storm came up and the boat was rocking, the boat was sinking. The peasant started diving off the boat and while he was diving off, he asked the Pundit "Can you swim?" The Pundit could not swim. Who is the practical man? Now every day they had to cross the river twice, going to work and coming back. The peasant was a practical man in that in the event of a storm brewing or the boat capsizing, let me learn to swim. He was a practical man, so he learned to swim. The Pundit no, in all his Scriptures and books, and he drowned. THAT is the value of practicality. So all the Scriptures and all the learning and all the Gurus - they can be parcelled up and thrown into the river.

So what we are trying to say is this - that all philosophies of life has to become practical otherwise they remain up here, only in the brain box, and if you have too much of it there it can drive you crazy. But if it is conjoined with the heart then it has practical value. I said that love is quality to be demonstrated, and we can demonstrate it with our neighbour sitting right next to us. Look at Mr and Mrs Bonnicut sitting so happily there, elbows touching. Married about 50 years I think, are you? Lovely. It must be demonstrated all the time.

So when it comes from a spiritual point of view we do not judge criminals. You have done an act. I might have done worst. What can I do to help you?" What I can do is to love you, give you understanding, and that love and

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understanding will change your mind, change your attitude. And if that doesn't work too much, say come with me and we will attend one of the BMS meetings (Laughter) perhaps some understanding can be found there! Good, next

Questioner: You speak of reincarnation. To a Christian the game is Life and the stakes are very high. Jesus said that "Many will come in my name". St. Paul said in Corinthians "Even Satan can disguise himself to look like an Angel of Light". Paul says in Thessalonians, his second letter, "The wicked one will come with the power of Satan and perform all kinds of false miracles and wonders and use every kind of wicked deceit on those who will perish". How would you defend yourself against a proposal or an accusation that you are a tool of Satan, especially as you talk of Christian and religious beliefs in a way that would seem very compromising to many Christians and hence you could be considered as a subtle force to lead people away from true Christianity and true salvation?"

Gururaj: Very true - I agree with you. Next question! Christ also said, and you have forgotten this, that "There are many sheep but not all of them belong to my flock". There shall be many doubters, let them doubt, for their doubts, too, will lead them. Start with doubt. Who starts with doubt? A real doubter (I love a doubters), a real doubter must be an earnest seeker. Doubting should not be engendered by curiosity. Doubting should come about by a genuine sincere search. When you seek sincerely you will overcome your doubts.

Now scriptures do teach various teachings because they have to appeal to various different temperaments. There are various temperaments in the world. Some people are born of doubt. Many things in life cannot be proven. I would ask this young man - are you sure your father is your father? You only think that because your mother has told you so. Many things in life cannot be proven, many things in life are taken in trust. The greatest business deals are done over the luncheon table, the contracts are only signed later. The relationship between husband and wife is one of trust. They can cheat each other and perhaps some of them could be so clever that for years it would not be known to either party. But there is trust, there is faith. There is trust, there is faith, and that is what the whole of Christianity based upon faith.

You talk of God - prove God to me. You talk of reincarnation prove that to me. There are a lot of things in life that are known by inference. The mind is not capable, the finite mind is not capable of comprehending the infinite. The finite mind can only infer certain things. Certain laws of logic are applied, and in its application we would think that "This could be so". But, that is not the criteria, the criteria is what one experiences. Yes, it is true. So many Satans come in the name of the Lord, so many of them do, and if you are deluded by the Satan, it is not the fault of the Satan, it is your fault! Yes. WHY do you get deluded by Satan, why do you get so deluded by an evil power because you have an evil tendency in you. Because of the evil tendency in you, you can only see the evil in others, that "I am being deluded". But if the

tendencies in you are good and pure your heart will feel. Forget the mind, your heart will feel that "Here are words uttered that will stand through ages and ages to come". So the criteria is your heart, is your feeling; the mind will help. Yes, use the mind. I always say it is the most cunning animal. It is the mind that invents the Satans and the Gods. They are all inventions of the mind. The entire universe is nothing but mind. All problems in life is nothing but mind. Good.

How we tutor that mind, how we learn through meditational practices, how we can overcome the mind, how we can go beyond the mind, and there truth is found. And yet when truth is found, it cannot be explained. And when you reach that level beyond the mind, all your Satans and your Gods, they all disappear. They have no existence, the existence of it lies IN the mind.

So that which is written through the mind must be of the mind. So the purpose of our Meditation Society is to experience truth. We don't want to know about truth - for that you go to a University because Universities only tell you ABOUT a thing, not what a thing is. What we learn in our Meditation Society is to experience what truth IS, and that truth is forever eternal, that truth is so powerful when known and experienced that there are no Satanic powers that could ever touch it or come near it. They cannot because when the light is switched on darkness disappears. Darkness becomes non-existent, darkness becomes an illusion and the mind has these illusory faculties.

The mind is capable of experiencing illusions - that is the stumbling block to the truth. If any man wants to find Divinity through the mind, he cannot. The mind can be refined to its highest Sattvic level. The mind is also governed by the 3 Gunas, which constitute Nature, the entirety of the universe.

I have spoken about this before, about the Gunas. You have the Tamas, inertia, laziness, darkness; you have the Rajas, which is the activating force, the passionate force; you have the Sattva, which is light, light, light, light. Now the mind, although it is a stumbling block to the progress in Man's evolution, the same mind can be used in such a way, the same mind can be trained in such a way whereby the Sattvic forces, the force of light, can dominate one's life. The 3 Gunas will forever be there, they are indestructible as Truth, or Divinity is indestructible. These forces will always be there, but what we have to do is to allow Sattva to dominate and not Tamas to dominate. By allowing Sattva to dominate then mind becomes more and more refined. Sattva is more subtle, it reaches the highest subtlety of relativity. While Tamas on the other end is at its grossest level. So we allow Sattva to dominate so that the mind experiences the finest relative quality of existence. And when we reach the finest relativity then we go beyond it and experience truth.



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So we use the mind as an instrument to overcome itself. And then the power of darkness, the power of Tamas, call it Satan, call it what you will, disappears. There's an old saying - it takes a thief to catch a thief. It takes a Satan to recognise a Satan. Yes that is true, very true. So through our meditational practices when we reach the refinement, the Sattvic level of our minds we are in tune (Inaudible) and we go beyond all the doubts.

Now the human mind and the human heart can never remain a vacuum. When doubts are removed through this process - it is easy to say "do not doubt, do not doubt, believe, believe, believe", it is easy to say it, but we are talking of practical methods - how to overcome doubts. So, as we said, to repeat again, the human personality, the mind, the heart, can never remain a vacuum. So when you remove doubts it has to be filled with something and it gets filled with faith - faith and trust is the same - the pillar on which this entire society is based.

We said before - we gave examples - how everything in life we take on faith and when words of wisdom are spoken they are not only understood by the mind but they are felt by the heart, and that is the verification of truth - how does my heart feel? How do I experience these words that I hear? Now hearing is not enough. After hearing, Shraven - that's the word in Sanskrit - after Shravan comes Mannan which means "After hearing, contemplate on the words you have heard", and after contemplating experience those words.

Truth is unutterable, but the truth we speak of is only a fraction but a fraction is needed to guide us along the path to experience the totality, the completeness, of truth. So that will always remain a personal experience and experiencing truth is synonymous of realising truth.

When you realise truth, experience truth and realise truth, you realise yourself; when you realise yourself, you realise Divinity; and to a realised man that is totally in communion with Divinity, sees no Satan. For once he experiences the omnipresence of Divinity (omnipresent means being present everywhere) where is the place for Satans? They just remain on the cinema screen.

OK. Fine. Good." (Excerpts from film soundtrack indistinct).

Amrit: " We have a film of Gururaj from last July from when we were training teachers in North London". There are excerpts mixed with music."

FILM:

"It's a real joy to be here this afternoon, and especially getting together with the meditators who have been practising. Whatever wells up in your heart inspires them.... It is a communication that takes place which knows no bounds, no limits

whatever; in this communication the oneness of all is so deeply felt. What greater inspiration can there be, what greater joy can there be in the soft gentle atmosphere of oneness. That 3 minutes could be stretched into eternity. Who needs more than three minutes, because there's no goodbyes to be said, there is forever a presence, communications are forever with us all the time. And if you have experienced .....the most important thing is the spiritual flow between us, where the spiritual link and the channel has been opened and there is interchange and communion taking place all the time and that communion can only take place if the heart is sufficiently open and only if the heart sufficiently opened the heart is symbolised, characterised, EXPRESSED. I have been here for 5 or 6 weeks now, the course at Hayes, the (?) of the courses here .....it is the expression, it is the oneness of each and every one of you and have you not sensed the feeling of no separation whatsoever .....with your tears and my tears, your laughter is my laughter, your smiles, I smile in your smile. ....and it was made that way because physical bonds can be broken, mental bonds can be broken, but spiritual bonds are impossible to break, they remain forever eternal. So sometimes being away for a little while in the physical can be a bit painful .....but when we look at it deeply, where is there go, there is there to come from, when we are all in the eternal.

NOW. Where is there to come from, where is there to go to? I want you to be with me this eternal NOW, no past, no future, just a NOW, and experience in that knowingness .....we have had a lot of fun, and laughs, I have shed tears with you .....and expresses itself in so many ways, it expresses itself in the play of a child, so many things have been happening through the Meditation Society and from what I can see the upward surge that is there, the people I have met last November and the people I have met this July have not been the same people. They might be in the same bodies, yes, but a spiritual awakening has taken place, a beautiful expansion of mind, a beautiful opening of heart, in spite of all the joys and sorrows that might have been between, in spite of that a beautiful steadiness has grown .....a sense of at-one-ment is forever in the background. What is what we have, to proceed, and more and more bonds shall be .....that at-one-ment with the environment, with the Guru.....with the universe and finally at one with Divinity.

From the point of light within the mind of God let light stream forth into the minds of Men. Let light descend on earth. From the point of love within the heart of God, let Love stream forth into the hearts of Men. May Divinity return to earth. From the centre where the Will of God is all, let purpose guide the little wills of Men and .....from the centre which we call the race of Man, let all of Love and light work out and may it seal the door where evil dwells. Let light and love and power restore planet Earth. Namaste."

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