

Am I lonely/Alone ...

Bliss of Aloneness is not solitary aloofness

Isn't it a mystery for all of us - **"How can bliss be in aloneness? How to relish the transcendence and tranquility, serenity of aloneness?** Perhaps yes!! It's a mystery and this inability to comprehend and appreciate 'aloneness' is what dissuades one, discourages one to realize the truth. What deters a human from grasping the bliss of aloneness, the glory of this state? It is ones' compliance with conventions, the conformity, that being alone is to renounce the world, to give up all possessions and relations to abstain from all worldly things one jeels may be aloneness calls for a determination to renounce the materialism of the society. But the very few, who follow this road less traveled, nourish their souls and are blissful, happy, easy going and more comfortable in their lives. They explore their lives living on this platform of aloneness. And on encountering aloneness, become fearless, which is a prerequisite to relish the essence of GODLINESS. Aloneness, fearlessness and godliness are all synonyms to a state where one is in unison, complete, open and one with all. There is no isolation, aloofness and self-enclosure, one becomes a cruise spreading gaiety. These are perhaps the treasures of aloneness. What are the milestones in the journey to aloneness from loneliness. There is a veil which often confuses are whether my aloneness is loneliness. But the gap between the two can be measured if we see the cause and effect of the two states, the easiness, aloneness brings or procreates and the misery, loneliness breeds. Aloneness is comprehended in affinity with Truth, whether that be from one religious texts, scriptures or ones voluntary exploration, but it should be truth, applicable to all in all spheres of life. And once one starts relishing the ripened fruits of this state he automatically sows fruitful seeds for the coming generations in his compassion, not duty. He respects the human race and feels responsible for it, he becomes a candle that lights others and consumes itself! Lets be on the headway of Aloneness and mark its milestones. The oneness which is a natural composition of every being. All of us are built up with this natural state within us it is only lost on the labyrinths of worldly vocations one losses it, the coverings which hide it and loneliness over shadows!! So, let's parade on this natural highway with a vigilance on the milestones. "Religion is a way of walking not a way of talking..." and therefore reminding oneself that, those accompanied by noble thoughts are never alone.

The essence of religion is the total concentration of our conscious being. A true freedom is in which one transcends duality and rises above all doubts of 'ifs' and 'buts'. Freedom from fear, effort, greed, envy and sorrow is mukti, salvation. But our contemporary scenario is devastating and is a tool of destruction. Floated with innumerable gurus, saints and varied faiths which propel human to indulge in never-ending rituals and practices and

claim to procreate riches and luxuries; prosperity and happiness; wealth and health, through this medium of religion. Religion by these entrepreneurs is exhibited as a factory which manufactures all that you desire, a multi-purpose machine, which creates all tangibles one can dream of. Mere chanting of mantras, recitation of prayers and illogical rituals are a gateway to prosperity as per the belief of these physical Gurus. The ones claiming this are strangling humanity, as they are murdering the human conscience. The system where ceremonies and ritualistic practices promise to flourish your business, houses are very self centred systems. While religion is synonymous to selflessness. And such system dissuades equality, as the pursuit of more is a movement, where one gets insensitive to others and is weighed down by his own desires. These Gurus and their promises propels, one towards an urge 'to become', 'to be somebody', 'outshine others' and grappled by their sainthoodness, one ruins his own life, being entrapped in the materialistic rat-race. Such a faith, belief which vows abundant riches, sons, high packet jobs, triumphs over court trails is a slow poison, a disaster to humanity, deviating man from his centre and pushing him towards greed and the chaos it breeds. Therefore one can't be free from the misery of bondages and ones aspirations exhaust him to take this road of Aloneness.

It's not ones way of day-to-day living which prevents him from the bliss of aloneness, but the inability to understand to savour aloneness and the liberation it begets. One often mistakes this path to be of renunciation, so he is either apprehensive to take this road or gets on the opposite track of Masochism. He thinks of abandoning his possessions, renouncing the world and moving to caves or mountains is religion, is the path of salvation. Unfortunately such beings, start condemning and restricting everything. They get very distant from the Creator, as they stop relating to His Creation. For them all relations, bondages are false, every relation will prevents your headway to Religiousness. So, they indulge in tapas, repetitive recitation of mantras, long periods of fasting, as for them depriving and starving themselves of their basic needs is Bhakti, or a path to attain Mukti, salvation to and get rid of this birth and death cycle. This masochism is a slow suicide.

But Gurbani, The Universal Truth, declares LIFE is for living live it to the brim. The true path is in the living, rejoicing, eating, fulfilling ones needs but along with awareness, by keeping ones conscience clear, without ill-will towards others and being more tolerant in accepting laws of nature and when this true knowledge – Gurmat – the right technique of living is grasped by the human intellect, it is liberation, salvation, mukti. One needs to be in the social system, making relations, keeping families not abandoning anything or renouncing but being free of the attachments, therein not clinging or dying for anything which beget anxiety and frustrations. Infact, Gurmat extols that renunciation is not living, but running, escaping. One might be alive, breathing, his heart beating, but this is just existing. If one is away from humans and this commune this society where we gather to share, care and be of use to others then living is futile. Like a ship is manufactured to sail

and not to be on the harbour, anchored all the time, else it's useless, if it can't move from the port. But when sailing all precautions are mandatory to avoid its sinking. The replica is with a human, who is not to be alienated from the society, but live, prosper and yet be clear in his vision, to maintain the serenity, tranquility of life, this is a touchstone or a milestone to aloneness, being in action without dependency, being in a system of interdependence and yet relishing the juice of aloneness which avoids the sinking of your conscience. 'To be conscious and cheerful is Living'.

Being 'alone' one musters up the courage to be in affinity with the Truth. Aloneness doesn't demand the dependency on crowds, as you hanker and revolve in your awakening and take support of the right direction and not people. In aloneness, the purpose of life is crystal clear, and hence no time is wasted in any futile activities. So, one doesn't be a part of the social evils and infact makes every effort to evade these marshes of wrong notions, impractical illogical beliefs and futile rituals, customs and ceremonies. In aloneness, ones self esteem is boosted with confidence and courage, and ones exclusiveness exhibits without effort. The petty mundane activities are never a part in aloneness, as, you are free from fear, effort, greed, envy and sorrow. This is liberation, aloneness, samadhi, salvation.

The purpose of Life is a life of Purpose. So in being alone, one need not depend on social approvals by showing off his wealth and humiliating or belittling the 'have nots' section of the society. Infact, in aloneness all discrimination elopes, evades and one moves with open arms to embrace humanity, makes all efforts to nourish humanity with abundant joys and gaiety.

Therefore, no isolation, no self-enclosure, and at the same time no dependency is aloneness. One is just alone from desires and depends only on the Truth. Satgur (The true knowledge) is the orbit for aloneness, then this satellite radiates happiness, joyfulness and cheerfulness on this earth, which becomes a heavenly paradise. Then one needn't recite prayers, asking for Mukti, as the Unison is 'here', in living. One is in unison with God as you live as per his laws. And, this fearless state can never be attained if one remains cocooned in ones own shell or cave. The state of Samadhi or meditation is a continuous activity, everything one does is with alertness, concentration. One might not sit in some posture of meditation to reach the spiritual heights, but the attention is net in everything he does and not scattered, one is completely aware of ones words, actions and behaviour. One becomes a being of the present moment. One is in the Now; neither in despair due to the past nor in anxiety of the future. The Now is the abode of Aloneness, this readiness to the present moments frees one from all worries, attachments, securities and one is self reliant. Such a being gets in synchronisation with life, laughter and tears are separate compartments now. There is no hypocrisy and duality. One surrenders before truth and it befriends one in taking away all the worries and apprehensions. Being in 'Now' is a reward

aloneness begets. And beings of such a state only can lay the foundation of a heaven on earth, their fearlessness, courage, bravery transcends to Beauty. Tasting this delicacy of aloneness, one becomes a treasure, an idol of love, a reservoir of compassion. He respects every being and feels responsible for all. The humility, sweetness and down to earth attitude are the strengths of aloneness and reflect the Oneness. This blissful state is the touchstone to Spirituality, which is one own journey, by oneself unaided, on your own. If one apes or follows somebody's footsteps, it will be a monotonous and a short lived fruit. As only in one's own journey is the fullness cherished forever. A person whose conscious awakens is forever and all his weakness like, envy, greed jealousy, possessiveness, harsh words are at bay and the fragrant being floats in the ocean in comfort and easiness. He is forever alert that my subconscious shouldn't be stained by any dirty act, my intellect befriends me to be out of clingings and be exclusively different. There is no ego in aloneness and every relation turns beautiful in the light of aloneness. This is the realization of God where the ego transcends to self esteem; lust to love, attachment to compassion, greed to gratitude and anger to courage. Such is the unison. May one transcends to this aloneness and its serenity....

Is this not moment, to lean back and savour, relish and enjoy the comfort of **aloneness** in our lives? Aloneness as comprehended by us, is not a passive activity but an easier, livelier, joyous living. The first half of this article before the intermission has been of a 'heavenly paradise', where one 'walks on the clouds' and is vibrant in ones Aloneness. But to wear the armour of Aloneness, one must never mistake it for '**Lonelienss – a sorrowful state of despair and emptiness**'. Aloneness is an enriching lifestyle, while loneliness sucks your gaiety. One often mistakes aloneness for loneliness as all the encyclopedias and dictionaries explain these terms as a sad, lonely, gloomy state, where one is left on his own, completely unaided. Thus, there is no law to differentiate between the two terms or their antagonism, neither are we striving to reflect that they are antonyms.

Our parade is to be alive. There is no condemnation, but just an understanding of the cause and the effect, what begets what? What breeds and procreates what in our lives? In this journey, we need to reflect upon who am I? Alone or lonely and then resolve through our own intellect what is the meaning of each torn and which mould should I possess, which is beneficial for my living...

So, after the intermission, the curtains are raised again and through this you can analyse what you are eating the riped fruit or the rotten one. Lets commence to nourish our lives...

Quiet often one is instigated by the monotony of life, expressing his restlessness, boredom, ennui and apathy. The comments or expressions are:

"I am tired!"; "It's so boring!"; "Life is static!"; "There is no movement!"; "Nothing new is happening in my Life!"; "There is

no zest, no fun!"; "Nothing is exciting in our country!"; "My parents are so boring, I can't sit with them!"; "I am tired of my wife!",

so on and so forth, the list is endless. And now to encounter it, what are our suggestions –

"Let's go out for a movie", "a new food patio has opened up, let's try that"; "I am going out to do window shopping!"; "My friends are waiting for me at the bar!"; "Let us arrange a picnic!"; "I am going to the cyber-care!"; "How about a discothèque today?"; "Why shouldn't I plan my holidays for Kathmandu, the Casino is really pepping!"; "Mom, I'll come home late tonight!"; "Our residence is in a shabby colony; Papa why don't you buy a house in a posh colony?"; "I need a new dress for my birthday, what will my friends say otherwise!"...

Is there an end to this?? Isn't one always entrapped in making the above statements. Perhaps yes! There is no way to nullify our such statures, but if one introspects and realize that all these are mere escapisms. We have tried so many amusements, so many sensations, we have exhausted ourselves emotionally and mentally and we are weary, dull in utter boredom. We always want to be busy and escape from being alone. We feel empty with ourselves, we can't fill our own void. We constantly fill these voids with people, television, computer, parties, shopping malls, casino, pubs, get-togethers like kitty parties, dance parties etc. But they all prove futile, as the pleasure obtained is very short-lived, very temporary. And again when one is on his own he is haunted by his loneliness. Being alone becomes a terror, rather than the aloneness as a treasure. To manage ourselves unaided is beyond our capacity, without these pastimes we are unworthy. This is the first symptom of loneliness, as you remain a wanderer, hovering in search of happiness... caught by boredom... we always need someone beside ourselves be it a TV, Radio, Mobile or my friend, *"I get bored alone"*. This state of loneliness is an outcome of our upbringing and our social scenario.

Our parents, our relatives, our friends have affected us, our conditioning since childhood breeds this loneliness. Therefore we must learn now that, the shots of aloneness were to be injected by birth, these vaccinations of aloneness are a must, else humanity would be crippled in despair and despondency. So, our society, the esteemed institutions, ones family and firstly all of us individually must learn to empathize with each other, be sensitive to each others needs and interests and then assist one another, help out and appreciate the talent. One might be good in painting, singing, writing, or whatever art one possesses must be pressed in,

drummed and well inculcated. Then, one would not be a bore to oneself, rather the hidden, latent talents would be instigated. When alone, one would paint ones mind, exhibit himself through his painting, recite a poem, write a book, learn music, endeavour to excel in sports, be health conscious and discover more for the advancement of oneself and his surroundings, thereby understand ones potential and the meaning of life, which is the cessation and ending of loneliness. Then, one doesn't sits back and crib that I am useless and unwanted, all these apprehensions evade, loneliness is surpassed and aloneness prevails, thus a happy civilization survives, actually lives on this earth. These are not only theories but they demand a practical approach in the actual living, which would exhibit from our deeds and our state of non-dependency. And this commendable attitude would make one discover and recognize his self-worth. Ones worthiness propels his self-esteem, which further drives one to aloneness.

This nutrient of self-esteem is of utmost importance, and all suffering from loneliness are devoid of it and they endlessly fill the void through tangible, materialistic assets and possessions. Their acquisitions are the signs for their worthiness, therein the pursuit of more webs them. They are forever yearning for flamboyance. If the neighbour possesses a big, luxurious car or a house, this dazzles them and they try to outshine the neighbour, compete with them and are envious of them. If their relative is a good figure in society, they are jealous of him, that 'why is he well-thought of'; they want to snatch his distinctiveness and crave to be somebody, this greedness sucks their empathy, even if their friends are draped in extravagant outfits, they get an inferiority complex, if being a visitor to someone house they are grappled by the crystals and crockery there. Therefore, materialism is a prerequisite to hold their stature in the society, the affluence is the key to their gaitety. In this rat race, they elope from their conscious inner selves. They cannot comprehend the fullness and completeness of their beings. Failing to nurture their own potential, they are unable to unfold their hidden talents, which are the true resources to enrich this earth and its inhabitants. The upliftment of humanity is dependent on each one of us, may we realize it!

Ones unworthiness, makes them vulnerable to social evils. As, they are not confident of themselves, they depend on crowds to approve them. This dependency entangles them in the vicious circle of a chaotic life. The fear of alienation haunts them, so the lonely ones agree to associate with alcoholics, players in the casino, dancers at pubs, and discotheques, their recognition is amidst these crowds only. So, even if they appear stout and strong in their facade, internally they are meek souls, COWARS. They never muster up the courage to stand by the Truth.

Their entire endeavour in life is endlessly accumulating wealth, arranging flamboyant parties, where they dance draped in dazzling outfits. This extravaganza is there entire mission of life, which buries their conscience and solace. These entrepreneurs are forever competing, therein never

satisfied and contended. They always have a phobia of society, and indulge in all the malpractices to gather the maximum. These assets beget them spouses for their children, a society of humans becomes a jungle. "To gather more for my child's trousseau, dowry I am ready to squeeze the other." Unfortunately, love, empathy, concern, brotherhood elopes and a pathetic zoo become our habitat. The advancement of competition, lures a new technology – **'Harmony withering away'** all beings are cocooned in their own shells, infested by rapes and crimes; for dowry we are killing innocent daughters, this fumigation, this epidemic takes its toll. We have forgotten to sing and sail in our own boats, the terror of loneliness, the despair; the emptiness; has sucked our oneness, the mountains and rivers, the lush green forests which used to nurture serenity and tranquility, disturb our peace of mind today. Walking beside the seashore is scary and haunting for us now. Wordsworth was nature's child, but we civilized beings are not ready to be nurtured by Nature ... and its beauty. We prefer imprisoning ourselves in our apartments with some pets ... Our spouse, children, parents are boring and pets dogs, cats are pepping, what a parody?? This loneliness and the feeling of being unwanted is the most terrible poverty and our over-nourished, obese society, which has excess to eat, big bungalows to live and 'a place on wheels' is their mode of commuting, cell phones, and the 'SMS' keeps us connected in this scenario of abundance, we all have become, poor and meek and greedy inside. 'Cowardice' shatters us, and this is an alarm bell for us. If possessing, acquiring and living with the maximum tangible items, we are afraid, apprehensive or bored; sad, lonely and depressed; Inferiority complex and Identity crisis clouds us – then kindly give yourself a jerk and get up! Just become conscious of yourself that, what hankers you to this groove of thought, be a witness to the cause and its effect. "I want to elope with my beloved!"; "I want to run away from my house!"; "I want to end myself!"; "Leave me alone in my dungeon!"; if such are the effects then, in need to check, where am I heading, what caused it?? "Only I know what's right!"; "Just obey what I say!"; again if this attitude of 'Me – MR. Right' persists then, our chauvinism and himalayan ego is hankering for self-praise then are bitten by this scorpio of loneliness. Therefore, whenever you feel empty, lonely or sad amidst this beautiful creation, then check yourself, that somewhere you are not comprehending the facts, one needs to know oneself better and even accept each others' differences. The entire craving and cribbing is due to our lack of respect for our brethren.

But we keep befooling ourselves remaining indifferent to this chaos and be in a state of self-enclosure, in seclusion, solitariness – this is a darker side of loneliness, where one is weighed down by his intellectual snobbery, perfectionism, 'I am different, so I need not mingle with others', 'I am the best', "They don't deserve me". This superiority complex breeds hatred for others, you look down upon the have-nots. "The comfort lies only with people of my stature!"; "I can only get along with people of my thinking and my age group!"; "I cannot club or socialize with varied groups!"; "I belong to the

affluent intelligentia!"; "my ancestors were from a royal clan!"; "I get bored with youngsters or with elders!"; I am highly educated they are illiterate, we cannot associate!". These impressions, this chauvinism is all a highway to loneliness. But do we ever sit back and reflect upon what made us board this train, what deviated me from my journey to aloneness, bliss. This misery is an indication of not accepting the truth. And since the path of spirituality is devoid of misery ... so let me abreast myself and get pregnant with the truth. This would make our vision clear, that all of us are interdependent, we are one unit, everyone is embedded with the same light, all are branches of the same tree, only we need to chisel ourselves and develop a conducive environment for each one of us, to be the lotus above marshes. No misery, no gaiety is in seclusion, its contagious, we are connected! To wipe out others misery is an inspiration of aloneness, living is comfortable in cheerful surroundings, selfish motives and interests are not natural to humans, therefore seclusion it doesn't nourish humanity. The selflessness, opens arms embracing the entire race is human, humanness, our natural being ... So, lets float naturally in a habitat which is common to all! Let us all strive to be a candle which lights others and consumes itself! Don't have inhibitions to this, this is SURRENDER and an indication of our strength and deep reverence for the TRUTH ... This awareness would wipe off all misery, turmoil, chaos, anxiety and frustrations. The urge would be to let others blossom, to free them to grow in their own fullness, the society and its conformity would not compel, impose anyone to be trapped in futile activities, customs and ceremonies.

In our loneliness, we complete, complain, criticize, defame others. In loneliness we are dissatisfied, discontented, rude and harsh towards others. Sarcasm, taunts, mockery are the symptoms of loneliness. But to get away with this terrain, to abandon this bereavement, to attain salvation (MUKTI) from this continuous conflict and constant agitation, one needs to switch. Switch off or shut that door and carve a new doorway and opening of samadhi, awakening, oneness. A liberation amongst all! where the clinging attachments evade, one is not enslaved, a maniac, but easy, light and flowing. "If someone close to me departs, I am not in vain". This is the transcendence from Loneliness to Aloneness... There is satiety, no complaint.

We all can be our own 'Saviours', if we introspect, contemplate and realize the truth... Else our insanity and madness would enlarge and procreate asylums. Even a criminal is put behind bars, to be alone and think what he did and then understand for himself, so should we! Being canner with knowledge of ourselves and astutes of truth, **our abode would be an incredible wonderland indeed!!!**

Bhupinder Singh
THE LIVING TREASURE