

27. The bliss of Self-Realisation

At nightfall the moon is the illuminator;

At dawn it is the Sun who illumines;

Righteousness illumines the three worlds;

A virtuous son is the light of the family.

EMBODIMENTS of Love! At night the moon is the source of light for us. During the day the sun sheds light and serves mankind. The three worlds are illumined by *Dharma* (Righteousness). A virtuous son is a beacon for the family. From ancient times, Bhaaratheeya culture has been illumined, fostered and inspired by didactic sayings of this kind.

It is purity of mind that helps to sublimate mankind, directs it towards God and enables it to manifest the inherent divinity in man. "What is perceived is liable to perish" (says an aphorism). That which is seen, that which appears to be real, is bound to pass away in the stream of time. All that is apparent in the phenomenal world is bound to disappear sometime or other. We should make every effort to know that which is invisible but imperishable. All external objects seen with the eye are bound to disappear.

Acquire the eyes of wisdom

It is not right that man, who is endowed with immense potencies, should be content with what is seen by the physical eyes. Such eyes are possessed equally by beasts and birds, as well as insects and germs. What, then is the uniqueness of the sight given to man? It must be realised that it is difficult to secure human birth. Having acquired this privilege, human beings should not be content with what is seen by the physical eyes. Man should acquire *Jnaana nethra* (the eyes of wisdom).

It may be argued that even the physical eyes help to acquire knowledge. The eyes see everything but cannot see themselves. Eyes which cannot see themselves, how can they see the mind or see Maadhava (the Divine Lord)? To have a vision of the Lord, the physical eyes are not competent. One must acquire the eyes of wisdom for this purpose.

The eyes are there, but when they develop a disease the eyes are not aware of it. When the ears lose the power of hearing, they are not aware of the loss. The senses which cannot know their own state, how can they know God? The physical eyes can only serve to see external objects in Nature and examine their properties and explain them, but cannot recognize the Divine.

The external world is made up of the *Panchabhuthas* (five great elements) ether, air, fire, water and earth. The five senses are transient, momentary and prone to disease. Senses which are liable to become victims of the disease of attachment, how can they serve to recognise the Divine? Those senses which cannot recognise their own condition are enveloped in ignorance.

What is meant by the phrase "knowing one's self"? Does self knowledge mean knowing one's lineage or profession? Knowledge of the Self transcends knowledge of the body, the senses, the mind and the *Anttahkarana* (the Will).

Get the vision of God

Today people worship God in various ways. They pray to God! "Oh Lord! Let me have a vision of you! Free me from all my troubles." When one listens to these prayers, one is tempted to feel

that they arise only from ignorance. People who offer such prayers seem to have no idea of the nature of God. Who is God? The scriptures, the *Vedhas* and the Upanishaths, give the answer to this question that God is: *Sath-Chith-Aanandha*. What you should seek from God, who is *Sath-Chith-Aanandha*, is *Sath-Chit-Aanandha*, and not trivial things relating to the world. All things are included in that *Aanandha* (Supreme Bliss). What is happening today is that people invoke the name of God but are really worshipping the devil. All mundane desires are associated with the devil and not with the Divine. The more desires are controlled, the more blissful one will be.

What, then, is the meaning of the call "know thyself"? You have to get a vision of God. You have to experience the Divine. You have to converse with God. Man must realize God; see God; feel God; talk to God. This is religion. Without understanding this true meaning of religion, people regard various forms of worship and prayers as religion. "Realise is Religion." This means that to realize the eternal reality is true religion.

Man is the embodiment of the eternal Truth. He is the embodiment of *Sath-Chith-Aanandha* (Being-Awareness-Bliss). But he is unable to recognize his true identity because egoism and possessiveness, pomp and pride envelop man's true form of "Being-Awareness-Bliss." The man who is able to get rid of attachment and hatred, egoism and acquisitiveness, will recognize his *Sath-Chith-Aanandha* (divine nature). The Divine within is covered by these tendencies like ashes over a burning charcoal. When the ashes are blown away, the fire will reveal itself.

Sath-Chith-Aanandha is the true wealth of a human being. Everyone should try to secure this treasure by overcoming the dragon of self-conceit which is barring the access to it. Everyone has to think for himself how he is viewing this treasure.

Men appear to worship God, but in reality they are pursuing worldly objects. How can they expect to realise God? There should be harmony in' thought, word and deed. The Divine whom you seek is within you. Your yearning for the Divine must be total and all-absorbing.

The body is a trust and not your private property

People speak about *Moksha* (liberation). What is it from which they have to be liberated? Is it from family, wealth or position? No. Liberation from these is an easy affair. Liberation is from the sense of identification with the body. The body is only an instrument and not your true self. The body is a gift from God. It does not belong to you, but you have to protect it as an instrument given to you. Everything belongs to God. You have to treat it as a trust and not as your private property. It is therefore, your duty to make right use of the body and senses given to you.

God's ways are astonishing, inscrutable, and mysterious. God has made ample provision for all man's needs. He has also given to man much more in the form of luxuries. In addition, He has conferred on man the power to control all these things. God has told man' "You are free to use as you like all the things given to you, subject to one condition. You will have to face the consequences of your actions." This means that you cannot abuse the freedom given to you to misuse the things that are provided for you. When you misuse anything, you have to bear the resulting misery. When you make good use of anything, you will enjoy the benefits therefrom. You have to take note of the purpose for which you use your senses or the objects given to you. Any 'misuse of them will bring misery in its wake.

Understand your true Self first

You came with nothing into the world and leave it with nothing. What happens to your wealth or to yourself? Of what use is all other wealth unless a man realises the bliss of oneness with the Divine (*Sath-Chith-Aanandha*)? (Svaami sang a song, in which he lamented the plight of man who ceaselessly worked for feeding his stomach, forgetting God) All these, pursuits are utterly worthless. Scientists who are exploiting the moon are not trying to understand their own minds. Without understanding one's own true self, all other knowledge is meaningless.

The moon dispels the darkness of night. The moon shines through the reflected light of the sun. Moonlight is cool while sunlight is warm. The mind is like the moon. When the rays of the *Aathma* fall on the mind, it acquires coolness. When the same rays fall on *Buddhi* (intellect), it gets hot. Today there is more concentration on development of the intellect than on broadening the mind. Man, who has come from the Divine, should aim at the perfection of the Divine. The famous Italian violin manufacturer Anthony Stradivarius, took one year to make one perfect violin because he regarded the making of the violin as an offering to God, who is perfect.

Consider the body as the flute of God

All actions should be done wholeheartedly. This was exemplified by the total devotion of the Gopikas to Krishna. They were lost in ecstasy over the melodious music of Krishna's flute. They found in that music the essence of all the *Vedhas* and the scriptures. (Bhagavaan sang a song in which the Gopikas pray to Krishna to fill their hearts with the nectarine melody of his flute).

What is the significance of the flute? It symbolises the human body. The flute has nine holes. The human body has nine openings. The body should be considered as the flute of God. It should be rendered completely hollow, so that the Divine may blow through it. Today the body is anything but hollow. It is filled with all kinds of desires. Only when the desires are removed, the body will be a fit instrument for the Divine to fill it with nectarine music. This is the process of surrender to the Divine. Then one gets intoxicated with the music of the Divine.

Pomp and pride have to be given up to experience the Divine. People talk about meditation. But how much of it is concentrated on God? Nor is formal meditation necessary when you realise that the Divine is within you.

The purpose of meditation is to recognise one's unity with God. This realisation can come only when one removes the three-layered cloak that covers the *Aathma* in the form of the three *Gunas*---*Thamas*, *Rajas* and *Sathva*.

Trust everything as God's work, whatever your vocation or profession, By dedicating all actions to God, you sanctify every act in daily life. That is the message of the *Vedhas*.

Offer love to God

People are used to making edible offerings to idols or pictures, but consume them after the ritual. These are not what should be offered to God. You should offer your Love to God as the food that God loves. Regard even this love as a gift from God. You offer to God what God has given to 'you. This was what Jayadeva said in a famous song. "Oh Lord! That heart which you gave to me, I am offering to you." It is only when one is filled with this feeling that one can become a complete devotee.

There should be no sense of separateness. This was finely expressed by Pothana when he declared that his entire poem was inspired and composed by the Divine. Thereby his

Bhagavatham achieved unique sacredness. The way Pothana described the Goddess Lakshmi's dilemma when she saw her consort, Vishnu, rushing in haste to the rescue of Gajendhra (the lord of elephants), how she was anxious to know where the Lord was going, but felt that it would be inauspicious to ask him, is one of the memorable passages in the Bhagavatham. (Bhagavaan recited the poem with such verve that the entire audience burst into applause). Even Goddess Lakshmi may be swayed by fear on occasions, but the true devotee is always without fear. Raamadhas expressed this fearlessness in one of his songs. That fearlessness stems from total surrender to the Divine. But today we witness only part-time devotion. The reward is also partial.

No danger from Solar Eclipse

The day after tomorrow, there will be a Solar Eclipse and people are filled with apprehensions about the effects of the eclipse on the world. There is no need for fears of any kind, because such events occur from time to time. The earth came out of the sun. The moon came from the earth. The moon sometimes comes between the Sun and the Earth. At those times the sun cannot be seen. This is the eclipse of the sun. When the sun, the moon and the earth are in one line, it is wrong to think that any disaster will happen to the earth. No dangers are in prospect. Such natural phenomena are part of the mysteries of creation. Scientists are keen to study the eclipse as an experiment. If they are preoccupied with experiments, when will they acquire experience?

"When people are immersed in family life, what will they get from it? They will continue to suffer till the end of-their lives." says a Thelugu Poem.

If all your life is spent on experiments, when will you begin to experience life? When will you start putting into practice the knowledge you acquire? There is joy only in practising what you know, not in the acquisition of knowledge. The delight of the pudding is in the eating. Practise at least a fragment of what you have learnt. Cultivate love for God. Love is God; Live in Love.

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