

## **Title: What Is the True Self? The Supra-Rational Faculty**

### **H1 What Is the True Self? What Type of a Creature Is the Human Being?**

We are going to introduce the 'true self.' But do we have a 'fake self' too? Unfortunately, yes. Humans, just like any other phenomena, can have a fake version, but what does this mean? A simple definition of being fake is that the appearance of something contradicts what it actually is. In other words, an object, a phenomenon, or even an individual shows outward characteristics which they totally lack, or their quality does not match the claimed standard. In other words, while the phenomenon appears to be similar to the original version, it differs significantly in terms of function. Fake people are the same. Outwardly, they appear to be human, but inwardly, they are not.

You may have heard these statements which are used to describe some individuals:

- He has a heart of stone!
- He has only grown as tall as a tree!
- He is worse than an animal!
- How easy it is to become a scholar; how difficult it is to become a human!
- And so forth...

In fact, these statements are used as a metaphor to show a person is not a human inwardly. It may be interesting to note that these descriptions are totally rooted in reality. In other words, a human being can really be at the level of a stone, plant, or animal. He may even have high levels of education and be called a **scholar**, but he may still be devoid of humanity. The fact that we use these

statements to talk about the weakness in our human dimension is one side of the coin, but our definition of the **being human** is a key issue that needs to be addressed.

## **H2 Who Is More Human?**

What do you think about the following statements?

- The wealthier, the more human.
- The more attractive, the more human.
- The more educated, the more human.

No wise person approves of the above statements because we all know that being human is a concept that extends beyond these notions. As previously mentioned, our existence consists of two parts: false and true. We also mentioned that we are inanimate beings, plants, animals, and angels; these dimensions give us different existential properties. Having each of these properties in its own place is good and necessary for the growth and elevation of the human (spiritual) dimension of our existence.

However, there is a fundamental requirement: We must attend to each of these dimensions in its own place and according to its real value; we must have a balanced relationship with them. Otherwise, we will not be a human anymore and will take on the characteristics of the dimension to which we have allocated the most value, time, and money.

## **H2 Being Human Is Linked to Our Supra-Rational Faculty**

We may doubt the existence of anything, but we cannot **doubt our own existence**. We are always present to ourselves, and we are never outside or next to ourselves. The 'I' remains unchanged from the beginning to the end of our lives. The 'I' of today is the same as the 'I' of yesterday and the 'I' of twenty years ago. This 'I,' of course, cannot be tied to the body. Our body parts wear out or become deformed over time, but the 'I' does not. Furthermore, we attribute body parts to ourselves and say: **my hand, my leg, my brain**, etc.

What gives us unity of personality and a fixed 'I' is our soul. As previously explained, the soul has various dimensions and faculties, many of which are shared between humans and other beings. There is only one faculty that belongs to us and gives us advantage over other creatures; that is, the **supra-rational faculty** or the **human (spiritual) dimension** of our existence.

The supra-rational faculty is potentially present in all humans and is the origin of our desire for the infinite. Due to having this faculty, we have an unlimited capacity for growth and can pass through different degrees of perfection up to infinity. This is while the rank of other creatures is fixed, and they cannot go beyond it. The supra-rational faculty forms our human dimension and 'true self.' That is, the only and the most significant difference between human beings and other creations of God is that we have a human (spiritual) dimension. We are the noblest of all creatures because there is something within us that is exclusively ours, and no other creature shares it with us. Apart from our human or supra-rational dimension, everything else is related to our ego<sup>1</sup> or false self.

## **H2 Examining the Root of the Word "Supra-Rational" from a Philosophical Perspective**

---

<sup>1</sup>. In these articles, ego means the false self which refers to our gender, individual and social characteristics, and personality traits. It is unique to each individual and changes over time.

There are different reasons why the human dimension of our existence is called supra-rational. All these reasons ultimately encompass one single concept.

1. Being supra-rational means that the status of the human soul is higher than that of angels, who are pure intellect.
2. Each angel is a manifestation of God's names, but Adam was taught all the divine names and became the manifestation of all those names; as a result, he was superior to all angels and other intellectual beings.

The supra-rationality of the human soul implies that there are no limits to our soul which can stop us and no fixed rank beyond which the soul cannot go. However, other creatures have a specific existential rank. In other words, all creatures except the human being have a fixed rank and cannot change from one creature to another. It is only the human being who is continuously growing in his spiritual dimension, transforming from one level of existence to another [higher] one, and never stopping at any level.

The rationale behind presenting these points here is that you may be unfamiliar with the term 'supra-rational' and may be wondering, "Is there anything above the intellect at all?" In everyday language, we use the word 'spirit' instead of spiritual dimension, supra-rationality, the soul, or the heart, which is not the precise term in philosophy. However, it may help your mind to relate better to the content presented here. The supra-rational faculty exists in all human beings without exception. The faculty is the origin of some existential effects (*athar*),<sup>2</sup> which we will discuss below.

---

<sup>2</sup>. Every creature in the world has its own existential effects. For instance, fire produces heat and causes a burning sensation, and is never devoid of these effects of its being. Similarly, water is never without its existential effects such as "wetness", or its ability to quench thirst.

## **H2 The Supra-Rational Faculty, Spiritual Dimension, or Heart: The Exalted Dimension of Human Existence**

What does the true perfection of a human being lie in? In addition to those dimensions of our existence that we completely know and believe in, all of us have a higher and exalted dimension called **supra-rational** dimension or the **heart**, which constitutes our **true self**. It is because of this dimension that we are called human beings and the noblest of all creations. Angels also prostrated to this dimension of our existence.

Our heart, like other dimensions of our existence, loves perfection, but only the Absolute Perfect, and it is not satisfied with anything less than that. It will not calm down until it reaches the **Absolute Perfect** and fully embraces it with its whole being, even if it has attained perfection in all other dimensions. The **Absolute Perfect**, as its name suggests, is All-Perfect; He is without any defect or limitation, and the perfections of other creatures are just an overflow of His infinite perfections and emanate from Him. This being is none other than **God**.

Therefore, it is only through close connection with God, our love for Him, and manifesting His attributes that we are called **human beings** and become **superior to** other beings. Clearly, anyone who has not developed his supra-rational faculty, does not know God, or does not want to know Him is no longer called a human. But rather, he is a bipedal creature that is at its best an inanimate object, a plant, an animal, or an angel, and at times lower than these.

## **H2 The Effects and Perfections Originating from the Supra-Rational Faculty**

Human beings love infinite perfection. They look for infinity in everything they seek: infinite knowledge, infinite beauty, infinite power, infinite wealth, etc.

Seeking the infinite cannot be denied. With no exception, everyone loves infinite perfection, and there is no one who likes imperfection.

Seeking the infinite is rooted in our supra-rational faculty, which forms our human dimension and the truth of our existence. We share some dimensions with other creatures, but our **human-ness** has nothing to do with those aspects. What sets us apart from other creatures and makes us superior is our **supra-rational** faculty.

As we stated before, each dimension of our existence has its own particular partner with which it is compatible. The inanimate dimension of our being seeks inanimate assets like money, houses, and cars. Our vegetative dimension loves vegetative qualities such as beauty, child bearing, etc.

Our **supra-rational** dimension too has a beloved, who is **God**. God is infinite, and imperfection and deficiency are absent from His Essence. He is Absolute Perfection, and all other perfections originate from him. He is the source of power, wealth, knowledge, beauty, and any other perfection; He is the only being who can quench people's thirst for the infinite.

Human beings have no other beloved except God. It is worth noting that we are talking about the **human being**, not a stone, plant, or animal! If a person reaches the status of a '**human being**' and brings his supra-rational potential into actuality, he will realize that he has no other beloved except God. He will realize that nothing other than connection with God will give him happiness and inner peace.

He will not be satisfied with any limited perfections since he is not of their type. Those who have an unquenchable thirst for wealth, power, and knowledge and try to find happiness by acquiring these assets are seeking God deep down.



However, they are not aware of it. They do not know their true self and try to satisfy their desire for infinity through such limited perfections.

Each of us is like a country, every part of which is governed by a certain governor. All the governors are useful and needed as long as the supra-rational faculty runs the country. As soon as a governor crosses the line and takes control of the whole country, the security of the country will be undermined, and evil forces will start to take over.

Inanimate, vegetative, animal, and intellectual beings are respectable, provided that God is given priority over all. If we pursue other perfections for the love of God and winning His satisfaction, all of them will lighten up our heart; otherwise, no matter what status we reach, we will be left with nothing but sadness and anxiety.

The human heart is like a child who always cries for his mother, and when she is present, he feels secure and can enjoy everything. But when he gets away from his mother, even the most interesting entertainments in the world cannot calm him down. The heart is all a person has. It longs for its true love and is never deceived. So he cannot ignore his heart's need for God, even if he tries to.

If you have any questions about these concepts, please feel free to share them in the comments section. We would love to find the answer together with you.