

Death, the Great Enigma of Existence

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hohu sBnw kl ryxukw qau Awau hmwrY pwis]

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Religion is founded in the search into life and death, and to understand death is to understand all. To experience death is to experience all, because in the experience of death, you not only experience life at its highest, love at its deepest; in experiencing death you enter into the divine. Death is the door to the divine. Death is the name of the door of God's temple. The meditator dies voluntarily. The mystic dies voluntarily - before the actual death. He dies in meditation.

What is the greatest mystery of existence? It is not life, it is not love - it is death. Science tries to understand life; hence it remains partial. Life is only a part of the total mystery - a very tiny, superficial part. It has no depth, and so science, too, remains superficial.

Life is finite, momentary. It is a breeze, it comes and goes... It does not abide. Hence science knows only the partial truth. What it knows is true, but it is not the whole truth. Love is midway. It is exactly in the middle of life and death. Love is far more mysterious than life itself, because it has life in it and something more; it is life plus death. And only those who are ready to die will know the life of love. Those who are afraid to die will never enter the mystery of love.

Art explores the world of love. Hence art is far truer than science, and it goes deeper than science. The vision of the artist contains much more than scientific knowledge can ever contain, although the way of art is totally different from the way of science. It has to be different. Science can be objective because it is peripheral. Art cannot be absolutely objective; it is 50% objective, 50% subjective. It cannot be free from the observer.

Religion is concerned basically with death. Death contains all: life, love and something more. Death is the culmination of all, the crescendo, the highest peak. Life is the base, death is the peak - love is somewhere in between.

The mystic tries to explore the mystery of death. In the process, he comes to know what life is, what love is. Those are not his goals. His goal is to penetrate death, because there seems to be nothing more mysterious than death. Love has some mystery because of death, and life also has some mystery because of death.

If death disappears there will be no mystery in life. That's why a dead thing has no mystery in it, a corpse has no mystery in it, because it cannot die any more. You think it has no mystery because life has disappeared? No, it has no mystery because not it cannot die anymore. Death has disappeared, and with death automatically life disappears. Life is only one of the ways of death's expression.

Lovers of God know a little bit of it because 50% of love is death. That's why love is very close to meditation. Devotees know something of meditateness; unawares they have stumbled upon it. They know silence, stillness, timelessness. But they have stumbled upon it - it has not been their basic search.

The mystic dies continuously and remains as fresh as dewdrops or lotus leaves in the early morning sun. His freshness, his youth, his timelessness, depend on the art of dying. And then when actual death comes he has nothing to fear; because he has known this death thousands of times. Such is the stuff of which martyrs are made.

He is thrilled, enchanted; he dances! Joyously he wants to die. So he dies without becoming unconscious, and he knows the total secret of death. Knowing it, he has the master key that can unlock all doors. He has the key that can open the door of God.

