

### 13. The Scientist and The Saint

The word *Manava* (man) has several meanings. One of them is that man has an ancient origin. *Maa* meaning "not," and *nava* meaning "new" indicate that man is "not new." He has had a long past. Another meaning of the word is "one who lives without ignorance" (*Maa--ignorance*; Na---without; *Va -- lives*). The reason for this is the fact that in man there is a sacred principle composed of the five basic elements (ether, air, fire, water and earth).

If we examine the nature of the human state from the scientific point of view, it is found that the tissues of the human body are composed of the four elements: hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen and carbon. The unified expression of these four elements is the human condition. Ignoring this unity, scientists today are seeking to explore the nature of matter by breaking up the Love principle. "The Spirit of Love is Spirituality." "Splitting of Love is Science." Scientists are exploring matter by dividing Love. They are unaware of the nature of Love. They are ignorant of Purity. Scientists are imbued only with a sense of enquiry into matter. Consequently, today there is a complete divorce between science and spirituality.

#### **Matter and energy are not separate**

Scientists are not examining the relationship between matter and energy in the correct way. Scientists hold the view that matter is convertible into energy and vice versa. But, in fact, the two are not separate. They are inseparably interlinked and interdependent. The attempts to divide matter and energy have given rise to many doubts and confusions.

What is the new discovery that scientists have made today? All their discoveries are of what already existed. Take, for instance, gravity. Gravity has existed from the beginning of creation. Newton sought to find out the laws governing gravitation. He did not discover the phenomenon anew. He only found out what already existed. That the earth had gravitational attraction was known even before Newton investigated it.

Likewise, matter and energy have existed from the time of creation. Both are comprehended by the mind only. When the mind functions in relation to the Divine it acquires the form of energy. When the mind is turned towards *Prakruthi* (Nature), the latter assumes the form of matter. Mind is the cause of experiencing joy or sorrow and for comprehending matter and energy. Recognising this quality of the mind, the sages declared: "The mind is the cause of liberation or bondage for humanity."

There are two *concepts--Drishti* (seeing) and *Drishyam* (that which is seen). It is because of the power of sight that we are able to see the visible objects. It is because the objects are there, we are able to see them. There is thus an inextricable relationship between seeing and what is seen. Today, it is because we separate seeing from the things seen that sorrow arises. Seeing and that which is seen should become one.

#### **The One in the many**

What is *pavithram* (purity)? This has been characterised as *Shakthi* (energy, power). Purity has been described as the state of desirelessness in man. When there are desires, sorrow also dogs them like a shadow. When there is sorrow there can be no purity. The mind is the cause of both desires and purity.

The *Vedas* have declared: "I am One; I shall become many." It is the One that has become the many. This is the unity that underlies the diversity. In this context, these concepts have to be understood: *Sajaatheeyam*, *Vijaatheeyam* and *Swa-gathabhedham*.

*Sajaatheeyam*: Although human beings differ in form and characteristics in various respects, they belong to the human species. *Sajaatheeyam* refers to the oneness of the species. In terms of the human body, every human being has one thing in common regardless of other differences. Differences of race, religion, caste, language or community do not affect oneness of humanity. This is *sajaatheeyam*---*belonging* to the same species. Whether one is an American, a Chinese or an Indian, he is a human being.

*Vijaatheeyam* relates to differences between species. For instance, there is nothing in common with a human being and a tree. The tree does not belong to the same species as man. There may be innumerable varieties among trees. But all of them belong to the vegetable kingdom. There are differences between the human species and the species of trees. These differences are covered by the term *Vijaatheeyam* (differentiation among species).

*Swagathabhedam*: This term relates to functional differentiation. For instance man has hands, legs, ears, eyes, mouth and other organs all in the same body. Blood is the same. The heart is one only. But each organ discharges only its specific function. The eyes can only see, but cannot hear. The ears can only hear but cannot see. The body is one but each organ and limb performs only its particular function. This functional differentiation is called *Swagathabhedam*.

### **Power of the Divine is indeterminable**

Scientists today are accomplishing any number of things. But they are unable to recognise the divine potency that exists in the human being. Here is an example.

The earth is one. When a lemon seed is planted, the fruit that comes from the lemon plant tastes sour. If a mango seed is planted and a tree grows from it, the fruit of that tree tastes very sweet. If a neem seed is planted, the fruit from the neem tree is bitter in taste. The soil is the same; but the fruits from the different trees have different tastes. Likewise, although all human beings are made up of the same elements, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen and carbon, individuals vary in their mental and other qualities. What is the reason for these innumerable differences? What is the force that is behind these genetic differences? How do the scientists account for them? When they are able to understand the reason for these infinite differences, the scientists will achieve fullness in their knowledge. The truth is, no one can determine the magnitude or range of the powers of the Divine.

### **Science is partial, spirituality is wholistic**

The fundamental difference between science and spirituality is this: Science is concerned with investigating the external phenomenal universe. Spirituality is engaged in exploring the inner workings of the Divine. The scientist is one who has an external vision. The one who has an internal vision is a saint.

Here is an example of the difference between scientific truth and spiritual truth. If you draw the figure of a circle, that which ends wherefrom it started in the full circle has been described as *Poornam* (the full or the whole). "*Poornam adah, Poornam idam, Poornaath Poornam udachyathe. Poornasya Poornam andaaya Poornameva avashyathe.*" (That is Full. This is Full. When the Full is taken out from the Full, the Full still remains.) The Full Circle represents spirituality. For in it the end and the beginning are the same. Spirituality knows no difference

between beginning and end. The very term *Aadhyaatma* means that which has no beginning or end.

To understand what is science, you cut the full circle into two halves. The left half is a semicircle which resembles the English letter "C." "C" is science, that is, it begins at one point and ends at another. Between these two points there is a big gap, which is called *agamyagocharam*. It is beyond reach, invisible and incomprehensible.

### **Matter is creation, Spirit is Creator**

Matter and Spirit may be regarded as two semicircles. Scientists are only investigating matter and are ignoring the Spirit. The two parts have been described in Vedantic parlance as *Prakruthi* and *Paramatma*.

The scientist is the one who enquires into the nature of *srishti* (creation). The saint is one who seeks to know the Creator. The scientist is preoccupied only with studying creation. What about the Creator? Once you understand the Creator, you can understand the whole of creation. That was why Saint Thyagaraja said: "Rama, If I have your *anugraha* (grace) all the *grahas* (planets) will be within my grasp." Therefore, if you comprehend the Creator, you can easily know all about creation.

Creation (the phenomenal universe) is within the comprehension of the senses. All that we hear, see and experience are within the purview of our senses. We refer to all these things as "this," "this" and "this" (*Idam*). But what is beyond the senses is referred to as "that." "*Poornam adah Poornam idam*" (That is Full; This is Full). The term "That" refers to something which is distant. From what is "That" distant? From what is "This" near? We use the term "This" to refer to things which are within the purview of the senses; "That" refers to what is beyond the senses.

So, what is beyond the senses has been called *Aadhyatmic* (spiritual). What is below the senses has been called *Bhouthik* (elemental, constituted by the five elements). We are simultaneously below the senses and above the senses. Below the senses is the body. Beyond the senses is the *Hridaya* (the spiritual heart). The eternal *Hridaya* is encased within the perishable body. It is like keeping valuable jewels in a relatively cheap iron safe. Divinity is the valuable treasure kept in the iron safe of the body. This indicates our true form.

### **Bend the body, mend the senses, end the mind**

If you wish to understand your true nature, you have to do three things: Bend the body, mend the senses, end the mind. The first step is to "bend the body." That means, you should not allow the ego to develop within your body. Cultivate humility and do your duties sincerely. This is what is implied in "bend your body."

"Mend the senses" calls for examining how the senses behave, whether they are tending to go astray, and correcting and restraining them when necessary.

"End the mind" calls for quietening the vagaries of the mind. How is this to be done? It is by turning the mind in a different direction. For example, there is a lock and key. When the key is turned towards the left, the lock gets locked. If the key is turned towards the right the lock is opened. Thus the key performs both functions of locking and unlocking.

### **End the mind by turning Godward**

In man, the heart is the lock. The mind is the key. When the mind is turned Godward the heart develops detachment. When the mind is turned towards the world, the heart develops attachment. Thus both detachment and attachment result from the way the mind functions. When the mind is directed towards *Prakruthi* (Nature or the phenomenal world), bondage ensues. When you turn your mind towards Divinity, you experience *Ananda* (bliss). "End the mind" means turning the mind Godward. All you have to do is to dedicate every action of yours to the Divine. Then everything becomes easy and a source of bliss.

Science can offer you only temporary worldly comforts. Spirituality alone can give you enduring bliss. All the amenities which provide temporary comfort also give rise to unhappiness. A person may be sitting in an air-conditioned room. But his mind is filled with anxiety and worry. His brain is heated. One who has peace of mind will experience no discomfort even if he is in a forest. Peace, therefore cannot be got through science. In fact, science and technology today are leading man away from peace. Is any scientist enjoying peace of mind? No. He is leading an utterly artificial life. He is filled with worries. His mind knows no rest.

All the ills of man today are due to the fact that his mind is never restful and quiet. The mind is preoccupied with worries. Even an inanimate machine needs some period of rest. But no rest is given to the mind.

If we desire peace for the individual, for the society and for the nation, it can only be achieved through spiritual means. Hence, recognising the truth, without attaching excessive importance to worldly comforts, we must make every effort to acquire peace of mind. No doubt physical comforts are necessary up to a point. But they should be limited to meeting the basic demands of nature. For instance man requires sleep. Similarly peace of mind should be got through natural means. The spiritual path is the only way to achieve "the peace that passeth understanding."

*Discourse at "Sai Sruti," Kodaikanal, 6 May 1988*