

31. The message of *Vedhaantha*

*One may master the scriptures,
Or be a great composer of poems,
But without purity of heart
These accomplishments are valueless.*

EMBODIMENTS of Divine Aathma! From ancient times Bhaarath has been famous for its exposition of the four *Purushaarthas* (the four goals of life--Dharma, *Artha*, *Kaama* and *Moksha*) and the teachings of the *Vedhas* and *Vedhaangas*. The *Vedhas* embody the sublime truths experienced by the sages and the seers.

Vedha is derived from the root '*vidh.*' It means knowledge. The *Vedha* proclaims the truths, which are valid for all time, for all the three worlds, relating to the well-being of mankind and the divinisation of human life. The *Vedhas* taught the principles of daily life and how people should order their lives. Their approach is dualistic, being concerned about how men should achieve the four goals of life in the world.

The *Vedhas*, which originally constituted a single body of hymns, were later divided into three sections: *Rig-Vedha* *Yajur-Vedha* and *Saama-Vedha*. The *Yajur-Vedha* later got subdivided into *Shukla* and *Krishna Yajur-Vedha*. Then came *Atharvana-Vedha*.

The nine *Vedhas*

The *Vedhas* are known by nine names. The first is *Shruthi*--that is, what is learnt by listening. This was necessary in ancient times when printing of books was unknown. The others are: *Anushravana*, *Aamnaaya*, *Samaamnaaya*, *Chandhas*, *Adhyaasa*, *Gamana*, *Nigama*, *Aagama*. *Nigama* and *Aagama* refer to the breathing process of the Divine.

All the *Vedhas* relate to the affairs of the phenomenal world. Each *Vedha* has a *Samhitha* (collection) made up of *Brahmanas*, *Aranyakas* and *Upanishaths*. All these lay down the practices that should be observed in the stages of *Grihastha* (householder) and *Vaanaprastha* (hermit leading an ascetic life). The practices were intended to control the mind. They are not designed to enable one to have direct experience of God.

It is *Vedhaantha* that deals with the question of Self-Realisation. For the spiritual journey, it is the guide-post and the destination.

There are three essential things to be understood regarding *Vedhaantha*. First is *Thaarakam*. Second is *Saankhya*. Third is *Amanaskam*.

Thaarakam calls for the understanding of four, principles: *Kesari*, *Dhesari*, *Madhyama* and *Bhagavathi*. *Thaarakam* calls for the investigation of five *mudhras* (ritualistic hand gestures) and after realising their spiritual insignificance, concentrate on *Sath-Chith-Aanandha* and merge the mind in the bliss of that experience.

Saankhya envisages twenty five entities made up of the five sense organs, the five sheaths, the five life-breaths, the five elements, the mind, the body, the intellect, the inner motivator and the individual soul. This system of *yoga* calls, for an enquiry into the reality of each of these entities leading to the discovery that the Reality, *Sath-Chith-Aanandha*, is beyond all these and to

recognise one's identity with this transcendental *Aathma*. This calls for an exploring of both the external world and the internal world of mind and spirit.

Amanaskam means the realisation that the entire universe is nothing but *Brahman*, which is the only Reality. When there is this realisation of *Brahman* the one without a second--even the mind ceases to exist. It is only the operations of the mind that result in the perception of diversity in the universe. When oneness is experienced, there is no mind at all. All is *Brahman* in that state of consciousness. There is room only for *Prema* (Love) in this state. That love is Truth.

Power of love experienced in the state of oneness

The power of that love is illustrated by an episode in Bhaagavatham. Once Yashodha went in search of Krishna and could not find him anywhere. She met Raadha and asked her whether she had seen Krishna. Raadha closed her eyes and meditated intensely on Krishna. That very moment Krishna appeared there. Yashodha realised that the love of a devotee like Raadha for Krishna was infinitely greater than her own maternal love for him.

This is how the Divine reveals Himself to devotees. Krishna appeared instantaneously before Raadha because of her pure, selfless love. If the heart is polluted or filled with pride, God cannot be experienced even if one tries for endless years.

Yashodha confessed to Raadha that her devotion had removed the veil of ignorance and pride clouding her vision all along. She admitted that there were many who loved Krishna more than she did and requested Raadha to teach her how to love Krishna. Raadha told Yashodha that this love cannot be taught by others. Each one has to develop it by one's own pure and total devotion.

After Krishna came home, Yashodha chided him for going to others houses to steal butter while refusing to eat what was available in plenty at home. The lesson to be drawn from Krishna's action is that He preferred to enjoy the devotion and love of His devotees rather than the maternal solicitude of Yashodha.

How to realise the presence of Divine within

This means that if you have pure, sacred, selfless love for God, the Divine will appear at that very instant.

How do you realise the presence of the Divine within you? Your body is made up of physical constituents like iron, water, phosphorus and lead, the value of all of which totals barely a few rupees. And yet within the body there is a power which can make millions. Wherefrom does that power come? Does it come from the mother who gave birth to the child? No. Till the child in the womb is four months and nine days old, the foetus is just a round mass of jelly. Then a force of vibration enters the embryo. Wherefrom does that vibration come? That is the *Brahma-Thathva* (Brahman principle). That is the *Praana-Thathva* (Life Principle). From that moment the child in the womb starts moving. Simultaneously the Brahman Principle enters the foetus. The combination of the two in the body is *Thaarakam*. This is one of the secret doctrines of *Vedhaantha*. This process is treated as a human phenomenon. It is not something human. It is a manifestation of *Brahman*.

When I speak through the mike you are able to hear me. But without the current the mike cannot function. The mike is matter. The current is energy. Their combination enables my voice to reach all of you.

Likewise, the coming together of *Brahman* and *Maaya* results in emergence of the *Brihath-Svaruupa* (the cosmic form of the Lord). *Brihath-Svaruupa* is the all-pervading energy.

How to realise the Self

You must realise that whatever scriptures one may master or whatever power and wealth one may acquire, without love one cannot achieve liberation. All of you are looking at the external world. Turn your vision inward. The external vision is useless. It is when you look inward that you will recognise your true form. The master of a house throws out all the useless things but safeguards what is most valuable inside an iron safe in the house. Each of you should realise what is most precious within you. The three processes of *Thaarakam*, *Saankhya* and *Amanaska* are extremely precious spiritual gems. They are within you, but you are not aware of their existence, because you have not related yourself to the owner, the Master within you. That owner is the *Paramaathma* (Supreme self). How to relate yourself to the owner and cultivate his friendship? To enable the students to understand this I am explaining this truth of *Vedhaantha* in simple terms.

Neutralise *Maaya* to reach the *Paramaathma*

The master resides in the upper floor of the house. You are outside the gate, guarded by a mastiff called *Maaya*. How, then, are you to approach the master, the *Paramaathma*? You shout His name. He comes down, recognises you and takes you inside. *Maaya* does not trouble you.

To neutralise *Maaya*, you have to prove your oneness with the Divine. This has been proclaimed in the Upanishathik saying: "*Adhvaitha dharshanam Jnaanam*" (The Supreme knowledge is the perception of the non-dual unity). This is the path of knowledge. The other path is that of devotion. The Lord comes down to help you when you chant His name at all times. You may ask how this can be done when one has to attend to many other things everyday, including study of books etc. There is no room for this doubt. Consider every act of yours as an offering to God. Do what is appropriate for each action. All this is necessary till you secure God's grace. Thereafter, they are unnecessary.

Awareness consists in the conscious remembrance of God on all occasions.

In the presence of evil actions, the Godly man should not remain a silent spectator. He has to stand up for truth. Because of their failure to do so when the Kauravas were attempting to disrobe Dhraupadi, Krishna accused Bheeshma, Dhrona and other Aachaaryas of being accomplices in Dhuryodhana's sinful act. Because of this grievous lapse on their part all these preceptors came to a sad end.

Lord's name should be remembered with total faith

Vedhaantha declares that three kinds of attachment--attachment to wealth, wife and children--are the cause of a great deal of sinful deeds. Hence, Krishna enjoined Arjuna to remember the Lord always and fight the battle. That will ensure his victory.

However, the Lord's name should be remembered with total faith. This is what the students should bear in mind. Krishna sought to instill such faith in Arjuna through the Geetha. Whoever it may be, if he carries out Svaami's commands with total, unwavering faith, he will have direct vision of the Divine in a moment. This principle is taught by *Saankhya Yoga*.

Vedhaantha in its essence is extremely simple. It is easier to grasp than butter. God is softer and sweeter than butter. To experience God you have to apply the heat of *Jnaana-Agni* (the fire of spiritual knowledge) to the heart filled with love. You must come near to God and become dear to Him through your love. When that happens desires disappear.

Vedhaantha is replete with such profound truths expressed in short aphorisms. Dr. Jumsai (who had spoken earlier) said that all are children of God. In fact all are the Divine itself. Instead of being a lover, whose love is confined to a few, become love itself so that you can love all. This is the supreme truth proclaimed by *Vedhaantha* (*Vedhic* metaphysics).

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What exactly is the aim and purpose of all the sastras, the Bhaagavatam, the Puraanas, these discourses and the harikathas? It is to tell man the truth about himself. There is no plot to mislead you. That is not the desire of the Sages who wrote down these annals and their own experiences. You know only the present and what is happening before your eyes. You do not know that the present is related to the past and is preparing the course for the future. It is like the head-lines and titles of a film on the screen; as the letters gleam one after the other, you read them and pass on to the next that comes to view. Each new letter or word wipes out the one already before your eye, just as each birth wipes out the memory of the one already experienced.

Baba