

24. From the corporeal to the Divine

EMBODIMENTS of Love! The body, the Sense organs, the mind and the intellect are the instruments for a human being. Only the person who understands the secret of these instruments will be able to comprehend the *Aathmik* Principle. If a man cannot understand the vesture he is wearing, how can he understand the mystery of the Infinite Indwelling Spirit?

First comes the body it is called *Dheha* because its ultimate destiny is cremation. The body is burnt after life goes out of it. The body may be judged by its form. But it is in fact a receptacle for all kinds of garbage and is subject to numerous ills of the flesh. Recognising its impermanence, man should turn his mind towards the *feet* of the Divine.

The body has also another name, *Shareera*, which means that which is subject to decay.

The body at the beginning is a lump of flesh (as foetus). Then it acquires an attractive form. Youth confers on it special charm. In old age it develops deformities.

The body is consumed by the fire of worry when a man is alive or is burnt on the funeral pyre when he is dead.

The Scriptures declare that man is endowed with a body primarily to lead a righteous life. The Bhagavath Geetha describes the body as *Kshethra*. One meaning of this term is that it is the abode of the Divine. Places of pilgrimage are called *Kshethras*. Another meaning of the term *Kshethra* is "a field." If you want to grow a crop on a field, you have to prepare it suitably for the purpose. Ploughing, sowing and watering have to be done for the crop to grow. As is the seed so is the crop. Likewise, the actions of the body determine the nature of one's life. Everyone should resolve to perform good- deeds to enjoy good results.

"Both the body and the *Aathma* are divine"

The body as *Kshethra* is a temple in which the Divine dwells as *Kshethrajna*, the knower of the *Kshethra*. The *Kshethrajna* is the *Aathma* (the Self). The Geetha declares that both the body and the *Aathma* are divine.

However great a scholar may be, however profound his knowledge of the scriptures, .he has to learn all about the body because it brings with it the consequences of the previous lives of the individual. The body is the basic instrument for all actions in this life and for the acquisition of all knowledge and skills. Everyone at the time of birth brings with him a necklace from the Creator made up of the results of his good and bad actions in past lives.

Everyone reaps only the fruits of what he sows. Only good actions can produce good results. Your happiness or sorrow is related to the nature of your actions. In a sense, all actions of man can be regarded as *Yajnas*. To cross the ocean of *Samsaara* (the cycle of birth and death) all that is necessary is service to good people and no other religious observance. By such service, one receives the grace of the Divine. All actions have to be done as an offering to God to secure this grace. They then become *Yajnas* (holy sacrificial rituals).

One should think of God and offer prayers, at least four times a day---at dawn, at noon, at sunset and before going to bed as food for the soul.

Body is sacred and precious as the abode of Aathma

The body should be regarded primarily as an instrument for the realisation of the Divine through the nine forms of devotion. Attachment to the body for physical pleasures should be given up. It is essentially sacred and precious as the abode of the *Aathma* and should be used only for sacred purposes. God is one, whatever the name or form in which He is worshipped. God blesses a devotee according to the depth of his devotion, without regard to the name or form used for worship.

Today, before the commencement of the *Yajna*, the *rithviks* rubbed two sticks against each other to produce fire for the *homam*. What is the significance of this procedure? It indicates that for a *Yajna* the fire should be started in a natural way and not by any artificial means. Two sticks are used for the purpose. Similarly the body and the mind should be rubbed against each other to generate *Jnaana-agni* (the fire of wisdom). It should also be realised that there is a-divine energy latent in man---like fire in the wood---which enables the eyes to see, the ears to hear, the mind to think and the body to move about. All organs are able to function because of this divine energy. Man feels proud that he is the doer of all things. There is no basis for this pride. Such egoism is a fatal disease. Egoism is accompanied by another dire disease called *Asunya* (envy). There are cures for all kinds of diseases in the world. But there are no remedies for egoism and envy. Total rain is the only cure for these two diseases.

Man should realise that there should be no excessive indulgence in any desire, whether it be food or other necessities. This is the lesson we have to learn from our ancients, who practised self-restraint in every aspect of life. In the ancient days you did not have the kind of education that is imparted today. They did not secure high degrees. But they led a life of purity and integrity with the name of Naaraayana on their lips.

The triune peace can be conferred only by God

Today people should develop pure hearts and unwavering minds to secure peace. Not all the wealth of the world or the great advances in space technology confer peace on people who have not found it within them. When at the end of a *bhajan*, we say *Shaanthi* three times, the prayer is for peace of the body, the mind and the Spirit. Without this triune peace man cannot have real peace. And this threefold peace can be conferred only by God. This means that spirituality is essential for the health of the body, the peace of the mind and the bliss of the Spirit.

The Cosmic Spirit is one only, though it may be called by many names and worshipped in varied forms. You should see the Divine in everyone, including those whom you may regard as aliens or enemies. True spirituality consists in this sense of spiritual oneness. It can arise only when the attachment to the body is given up. People imagine that it is difficult to give up this attachment. It is not so. When you develop the conviction that you are the *Aathma* (the Self), then it will be easy to give up attachment to the body. When people in general develop this feeling, there will be a great transformation in the life of mankind. Peace should spread from the individual to the family, to society, the nation and the world and not vice-versa.

Spiritualising effect of vibrations from the Vedhas

Embodiments of Love! Today the *Vedha Purusha Jnaana Sapthaaha Yajna* has been inaugurated for promoting the welfare of the universe. Every individual has to play a part in this endeavour for world peace and prosperity. Whether you understand the meaning of the *manthras* or not, the vibrations emanating from the chanting of the *Vedhas* will have a spiritualising effect on the

listeners. There is bliss in the vibrations of the *Vedhic* hymns. *Brahman* (The Cosmic Self) is described as the embodiment of cosmic vibrations which permeate the universe, fill it with effulgence, wisdom and bliss. Make use of the opportunity provided by the *Yajna* to purify your life and raise yourself from the human to the Divine.

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