

19. Prajnaanam Brahma

Not all the pleasures and luxuries of the world

Will confer contentment on man;

Without realisation of the Aatmic Principle

He cannot experience peace and contentment.

There are various kinds of *Dharma* (rules governing one's conduct) in the world. *Brahmacharya* (celibacy), *Grihastha Dharma* (the duties of the householder), *Vaanaprastha Dharma* (withdrawal from the world) and *Sanyasa* (complete renunciation) are known as the *Ashrama Dharmas* (the *dharmas* relating to different stages in a man's life). The Varna or caste *dharmas* relate to Brahmins, Kshathriya, Vaisyas and Sudras. There are, moreover, *dharmas* relating to worldly life and spiritual life. In Bharath, man's life is thus regulated by *dharmas*. All these *dharmas* are related to the mind. Enquiry will show that these *Dharmas* are of minor importance.

There is one *Dharma* which is greater than all these. That is the *Dharma* concerning the awareness of the "I"--*Prajna-Dharma*. It is the *Dharma* which pervades equally the body, the mind, the will and the *Antha Karana* (Inner instrument). It has been defined as "Constant Integrated Awareness." It expresses itself as "I" and shines forth in its fullness. It manifests itself throughout the world. But man does not recognise its effulgence in spite of its presence within him. What is the reason?

How to realise the "I" principle

The sun shines in all his glory, but his light is not felt inside a house because of the walls around and the ceiling above. In relation to man, what are these walls and this roof? The Vedas have declared: "The body is a divine temple and the indwelling spirit is the eternal *Jiva*." The body is like a temple. But, man has created the walls of *Abhimaana* and *Mamakaara* (attachment and possessiveness) around it and covered it with the ceiling of *Ahamkaara* (egoism). It is only when these walls and roof are removed that the divine "I" principle will be revealed in its true form as the effulgent *Prajna*.

Out of his egoistic feeling, a man declares, "I did this." "I saw this." "I heard this." "I experienced this." It is true that it is the "I" that sees, hears and experiences. But when a man uses the "I" today, he identifies it with the body sense and not with an awareness of its *Prajna* nature. Hence there are two kinds of "I" "One may be equated with the term "eye" and the other with the single letter "I." The "I" that corresponds to the "eye" is related to the body. The single letter "I" proclaims the power of *the Prajna* (Constant Integrated Awareness).

Students! You must realise that when a man with the body-consciousness says, "I have seen," it is not the eyes that have seen. Nor is it the ears that have heard or the hands that have performed actions. Nor is it the mind that has experienced. Behind all these is the power of *Prajna* which enables man to have all experiences of seeing, etc.

It is only when man gives up the ego sense relating to the body and realises the role of the *Aatmic* power of *Prajna* that he would be able to comprehend the principle of Divinity within him.

Conscience always declares only the truth

The basic human nature is related to Divinity and not to the body and sensory organs. In this human nature, how does one comprehend the meaning of "I"? This "I" shines as an entity that is pure, unsullied and unselfish. In modern parlance this is called "Conscience." Whatever action one does, the Conscience declares whether it is right or wrong. Whatever one may say or do in worldly life, the *Prajna Shakthi* (the power of Conscience) proclaims what is true, what is permanent and what is unaffected by the past, the present or the future. Here is an example. A thief stole valuable jewels from a house one night. The next morning the police arrested him on suspicion. To escape from the clutches of the police, the man uttered a number of falsehoods saying that he had never stirred out of his house and that he had not committed any theft. Although from a worldly point of view, he was uttering all these lies, his conscience was telling him that he had committed the theft and hidden the stolen articles somewhere and that he should not utter lies. This is the voice of the *Prajna* principle which is related to the Universal consciousness.

The individual and the Divine are not separate

To recognise this *Prajna* principle there is a certain kind of *yoga* (spiritual discipline). What is this *yoga*? Is it *Kriya yoga*, or *Bhakti yoga* or *Jnana yoga* or *Karma yoga*? There has been a great deal of misinterpretation of the term *Yoga* from very early times. It has been wrongly associated with some form of physical discipline. This is not the right meaning. *Yoga* means *Ananda* (Bliss). This is the correct meaning. When is this bliss experienced? When there is an awareness of the "I" principle, this bliss is secured. When life is enjoyed with the full awareness of the *Prajna Shakthi*, bliss is experienced as a result of this *yoga*. *Yoga* is the unity of the individual with the Divine. *Yoga* means an end to dualism. *Yoga* teaches that the *Jiva* (the individual Spirit) and the Brahman are not separate but one. This is the significance of the declaration in the *Shruti* "*Ekam Sath: Vipraa bahudhaa vadhanthi*" (The Truth is one: the wise call it by many names). This truth is beyond the categories of Time.

So, the individual and the Divine are not separate. Some are of the view that they are like an object and its reflection. There is, however, a big difference between the reflection and the object. The *Prajna* principle explains the relationship between the object and the image. The *Prajna Shakthi* teaches that when a person sees his reflection in a trough of water, the reflection resembles him, but he is not the reflection. Students today are not taking to the spiritual path because there are not qualified teachers to tell them the spiritual truths in the proper manner.

The truth taught by *Prajna-principle*

The image is you, but you are not the image. The *Prajna-principle* explains this by the following example. For instance, if someone beats you, you are hit, but the image is not affected by the beating. This demonstrates the fact that you are affected by the beating. If you and the image were identical, the blow that hit you should affect the image equally. Therefore, it is clear you are not the same as your image. But the image identifies itself with you. For instance, if someone insults the image, you get angry. But if you are hit, the image does not suffer any blow.

This is the truth taught by the *Prajna-principle*. Awareness of this Truth is more significant than all other truths (*Dharmas*). The essence of all truths is contained in the truth about the "I" as recognised by *Prajna* (the constant integrated awareness). Its value is equal to the total value of all other truths, which are only fractions of the whole, like 100 paise making up a rupee.

The significance of Sri Krishna's statement in the Gita, "*Sarvadharmaan parithyajya maamekam Sharanam vraja*," is that by giving up all petty *dharmas* (observances) and surrendering to the Lord you get the benefit of adhering to all the other *dharmas*. This is contained in the assurance: "*Aham Thvaa sarvapaapebhyo mokshayishyaami maa suchah*" (I shall liberate you from all sins, do not grieve). Do not attach any value to the minor *dharmas*. Understand the basic truth about the "I" (*nenu*)---the *Prajna-principle*---and derive the maximum benefit.

Apart from *Prajna*, there are in man entities like the body, the mind, the intellect, the will and the ego. All these appear to be distinct and disparate. But essentially they are one. It is the functional differences of the mind which account for the different terms like intellect, will, etc. It is the same mind that assumes all the forms. *Prajna* (Constant Integrated Awareness) is present in all of them.

***Prajna* is the common factor**

To understand the *Prajna-principle*, what has to be recognised is that *Prajna* is present in all the constituents of the body and the mind, but under different names and forms. Just as sugar is the common factor in a variety of sweets with different labels, *Prajna* is the common factor. This common factor is identified with the "I" (*nenu*).

How does this happen? One declares: "This is my body." "My" is an expression of "I." Again, one declares: "This is my mind." Here, again, the "I" is affirmed. "This is my *chitta*" (will), "These are my sensory organs," "This is my *Antha Karana* (Inner motivator)." In all these statements, the "I" is repeatedly affirmed in the possessive case. ("*naa*" in Telugu, meaning "my"). But in Sanskrit, "*naa*" means "not." The declaration that "This is my (*naa*) body" also carries by implication the meaning "I am not the body." Similarly when one says, "This is my mind," he implicitly affirms that he is not the mind. It will be seen that even within such simple statements, deep meanings are implicit. The use of "my" in describing one's body or mind also means that he is different from the body and mind.

The "I" principle is like a flowing river

Here is an example. You have a block of ice. No one terms it as water. Nevertheless the ice block is full of water. Without water there can be no ice. This means that ice is one form of water and is entirely based on it. Likewise, for the body, the mind, etc., the basis is the *Chith-Shakthi* (the spiritual element) known as "I." It is the *Prajna-Shakthi*.

To give another illustration. You go to the Ganga with ten tumblers and fill them with Ganga water. All the tumblers contain Ganga water, but the Ganga is different from them. The "I" principle is like the flowing river Ganga. This infinite "I" principle appears in a myriad objects in multifarious forms. All these objects have emanated from the infinite "I." They are fragments of the Infinite like the Ganga water in each tumbler.

Similarly, in the body, the mind, the intellect, etc. the *Prajna-Shakthi* of (the integrated awareness) "I" is present. All these have emerged from the Infinite and are manifestations of it.

Today, in the modern world, there is no attempt at expounding the unity that underlies the diversity. What is the reason for this? It is because many ancient sayings are interpreted in different ways. For instance, there is the saying: "*Shareeram Aadhyam khalu Dharma Saadhanam*" (for the achievement of righteousness the body is primary). The meaning of this aphorism is that the body is given to you for the pursuit of *Dharma*. Another aphorism is:

"*Sarvam khalu idham Brahma*" (Verily, all this is Brahman). The entire creation is pervaded by Brahman (the Universal Absolute). Then there is "*Aham Brahmaasmi*" (I am the Brahman). It means: "I am the embodiment of the Divine Consciousness." The *Sastras* make such pronouncements on one side. On the other, some unseemly *slokas* are recited at the conclusion of traditional ritual worship in Brahmin houses. "*Paapoham, Paapakarmaaham Paapaathma, Paapasambhavah*" (I am sin itself, I am a committer of sin, I am a sinful soul, I am born out of sin). This is a prayer in which the worshipper attributes sin not only to himself but even to his forebears. You may well imagine how unseemly all this is. Such prayers were devised to induce in the pious a sense of guilt and make them atone for their "sins" by making offerings to the priestly class.

The reason for loss of faith in the Divine

When the *Sastra* declares that everything has originated from Brahman (the Absolute), when the Upanishads declare that the Lord is the indweller in all *beings*---"*Eeshvaras sarvabhoothaanaam,*" how could the ideas of "birth in sin" and "I am a sinner" have any place? By arousing baseless fears in men, such sayings have served to undermine whatever little faith the people had in the Divine. This also accounts for the loss of faith among students today. Consequently, I introduced changes in this *sloka* in Prashanthi Nilayam. The priest in our Mandir used to repeat the old *sloka* earlier. In the place of *paapoham*, the term *Praapthoham* was substituted. *Praapthakarmaaham, Praaptasambhavam.* The changes meant: "I am born as a pure being. My parents were pure persons. My spirit is holy. My actions are sacred." The old *sloka* (verse) was changed in this manner.

Divine love is the panacea for curing "diseases"

On the basis of what happens in the world, people talk about sin and merit, but inherently there is nothing of the kind. There are misdeeds no doubt, but these should not be characterised as sins. Wittingly or otherwise man is prone to commit wrongs. Man should not commit such wrongs, because actions arising out of attachment or aversion, anger or hatred are expressions of the animal nature. When a man is filled with lust or hatred, he is a prey to a grievous illness. Vices like envy, anger, ego and hatred are various kinds of diseases. These cannot be cured by ordinary medicines or by professional doctors, who can only deal with physical ailments. These maladies are related to the *Antha Karana* (the internal instrument of action). There is a divine panacea for curing these diseases. That is Divine Love. Once that Divine Love is got, one can experience the "I" (higher Self) present in the *Prajna-principle*. When the diseases go, health is ensured.

Hence, the first requisite is to develop the Love principle as the supreme quality of a human being. But this Love should not be mixed up with the myriad forms of affection and attachment found in daily life. These may be called "love," but they are only different forms of *Anuraaga* (attachment).

Students should understand the difference between *Anuraaga* (worldly love) and *Prema* (Divine Love). Worldly love knows only how to receive and not to give. Divine Love gives and forgives and does not receive. It does not expect any return. In worldly love, there is no spirit of sacrifice. The *Shruti* declares firmly that immortality can be attained only through sacrifice and by no other means.

Preciousness of *Aatma-Jnaana*

People indulge in what they call meditation in *ekaantham* (solitude). It is not seclusion in a room or a cave or a forest that constitutes solitude. It is the one-pointed contemplation of God that is true meditation. It means merging the mind in thoughts of the Divine exclusively. The mind is a prey to continuous fickleness. The only way to achieve concentration is to merge the mind in the *Prajna-Thatthwa*, the integral awareness of the "I." The *Prajna-principle* is also described as *Guhyam*, that which is hidden or held in secret. It is infinitely precious. *Prajnana* is also termed *Brahma-Jnaana* or *Adwaita-Jnaana* (knowledge of the Absolute). It is also called *Aatma-Jnaana*. This knowledge is so precious that it has to be carefully safeguarded. But when its preciousness is not realised, it is treated lightly.

There was a shepherd who found a shining piece of stone in a river and not knowing its value, he tied it round the neck of his favourite lamb. A jeweller saw it and knowing its value as a diamond bought it from the shepherd for ten rupees. When he was gloating over the cheap price at which he had got the highly valuable diamond, the diamond broke into a thousand pieces and an ethereal voice told the jeweller: "I could excuse the shepherd for treating the diamond as an ordinary shining pebble, because he did not know its worth. But when you, who knew its value, got me for a low price, I could not bear the humiliation and my heart broke into pieces." Students are indifferent to spirituality because they do not know how precious it is.

Students should first of all realise the supreme value of spirituality. To pursue the spiritual quest with real understanding is *yoga*. People refer to *Raja yoga* and associate it with Emperor Janaka. How did Janaka practice *yoga*? He reigned over the empire as a ruler. He led the life of a householder. He experienced the spirit of a *thyaagi* (renunciant). He merged his entire being in the *Aatma*. To merge the body, the mind, the intellect, the will and the ego in the awareness of *Aham* (the "I" or the Self) is *Raja yoga*. The goal of life should be to become a *Raja Yogi*. This is the means to get rid of all worries.

How to get rid of worry and attachment

Students! How do you get rid of worry? Worry arises out of *Moha* (attachment). To get rid of attachment for anything, you should turn your yearning towards something that is greater, more beautiful and satisfying than the one to which you are attached. There is an illustration for this from the *Ramayana*. When Bharatha and Satrugna returned to Ayodhya from their uncle's kingdom, they were stricken with grief on learning about the death of their father. They felt sad that they had been denied the chance to be beside their father at the moment of his passing. When they went to Kausalya to enquire about Rama and Lakshmana, and what their father's last words were, Kausalya broke into sobs and told them about the exile of Rama and how Lakshmana and Sita had gone with him into the forest to stay there for fourteen years. When Bharatha heard this, his love for Rama overwhelmed his grief over the death of his father, and his greater love for Rama made him even bitter with regard to his father as the cause of Rama's exile. The grief over the death of the father yielded place to the sadness over separation from his beloved brother.

Develop noble sentiments and sublime ideas

A greater grief submerges a smaller grief. A nobler feeling eliminates an unworthy thought. Hence, to get rid of petty and mean thoughts, one has to cultivate noble sentiments and sublime ideas.

Man's entire life is a procession of worries from birth to death. To get over these worries, at least from now on turn your minds towards God, because love of God is the panacea for all worries. Develop love of God. This is my sole message to all of you students.

Students! Dedicate all your thoughts towards the single object of realising the Divinity in you. "*Prajnaanam Brahma*," declares the *Upanishad*. The integral awareness which is your real Self is the Universal Consciousness. Ruminates over this truth. Then you will realise your oneness with the Divine.

Brindavan, 28 May 1992

First, tend your parents with love and reverence and gratitude.

Second, Sathyam vadha, Dharmam chara... speak the truth and act virtuously.

Third, whenever you have a few moments to spare, repeat the name of the Lord, with the form in your mind.

Fourth, never indulge in talking ill of others or try to discover faults in others. Finally, do not cause pain to others, in any form.

Sathya Sai Baba