

20. Brahmamayam Jagath

SARVAM Brahmamayam Jagath (The Cosmos is saturated with *Brahmam*). There is nothing in the universe unconnected with *Brahmam* (the Omni-Self). While the Divine is thus all-pervasive, the ability to recognise this truth is not present in all.

The fact is well known that fire is latent in wood. But on that basis, if one attempts to cook rice in a vessel, placing it on a lorry load of wood, can the rice be cooked? Fire has two states' the inner and the outer. The fire that is invisible and latent is inner fire. This fire, though it is present, cannot burn anything. The external fire manifests its true form and can burn anything and reduce it to ashes. Likewise, the power to experience the omnipresent Divine and envision it internally is possessed by each one, while only some have the capacity to demonstrate it externally.

The Cosmos is rooted in Consciousness. Every object in the universe has emanated from the Divine. From a blade of grass to a mountain, from a drop of water to a mighty river, from the atom to the *Parabrahmam* (Supreme Spirit), all are permeated by the One Divine principle. It is not easy for all to realise the oneness of this all-pervading Divinity. It is only when the rays of Divine love unite with the devotion of the individual that the Vision of Divinity is experienced.

The theist and the atheist

The fire of spirituality burns equally in the theist, who declares constantly that God exists, and in the atheist, who repeatedly denies the existence of God. The feelings of love' are present in the heart of the atheist, no less than in the heart of the believer. But, the feelings of love of the theist are directed towards God. The atheist's love is turned towards *Prakriti* (Nature). Because of his love for the objects of the world the latter gets bound. When he directs that love towards God, he will become the instrument of his own liberation. Love is the impelling force for both bondage and liberation. That love is a manifestation of the divine.

Love can be experienced only by love and by no other means. The Bhagavatam expounds the union of love with love. In this context, some doubts may arise. It may be asked how in the Bhagavatam not only theists, who are lovers of God, figure in the work, but also avowed enemies of God. When you have accounts of wicked men like Hiranyakasipu, Hiranyaksha, Kamsa, Sisupala, Dantavakra and others in the Bhagavatam, can the Bhagavatam be regarded as a work which deals only with the intimate relationship between God and devotees? The answer to this query may be made clear by a simple illustration. If, supposing, someone comes to your house asking for water to quench his thirst you have to offer him some water, buttermilk or some drink. To offer this drink, you need a container. This may be made of silver, brass or other material. The material of the container is not important. What is important is the drink. Likewise, Hiranyakasipu and others are a kind of containers for serving the drink of devotion. What is significant is the transformation of the contents of the vessel into the Divine substance.

Demons teach devotees the Divine power

In your eyes, Hiranyakasipu and others may appear to be demons. But in the view of the Divine they may appear as persons who help the devotees to affirm their faith in God. The Lord makes an example of the demons to teach the devotees the truth of the Spirit. The good is wedged in between two bad things. Pleasure is an interval between two pains. Indeed, if there had been no Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakasipu, there would have been no occasion for the advent of the Narasimha Avatar to bless Prahlada. Without hatred on the one side, the power of faith on the

other cannot be demonstrated. Although Prahlada's father, Hiranyakasipu, subjected his son, a great devotee of God, to numerous ordeals, Prahlada emerged from them as an ideal lover of God, who acquired undying glory. Hiranyakasipu was the instrument for revealing the greatness of Prahlada. The Lord creates hostile forces to demonstrate the power of faith in the Divine and to confer peace and plenty on the believers.

When two sticks are rubbed against each other fire emerges. The fire that is latent in the wood becomes manifest thereby. But this happens only when the sticks are rubbed continuously and not in leisurely stages. Likewise, when the Lord's name is chanted without intermission the fire of Divine wisdom manifests itself in the devotee. To bring peace and joy to devotees, there must be some wicked elements present in the world. Just as a mother provides toys and sweets to a child for its pleasure, though they are of no use to her, God creates certain things for the sake of the devotee, to bring out the depth of his devotion.

Confront the hostile elements

Take another example. The sugar cane's fibre is essential for preserving its juice. What we have to consume is the juice. But the juice is contained in the fibre, which is useless for us. It is only by squeezing the fibre that the juice can be got. Likewise, only by confronting the hostile elements can the benevolence of the Divine be experienced. Even in small matters, we find that their true nature is discovered by experiencing the elements opposed to them. For instance, if one wants to develop physical strength, he has to subject the body to severe gymnastic exercises. Can jaggery be got by seeking favour from sugar cane? Can it be got without crushing the cane and boiling the juice? Even a diamond requires to be cut and polished to enhance its brilliance and value.

Likewise, although Divinity resides in everyone, only in some persons it manifests itself externally. The reason for this external manifestation is the combining of the devotional feelings of the individual with the grace of God. Who is responsible for the appearance of Lord Narasimha before Prahlada? Is it Prahlada or Hiranyakasipu? Both are responsible. Hiranyakasipu's doubts and Prahlada's faith came together. Hiranyakasipu asked: "Where is God?" Prahlada replied: "There is no need to entertain doubts as to whether He is in one place and not in another. He is everywhere." Hiranyakasipu then asked: "Is He in this pillar?" Prahlada replied: "Yes." Hiranyakasipu hit the pillar. Then Narasimha emerged from it. It is the combination of the opposing elements in Hiranyakasipu and Prahlada which accounts for the emergence of Narasimha Avatar. God is present in one form in Hiranyakasipu and in another form in Prahlada. God is the doubter and God is the believer. He is the one who adores and also the one who derides. He is the giver and the recipient. When this Omnipresent oneness of the Divine is comprehended, then the significance of the statement, "*Sarvam Vishnumayam Jagath*" (the Cosmos is permeated by the Divine) will be understood.

Same entity is present in all the three states

The same entity is present in all the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep. In the waking state, you are listening to the discourse in this hall. In the dream state, you experience certain incidents. You feel there is no relation between the body and the dream state experiences. In the *Sushupti* (deep sleep) state you experience a sense of bliss. In that state you think that neither the body nor the mind exists. Who, then, is the experiencer? It is the same entity that has experienced the bliss in *sushupti*, the dreams in the dream state and the sensations in the waking state. In the waking state, it is through the senses that the experience is had. In the dream state it

is through the mind in the *sukshma sareera* (subtle body). The experience in the deep sleep state is by the divine power which transcends the body and the mind. The states are different, but the experiencer is one. It is difficult to understand the workings of the Divine. But one who seeks to understand them with devotion and persistence, will find it easy.

How the Divine functions

From time to time this Divine power assumes numerous forms. In devotees it shines as the *Jnana-Agni* (fire of wisdom). In non-devotees it burns as *Krodha-Agni* (the fire of hatred) or the *Kama-Agni* (fire of desire). Fire is a dreadful power. Even when it is at a distance, it evokes a sense of fear and danger. But man today has this fire (of hatred, etc) in his heart and has become a victim of fear and delusions. The fires of lust, anger, hatred and jealousy can do a lot of havoc to man. All other types of fire subside in due course. But these fires (of hatred, etc.) never completely cease. They may flare up at any moment. How, then, are these fires to be extinguished once for all? What do you need for putting them out? *Vairagya* (detachment) and *Prema* (love) are the two requisites to extinguish these fires.

It is only through *prema* (love) that man can acquire peace. Although man today has a surfeit of comforts and amenities, he is steeped in fear and worry. Despite all his attempts to ensure security, the fear remains. All the amenities he enjoys do not confer peace of mind on him. Why is he haunted by this fear and lack of peace? It is because he entertains in his heart the fires of hatred, jealousy and the like.

Only pure thoughts can confer peace. An innocent and pure person is always at peace. It is the guilty man who lacks peace. It is only when a man rids himself of evil that he can be free from fear. How is one to get rid of evil? Men imagine that they lack the capacity to distinguish between right and wrong, good and bad. Of all beings in this world, man alone has the highest capacity to determine what is right and what is wrong. Despite being aware of this capacity, he indulges in wrong deeds. Knowing what is wrong, he commits wrongs. Consequently he becomes a victim of fear and anxiety. He would not suffer from these, if he did anything wrong out of ignorance. There are insane persons who are not conscious of right and wrong, because they have no discriminating power. They act without any sense of fear because they are not conscious of the character of their actions. It is the person who indulges in wrong actions deliberately who is haunted by fear and worry.

One fire, different uses

The discriminating power has to be used in the right way. You should follow the dictates of your conscience and act according to the promptings of the *Atma* (the Indwelling Spirit). You are filled with fear when you do something against the injunctions of your conscience. To get rid of fear, you have to perform all actions in a spirit of dedication to the Divine. Remember that fire is present in your body even as it is latent in wood. Use this fire properly. Although fire is one, in its use it can be good or bad. The fire that is used for burning a body in the burning ghat is fire. But will any one use it for cooking purpose? No, because it is not: pure. Consider the fire burning in a *Yajna Kundam*, in which offerings are made to the deities with sacred *mantras*. That is also fire, but it is sacred fire, surcharged with divinity. It is worshipped as divine. Then, you have fire used for cooking, in the kitchen. That fire is confined to the purpose of cooking. Will anyone offer worship to the fire in a cigarette? But when a joss-stick is burnt, it acquires sanctity as an offering to the Divine. Thus fire may be one, but it can be used in different ways.

The aim of *sadhana*

Divinity is one, but manifests itself in many forms. *Sat-Chit-Ananda* (Being-Awareness-Bliss) is one, but its manifestations assume many names and forms. In every object, there are three attributes' *Sat-Chit-Ananda*. These three qualities are present in this table and this mike. You can recognise "*Sat*" and "*Chit*", but not "*Ananda*".

"*Sat*" means, "It is there" (it exists); "*Chit*" means you can perceive it. Both these are true. But we cannot know whether it is experiencing "*Ananda*" (bliss). Such objects are described as *Jada* (inert). Now look at that person there. He is both "*Sat*" and "*Chit*" (He has both a form and a name). But we can also notice that he is experiencing "*Ananda*." He is deriving joy from Swami's discourse. It is only in man that "*Ananda*" (bliss) is recognisable. In all other objects "*Sat*" and "*Chit*" are cognisable. It is evident that in every *padartha* (thing) the Divine is present.

The aim of *sadhana* is to convert *Padaartha* (the physical object) into *Paraartha* (Divinity). This Divinity should be regarded as embodying the Love Principle. Without Love, you cannot comprehend Divinity at all.

This love should not be chasing after ever-new objects. It should be concentrated on the One. Only then you can have the right relationship with God. For instance, when a stranger comes to your house, you treat him with special respect. But when an old friend comes, you welcome him freely with familiarity and love. That is the freedom you should have in relation to God. How is that freedom acquired? Through complete dedication. "Mine" and "Thine" should be totally, eschewed. The Vedanta has declared that the elimination of "I-ness" (the ego sense) is Self-realisation. You must reach the state of "All-is-you" from the state of "I". You must see the Divine in everything in the universe. "You (the Divine) are everything---the seen and the unseen." This conviction must come to you.

Turn on the switch of Divine Love

When you switch off the current, the light does not burn. Because you cannot see the light, you cannot say there is no current. The light will appear when you turn on the switch. Hence the presence or absence of light (current) is related to your behaviour. It: does not affect God's omnipresence. In your ignorance, you do not put on the switch and complain that there is no light. This is one reason for the absence of light. There may be another reason also. There is a main switch which governs all other switches. If the main switch is off, all the rooms will be in darkness and if the individual switches are put on, the bulbs will not burn. What is that main switch in man? It is Divine Love. When this switch of Divine love is turned on, love will manifest itself in every limb and part of the body. Your words will be filled with love. Your actions will be saturated with love. Your eyes will gleam with love. You will be listening to loving words with your ears. The light of love will shine in every limb. Without that love, if you are steeped in selfishness and self-centred actions, every limb will be plunged in darkness.

The *gopikas* prayer

Therefore, Love is Supreme. Develop love in your hearts. Let love flow through every part of your body. Make love the reigning principle of your life. Develop love through love. This was the prayer that went forth from the hearts of *Gopikas*: "*Oh Krishna*, play on your flute so that our parched hearts may be flooded with your nectarine love and we may be filled with love in all that we think and do. Plant the seeds of love in our arid hearts so that the saplings of love may sprout and grow."

It is when one is filled with joy that music flows spontaneously from him. Krishna was filled with joy always. Hence, whether He was on a village green or on a battle-field, His words turned into song.

To experience this joy, you have to have firm faith in God and shed all fear. Cultivate Divine Love and experience this joy. Sanctify your lives by dedicating it to the Divine.

Discourse in the Prashanthi Mandir; on 28-6-1989.

Prayer must emanate from the heart, where God resides and not from the head where doctrines and doubts clash.

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