

THE SALT DOLL

(A Buddhist Story)

Note:

The story of the Salt Doll is an expression of the pantheistic philosophy underlining the thinking both of Hinduism and Buddhism. According to their way of thinking there is only one single distinct reality – that’s God – all the other things that exist, though they might look real, they are not so, they are only apparent. All differences between being and being are deceptive. There is only one entity, that’s God. According to the pantheistic thought, we come from God not by creation but by emanation – say, sort of evaporation.

Tough the water drops emanating from the sea by evaporation, look different than the sea, finally, sooner or later, losing their identities, they will return to the sea and merge into the one only existing reality - the vast ocean..

Pantheistic thought, likewise, will affirm that we humans - as long as we are away from God - labor under the illusion of enjoying consciousness and personal identities, but at the end, when, we shall dissolve in the immensity of God, our consciousness and identities shall vanish.

In the Buddhist Story, of the Salt Doll, the Doll found God only, by being dissolved in the immensity of God symbolized by the sea.

We however, give to the he Story of the Salt Doll a Christians reading. We claim that without losing our personal identities and consciousness – we shall find our final happiness in God alone. God created us to his own image and out of his bountiful love, He gave us a share in his own divine life.

Pantheism teaches that everything that exists is a part or a physical manifestation of God. Actually speaking we and that is, is God. Christianity teaches that God out of his goodness and love created us and He made us sharers - by grace – of his divine life. We are not God, but God made us divine.

The complete happiness and fulfillment, all of us are hankering for, cannot be found away from God. Our entire life should be a relentless search for God. It is only by surrendering ourselves to his divine will, that eternal happiness will be ours.

St. Augustine rightly wrote: Our hearts, oh, Lord are made for you, and they will never find rest until they the rest in you”

Opening Prayer

**Pacify yourself Relaxation or awareness exercises may help
Recite pray and sing:**

“Lose yourself in me,
And you will find yourself.
Lose yourself in me
And you will find new life
Lose yourself in me`
And you will find yourself
And you will live,
Yes, you will live in my love.

The Story

Once upon a time, after a long journey over mountain and valley, a Salt Doll reached the sea-shore. She was struck at that vast expanse of water. She had never seen the sea before. It was so large, so charming! She felt irresistibly attracted towards it. She stood on the shore, so firm and assured. The sea in front of her looked so vast, so immense, so inviting, so peaceful! She wanted by all means to know what the sea was.

Timidly, the Doll came closer to the sea and with a touch of curiosity asked the sea: "Who are you?" And the sea replied: "I am the sea." The Doll remarked: "Well, you only told me your name. I want to know more about you. I want and long to experience who you are! Show me more about yourself'."

The sea, mysteriously, answered: "I am just what I am. I am the sea." In perplexity, the Doll inquired: "I cannot figure out what you say you are. Yet, I want to know more about you. Shall I be ever to understand who you are?"

The sea replied: "You will never come to know who I am, unless you come closer to me, unless you touch me. ... "If you really long to know who I am, please, come forward and allow me touch you!."

The Doll came forward and fearfully touched the sea with one of her feet. Immediately, she experienced a very strange, but beautiful a feeling.... Something glorious she could not understand! . Then, she tried to move her foot away from the water, but her foot wasn't there any more! It had dissolved in the sea. In fright and disbelief, the Doll cried out: "What have you done to my foot?"

Yes, your foot is gone....You have given me permission to touch and experience who I am! If you wish to know more of me, and how wonderful is to abide in me, come closer now!

Be ready to lose yourself in me. Then, the Doll gradually, stepped deeper and deeper into the sea.

The deeper she went into the water that strange but wonderful feeling of joy grew stronger and stronger, she kept experiencing and more of the sea. When finally, when the Doll was about to be completely possessed by the sea, she exclaimed: "Now, I know what the sea is and what I am. We are one!"!

THOUGHTS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

What does the sea stand for in the story?

And the Salt Doll?

What was the Doll longing for?

What are we, all men and women, longing for?

When, how and where will our longings for happiness will be satisfied?

What is the cost of finding lasting in joy?

Explain the following sentences

One thing is to know about God and another is to know Him.

To know God and to experience Him, we have to allow Him to take hold of us.

Rather than trying to grasp God, we have to allow him to grasp us.

Rather than trying to find God, we have to let him find us.'

We have to lose ourselves in God, to be able to know him.

When the Doll was dissolved in the sea, she came to know the sea, yet she was not the sea.

God can possess us fully, we cannot fully possess Him.

Out love, God made us divine, not gods

God is for ever greater than us!

God is a mystery to be believed, not a theory to be proved

God has to be apprehended not with our intellect only, but with our entire being

To accept God's existence is neither rational nor irrational, it's just reasonable.

By losing ourselves in God, we shall find ourselves and all other things as well. ,