

17. Experiencing the Bliss Divine

STUDENTS! Embodiments of Divine Love! It is only when the process of creation is understood in terms of the close relationship between the *Brahmam* (Omni-Self) and man can *Brahma-Vidya* (the Divine knowledge of the Supreme) be attained.

Brahman represents the Infinite. From this Infinite, *Akasa* (ether or sound) emerged. From *Akasa* came *Vayu* (air), from Air, *Tejas* (Fire), from *Tejas*, water and from water, the earth. From the earth came the *Oshadhayah* (herbal plants), from the plants, food, from food, *Purusha* (man).

When the advent of man through this process is understood, it will be clear that man came from the Infinite.

The term *Brahmananda* is a compound word composed of *Brahma* and *Ananda*. When this compound word is examined in its two parts, it will be 'seen that *Brahma* is different from *Ananda*. When this *Ananda* (bliss) is united with *Brahmam*, it becomes *Brahmananda*. Hence, it is evident that there is an inextricable association between man and *Brahmam* (the Omni-Self).

Steps to be taken to experience *Brahmananda*.

Brahma-Vidya (the knowledge of the Absolute) can be got only through *Brahmam*. But, man because he is bound to worldly attachments, forgets the truth about the Absolute and is lost in mundane concerns. The common man, who is a prey to desire, fear and hatred, is far from experiencing *Brahmananda* (the Supreme Bliss). If desire, fear and hatred are given up, men will be able to understand to some extent the nature of this Supreme Bliss. But renunciation of these three alone is not enough. Love of the Lord should be fostered. Even that is not enough. You have to qualify yourself to be proximate to God's love. But even nearness is not enough. You must rely entirely on the *paratatwa* (the Supreme truth). Only then the human can become the divine.

The *Sikshaavalli* section of the *Taithiriya Upanishad* sought to teach the disciples how to realise this *Brahmananda*. *Brahma-Vidya* is not something beyond human attainment. It relates to spiritual practices concerning daily life, These practices have to be observed regularly every day.

The Upanishad has revealed three forms in which the transcendental *Brahma-tatwa* manifests Itself The three forms are: *Viraat*, *Hiranyagarbha* and *Avyakrita*. These three forms are related to the gross, the subtle and the causal (forms of the human body). They are related to the three states of consciousness: Waking, dream and deep sleep.

Three Different forms of the *Viraat-swaroopa*

The *Viraat* form is the gross physical form assumed by the *Atma* in the waking state for leading a long life in the world. He manifests himself in many forms under many names. The entire cosmos, consisting of animate and inanimate objects, is the form of *Viraat*, permeating the five basic elements. The *Viraat Purusha* (the Cosmic Person) is manifest in every creature from an ant to the Absolute, demonstrating thereby that the cosmos is a manifestation of the Divine. He is called "*Viraat*" because of his cosmic manifestation and His immanence in everything in creation that is perceivable.

Thus everything that is seen is a manifestation of *Viraat*. *The Viraat Swaroopa* (the Cosmic Form) is related to the external physical universe. Assuming the gross physical form, the *Viraat*

(Cosmic Person) stands forth as an ideal. He has no other names. One is *Vaiswaanara*. This is the Divine in every being, who identifies himself as "I." From a king to a peasant, from a millionaire to a pauper, from a child to an old man, a woman or a man, every person identifies himself or herself by using the term "I" ("I am so and so"). The concept of "I" is thus present in every being. *Vaiswaanara* is the entity that makes every being use the term "I" to distinguish oneself.

The other name is *Vairajasutha*. It means one who has assumed a mysterious form. While being present in every being, he appears to be absent; while carrying on all activities, he appears to be inactive; while experiencing everything, he appears to be not the experiencer. It is for these reasons he is called *Vairaja-sutha*.

This is the inner meaning of these three different forms of the *Viraat Swaroopa* (Cosmic Person).

***Hiranyagarbha* is the source of all beings**

The second name is *Hiranyagarbha*. He is the source of all kinds of knowledge--ethical, spiritual, physical, scientific and social. He may be described as *Jnana bhaskara* (The Sun of Knowledge). When the Sun rises, he assumes a golden hue. By his golden rays, he turns the whole of nature golden. The entire creation emerged from *Hiranyagarbha* at the beginning. *Hiranyagarbha* is in the form of an oval-shaped golden egg. From *Hiranyagarbha*, the first to emerge was the mouth. Sound started from the mouth. Then came the nose, from which arose air. Then came the eyes, from which emanated fire. The ears came thereafter. The directions arose from the ears.

Hiranyagarbha is the primary source of the origin of man. *Hiranyagarbha* is the prime source of all living beings. It is *Hiranyagarbha* who endowed all these beings with the power of discriminating between the eternal and the ephemeral between what should be sought and what should be renounced, between what ought to be and what ought not to be done.

What is the Supreme Knowledge that man needs to make his life sacred and meaningful and what is the path he should pursue to lead a purposeful life? *Hiranyagarbha* offered to man the knowledge he needed for this purpose. This is the primary activity of *Hiranyagarbha*.

Hiranyagarbha has two other names: *Suthratmaka* is one. It means the one who functions like a string through all *Atmas*, even as a string runs through a necklace of gems. This means that he is present in all beings like the string that keeps together the gems in a necklace. This string is called *Brahma-Sutra* (the string of *Brahman*). The principle of *Hiranyagarbha* indicates how the Divine unites all human beings equally like the string of a necklace. *Hiranyagarbha* thus demonstrates a divisionless universe.

***Hiranyagarbha* creates the figures in dreams**

The other name for *Hiranyagarbha* is *Prana*. *Hiranyagarbha* assumes a subtle form in the dream state of a human being. He is the entity who is awake in the dream and sleeping states. In the waking state, the *Viraataswaroopa* creates the visible cosmos. In the dream state, *Hiranyagarbha* creates the figures in the dreams. All objects in this state have no physical basis. All that perceived in dreams are the creations of *Hiranyagarbha*. *Hiranyagarbha* in his subtle form creates everything in the dream state.

The third one is *Avyakrita*. He is one who has no form of any kind. He is present in the *Kaarana Sarira* (causal body), without any form, and enjoys the *Sushupti* state of man (the deep

sleep state). Though he has no form, he has control over everything. Without limbs or organs, he performs all actions. He travels long distances. Without eyes, he sees everything. Without ears, he hears everything. He is thus engaged in all activities relating to creation, but has no form. This *Ahyaakrita* has two other names: *Antaratma* and *Iswaratwam*.

Thus, *Viraat*, *Hiranyagarbha* and *Ahyaakrita* have three names each. What is the inner meaning of these names?

Antaratma means one who impels from within all activities (*Antaravaani* or inner voice). Every impulse arises from *Antaratma*. All the sounds uttered by man come from the *Antaratma*. The *Antaratma* is the basic source of all sounds.

Iswara is the third name for *Ahyaakrita*; though he is the possessor of all forms of wealth, he is the entity who judges good and bad actions and metes out punishment or reward according to deserts. In common parlance, he is called "*Layakaara*." He presides over actions. Hence, he decides on good and bad actions and metes out justice. He is known as the giver of *Aiswarya* (wealth). But good and bad deeds are comprised in *Aiswarya*. As Iswara is the Lord of all wealth, he gives to each man what he deserves according to his good and bad actions.

Upanishads have relevance to all human beings

The Upanishads should not be regarded as of no relevance to ordinary human beings and as valid only for sages and ascetics. Why are students today ignoring these sacred Upanishads? It is because there is no expositor of the Upanishads who will teach the students the relevance of their teachings for daily life. The notable advances in science and technology we witness today represent the essence of the Upanishads. The Upanishads are the final phase of the *Vedas*. Hence they are known as Vedanta.

The Upanishads are the quintessence of knowledge. They are the very embodiment of the highest knowledge. They are illuminating. Man should acquire this knowledge. Physical and mundane knowledge is concerned with the world. But to achieve peace of mind and joy of the Spirit, knowledge of the Upanishads is vital.

Viraat, *Hiranyagarbha* and *Ahyaakrita* are not entities existing in some separate place. When you examine carefully, you will find that every human being is an incarnation of *Viraat*, of *Hiranyagarbha* and *Ahyaakrita*. This profound truth is not realised by men because of their narrow outlook. The *Viraat-form* (Cosmic Person) is the human body multiplied by infinity. $\text{Mind} \times \text{Infinity} = \text{Hiranyagarbha}$. $\text{Life} \times \text{Infinity} = \text{Ahyaakrita}$. These three forms are related to the gross, the subtle and the causal bodies of man. All the three bodies are in the human being.

Hiranyagarbha is not in some distant place. He is installed in the mind. The *Viraat-purusha* is in the human form. The five basic elements (representing the faculties of sound, sight, smell, taste and touch) are in the human body, as well as in the cosmos.

All powers are present in man

The body is *Prakriti* (matter or earth). The inhaling and exhaling process is based on air. When man is engaged in motion and action, heat is generated. This is the fire element in man. When one performs an exercise or rubs his palms, heat is generated. That heat is in man. The entire body is composed of water (the fourth basic element). In this manner, all the five elements are within the human body and hence is regarded as a manifestation of the *Viraat-Swaroopa* (the Cosmic Person).

All powers are found in man. The powers not found in man cannot be found elsewhere in the universe. Because of his external vision man is unable to recognise that all that he sees externally is within himself.

Difference between waking and dream states

On account of attachment, fear and hatred, man forgets his true nature. This fact can be witnessed in the dream state. You have a dream in which you are travelling by a train. You pass a number of stations in the dream. You see many passengers and you spend your time in talking and joking. Wherefrom did the train come in the dream state? It is a creation of your mind. Likewise the stations you passed by and the passengers you moved with are all creations of the mind. All that was experienced in the dream are products of the mind. Nor is that all. You created even yourself in the dream. This is the activity of *Hiranyagarbha*.

In the waking state, one perceives everything outside him. His perceptions are governed by the conditions of time, place and circumstance. But in the dream state, these triple conditions are totally absent. You may enquire into the difference between the waking and dream states. For instance, you learn that there will be a meeting at 4 p.m. here. You start from the city at 3.30 p.m. by car. You arrive here at 4 p.m. You came to attend the meeting and listen to Swami's discourse. The time 3.30 p.m., the action leaving by car, the consummation reaching here at 4 p.m. In this sequence, you will notice that time, aim, action and achievement are all present in the waking state. In a dream, you have travelled to Delhi. When did you start on the journey? The time is not present in the dream. By what conveyance did you go? There is nothing in the dream about it. For what purpose you went to Delhi is not evident in the dream. The absence of time, purpose and circumstance is characteristic of the dream experience. The waking state testifies to the presence of these three elements. The *Viraat-Swaroopa* is related to time, purpose and action. The absence of these three factors indicates the nature of *Hiranyagarbha* (the dream state). Men experience both these states (the waking and the dream states).

The experiencer is same in all three states

Who is the experiencer? It is not someone in the waking state, a different one in the dream state and a third one in the *Sushupti* state (of deep sleep). The states of consciousness vary, but the experiencer is one and the same in all the three states. Because of the differences in the states, the experiencers appear to be different.

All the variations in experience are related to differences in time, place and circumstance. The body is made up of time, actions and obligations. Therefore, if the body is to be sanctified, time has to be utilised in performing right actions. "*Karmaanubandheeni manushaya loke*" (The human world is bound by actions). No one can be free from action even for a moment. Everything a man does, whether voluntarily or otherwise, constitutes *Karma*. For instance, a question is asked about someone: "What is he doing?" "Nothing," comes the reply. "If he is doing nothing, what is he doing?" is the next question. The answer comes: "He is sleeping." "Sleeping" is also an action.

Likewise, "sitting" is also an action. Respiration is also an action. All that happens within our body, like the circulation of blood or the beats of the heart, is also an action. Actions may be performed voluntarily or involuntarily. The breathing process goes on irrespective of what you do or feel, without any deliberate effort on one's part. This goes on in different states of consciousness. Such an automatic action is called *Aadhi bhautikam*. It relates to actions of the

body. *Aadhi atmakam* relates to actions of the mind. *Aadhi daivikam* relates to actions prompted by the Divine. These three categories of actions are governed by *Viraat-Swaroopa*, *Hiranyagarbha* and *Avyaakrita* respectively, in the different states of consciousness.

The awareness of the ancient sages

As the ancient sages knew the inner secret of these three divine manifestations which governed the three states of consciousness, they renounced all the worldly attachments and strove for realising permanent *Ananda* (spiritual bliss). People today, being ignorant of these truths, are treating this knowledge with derision.

For instance, in one *Veda* it is declared: "*Chandramaa manaso jaatah. Suryo chakshorajaayata*" (The moon emerged from the mind of the Cosmic Being; the sun came from his eyes). The moon referred to in this *mantra* is not the planet moon, a fragment of the earth, on which man had landed, as considered by scientists. They jestingly comment that no God was found on the moon by the cosmonauts. The *Vedic* reference to Chandra is not the planet moon visible from the earth. It refers to the mind-principle acting in every human heart. The significance of the *Vedic* reference to the Sun and the Cosmic Purusha's eye is that the human eye has the effulgence of the sun, on account of which it is able to see the Divine in everything.

Relationship between the sun and the eye

No one can determine the power of the eye. The eye which is barely half an inch in size is able to see stars that are billions of miles away. Wherefrom did the eye get this power? What is the relationship between the sun and the eye? It is like the coming together of the negative and the positive, which enables the eye to see this phenomenal universe. If the one is present and the other absent, nothing can be seen. For instance, if you go into a dark room, your eyes cannot see anything because there is no light. But when there is light, if you close your eyes you cannot see anything. There has to be a coming together of light and eye-sight. Only then you can see the forms of objects.

The effulgence of the sun and the power of eyesight together make the world perceivable. Thus the entire *srishti* (creation) is perceived through *drishti* (sight). Without perception there is no creation. Perception is thus fundamental. There is no blemish in creation. The fault lies with the *drishti* (sight). Hence, one's vision should be totally pure.

This is the lesson of the Upanishads. Your eyes are your *sastras* (scriptures). Therefore, develop the proper relationship between creation and perception.

Thus, there are many things, which cannot be learnt through the physical sciences, which can be understood from the Upanishads. What science has discovered so far is very little. Scientists feel proud about their miniscule knowledge. Spirituality affirms that even in the microcosm there is the macrocosm. "*Anoraneeyaan mahathomaheeyaan*," proclaims the *Veda* (The Divine is minuter than the atom and vaster than the vast cosmos).

A small seed planted in the ground grows into a vast banyan tree. The power of growing into a huge tree, with branches, leaves, flowers and fruit is immanent in the small seed. How does this growth take place? It takes place when the seed has sacrificed its original form. After it is planted in the ground it renounces its individuality as a seed (*Ahamkar*). When it sacrifices its original form, it acquires a new form. As long as it retains its original form, it will not be able to manifest its potentialities. Moreover, in the vast banyan tree, there are innumerable small seeds.

Minutest atom and Infinite Cosmos are one

From the microcosm the macrocosm emerges. In the macrocosm the microcosm exists. When this process is investigated, it will be seen that the minutest atom and the infinite Cosmos are basically one. Only the forms differ, but the substance is one. This is one of the profound mysteries revealed by the Upanishads.

Each Upanishad has sought to disclose the secret of creation. In attempting to understand the Upanishads, different persons, according to their intellectual abilities, interpreted them variously. These differences are related to their different natures.

For instance: A hunter looking at a bird on a tree fancies what a fine meal the bird will furnish for his family. He is thinking only of the meat in the bird's body. But when a poet looks at the bird, he is in rapture over the colours of its plumage and the softness of its feathers. Although the object is one, it appears differently to different persons according to their outlook.

How do these differences in perception arise? They arise from the worldly habits of the people concerned. Hence, good habits are essential to develop right attitudes. Nothing can be learnt well except by Constant practice. This applies equally to the Upanishadic teachings.

***Brahma-Ananda* is Self-realisation**

Brahma-ananda is not a commodity obtained from somewhere. It is Self-realisation, which confers supreme bliss. Man imagines that there is something uniquely precious by securing which he can experience bliss. This delusion is the cause of attachment, which arouses fear as to whether he would be able to get what he seeks and whether he would be able to retain it. Out of this fear is generated hatred. If there is no attachment, there will be no fear or hatred.

The first requisite is for men to realise their humanness and have respect for human values. All the violence and discord in the world today are due to the eclipse of human values. In the pursuit of desire, all values are sacrificed. Of what use are acquisitions if humanness is absent?

Students! Lead ideal lives. Ideals alone survive long after men are dead. Earn a good name by your exemplary conduct. Make your conscience your mentor. Control your senses and make the mind the master of the senses. This is the supreme message of the Upanishads. The term Upanishad means "Sitting near." (It signifies the proximity of the disciple to the preceptor). Nearness to God enables you to get rid of your bad qualities and to acquire good qualities.

Study the sacred scriptures of all faiths

The Upanishads lead you near to God. Instead of wasting your time on trashy novels, devote as much time as possible to the study of the sacred Upanishads, which will make your lives sublime. Study as well the sacred scriptures of other faiths. All of them contain sacred idea.

It is highly important for women to study sacred books and avoid seeing sensuous films and TV shows, especially during pregnancy. The child in the womb is likely to be influenced, by the mind of things they read or see. (Swami gave the examples of Subhadra and Lilavati to point out how Abhimanyu learnt about Padmavyuham in embryo, while Prahlada learnt the Narayana mantra from Narada from the womb of his mother). Mothers should be filled with pure thoughts and maintain a pure environment. Mothers should see that their children grow up as ideal persons in society. For this purpose, they should acquaint themselves with the cultural heritage of the country as enshrined in our Upanishads, *puranas* and epics.

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