NEVER LOOK BACK

By Ammaji, Yogacharini Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani

Get thee behind me, Satan!” Most of us will know who spoke those famous words. Jesus was a forward looking man, a sadhu, a man who moved “straight ahead”.

“Devil” is the word “lived” spelled backwards. Being tied to our Samskara by our clinging to the past, the days we have left behind, is to be bound on the grinding wheel of eternal misery. What is gone, is gone, and all our tears cannot wash out even a whit of it. Looking backwards implies to be stuck in the mud of mundane. Turning our head back, we cannot see where we are going and thus will fall into many a pit! We do not see the present face of those we live with. We see only what they have been, an accumulation of disappointments, treacheries, thefts, betrayals. The present never stands a chance. It is too fragile, too vulnerable. The past is as hard as a rock. It will endure forever!

The past is history. The future is a mystery. But the present is a gift, that is why it is called “the present!” History belongs in the dusty shelves of old libraries. The future belongs to science fiction. But the present is here and now, in this fleeting moment. We cannot hold it. We can only blow it a kiss as it flies!

Many there were who looked back, only to see their own doom!
Lot and his wife are instructed by God’s angels to flee the sinful city of Sodom with the condition. “Don’t look back.” However, consumed by curiosity, Lot’s wife looked back and was turned into a pillar of salt (Genesis 19:15-26).

Nor were these the only ones who looked back.

Master-musician Orpheus traveled to the underworld to get back his dead wife. Hades and Persephone said that he was allowed to take Eurydice back to earth on one condition: “don’t look back until you both reach the upper world.” Unable to restrain himself, he looked back before he reached the upper world only to see Eurydice vanish forever.

Again, we hear the voice of Jesus from the past, whispering words of advice as we walk our weary road.

“No one who puts his/her hand to the plough and looks back” is fit for God’s service (Luke 9:62).

Unfortunately, sometimes Karma forces us to walk in bondage with others who walk backward, even as we struggle to move forward! Such persons rationalize their clinging to the past: Tradition, comfort, familiarity, respect for forebearers, for customs, for elders… this is a cunning disguise for laziness, ill-will, lack of creativity, small-mindedness, fear of the new, bondage to evil thoughts, words, deeds, ignorance, mean-mindedness… the list of vices is endless, in those insistent on “looking backwards.”
The evolutionary thrust is always “full steam ahead!” With eyes wide open, chin up, shoulders back, head turned firmly to the front, the noble soul “looks always forward” to that promised bliss of higher states of consciousness. “Get thee behind me Satan! I move forward to the light.” This is the battle cry of the Adikaran, the soul fit for the higher life.