

27. The Sadhguru speaks

THE Macrocosmos and the microcosmos---the *Brahmaanda* and the *pindanda*---the Universal and the individual---all arise from the One Truth. They are manifestations and emergents of that Truth, which is not affected by either. That Truth is known as *Brahman*. When this unmodifiable, transcendent and immanent *Brahman*, instead of just 'being,' decides on 'becoming,' It is best designated as 'God,' '*Ishwara*' (Almighty). The Divine ground of everything is the spiritual Absolute, called *Paramaathman* (Supreme Absolute Self). It is also the ground, the base, the core, the reality of man.

But in spite of 'becoming,' which is only an illusion imposing multiplicity on the One Being, It remains One. So long as inquiry is postponed, only the multiplicity is cognised. The multiplicity is neither real nor unreal. It is relatively real, temporarily real, pragmatically real, *mithya*---not *sathya*---but an amalgam of *sathya* (truth) and *asathya* (untruth), apparently real but fundamentally unreal, real for most practical purposes (*vyavahaara*) but unreal when the basic nature is unravelled. *Mithya* is the mixture of *sathya* and *asathya*, the knowledge of the serpent which is negated when the knowledge of the rope is won.

***Maaya* makes us believe the world is real**

The clouds appear to be stuck to the sky; so, too, *maaya* (the tendency to conclude that what the senses tell us is true or to project our preferences and prejudices on to the world around us) gives us an untrue picture of *Brahman*. It makes us believe that the world is real. Its impact warps our reasoning process, our sensory impressions and our views on God, on creation and on man. It spreads before us a diversity which tantalises and deceives.

The basic Truth upon which *maaya* (divine illusion) projects its kaleidoscope is described by seers as *Sath-Chith-Aanandha* (Being-Awareness-Bliss Absolute). This does not mean that *Brahman* has three attributes, namely: It exists beyond time and space; It knows and can be known; It is the source and acme of Bliss. They are not three distinct characteristics; they indicate the One, of which the three can be grasped by experience---not by words, for words can only recoil before that Godhead. We cannot assert that *Brahman* (Supreme Being) belongs to a class or genus, nor can it be defined by the three basic qualities. It cannot be described as performing any specific activity, for It is ever motionless. Nor can It be explained in terms of relationship with other entities for It is One, without a second.

Maaya is only the Divine Will that inaugurated the manifestation of the cosmos (*Ekoham, Bahushyaam*---I am one; I will be many). *Maaya* (apparent deluding reality) inheres in every being and every activity of that being; it has three aspects of achievement through the three modes and moods of that Will---the *saathwik*, the *raajasik* and the *thaamasik* (the calm, contented, equanimous mood; the potent, passionate mood; the inert, slothful, sluggish mood).

***Maaya* is the Will that causes the variety**

When *maaya* prompts us into the *saathwik* mood of that Will, we become progressive seekers of *jnaana* (spiritual wisdom) that reveals the Unity. When we are overwhelmed by the *raajasik* quality of that Will, we are deluded into the pursuit of worldly victories and ephemeral wealth and renown. The *thaamasik* nature of that Will seeks the quickest and easiest ways of happy living. These are the reflections in our minds of the basic modes of the Will that *Brahman*

assumes when It is moved by the primal urge to express Itself. The facets of that Will are called *Jnaana shakthi*, *Ichhaa shakthi* and *Kriyaa shakthi*.

The three modes affect beings and things in various proportions and permutations, and so we have all the variety and diversity of the objective world. *Aathman* (whether individualised or universalised), is One only. The *jeevaathman* (individual soul) and the *Paramaathman* (Supreme Soul) are one and indivisible.

The philosophers of all lands and all times have sought to discover the truth about God, the objective world and man, as well as their mutual relationship. *Maaya* is the Will that causes all three. It is a clear flawless mirror. When the *saathwik* nature is reflected in that mirror, God results; when the *raajasik* nature is reflected, *the jeeva* (individualised Self) results. It is ever-anxious to grow, to grab, to survive and to be secure. When *thaamasik* nature is reflected, matter (the objective world) is the result. All three are *Paramaathman*, but they derive their reality as Its reflections. When undergoing reflections, they attain different forms and combinations of characteristics. The One becomes many; every one of the many is Real only because of the One in it. *Maaya* too is a component of the One; by the emphasis on that component, the One transformed Itself into the many.

The One comprehends all the images

We now know that *maaya* is like a mirror. The mirror reflects within itself all that is before it. The convexity or concavity of the mirror, or the covering of dust that might have settled on it, will certainly blur the reflected image, but it cannot distort the objects themselves. *Ishwara*, *prakrithi* and *jeeva* (the Almighty God, objective world and individualised self), all three are images of *Paramaathman* (Supreme soul) reflected in the mirror of *maaya* and warped by the *gunas* (qualities) that tarnish the surface of the mirror. It is the mirror that pictures the One as many. But the One is ever One.

The One is comprehensive of all this. So It has no wants, no desires and no activity to realise anything. Shri Krishna tells Arjuna, "*Na me Partha! asthi karthavyam, thrishu lokeshu kinchana*" (There is nothing I have to do in any of the three worlds), He has willed the world as His Sport. He has laid down that every deed must have its consequence. He is the dispenser of the consequences, but He is not involved in the deeds.

None can discover the beginning of *maaya*

Therefore it becomes plain that neither the personalised God, nor the individualised self, nor even the objective world can ever succeed in discovering the beginning of the *maaya* which brought them into existence and started the chain of 'act-consequence-act.' Nevertheless, one can succeed in knowing when *maaya* will end! When will it end? When the objective world is ignored, set aside, denied or discovered to be immanent in the Divine, the *jeeva* (individualized being) is no more. When the *jeeva* is no more, the *Ishwara* (Cosmic Being or personalized God) is also superfluous and disappears. And when the *Ishwara* has faded out, the *Brahman* (Absolute Reality) alone Is. Where there is no child, how can a mother exist? It is a word with no significance. When a personalised God, a personality separate from the rest, called *jeeva*, and the mental creation of *that jeeva*, called *prakrithi* (the objective world), are non-existent in the developed consciousness of man, *maaya*, the progenitor of all three, cannot persist.

When space is enclosed in a pot, it appears limited and small. But once released from the *upaadhi* (container), it again merges in the infinite sky. The sky is not reduced or transformed in shape or quality by being held in the *upaadhi*. So, too, the One *Aathman* that is pervading the bodies and lives of billions of beings does not get affected by the *upaadhis* (living beings) to which it adheres for some time.

Many are affected by the problem of what caused the Cosmos. How did it come into being? They advance various theories and lay down many opposing hypotheses. But there is no need for seekers to beat about the bush so much. Just as a dream results when one is cut off from reality in a state of sleep, the Cosmos is a result of being cut off from reality by *maaya* in a state of ignorance. The Cosmos is as ephemeral and as vagarious as a dream. It is difficult to discover laws that explain or govern its infinite mysteries. More profitable than inquiring into the mysteries is the inquiry into possible ways of benefitting by them and learning from them. It is mostly a waste of time to probe into the origin of the Cosmos or to determine how it will end. You are a part of creation, so try to understand yourself and keep your goal in view.

The individual has three qualities in him

The *jeeva* (individual) has the emotional, passionate and active qualities in his composition. The quality that is inferior is the *thaamasik* and that which is superior is the *saathwik*. *Ishwara* is the *saathwik* reflection of *Brahman*. Therefore man must strive to rise higher into the *saathwik* realm. He must be ever vigilant not to slide down into the lower realm---the *thaamasik* realm of matter and material pursuits. The *Guru* has to hold this ideal before the pupil and guide him towards it. He must encourage him to become aware of the God within man.

The word *aadhyaathmik* (spiritual) is used often by aspirants and preceptors. What exactly is implied by *aadhyaathmik*? Is *bhajana* (congregational prayer) *aadhyaathmik*? Or does it *involve japa* or *dhyaana*? Or does it denote religious rituals and ceremonies? Or does it extend to pilgrimages to holy places? No. These are only beneficial acts. *Aadhyaathmik*, in its real sense, relates to two progressive achievements or at least sincere attempts towards those two achievements: elimination of the animal traits still clinging to man and unification with the Divine.

Three different types of *Gurus* in the world

Consider how far man has succeeded in overcoming the animal inheritance of lust, greed and hate, when he spends time, money and energy for these so called *aadhyaathmik* exercises. What progress does he make by listening to exponents of texts? Has man become any less bestial? This is the inquiry, this is the assessment for man to be engaged in, though this is the very task ignored by him at present.

The *saadhanas* (spiritual practices) now adopted promote only pride and pompous display, envy and egotism. They do not uproot them in the least. People proceed to the House of God as pilgrims, but pray to Him for more money, fame and power, for their thoughts, words and deeds centre only around these transitory and trivial tokens of worldly success. The world and all its trappings bespeak the *thaamasik guna* (quality of inertia). They can never raise man to the higher *saathwik* (pure level).

The *Guru* must exhort the individual self to realise the Universal Self. On this *Guru Poornima*, we must revere with grateful hearts such *Gurus* who have consummated liberation for many.

They are the highest *Gurus*. There are in the world many other types also. There is the *Guru* who gives you a *manthra* (sacred formula), tells you its potentialities and directs you to repeat it sincerely and steadily. He is the *dheeksha guru*; the initiation into the *manthra* is called *dheeksha* in ritualistic parlance. He assumes that his duty ends with the gift of the *manthra* and the command to use it with conviction and care. He does not direct the pupil to master his senses or guide him to march forward and attain that victory. For the pupil the *manthra* is a formula to be repeated in a parrot-like way. He might not even know that it is a precious gift, but without the *saadhana* (spiritual discipline) of self-improvement, the gift has no value at all.

The *maaya* too is an aspect of *Brahman*

A second type of *Guru* recommends the worship of one or another of the forms of God. Another set of *gurus* teach lessons destined to change your consciousness. These are the *teacher-gurus*. But all these types ignore the One and divert attention, adoration and devotion to the many, which are only relatively real. They do not lay down methods by which purity and clarity can be won. They are afraid to antagonise the animal urges in their pupils. Their teachings fill the head but do not thrill the heart. All types of *gurus* assert that God, Nature and man are distinct, whereas they are all really based on the play of *maaya* on *Brahman*. They deal with subsidiary not the Primary, the diversity not the Unity, the trivial not the true. The primary is *Brahman* which, when reflected in *maaya*, seems to be broken into God, Nature and man. These three are only the unreal images of the One. And the *maaya*, too, is an aspect of *Brahman* "*Mama-maaya*" (My *maaya*), says Krishna in the Geetha. Hence when we merge in *Brahman* or win the Grace of the Lord, His *maaya* cannot exist for us.

One can also be rid of *maaya* if one can discard the three *gunas* from one's make up. The *Sathwa guna*, too, has to be transcended. Why? The Geetha directs that even the eagerness to be liberated is a bond. One is fundamentally free; bondage is only an illusion. So the desire to unloosen the bond is the result of ignorance. Krishna says, "Arjuna! Become free from the three *gunas*." In truth, the word '*guna*' means 'rope,' for all three *gunas* bind the *jeeva* with the rope of desire. Liberation means liberation from delusive *moha* (attachment). '*Mohakshaya*' is decline in the desire caused by attachment to sensory pleasure.

The greatest of *Gurus* was Sage *Vyaasa*

The *Yadhavas* were attached to Krishna through a sense of worldly belonging. He was their kinsmen, they felt, and this feeling did not save them from total destruction. The *gopees* felt they were His, not that He was theirs. So they were recipients of His Grace. When the ideas of 'I' and 'mine' disappear, man's only thoughts are of 'Thee' and 'Thine.' He then finds only 'Thee' everywhere and thus achieves the Vision of Unity.

This day thousands of you have gathered here because it is *Guru Poornima*, the 'full Moon of the *Guru*.' The fully worth-while *Guru* must facilitate that Vision of Unity without the discords and divisions that 'mine' and 'thine' engender in the mind of man. Such a *Guru* was the sage *Vyaasa*. This day is also called *Vyaasa Poornima*, a day when mankind offers him the gratitude he deserves. '*Vyaaso Naaraayano Harih*': *Vyaasa* is the Lord *Naaraayana*, *Hari*. *Naaraayana*, the Lord Himself, came as a man called *Vyaasa*, to collate the *Vedhas* and teach man the path towards God. He has made the path plain and easy to climb.

But the tragedy is that man has misinterpreted or missed the path. He has stuck to his out-moded beliefs in the efficacy of worldly, material and transitory rituals and rites, which weaken his

mind through fear or pride. The true *Guru* should keep away from such weakening tactics and should impart the strengthening awareness of the *Aathman*. Only then can he be revered as a *Guru*. When there is the clear call from the higher regions of the *saathwik*, why should the *Guru* remain deaf to that call and grovel in the regions of *thamas* and *rajas*? Why must he be content to keep his pupils in those lower levels?

Goodness is natural to man, not evil

However, the trend among the guides and seekers in the spiritual field is to avoid the heights and wander in the valleys. Consider for a moment how long worldly triumphs last. They are but the play of scintillating name and form on the Divine, which is the core of every being and thing. Earn the vision that sees the Divine inherent in all. We are not troubled when something is good, but only when it is bad. This is because goodness is natural and evil is an aberration. We are worried and alarmed when someone slides into wrong or is in pain or in sorrow. This is because nature plans us to be right, to be happy and ever in joy. It is a pity that man has lost his understanding of this truth.

Embodiments of the Divine *Aathman*! In truth, man is the encased *Aathman*. He is the repository of the infinite, ever-full, One, Indivisible *Aathman*. Man, at best, remains man, satisfied with the *rajoguna* dominant in him. Many are content with their dealings with the objective, *thaamasik* world. Their ideal is only to amass material wealth and satisfy material needs. Examine yourselves and discover at what level you are by analysing your desires and activities. In this way you can yourselves sublimate your thoughts and urges.

Your revised urges must have a beneficial impact on your activities, for it is through activity that *gunas* are given up or gained. Activity causes birth and death and fills up the years of one's life. It supports good and evil, joy and grief.

However, man is willfully unaware of the activities that will lighten the burden of his life and also illumine the *Aathman*. It is the *Aathman* that illumines all, but man is in the dark about its existence. Just as everything sweet is sweet on account of the sugar it contains, all things and objects are cognized because the *Aathman* is behind the cognition. It is the Universal Witness. It is the Sun that activates all but never gets activated itself. You, too, must establish yourself in the position of a witness.

Methods to attain the status of a witness

The sages have laid down methods by which man can attain the status of a witness. *Dhyaana* (meditation) is the most important of these. It is the penultimate of eight steps, the last one being *Samaadhi* (super conscious state of communion), and grants the wisdom to be completely unaffected. The sixth stage is *dharana* (concentration). *Dharana* is the stage when *japa*, *puuja* and other practices are engaged in, in order to prepare the concentration of mind for *dhyaana*.

Dhyaana is not mere sitting erect and silent. Nor is it the absence of any movement. It is the merging of all your thoughts and feelings in God. Without the mind becoming dissolved in God, *dhyaana* cannot succeed. The Geetha describes genuine *dhyaana* as '*Ananyaschinthanyatho maam ye janaah paryupaasathe*' (Those persons who adore Me, without any other thought or feeling). Krishna has assured such persons that He would Himself carry their burden and be by their side, guiding and guarding. Persons adept in this *dhyaana* are very rare; most people go through the external exercises only. So they are unable to win Grace.

Bodies are expressions of the *Aathman*

Dhyaana is interrupted in most cases by worry and anxiety regarding one's kith and kin, and one's earning of riches. But since all are manifestations of the *maaya* which is natural to *Brahman* or *Paramaathman*, the *Paramaathman* (Supreme Self) in which you take refuge will certainly free you from fear. Why? You are, each one, the *Aathman* and nothing else. This is the reason why I began this discourse, addressing you as *Dhivyaathma swaruupas!* Your bodies, too, are expressions of the *Aathman* (divine self). Your personality, individuality, mind, intellect---all are manifestations of the *Aathman* which is the prime mover of your life.

This teaching is being propagated since ages by the sages of this land. The seers who saw the validity of this vision encouraged inquiry and experiment into the process of *dhyaana* and *saadhana*.

Sage Vyaasa sympathised with man who was caught in the coils of do's and don'ts, of success and failure, of desire and despair. He demarcated many a path which leads man along to fulfilment. The fulfilment consists in uprooting the animal that lurks in man and reaching out to the Divinity that is his essence.

We find individuals and groups trudging to Badhrinaath, Kedhaarnaath and Haridhwaar in search of peace and prosperity. They also go to Thirupathi and Kaashi. Have they jettisoned even a few of their animal propensities. That is the test; that is the justification for the money and time they have spent and the troubles they have undergone.

When the animal is conquered and God head is felt within reach, man can assert that all these pilgrimages are within him. He has no need to travel from temple to temple. And without achieving this victory you have no right to claim that you are a devotee of Raama or Krishna, or of any other Incarnation of the Lord.

This is real *aadhyaathmikatha* (spiritual progress). I bless you all that you may earn it.

Guru Poornima, Prashaanthi Nilayam, 9-7-1979

Man must demonstrate his superiority over the animal, by conquest over the senses. He must wriggle out of his animal shackles and assert his "humanity," which is essentially "divinity".

When Emperor Bharthruhari gave up his throne and went into a hermitage in the forest, the subordinate rulers who were his tributaries laughed at the stupid step and asked him how he got the idea and what he gained.

Bharthruhari replied, "I have now gained a vaster empire, a richer and more peaceful empire; I gave in exchange a poor barren torn empire; see what profit I have made."

Sri Sathya Sai