

state of the soul (comparable to the deep-sleep state of man), until it has gained full gross consciousness (comparable to the wide-open eyes of man in the awake state) while experiencing the gross world, the soul is One—indivisible, infinite, formless—and is eternally in the Over-Soul.

Throughout the whole process of evolution, reincarnation was an absolutely spontaneous outcome of the first urge, manifested in the unconscious soul, to become conscious of its eternal and infinite Self.

As has been mentioned already, we can now understand that the cycle of evolution of consciousness of **soul** evolved further and greater **consciousness**, together with the evolution of **forms** of higher and higher types, while exhausting the impressions of the dissociated forms of lower types.

Thus the evolution of consciousness of soul apparently causes the soul to identify itself with, and gather varied innumerable impressions of, higher and higher gross species of forms of the gross world.

The clean-cut and major concrete gross forms (after the most-first seven major, most abstract gaseous and fluid forms) with which the consciousness of the soul associated (with every leap of greater and greater consciousness) are separated by the seven leaps from stone to metal, from metal to vegetable, from vegetable to worm, from worm to fish, from fish to bird, from bird to animal and lastly from animal to human being.

The most-finite first impression of the first urge gave to the unconscious soul the most-finite first consciousness. Gradually, varied impressions gained greater finite consciousness for the soul, and eventually the evolution of consciousness was complete when the soul identified itself with the most-first human-form.

In human-form the soul achieves full and complete consciousness.

Therefore the soul, having now gained full and complete consciousness in human-form, does not need any more or any other higher forms to evolve consciousness.

This consciousness is full and complete.

Though this soul has gained full and complete consciousness, it is still not at all conscious of its Self as One, indivisible, eternal

and infinite, and does not experience infinite knowledge, power and bliss. But it is only fully conscious of its identity with human-form and its varied aspects, and experiences the gross world in full.

The soul with full consciousness is still unconscious of its original infinite state because of the unwanted (though necessary) burden of the gross impressions of the human-form from which the consciousness of the soul dissociates as that form drops dead. These impressions, of the human-form now dead, still cling to the full consciousness gained; and, as usual, the consciousness of the soul centralizes itself in these gross impressions of the human-form just dropped.

In trying to unburden consciousness of these impressions, the gross consciousness of the soul tends the soul to experience and exhaust these impressions through innumerable opposite experiences taken through a series of reincarnations. In this process of reincarnation the consciousness of the soul, while trying to liberate itself from the burden of impressions, gets still further entangled at every stage of reincarnation. When a complete balance of experiences of opposite impressions is just about to be attained, it is just then disturbed by the consciousness of the soul associating itself with the next new human-form. Absence of this association would otherwise have neutralized the effect of the impressions by an equal balance of respective opposite experiences and would thus have liberated the consciousness of the soul from all impressions of opposites.

Here the simile of a “perfect balance” would be appropriate. The consciousness gained by the soul during the process of evolution resembles the indicator at the fulcrum of a perfect balance, and the two pans of the balance are filled with the unequal weights of opposites of impressions such as virtue and vice, etc.

In this way consciousness, acting like the indicator at the fulcrum, tries to gain equilibrium, which is impossible as long as there are in existence unequal impressions of opposites remaining to be experienced. It is therefore that the gross consciousness of the soul constantly seeks to experience the **predominant** opposite impressions in order to gain a total equilibrium of the impressions of opposites.

But the tragedy is this, that as soon as the gross consciousness of the soul tends to reach the zero point of equilibrium by gradually experiencing the predominant opposite impressions, it so happens that the consciousness of the soul invariably gets too engrossed in experiencing the predominant opposite impressions, and experiences them or exhausts them to such a degree that these predominant opposite impressions are now reduced (*i.e.*, through experience) to such a level, that those impressions which were over-balanced by the original predominant opposite impressions now become predominant; and a great disturbance of balance or equipoise occurs; wherefore consciousness, acting like the indicator at the fulcrum, swings or switches in just the opposite direction of its original experience.

It is at this juncture that the consciousness of the soul turns towards the experience of the **newly** predominant opposite impressions through another human-form. A human being takes form or birth as a medium to satisfy the demanding need of the consciousness of the soul, which now seeks to exhaust or spend or experience the more predominant opposite impressions.

It is but natural that the predominant qualities manifested now by this human soul will be in accordance with the predominant opposite impressions, of which this new human-form is but the mould.

Thus, in the process of reincarnation, the fully gross-conscious human soul, fortified with fully developed subtle and mental bodies, though unconscious of these, must necessarily experience countless varied experiences of impressions of opposites—the impressions which are diametrically opposite—in a chain of unending experiences.

Through its association with the gross body, the soul seeks to exhaust its previously accumulated opposite impressions, but rarely succeeds in doing so. On the contrary, it often accumulates **fresh** impressions of opposites. When the gross form is about to exhaust the impressions which brought it into existence, it is dropped. The residual opposite impressions lead the soul to heaven or hell, in accordance with the predominance of virtue or vice. In discarnate existence also, all opposite impressions seek to be exhausted

through the subjective experiencing of vivified impressions. But even here, in the state of heaven or hell, the equipoise of impressionlessness is generally approximated but missed, and the residual predominant opposite impressions goad the consciousness of the soul to associate with a new gross medium. Complete equipoise is lacking in death as well as in birth. It can only be achieved in the gross world. Therefore an endless chain of lives in the gross sphere is sustained by residual impressions, until consciousness succeeds in getting established in impressionless equipoise.

At every stage and in every state of reincarnation, the consciousness of the fully human-conscious soul gets firmly centralized in the more and more concentrated impressions of human-forms with which it has identified and from which it has dissociated. There seems to be no escape* from these concentrated impressions. These impressions must be experienced and exhausted, and the more the impressions are experienced the more the impressions become concentrated.

The only solution to “thin out” this concentration of impressions is for the consciousness of the fully human-conscious soul to experience increasingly and more rapidly these impressions in such a way, and in so great a frequency that every impression experienced, and the impression that this experience created, should be counter-balanced somehow by an opposite impression.

* Knowing that Creation is not an accident and that it has a deeper meaning than is apparent to the eye, the seers of all ages have time and again drawn the attention of the world to the fact that, although for a certain period of his life on this planet man may identify himself exclusively with the life of the senses, his transcendental destiny is God-realization.

Maulana Rumi, in his *Masnavi*, has a parable that illustrates this: The cub of a tiger happened to be reared amongst a flock of sheep. As the cub grew up, it developed all the traits of the sheep and grazed and bleated like them, so that it never thought of itself as anything different from the sheep. One day, however, a tiger from the jungle approached the one from the flock and said to him, “Do you know that you are a tiger like me, and not one of the sheep?” Thereafter he coaxed the strayed tiger to look at its image in a rivulet nearby, and succeeded in enlightening it as to its true nature.

The moral of this fable is that man also allows himself to be identified with the world of the senses and seems to have no way of escape. But there is a way of escape, for eventually a Master appears who enlightens him. He is then redeemed, and finds himself in the course of time face to face with his ultimate goal—God-realization.

Throughout the process of reincarnation this play of balancing and counter-balancing the opposites of impressions continues, and on this play is sustained the reincarnation process. On this play depends the eventual emancipation of the human-conscious soul from the chains of ignorance, and the ultimate realization of Self-consciousness.

Thus, in the process of reincarnation, the fully gross-conscious human soul must necessarily experience innumerable and diverse experiences of impressions of opposites—the impressions which are diametrically opposite—in an apparently unending chain of consistent experiences.

Therefore, while the gross-conscious human soul, which is now fully conscious, undergoes the experience of **opposites** in the gross world, the consciousness of the soul has to identify (or reincarnate) itself a number of times as a male, then as a female, and vice versa, in varied castes, creeds, nationalities, colours, and in different places; as rich one time and then as a pauper; sometimes healthy and sometimes sick, and so forth, all the while reviewing opposite impressions, creating opposite impressions, and simultaneously exhausting them by opposite experiences.

It is only through these diverse opposite impressions and their respective opposite experiences, that the gross-conscious human soul in the gross world could possibly one day, after millions of births and deaths, and through these opposite experiences of births and deaths, be able to balance or thin out the residual or concentrated opposite impressions.*

It is this cycle of deaths and consequent births of human-forms that ultimately results in inciting the fully evolved consciousness of the gross-conscious human soul to **involve** this consciousness to that depth where the fully involved consciousness of this soul realizes the reality of the infinite, eternal state of the Self.

* *Sarāpa arzu hone ne bandah kardiya ham ko*
Vagamah ham Kuda the gar dil-i be mudu'a hota.
 —Mir Taqi

“The fact that I am weighed down from head to foot with desires has made a slave of me; I should be God in reality, were my heart and mind desireless.”

This process of involution of consciousness gradually takes place as the gross impressions of the opposites gradually become fainter and less concentrated.

At this stage the consciousness of the gross-conscious human soul gradually gets dissociated from the gross world, as the involution of consciousness infolds, and gradually dissociates from experiencing the impressions of the gross world.

This involution of gross consciousness is only possible when the opposite impressions gradually, after a very, very long process, thin out through the process of unfailing reincarnation, which leads to the limit of gross impressions of the opposites and gross experiences of the opposites.