

THE SALT DOLL

Inspired on a Buddhist Story by P.Ribes, s.j.

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 indistinct reality – that's God – all the other things that exist, though they might look different, they are not so, they all are only manifestations of the one and same reality, namely God. All differences between being and being are deceptive. According to the pantheistic thought, everything comes or flows from God, not by creation but by emanation

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

Pantheistic thought, likewise, affirms 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; finally, our consciousness and identities shall vanish.

In the Buddhist Story, of the Salt Doll, the Doll finally, found its identity with God, by being dissolved in the immensity of God, symbolized by the sea.

We, however, try to give to the Story of the Salt Doll a Christian reading. We claim that without losing our personal identity and consciousness – we shall find our final happiness in God alone. God, out of his bountiful love, created us to his own image

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

The complete happiness and fulfillment, all of us are hankering for – throughout our existence on earth - cannot be found away from God. Our entire life – consciously or unconsciously - is a relentless search for God. It's only by surrendering ourselves to God's 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

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 discovered. She had never s

een 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 embrace 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 out 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 embrace me and experience who I am! If you wish to know more about me, and how wonderful is to abide in me, come even closer to me 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. 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!"!

Prayer

"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.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

- 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 embrace us and 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.
- God will possess us fully, yet we shall never fully possess Him.
- Out love, God made us into his image; He made us divine, like unto Him, but not God himself.
- God is for ever greater than us!
God is a mystery to be believed, not a theory to be proved
- \W cannot apprehended God with our intellect, 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 in Him and all other things as well.

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