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| Spirituality


Ramifications of retribution

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A criminal doesn't just drop from the sky. He is produced in an ecosystem, which refers to how we are deciding to be, right now. Look at the common man: he might not violate the written law frequently, but does he not carry the desire to really get and enjoy much that is forbidden by the law?

It's the same story being tragically repeated in every such case. And the case need not even be of sexual assault. Crime is multifarious and diverse, and happens in very unimaginable and subtle ways. So firstly, it is not about one particular victim. Secondly, it is not even about rape alone. It's about the overall context of crime.

Blaming the individual, system and the entire society

We punish the one who has committed the act, and we often convince and console ourselves that the problem has been explained. Another approach is to blame it on the system. And then there is the third approach that talks of social attitudes, patriarchy and economic disparities: here, people say that unless there is a social transformation, things cannot improve. In each of these three approaches, one draws the benefit of victimisation. The finger points towards somebody else. To punish the other is to absolve oneself of all responsibility. If we don't tell ourselves that things have been corrected by punishing the other, we will be forced to face the mirror. We will be obligated to enquire into ourselves, and we don't want to do that.

The common man: A respectable criminal

It would be a great mistake to treat a criminal as an aberration. We say that these are fringe elements, they are not what the mainstream is; they are the outsiders. But they are not the outsiders! They are very much related to how each one of us is. The face of the criminal is just our own criminal face that we usually keep hidden. The common man himself takes pleasure in crime. just doesn't have the guts or the safe position to commit larger crimes. So, there are those who commit crimes and those who are waiting to commit crimes, they're waiting to gather more power. There is a huge section of

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class urge to have a government job. Nobody openly says that he wants to be a government officer because it offers big money. But don't we know why there is such a mad rush after government jobs in India? The common man aspires to be a criminal, albeit a respectable criminal.

The entire mankind is in ICU

The common man is indoctrinated in materialism. If material becomes everything, then the woman's body or the man's body or the animal's body too will be looked at as just material. The entire society is rushing after the material. And we very well know the relationship between material and the woman's body. Don't we see how all these are interconnected?

After all, the final consumer of all kinds of nonsense is the common individual. That is where the change must happen. And it is not impossible; this is not some dream or utopia. It is doable. Deep inside each of us is craving for it. Its time has come. Not that there was any point in history when its time was not there. But right now, we need that revolution in individual consciousness. We always needed it. But today it's not even a general need; it's an emergency requirement. Today entire mankind is in ICU, the entire planet is in ICU. That's the emergency medicine we need.

Look at what happened in India. Eighty percent of the public outcry was because of the rape. Only 20 percent was because of the murder. It is rape that interests people. Are people really interested in the welfare of women? No. Look at their approach towards women. But the moment a woman gets raped, there is a big hue and cry. That will tell you our approach towards woman's sexuality and the woman's body. We don't bother for their education. We don't feel ashamed when we make our little daughters dance in reality shows to loathsome Bollywood songs. A woman is not allowed to work after marriage. Nobody cares. It doesn't make headlines at all. A woman has an unsafe work environment. Doesn't matter, doesn't make headlines. A woman dies during childbirth. Who bothers? Public spaces are not women-friendly. Nobody is concerned!

What is the solution?

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you can change the actor, then all the actions will change. Crime is an action. Who is the actor? The actor is who you think you are: your identity. That has to be changed. Fathers, mothers and kids: all have to change. The kind of stuff people allow their kids to watch on television, the kind of movies that are allowed to become blockbusters; they have to be sharply looked at.

Justice is not revenge. Justice has to do with justness. Justice can't really be delivered in a courtroom, unless mostly superficial. Real justice happens only when you are just to yourself. Do justice to your own life and you will probably have a just society where there is little exploitation of the disempowered sections. All will be fixed on its own once there is a fundamental shift at the level of individual consciousness. All depends on your intention. In your own self-interest, please be intended rightly.

The indispensable shift in consciousness

❖ Unless we see what we are doing in our own households, it would be largely hollow to wish for an end to crimes. We will have to raise the child differently. And to raise the child differently, we will need to be different.

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❖ All will be fixed on its own once there is a fundamental shift at the level of individual consciousness. All depends on your intention.

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