

## 6. Service, love and sacrifice

*The individual self is always the eternal Self (Shivam);*

*Shivam is ever the indwelling Spirit in the individual;*

*The one who is aware of this oneness*

*Is verily the knower of the Self, none other.*

*EMBODIMENTS of Divine Love!* Only the one who realises that there is no difference between Shiva and the individual is a true *Aathma-Jnaani* (knower of the Self).

Scientists are seeking to explain the mystery of creation in various ways. The Science of spirituality has also been explaining creation in various ways. Whatever any one may say, what is perceived by us is the atom. Without the atom there can be no universe. Rocky mountains, wooded forests, the waters of the ocean, the mud of the earth and the flesh and bones of the body are all composed of atoms. No object will be perceivable without the *presence* of atoms. The food you eat, the water you drink, the objects you see and the earth you tread upon are all made up of atoms.

When you enquire into the nature of the atom, you realise that the whole world consists of atoms.

The *Vedha* described the Divine as "*Anoraneeyaan mahatho maheeyaan*" (subtler than the subtlest atom and vaster than the vastest object).

Many regard the atom as something which is not visible to the eye. This is wrong. The atom consists of particles which are nor visible.

The ancient sages considered that the Divine was immanent in the atom. "Oh Lord! You are extremely subtler than the atom and vaster than the vastest object. You are said robe manifest in the 84 lakhs of species in the universe and declared to be omnipresent throughout the cosmos. How can we hope to recognise you?" (Telugu song).

### **Science and the *Vedha***

For a thousand years scientists have been trying to explore the nature of the atom. But a long time ago, the young lad, Prahlaadha, knew that God was immanent in the atom and proclaimed that truth. He stridently told his father: "Do not have any doubts as to the presence or absence of the Divine from one thing or another. The Lord is all-pervasive. You can find Him wherever you seek Him!" (Telugu poem). Young people should realise the superiority of spiritual power over the power of technology

*Om*, the *Pranava Manthra* contains within it the powers of Shiva and Shakthi. These two powers, Shiva and Shakthi, correspond to what scientists call electron and proton (the two constituents of the atom). Proton forms the nucleus of the atom. The electron is moving at great speed round the proton. The *Vedha* has described the phenomenon in different ways. It has declared that Shiva and Shakthi are inextricably associated with each other. This corresponds to the relationship between the electron and the proton. Anterior to the electron and proton is the particle known as neutron. This corresponds to what the *Vedha* has called *Sath*. In common parlance *Sath* is regarded as something effulgent. This is not correct. *Sath*, in fact, means darkness. Out of this darkness is born light. Out of the darkness called *Ashaanthi*, comes the effulgence of *Prashaanthi*. Thus darkness is called *Thamah*. One meaning of *Tha* is "nectar." The other

meaning *is garbha* (womb). This womb is called by the scientists as "space". The second syllabic *mah* means poison or Time. Thus the word *Thamas* encompasses space and Time, which are the determinants of the human predicament.

### **Realise the oneness of individual and Divine**

What is the origin of man? At the beginning there *is garbha* (space). In this *garbha* (womb or space) human life originates and has the form of a bubble on the seventh day Oil the 15th day it takes the form of the embryo. On the 30th day it becomes foetus. On the 60th day, the head starts taking shape. On the 210th day, the foetus quickens with life. On the 240th day, the full body is formed. On the 270th day the child, comes out into the world. the *Vedha* declared that space and Time are essential factors in human birth.

Instead of understanding the miracle of human existence, men are wasting their lives in the pursuit of transient worldly pleasures.

Although superficially it may appear as if there are differences between the findings of science and the declarations of the *Vedha*, essentially there are no differences. The *Vedha* has revealed many truths not discovered by science. Science has not yet found many of the truths declared by the *Vedhas*.

People should try to find out how much of the powers of the Divine are present in *man*. *Jeevi* (individual) and God are not different from each other. The individual however, by his attachment to the body, is leading a mundane existence. The day man develops love of Spirit, he will realise the oneness of the individual and the Divine.

### **The external world is a reflection of the inner being**

Men should understand the true relationship between the external phenomenal world and the world of the Spirit inside. The external world is a reflection of the inner being. All the happiness that he seeks from external objects is within himself.

Take the example of the ocean. The water that turns into vapour from the ocean assumes a different form and quality It acquires purity and sweetness and returns to the ocean in another form. Look at the changes it goes through in this process. Going up as vapour, becoming a cloud, coming down as rain, flowing as rivulets, it joins the ocean as a river. The change into vapour is *Sathya* (Truth). The formation of the cloud is *Dharma* (Right Conduct). Coming down as rain-drops corresponds to *Prema* (drops of love). When the drops join to become a river, there is the flow of *Aanandha* (Bliss). This stream of bliss merges in the ocean of Grace.

Sometime or other what has come from the Divine has to merge in the Divine. This is the natural destiny of all living beings. Taking birth as a man, leading a godly life, one ultimately merges in the Divine.

Considering the Divine as formless, some scholars have raised controversies regarding this process. The truth is that there is no object in the world, which is formless. Even the minutest sub-atomic particle has a form. Only the ignorant can think otherwise.

It was for this reason that the ancient sages adored the Divine in various forms. Holding that all forms are made up of atoms, they recognised the Divine in all forms.

### **Holiness of Shivaraathri :Dedicate all actions to Divine**

*Shivaraathri* has a variety of mournings. *Raathri* implies the darkness of night. But *Shivaraathri* connotes not darkness but the special sacredness of this night. There is darkness in this night also. But this darkness is invested with auspiciousness. The reason is on this *Chathurdhasi* day (14th day after the Full Moon), the moon, who is the presiding deity for the mind, has shed fifteen of his sixteen digits. This is an auspicious time for having proximity to God. (Bhagavaan sang a Telugu song to extol the days when good people gather to meditate on God, when kith and kin fraternise in the home, when hospitality is extended to strangers and when the needy are helped. These alone are real days, all other days are indeed days of mourning).

The *Upanishaths* refer to the attributes of the Divine as *Sathyam*, *Shivam*, *Sundaram*. Plato regarded Truth, Goodness and Beauty as the attributes of the Divine. *Shivam* represents the principle of auspiciousness. It is associated with Truth on the one side and Beauty on the other.

*Shivaraathri* was regarded as a sacred day by the ancients. Experiencing bliss on that day they offered it to the world.

People should realise the *impermanence* of worldly pleasures and the transient nature of youth, wealth and progeny. People should turn their minds towards the eternal Divine.

It may be asked: "If the Divine is present in all things, is there no difference between good and bad, truth and falsehood?"

For the person who has the conviction that the Divine is present in everything, there is no good or bad. He *sees the* Divine equally in all things. Good and evil exist for the one who looks at these things in terms of these differences.

In the Geetha, Krishna pointed out to Arjuna how he was the active force behind all events and that Arjuna should consider himself as an instrument of the Divine. When anyone acts out of the firm conviction that he is an instrument of the Divine and dedicates all his actions to the Divine, he will see no distinction between right and wrong. It is attachment to the body that produces the illusion of individual doership. When that attachment goes, there is realization of oneness with the Divine.

No doubt the body is necessary for certain purposes. But it should be regarded as an instrument and all actions should be performed as offerings to the Divine.

### **God is present in all irrespective of beliefs**

Divinity is present equally in all, irrespective of their beliefs. The believers should conduct themselves on the basis that the Divine is present in them and redeem their lives by acting up to the injunctions of the Divine.

Some scientists may deny God, but they do not realise that the powers of the electron and proton are derived from the Divine. God may be called by any name, but God is one. The atheists may adore something without calling it God, but nonetheless the Divine is present in it.

Once some persons approached Buddha and put to him questions about God. Buddha told them: "Why are you wasting your time on these futile controversies? If you were told about God, you will not believe. Why should you waste my time on this matter? The basic requisites for life in this world are *Sathya*, *Dharma* and *Ahimsa*. (Truth, Righteousness and Non-violence). Regard Truth as God. Adhere to Truth. You will realise everything."

Some people ask, "How are we to believe in God when we have no notion of his form?" This is sheer folly here is a flower. It has a form, but the fragrance emanating from it has no form. Can you deny the reality of the fragrance because it has no form? Fragrance has a form, but that form is manifested in the flower.

### **God acquires the form in which the devotee worships**

Take, for instance, *Prema*. (love). What is the form of love? It is your fault if you do not recognise its form. Love has a form derived from the persons who exhibit love. Without someone expressing love, love cannot exist, just as fragrance cannot exist without a flower. So, in these examples we can see the inextricable relationship between what appears to be formless and the source of its form.

To take another example: Here is a person whose form can be described in terms of various physical features. But does this description in terms of height, weight reveal anything about his internal qualities like forbearance, peacefulness, compassion, love and sacrifice? Are not these qualities very real and significant? he is prized mainly for these qualities, not for his physical features. To judge him only in physical terms is meaningless. His formless virtues are more important. When one is judged in respect of his qualities, the form is irrelevant.

The utter ridiculousness of judging a person solely on the basis of his physical form was demonstrated by Sage Ashtaavakra to the learned *Panditts* in Emperor Janaka's court when all of them laughed on seeing the crooked figure of Ashtaavakra. The sage laughed even louder at all of them. When they asked him for an explanation, Ashtaavakra told them that the scholars who laughed at his uncouth figure were no better than cobblers who judged things by the nature of the skin. Ashtaavakra told them that "*Pandithaah Sama-dharshinah*" (the truly wise person sees the Divine in all beings). Those who judge by the external form are no better than the cobblers. "I laughed at all of you because I wondered how the Emperor happened to esteem you all as scholars."

This means that those who judge anything on the basis of the external form are utterly foolish. No purpose is served by trying to explain to a blind person the nature of something he cannot see. Likewise, how can anyone speak about God to a person who has no intimacy with the Divine or yearning for God?

Your conscience is the Divine. God dwells in the heart as a witness. This is the truth about the omnipresence of God. To experience the Divine within you, you have to cherish godly feelings. To acquire such feelings you have to perform certain Spiritual exercises.

The formless Divine has to be worshipped in the form of Kaama, Krishna or other forms according to one's preference. Just as air or water assumes the form of the container in which it is kept, God acquires the form in which the devotee worships Him. All forms are His.

To worship God as immanent in every atom or cell in the body is the highest form of worship.

### **The Divine is both the lover and the loved**

*Embodiments of Love!* Through love you can achieve anything. A man without love is as good as dead. *Serve* all with love. The Divine is both the lover and the beloved. He is the director of the play and he is also the actor. (Svaami sang in Telugu about: the double role of the Divine in human affairs).

*He will bring tears to your eyes;*

*He will wipe away your tears.*

How does He do it? When you are immersed in worldly affairs He brings tears to your eyes. When you are immersed in spirituality He wipes away your grief.

*He will drive you crazy.*

*He will drive away your madness.*

*Verily He is the ever blissful Sai.*

He makes the devotee crazy about Svaami and makes him cry: "Svaami! Svaami! Svaami!" he rescues the devotee from the crazy attachment to the world.

*He will make the hedonist miserable;*

*He will make the miserable happy.*

An affluent pleasure seeker is rendered miserable. A miserable person is made happy. When a man becomes affluent he gets afflicted with the disease of worldly attachments.

### **Rid the country of the seven maladies**

Today the world is afflicted with seven kinds of diseases.

First: Business without morality. This is a major malady afflicting the world.

Second: Politics without principles.

Third: Education without character

Fourth: Sustenance without sacrifice.

Fifth: A harvest without labour.

Sixth: Humanness without virtue.

Seventh: Devotion without faith.

What is the use of devotion without faith? What is the use of claiming to be a man without human qualities? How can you expect a crop without cultivation? What is the use of education without character?

Three things are most essential today. Morality in business, politics with principle and education with character.

Today the above mentioned seven diseases are causing all the troubles to the nation. Wherever you turn, there is disorder, misery and lean. Everyone should resolve to rid the country of these seven grievous ills.

### **Love is Divine: Live in Love**

How are these diseases to be got rid of? Love is the only means. Love is God. Live in love. When love is developed, hatred will have no place. Injustice will be out of bounds. People will not indulge in falsehood. They will not resort to wicked ways. People will follow the right path.

Therefore, deem love as God. Buddha declared: "*Ahimsa* is the foremost virtue." Sathya Sai declares: "Love alone is the form of the Divine."

Love all. Love is God's only property. It does not belong to man. It is not a purchasable commodity. It issues from the heart. It alone can be said to be divine. Divine love is different from human attachments. It is timeless. It is omnipresent. Make it your sole ideal. It is inherent in you. Manifest it in the proper way. If there is sugar at the bottom of a tumbler filled with water, you can make the whole water sweet by stirring the sugar and dissolving it in the water. Likewise, your heart is a tumbler. At the bottom, there is Divinity. Take the spoon of *Buddhi* (intellect), stir the heart by the process of *saadhana*. Then, the Divinity in the heart will circulate through the entire body. Then, every action of yours will be sweet, your speech will be sweet, your walking will be sweet, your looks will be sweet, your thoughts will be sweet. You will be sweet all over.

Realise that sweetness is within you. Turn your intellect inwards and discover that sweetness by filling the intellect with love. Saint Raamadas proclaimed the same truth when he sang his song calling upon all devotees to share the sweetness of the *Raama-naama*. "Here is the Sweet of Raama's name. Eat it and enjoy the bliss. Do not go after any other silly things sold in the bazaar. This sweet has been made out of the flour of the *Vedhas*, mixed with the milk of the *Mahaavaakyas*, and is offered to you by the ancient sages. They made it with the sugar of inward contemplation and the ghee of pure thoughts, removed the taint of falsehood from it." The chanting of Raama's name costs you nothing. Why do you go after bad things, paying a heavy price for them?

The blissful name of Raama contains the essence of *Vedhas*, is the goal of all spiritual endeavour and is the essence of all spirituality. All things can be accomplished by churning the Lord's name.

### **Strive to destroy the ego**

Do not look upon *Shivaraathri* as only an annual festival. Deem every night as a *Shivaraathri* (holy night). Whatever and whenever you entertain sacred thoughts and contemplate on God, you have *Shivaraathri* then and there.

*Shivam* means goodness. It calls for the eschewing of egoism. Those who know Telugu can see how the letter Sa becomes *Si* by the shortening of the mark at the end of the letter Sa. The elimination of the ego makes all the difference between *Shivam* and *Shavam* (a corpse).

Every human being should strive to destroy the *Ahamkaara* (ego). Unless the ego is eradicated, Divinity cannot be realised. Consider this example. Here you are, devotees who have come from distant parts of the world at great expense and trouble. Who sent you any invitation? Why have you come here? You have come to experience the love of Svaami. Svaami is moving amongst each of you with joy and laughter and filling you with happiness. It is because of Svaami's abundant love that you are drawn to this place. If ego prevailed here, none of you would come here. It is the total absence of ego that attracts you to Svaami. This was the feeling that animated the *gopis* of Brindhaavan. Their only desire was to be near Krishna at all times and in any condition.

This is true relationship between the individual and God. But people are forgetting this and wasting their time. They should be prepared to make any sacrifice to realise God, which is the primary purpose of human birth.

### **Follow the example of Raama**

*Students!* Whatever may be your parents plan for you or your own plans for your future, never give up meditating on God. *Serve* your parents. Follow the example of Raama, who became

adorable as a God by His exemplary life. He sacrificed everything to uphold the plighted word of his father. Doing your duty is true *yoga*. Your duty as a student is to respect your teachers, revere your parents and earn a good name in society. After you get married, you must lead a virtuous and purposeful life in society. This is the culture of Bharath. It calls for a life of purity in thought, word and deed.

This is the primary message of *Shivaraathri*. I am giving you three maxims which you have to bear in mind: "*Seva, Seva, Seva.*" Never forget the duty to serve. For this you have to develop love. To develop love, you have to promote the spirit of sacrifice. Service will become meaningful when it manifests love that issues from sacrifice. Consider service as conducive to your own spiritual development. "Be good, do good."

*Discourse in Sai Kulvanth Hall on the evening of 7-3-1997.*