

## HONEY DROPS

( मधुबिन्दु )

### A Parable

There is a big banyan tree; on one of its branches there is a large honey comb, and from it some globules of honey are falling below. A man, having held on to one of the many falling branch-roots (वडवड्) of this great tree, is hanging on the same. Every now and then, while so hanging, he catches the honey drops in his mouth; and while relishing the taste thereof, he is saying "Oh! how sweet is this honey."

At that very time, a *Dewa* (देव—a denizen of heaven) descends in his celestial aeroplane and tells the man, "O Man! what are you doing?" The man answers, "Sir, I am enjoying the delicious taste of this honey!"

But the *Dewa* says to him, "Look, your condition is very precarious. The branch-root on which you are hanging is being gnawed at by two big rats. Below you is a great well. In the well, there are four big snakes who are staring at you with their red eyes, their mouths open and their tongues swishing in and out! As soon as you fall, they will swallow you. And look O Man! at the main stem of the tree. There is an elephant in rage and he is violently shaking the whole tree by his pulling and pushing of the main stem which he has wrapped in his long trunk. Because of this the honey bees are coming out and circling and stinging your body. Are you not in pain? Are you not afraid? So, why don't you, without delay, come with me and fly away. I have only come to save you, having seen your pitiable condition as I was passing above you."

The man replies, "O Lord! what you say is true, but let a few more droplets of honey fall; let me once more enjoy the taste of it. Then, I shall come and sit in your beautiful aeroplane."

The *Dewa* is very surprised by the answer and says to himself: "The man has no other way of saving himself, and by his good fortune he has found this vehicle. Even then, he prefers to wait! How sad! Is there no end to such foolishness!" And the *Dewa* flies away.

The parable is explained thus: The large tree is the World (संसार). The honey comb is the life that Man leads in it. The globules of honey represents his happiness and worldly pleasures (सुख) – through his attachments to wife, children, family, wealth, authority, prestige etc. The branch-root on which the Man is hanging is his life-span. The two large rats which are gnawing at the branch-root represent time as day follows night. The deep well that is below is the endless (bottomless) chain of births and rebirths. The four snakes are the four *Kashāyas* (कषाय – i. e. anger, pride, treachery and greed) which are the cause of this chain; alternatively they also represent the four types of future births (as *Dewa* – a denizen of heaven, or as human, or as *Tiryancha* (तिर्यञ्च) – animal / bird / insect / vegetable etc., or as *Nārakī* (नारकी) – a denizen of hell). The elephant represents death. The stinging bees are the painful experiences of existence in the shape of disease, anxiety, unhappiness due to things, people etc. The *Dewa* is the learned and compassionate *Gurū* (Teacher), and his celestial vehicle is the ten-fold *Dharma* (Religion) that is shown by the Omniscient.

This *Gurū* is telling the Man, "O blessed Soul (because you are capable of freeing yourself from all pain and anxiety), you have been very fortunate to have gained the very rare condition of birth as a

Human being; and yet what kind of a life are you leading?"

The man is replying, "I am caring for my son, my family; and in so doing, am enjoying the pleasures of this world."

At that time the compassionate *Guru* reminds him, "Your lifespan is decreasing day by day, and if you do not Liberate yourself through the *Dharma* of the Omniscient, then you shall be born again and again in the four types of birth (गति) through the eightyfour lakh kinds of wombs (८४ लाख बोनी), and shall meet continuous and endless pains and anxieties."

But the Man deluded by being attached to the pleasures of this world (i.e. of the senses etc.) tells him, "Sir, you are right – it is unlikely that I shall again and again be born only as a Human being (from which state only, is Liberation possible), nor would I, thereafter, be fortunate to find the right God, the right *Guru* and the right *Dharma*. But let me marry my children, let me earn a little more wealth, let me build a few more houses – and so let me earn the respect of society at large. Then I shall follow the *Dharma*."

The thoughtful reader should very deeply ponder over this reply and conclude whether there is any wisdom in it or not.

---

**Acknowledgement & Source :** This story is given in *Kuwalaya Mālā* and the translation was gone through by *Pujya Muni Shri Tattvānandavijayji* for which we are thankful to him.

---