

Hari Om!

Below is the parable of Jagad Guru Sri Adi Shankaracharya Maharaj's teaching to his disciple that we heard in satsang today. The image below is of the murti of Sri Adi Shankaracharya that graces our D.L.S. Headquarters' Vishwanath Mandir. This great teacher of Advaita Vedanta lived in the 8th Century A.D and was the organizer of the ten orders of sannyasins that he organized into four major monasteries (mathas). Our order is "Sarasvati" and we are associated with the first matha established by Sri Adi Shankaracharya, the Sringeri Sharada Peetham, located in Karnataka.

### H. H. Adi Shankaracharya Maharaj

Once, Adi Shankaracharya was sitting by a river with his disciples. The morning sun was slowly rising. The air was calm. Everyone was meditating — but one disciple's face clearly showed restlessness.

Noticing this, Shankaracharya gently asked, "Today your mind seems disturbed. What is troubling you?"

The disciple bowed his head and said, "Swami, whenever I sit for meditation, my mind refuses to stop. Sometimes devotion arises, sometimes anger, sometimes desires. Old memories come, and fears about the future appear. My mind does not listen to me. How can I control it?"

Shankaracharya smiled softly and said, "Do you see the river?"

"Yes, Swami."

"It is flowing, isn't it?"

"Yes, it never stops."

"Can its flow be stopped?"

"That seems impossible, Swami."

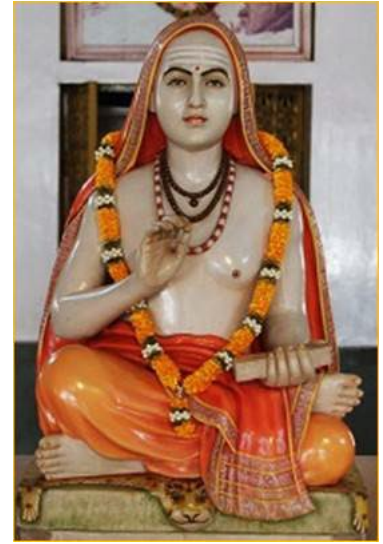
"And does the person standing on the bank get carried away by it?"

"No, Swami."

Shankaracharya said gently,

"The mind is like a river. It keeps flowing. Thoughts are its waters. You are trying to stop the water — that is why it feels difficult. You are not the water. You are the riverbank."

The disciple looked at him in surprise.



“The mind brings anger, desires, fears. Let them come. Let them go. Become their witness. When you observe them, they lose their power over you.”

Just then, a monkey appeared, jumping restlessly from tree to tree. Shankaracharya pointed toward it and said, “Do you see that? The monkey cannot stay in one place. The mind is even more restless. If you try to tie it down forcefully, it will run even farther.”

The disciple asked, “Then what should be done with the mind, Swami?”

Shankaracharya picked up a stone from the ground and said, “This stone is calm because it has no thoughts. But it is not intelligent. The mind becomes restless — that is natural. But you must become its master.”

He closed his eyes and instructed, “For a moment, close your eyes. Whatever thoughts arise, do not hold them. Do not suppress them. Simply watch.”

After a few moments, the disciple opened his eyes. A deep calm had appeared on his face.

“Swami... thoughts came... but I did not get involved in them. The moment I observed them, they passed away on their own.”

Shankaracharya said, “That is the secret of the mind. Do not try to control the mind. Understand it. The mind is not your enemy. It is a tool. When it joins ignorance, it becomes bondage. When it joins knowledge, it becomes liberation.”

The disciple then asked, “Swami, will there ever be a day when the mind completely stops?”

Shankaracharya looked toward the river and replied, “When a river merges into the ocean, it no longer flows as a separate stream. When the mind knows its true Self, it no longer rises as restless waves. On that day —

Anger may arise, but it does not stay.

Desire may appear, but it does not bind.

Fear may come, but it does not remain.

There, the mind becomes the servant —  
and the Self becomes the king.”

The disciple bowed his head.

That day he learned the way to master the mind — not by force, but by understanding.

Hari Om Tat Sat