

Amritam Gamaya

Lead us to Immortality (Part 1)

Chapter 17: Stillness of the Mind

Children, the mind is a flow of thoughts. There is never a moment when the mind stops thinking. At times the flow of traffic on the roads will be fast and furious, or, at other times, slow and leisurely. But it is not so with thoughts. Often, the flow of thoughts does not abate even in sleep. It is the mind's nature to brood over the past and to fret about the future.

Once, a middle-aged man was travelling in a train. A young man sitting beside him asked, "What's the time?"

Hearing this, the man said, "Shut up!"

Another passenger witnessing this interaction asked, "He only asked you for the time. Why do you need to get so angry over such a simple request?"

The man replied, "Yes, he asked only for the time. Suppose I tell him the time. He will start talking about the weather. He will then talk about the headlines in today's newspaper. He will talk politics next. Then he will ask about my family. I might then inquire about his family as well. Having thus become acquainted with each other, I might invite him home after disembarking. He might even spend a night there. I have a beautiful daughter, who might fall in love with him. Or he might fall in love with her. I shall never agree to my daughter marrying a man who does not even own a watch. This is why I shut him up right at the start to avoid any further conversation."

If someone asks for the time, we can either tell him the time or keep quiet. Was there any need for this man to imagine so much of the future? Because of the conflict in his mind, the other passengers also lost their peace of mind.

If the mind says 'stop' while we are walking, our legs will stop moving immediately. If the mind says 'stop' while we are clapping, the hands will stop moving at once. However, if we tell the mind to stop, will it? No. That said, we should be able to stop the mind. That is why we practice meditation. Just as we use a remote control to turn the television and other electric appliances on and off, meditation can help us bring the mind under our control.

Above all, we need a still mind to realize our true nature. We can enjoy supreme bliss and peace only in that stillness. May my children be able to awaken to such a state.

- Amma