

8<sup>th</sup> June 2022

## Control

**“He who, dwelling in all things, yet is other than all things ... who controls all things from within – He is your soul, the Inner Controller, the Immortal.”**

*Hindu Sacred Treatises in Sanscrit, Brihadāranyaka Upanishad*

After the excitement of Pentecost, I find myself in calmer mood and reflecting on the Spirit of God in a different way. But first, a true story ...

On 11<sup>th</sup> September 1897 the *Morning Post* reported on a case before London's Marlborough Street Magistrates' Court. George Smith, a cabdriver from Harrow, had been driving along Bond Street at 12.45am, when he was seen by a policeman to “swerve from one side of the road to the other” before mounting the pavement and crashing into a house. Smith wasn't in control of his cab because he was drunk. At Vine Street police station, a surgeon was called, certified Smith's state of inebriation and said he “shouldn't have been in charge of his cab.” Smith asked the policeman: “How fast was I going?” “At the time, I think about eight miles an hour,” was the reply. Smith pleaded: “I was going up an incline and could not have been doing more than six miles an hour, as eight miles an hour is the fastest these cars can travel.” In court, he was fined 20 shillings, the Magistrate remarking: “You motor-car drivers ought to be very careful. The police have a very happy knack of stopping a runaway horse, but to stop a motorcar is a very different thing.” George Smith, therefore, was, in 1897, the first person in the UK found guilty of drink driving.

No one likes to be out of control, and, indeed, there are some circumstances, like Smith and his driving, when being out of control is a positive danger. The Hindu text from the millennium before Christ which is quoted above offers insights into the kind of control we really need for our fullness of life. Not for these ancient sages a control that comes externally, to influence, guide or direct. But for them it was a control that comes from within. Finding that “inner controller” is the key to righteous living and being at one with yourself and the world around you.

God dwelling within you? The Spirit as your inner controller? The Immortal that has always been with you and that you can discover in yourself? Now, there's a reflection on Pentecost that I really like ...

### **A prayer for today**

*God, my “inner controller”? Goodness!*

*Maybe I should take heed of that before I veer off the road!*