

8. Eternal harmony

It may be possible to acquire proficiency in all branches of learning.

Or win victory in debates in an assemblage of scholars. It may be possible to give away as charity houses, lands and cows, and even to fly into the skies and count all the stars.

It may be possible to know and name all the jeevas in the World, or attain mastery in Ashtaanga Vidhya, or to reach the Moon.

But alas/difficult it is indeed to gain mastery over one's senses (indriyas).

Steady the mind, gain inner vision, and maintain peace and equanimity at all times.

One can attain mastery over all the Shaasthras, and become proficient in Vedha and Vedhaantha.

One may be a king, living in a palace or a great warrior winning victories in battles

One may have conquered the Goddess of Poverty and won vast riches.

But, alas, all these are of no avail, unless one has devotion and earned the grace of God.

Unless man has understood his inner nature, unless he has mastered his mind and grasped the inner truth, he is of no use to the world. The individual has to be responsible for the progress of the world by upholding the values of life and striving for the good of the community.

Understand your inner spiritual reality

Today, scientists and leaders of nations have forgotten the true values of life and the real good of the world. They are obsessed only with material progress. Unless they are awakened to the spiritual values of life, there cannot be any peace and prosperity in the world. Without spiritual basis, even if men have eyes, they are blind; even if they have ears, they are deaf; even if intellectually brilliant they are insane. Spirituality alone confers true vision, and makes man full and wholesome.

Today man is a contradiction in himself. His thoughts, words and deeds are incongruous. Without this harmony how can he contribute to harmony in the community and in the world? He can only create chaos. That is the misfortune in the world today. Man has therefore to understand himself, his own dignity and his inner spiritual reality, then only will he have the right perspective. Otherwise, it is like the story of the ten foolish disciples. Each one of them does the count and finds there are only nine and wails for the tenth missing man. Each one of them has forgotten to count himself and has plunged not only himself but others too in grief. The leaders and the so-called scientists of the world today are just as foolish as the ten. Without trying to understand one's inner reality, they try to probe the moon, the planets and stars.

First, one has to cultivate purity of thought and mental equanimity. This mental equanimity is not something which one can purchase or obtain from outside. One has to generate it from within. When one has gained equal-mindedness, amidst pleasure and pain, he will be free from sorrow and will enjoy peace.

Man has to understand the reasons for sorrow. The three sources of sorrow in *Vedhaanthic* parlance are (i) *Prakrithi* (Nature), (ii) *Jeeva* (self) and (iii) *Daiva* (God). These are *Adhibhautika*, *Adhyaatmika*, and *Adhidaivika*.

Our experiences are our own creation

We should first try to understand what *Prakrithi* is. *Prakrithi*, is not a permanent reality. It is something which has come in between; it is only of relative value. Whichever is not a lasting reality is an untruth. We should therefore transcend the consciousness of *Prakriti*. It is only when we forget what we should forget, we will be happy.

The *Prakrithi* we see around us cannot give us happiness. From moment to moment it is changing. The experiences *Prakrithi* gives us in the waking state get obliterated in the dream state, and those of the dream stage cease when we wake up from the dream. The dream experiences are our creation. And so are the waking state experiences! What we see is nothing but our own creations. The vision-experience of the world is but a projection of our mind and the reflection of our own inner thoughts. As the thought, so the vision. The colour of glasses you wear determines the colour in which things appear to you. If you wear red glasses, everything will appear red. If you wear green glasses, everything will appear green. Pure thoughts make the world appear as pure. If you view things with *prema*, with a loving heart, the whole world, the whole creation will appear to you as a reflection of *prema*.

The selfishness fouling our love is veiling divinity from our vision. What is the reason for the selfishness which is veiling Divinity from us? It is simply our attachment to the body; it is the weakness of our mind and our enslavement to our senses.

What is the way to overcome or sublimate this selfishness? For this, first, we should have a proper evaluation, a proper understanding of our body, senses, mind, etc. They are not ourselves. In ignorance we identify ourselves with them. They are our vestures, they are like the dress we wear. The body is not we, the sensory organs are not we; the mind is not we. They are merely our vestures. That is why we say "this is my body, etc." We never say 'I am the body'. We should therefore try to realise that we are really apart. The self that is apart from these is the real entity in us, and we are that.

The *Aathman* is a form of God Himself

The physical body is constituted of the five elements, which are material in nature, and it has therefore to fall off and disintegrate one day or other. The one that survives and abides eternally is only the '*dehi*' (the resident) in the body. The resident of the body has neither birth nor death. He is the *Aathman* and is an aspect and Form of God Himself. The body is just an *Upaadhi*, a vesture of the *Aathman*.

As to the sensory organs, they are like reins for the horse. The senses have limits. Each sense has a specific function, e.g., the eye is for seeing, the ear for hearing, etc. Each faculty has a particular and limited function. The eye cannot hear, nor the ear see.

We should appreciate the great harmony with which the senses function. The eyes notice something attractive, the mind wants to get it. The legs take you there. The hands pick it up. Its acquisition brings satisfaction and joy to you. You see the co-operation that exists between all the sense organs. Further, see how much mutual sympathy there is between all the sense organs. Also see how much mutual help there is between them and the co-ordination with which they all work. When we are walking along the road, the eyes notice a thorn along the path and the legs instantaneously move aside or cross over the thorn. In case the foot is hurt by the thorn, eyes shed tears. If the eye is hurt, the entire body feels the pain. Thus, the pain suffered by one organ is shared by others. What a great lesson in harmonious living they teach us!

The body is described in the *Upanishads* as a chariot, the rein is the mind, the senses are the horses, the intellect is the charioteer and the *Aathma*, the Lord, is seated inside.

The mind is like the rein for restraining the horses (senses). Mind is a cauldron of *sankalpas* and *vikalpas* (resolves and indecisions). It is a conglomeration of thoughts of various kinds. Sometimes when the thoughts become exciting, it gets upset and throws itself into grief. But in truth, it is just a bundle of imaginings. Just as the many threads' woven together make up the cloth, so also many thoughts make the mind. No thought, no mind either. A pure mind is the one with good thoughts or God-thoughts. We have to eschew all bad ideas and bad thoughts and harbour only good thoughts. You should exercise your intelligence and discriminate which thoughts are good and which, bad.

Desires create the phantom of the mind

The mind is also referred to as self, the pseudo-self. In truth, it is *maaya* (Once appearance). Everyone says, "I am mentally worried. My mind is troubling me much". But has any one seen this mind? No one knows what the mind is, but they suffer from the mind, from its illusory existence. The worry which you suffer is your own creation. Fear too is self-created, When we imagine the mind is there, it shows up. Deny it or enquire into it, it vanishes totally. Instead of enquiring, we give the mind undue prominence and allow it to ride over us and subject ourselves to suffering.

On one occasion, someone came to Shri Raamakrishna Paramahansa and wailed, "My mind is troubling and torturing me". Raamakrishna gave a very witty reply: "Oh, is your mind giving you so much trouble? Catch hold of it and bring it to me. I will punish it". Raamakrishna wanted to stress only that the mind is but his imagination. It is our desires alone that create the phantom of the mind. If desires are subdued, the mind vanishes.

We must delve beyond the body, beyond the senses, beyond the mind, beyond the intellect and reach the source of all these---the *Aathman*. It is the substratum, basis and source of all else. For everything we see there has to be a base, which we do not see. For the car that is moving, there is the road, which is the stationary ground for the car to move on. The car may swerve but the road does not swerve. If the road also moves, what journey can the car make and whereto? So also, the *Aathman* is the basis for the functioning of the mind and senses and body. *Aathman* is their sole support and basis.

Buddhi stands foremost among the faculties

I have referred to the chariot simile. We have to remember the pre-eminent role of intelligence in the journey by chariot. The horses may have been bridled, the chariot is ready but if the

charioteer is not there, what purpose will be served? There is a good motor car. Petrol has been filled in the tank. Air has been filled in the tyres. But if the driver is not there, of what use is the car? The intellect (*buddhi*), is like the driver of the car. The faculty that decides between good and bad and what course one should take is *buddhi*. *The buddhi* has to exercise its discretion in the light of injunctions from the *Aathman*, its Master.

Buddhi is the superior most amongst all the faculties, and its pre-eminence is due to its proximity and closeness to the *Aathman*. The horses are in front of the chariot; the reins are outside equipments, but the charioteer sits close to the master inside. Therefore, amongst the instruments, *buddhi* stands foremost; below *buddhi* is *manas* (the mind), below the sensory organs is the body (gross body). The brilliance of the *Aathman* directly falls on *buddhi* which derives the maximum benefit and strength from the *Aathman*. Therefore, *buddhi* can judge aright and choose the right path. Only when a man uses his intelligence properly we call him *buddhimaan*. If he does not use its direction properly we call him *moodha* or *aviveki*.

The Divine Prescription for life

The *buddhi* should exercise its control over the mind, and the mind over the senses. But what happens generally is that the *buddhi* does not exercise discrimination; the mind arrogates to itself superiority over the intellect and the senses arrogate to themselves superiority over the mind. And the chariot runs in the wrong direction and the purpose of the journey does not find its fulfilment. To avoid this, *buddhi* has to act in the *Aathmic* light, and the mind in subordination to *buddhi*. When *buddhi* is centered and anchored in *Aathman*, it receives the *Aathmic* light and brilliance and it gains its strength in fulfilling its role efficiently and fruitfully. It is not as if our daily life is different from *Adhyaathmic* life.

In our day-to-day life, if we use the intelligence to discriminate between right and wrong, and follow the dictates of the *Aathman*, then everything will be right. This is the Divine prescription and panacea for life. What is therefore required first is faith in the existence and supremacy of *Aathman*. If one has no faith in *Aathman*, no self-confidence, and if he goes ahead with his egoistic vanity, how can he ever benefit by the divine light and guidance? How can he know the *Aathmic* splendour?

Character and spiritual wisdom are wealth

Prema Swaruupas (Embodiments of love)! This created universe has two aspects. One is impermanence (*anityam*). The second one is unhappiness (*asukham*). In Geetha, Krishna has said: "*Anityam Asukham Lokam Imam Praapya Bhajaswa Maam*"--- Nothing in this world can give happiness i.e., true and lasting happiness. Mistaking this world as 'All' and forgetting the *Aathman* which alone is eternal and is the only refuge, is the greatest folly of man. Today, man is pinning all his hopes on this slippery world and is madly running after amassing and hoarding wealth. Of course, material needs are to be taken care of, but within limits, and not at the cost of spiritual values. Money and mansions are not the only wealth; hoard the wealth of the Spirit. Character is wealth. Good conduct is wealth. Spiritual wisdom is wealth.

Prema Swaruupas! Try to promote the wealth of good conduct, strive to earn the eternal wealth of the Wisdom of the Spirit. All other acquisitions will not be of any avail to you. They will attract relatives and friends to you just as frogs come to a pond when it is full. Once the pond dries up, not one frog will be found there. When one loses his riches, friends and relatives

forsake him. Such is worldly love. Friends fall apart, kinship gets strained, brothers separate, families get estranged---this is the play of worldly wealth.

Therefore do not get obsessed with amassing worldly wealth. But strive to earn the wealth of good conduct. Cultivate love of the spirit and engage yourself in selfless service of others. Through service, you earn good character. It promotes pure love and a good character. Devote your body, mind and senses, in the service of others.

"Paropakaaraartham Idam Shariram" it is said. This body is intended to do only good and serve others. The body is not gifted to you so that you hate and nurture jealousy against others and live selfishly, worse than an animal. You should devote, this precious gift of the body in selfless and loving service always.

Do everything in name of God

You should also bear in mind that it is nothing great if you do-Giving, giving only should be your motto good to one who has done you good. This is like give and take. Doing good to the man in spite of the harm he has done to you is nobler. For a *Sai Sevak*, giving, giving only, should be the motto. Even if you do not get anything in return you should be giving and giving.

Anyone may blame you, but you should ignore all such blame and go forward in doing service without rancour. Serving is your only duty. The Universe is a manifestation of God. So also is the 'individual. All these three are like Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara, the Trinity. Actually there are no Three, they are one, it is unified Godhead. Cherishing this thought of oneness, and serving the society is true *Adhyaathmic* or spiritual life.

Further, you should take to *"Sarvadhaa, Sarvakaaleshu Sarvathra Harichintanam."* It is just not sufficient holding a mala and doing japa, once in the morning during the Brahma *muhurta* time, once in the afternoon and once in the evening. All the twenty four hours you should be having remembrance of God. You should all the time be striving to awaken the spirit within you and for its blossoming (*Aathma Vikaas*). This is the real purpose of life.

True education is only *Aathma Vidhya*. The education today is oriented towards earning money only. For feeding a small stomach, should one have to learn so many things? There is knowledge of music, knowledge of arts, science, etc. But all pale off into insignificance in the light of the knowledge of the spirit. All other branches of knowledge are like rivulets which flow into the sea. (*nadeenaam saagaro gatihi*). Just as all rivers flow into the ocean, all types of education will find their true fulfilment when they lead and end up in spiritual knowledge and wisdom only.

Prema Swaruupas! Every day whatever work you may be doing, do it in the name of God and make your life sacred. You should not think that worldly life and spiritual life are different. Do not make such distinctions like spiritual life is sugar and worldly life is tasteless water. You have to stir the water in the glass, and let the sugar at the bottom dissolve well; then enjoy drinking the sweet mixture. In this way, worldly life should be blended and harmonised with spiritual life.

Divine Discourse, Dharmakshethra

Give each problem the attention it deserves; but do not allow it to overpower you. Anxiety will not solve any difficulty; coolness

comes from detachment. Above all, believe in God and the efficacy of prayer; the Lord has said that he who does good, thinks good and speaks good will not come to harm. That is the way to get equanimity, shaanthy.

Sathya Sai Baba