

Know your true identity

*One may master all forms of knowledge,
One may vanquish one's adversaries in debate,
One may fight with valour and courage in the battlefield,
One may be an emperor reigning over vast kingdoms,
One may offer cows and gold as an act of charity,
One may count the countless stars in the sky,
One may tell the names of different
 living creatures on the earth,
One may be an expert in eight forms of yoga,
One may reach even the moon,
But it is impossible to control the body, mind and senses.
Turn the vision inward and
Achieve the supreme state of equanimity of the mind.*

[Telugu Poem]

Embodiments of Love! In this world, for man to accomplish any task, *ichcha shakthi* (will power), *jnana shakthi* (power of

discrimination), and *kriya shakthi* (power of action) are essential. *Ichcha shakthi* refers to the determination to undertake a task. *Jnana shakthi* refers to the ways and means to be adopted to fulfil the task undertaken. It is not enough if you have *ichcha shakthi* and *jnana shakthi*; you need to have *kriya shakthi* too.

If you want to weave cloth, you need to have cotton. The cotton has to be made into thread, which in turn has to be woven. This relates to *kriya shakthi*. An enquiry into the type of equipment needed to do this relates to *jnana shakthi*. Man has got all these three potencies in him, but that is not enough. He needs to bring them together.

Primordial cause of Creation

Here is a small example. Suppose you have flowers, thread, and a needle; can you have a garland? Should not there be someone to make a garland out of them? You have a container for oil, a wick, and a lamp. But will this alone produce light? No. There must be someone to light the wick. You have gold, gems and precious stones; can you have jewels out of them? No. A goldsmith is needed to make them.

Here, you have two types of causes: One is *upadana karana* (primary cause) and the other is *nimitta karana* (instrumental cause). A goldsmith makes ornaments using gold, but who is the one who has created gold? He is God. So, God is *upadana karana* and the goldsmith is *nimitta karana*.

Without the primordial principle, *upadana karana* (God), *nimitta karana* is useless. God, the *upadana karana*, is the creator of this world. Man, the *nimitta karana*, is trying to experience and enjoy this creation. But man forgets the *upadana karana* (God) and thinks that he is the doer and prides himself on his achievements.

Without the primordial basis, man cannot achieve anything. Students of science are aware of this. Two parts of hy-

drogen and one part of oxygen are combined to make water. Scientists pride themselves on this achievement and ignore God, who is the creator of hydrogen and oxygen.

In this modern age, man is carried away by the sense of doership, forgetting the Principle of *Mooladhara* (primordial basis). The potter makes pots, but without clay and water, he cannot do so. The potter is only an instrument, and hence he is the *nimitta karana*. God, who has created clay and water, is the *upadana karana*.

Bharathiyas (Indians) believe that there are eighty-four lakh species in this world. These can be classified into four categories: (1) *andaja* (born out of eggs), (2) *pindaja* (born out of womb), (3) *swedaja* (born out of sweat), and (4) *utbhija* (born out of earth). There are twenty-one lakh species under each of these categories. They make a total of eighty-four lakh species.

Beings are many, but the living principle is uniform in all of them. There are innumerable waves in the ocean, each looking different from the other. Waves may vary in form, but ocean is the basis for all of them. Likewise, all eighty-four lakh species have emerged from the ocean of *Sath-chith-ananda* (Being-awareness-bliss)> All have their origin in *Sath-chith-ananda*.

Man is essentially divine

What is *Sath-chith-ananda*? *Sath* is Being, that which is changeless and eternally present. *Chith* means total Awareness. *Sath* is like sugar; *Chith* is like water. When water and sugar are mixed, you have neither sugar nor water, but syrup. Similarly, the combination of *Sath* and *Chith* results in *Ananda* (Bliss).

In all living creatures, you find this *Sath-chith-ananda*. But man is not able to understand his true identity, which is *Sath-chith-anandam* and is in search of happiness outside. It is like

searching for his own self outside. How can he find his own self outside? He has to look within.

In the waking state, there are four aspects: *kala* (time), *karma* (action), *karana* (reason), and *karthavya* (duty). Suppose you have decided to go to Bangalore by car to participate in a programme. You start at 5 a.m. and reach Bangalore at 8 a.m. Here *kala* is 3 hours, *karma* is traveling by car, *karana* is the programme, and *karthavya* is participating in it. All four aspects are present in the waking state.

Now consider that at 10 o'clock in the night you had a dream. In the dream, you went to Bangalore and participated in a programme. When did you start? How did you travel? When did you reach? What was the reason? You do not know. This only means that the above four aspects do not exist in the dreaming state. In the *sushupthi* (deep sleep state), there is no time, no reason, no duty, and nothing that you do; you only experience bliss.

Man is changeless in all three periods of time

In the waking state, you undertake different tasks with your body. In the dreaming state, you create everything, including your own self. In deep sleep, you enjoy bliss. You are one and the same in all the three states. On this basis, it can be said that man is changeless in all the three periods of time and experiences bliss directly or indirectly. He experiences oneness in all the three periods of time. When once he understands this spirit of oneness, there will be no scope for differences and conflicts. As long as you identify yourself with the body, you find only multiplicity.

Once, Adi Sankara went to Kasi and prayed to Lord Viswanath thus, "O Lord! I have come here to redeem myself of the three sins I have committed." He had not harmed anyone; nor did he steal anything. Then why did he call himself a sinner?

He explained the first sin in the following words. “It was I who declared, ‘*Yatho Vacho Nivartante Aprapya Manasa Sah.*’ Though I know that you are beyond the ken of thought and word, I tried to describe you in a string of words: *Isha, Gireesha, Naresha, Paresha.* I have committed the sin of not practising what I preached. This is my first sin.

“Though I declared that God is everywhere, I have come all the way to Kasi to have Your *darshan*, as if You are present only in Kasi. I have committed the sin of saying one thing and doing another. This is my second sin.

“It was I who said, ‘*Na punyam, na papam, na sukham, na durkham,*’ which means there is no sin, no merit, no joy, and no sorrow. Yet, I am praying for the atonement of my sins. This is the third sin I have committed.”

The significance of Sankara’s statement is that the disharmony of thought, word, and deed is in itself a sin. “*Manasyanyath vachasyanyath karmanyanyath duratmanam,*” the evil one is he who does not observe the unity of thought, word, and deed. “*Manasyekam vachasyekam karmanyekam mahatmanam,*” he is the noble one who has achieved the unity of thought, word, and deed.

Lord’s name, the only Saviour

Every action of Sankara is a teaching to humanity. When he was returning from Kasi, he found a person who was trying to memorise Panini’s grammatical formula by constantly repeating, “*Dukrun karane, dukrun karane.*”

Sankara decided to give him a teaching. He went and asked him what benefit he would get by repeating Panini’s grammar. That man said that he could become a great pandit, join the court of the king, and earn lots of money and lead a happy life. When Sankara asked him, what would happen to him after death, he said he did not know. Sankara told him, “O foolish man, understand that the body, money, and power are tempo-

rary. Attain eternal bliss, which you can enjoy even after your death.” Sankara sang the following verse:

*Bhaja Govindam Bhaja Govindam
Govindam Bhaja Mooda Mathe.
Samprapthe Sannihite Kale
Nahi Nahi Rakshathi Dukrun Karane.*

O foolish man, chant the name of the Lord. When the hour of death approaches, It is only the Lord who can save you, and not your grammar.

Though Sankara had no personal gain, he strove hard for the emancipation of humanity.

Engage yourself in sacred actions

Not only Sankara, Krishna too did the same. In the Bhagavad Gita, He declared,

*Na me parthasthi karthavyam trishu lokeshu kinchana,
nanavapthamavapthavyam varthayevacha karmani.*

I don't have to do anything in these three worlds, nor do I gain anything. But yet, in order to teach humanity, I constantly engage Myself in action from dawn to dusk, so that people follow My ideal and sanctify their lives.

Only through action man can redeem himself. “*Karmanyeva-adhikaraste maphaleshu kadachana* (you have the right to action, not to the results thereof).” “*Karmanubandheeni manushyaloke* (humanity is bound by action. No one can spend their time without being involved in action).”

When I ask some of the foreigners, what they are doing, they say they are doing nothing. They think action is related to involving in some kind of job or business. In fact, our inhalation and exhalation process is also a kind of action. Even the movement of eyelids is action. Day in and day out, the body is

engaged in some kind of activity or the other. The noblest way is to engage the body in sacred actions such as *sravanam* (listening to the Lord's stories), *kirtanam* (singing His glories), *smaranam* (remembrance), *Pada sevnam* (service to the Lotus Feet), *archanam* (worship), *vandanam* (salutation), *dasyam* (servitude), *sakhyam* (friendship), *Atmanivedanam* (offering oneself to the Lord, i.e. self-surrender).

You should understand that whatever *sadhana* (spiritual exercise) you do, be it *japa*, *tapa*, *yoga*, *dhyana*, or *bhajan*, it is for your own satisfaction. God does not need them. Some people think they worship for God's sake; it is a mistaken view. Whatever man does is for his own sake and to meet his selfish ends.

Vision of the True Self

As you inhale, you make the sound *so*, and when you exhale, you utter the sound *ham*. Together *Soham* means, "I am That," which means you are God. When you go on repeating, *Soham*, *Soham*, where is the need for any *sadhana*?

Where is God? How to see Him? These questions of seeing and experiencing God have been there since ancient times. In fact, you have to take to the spiritual path in order to know your true identity i.e. Divinity. He who knows his true identity is a true aspirant. Without realising this truth, all spiritual *sadhana* will be a waste of time.

"*Sariramadyam khalu dharma sadhanam* (body is gifted to undertake righteous actions)." What is our *dharma*? Love is our *dharma*. Truth is our *dharma*. Peace is our *dharma*. We should follow our *dharma*.

The quality of sugar is sweetness. If it is not sweet, then it is not sugar. Similarly, Love is your natural quality. Without Love, you cannot be called a human being. There is love in you, but you are limiting it to your family, friends, and relations. However, remember that your relations will come with

you only up to the burial ground. It is only God, who is with you always, even after your death.

“*Janthunam narajanma durlabham* (human life is the rarest).” Such a sacred and noble life should not be wasted. Having taken birth as a human being, you should set an ideal.

A dancer always keeps the rhythm in her mind, while dancing. Similarly, you should always remember your innate divinity in whatever you do. *Maya* (illusion) is like a *narthaki* (dancer) always trying to distract you. In order to control this ‘*nar-tha-ki*’, you have to reverse the order of the letters and do ‘*kir-tha-na*’ i.e. singing the Lord’s name

*Harernama, Harernama Harernamaiva Kevalam,
Kalau Nasthyeva Nasthyeva Nasthyeva Gathiranyatha.*

In this Age of Kali, the Lord’s name is the only refuge.

Many people aspire for *Sakshathkaram* (vision of the true Self). Westerners say that they want liberation. But they do not know what it really means. If you want to see your Self, give up body attachment and develop attachment toward the Self. Only then you will have *Sakshathkaram*.

At birth, you cry, ‘*koham, koham,*’ which means ‘who am I? Who am I?’ You should not die with the same question on your lips. When you die, you should be able to assert cheerfully, ‘*Soham,*’ meaning ‘I am God.’ Finding out the answer for the question, ‘Who am I?’ is true liberation.

Today, you have endless worries such as birth, death, old age, losses, failures, family life, etc. All these are of your own making. They arise because of your attachment and delusion. God does not give them. Who is the giver and who is the receiver, when you are God yourself.

Along as you have *bhrama* (delusion), you cannot attain Brahma (God). Just as ash covers the fire, likewise *maya* conceals your true identity. Fire is seen when ash is blown away.

Similarly, you can have the vision of the Self, when you give up body attachment.

Divinity through unity

Vedanta says, “*Ekam sath viprah babudha vadanthi* (Truth is one, but scholars refer to it by many names).” The same water has different names in different languages. Similarly, God is one, but He is worshipped in many forms and names.

‘I’ is the first name of God. Right from the pauper to a millionaire each one uses the letter ‘I’ while introducing themselves. This ‘I’ is your true identity. The single letter ‘I’ refers to the *Atma*, while the three-lettered ‘eye’ refers to the body. The body has three attributes; whereas, the *Atma* has none. *Atma* is Supreme Bliss. It is the eternal witness and beyond all descriptions. “*Ekatma Sarvabhoothantharatma* “it is the same Divinity that is present in all beings.)”

Embodiments of Love!

Try to enjoy and experience the love that is in you. If someone says there is no God, tell him, “Maybe your God does not exist for you, but my God exists for me. You have no right to question the existence of my God.” You have to argue with conviction. Such an argument will silence the person.

Each one is mad in their own way. The world itself is like a mental hospital. There are some who derive delight in self-praise. There are some that beat and accuse others. But the madness for God is the noblest. God sees to it that you give up madness for the world and become mad for Him. Only a fortunate few will be blessed with this madness for God. If only the entire humanity developed this madness for God, the world would be rid of disturbances and peace would prevail.

Do not imbibe negative feelings

Students! Embodiments of Love!

After every *bhajan* session, you are praying for the peace of the world (*Loka samastha sukhino bhavanthu*). You find only 'pieces,' but no peace in this world. In fact, if you develop love and tolerance toward fellow beings, there will be no need to pray for peace; the world will automatically become an abode of peace.

Develop love in you and share it with at least ten persons in a day. There are ninety-five crore people in this land of Bharath (India). If each one goes on sharing his love with others, then all will be one. Out of this unity, you will attain Divinity. Where there is mistake, there is fear; where there is love, there is no fear. Why fear when I am near and dear? You should have full faith in Divinity. Many devotees come here, but how many are firm and steady in their faith? All the worldly desires are negative in nature. The negative feelings stand in the way of attaining the positive. So, do not imbibe negative feelings. Develop positive feelings and think of God with unwavering faith.

26 September 1998
Prashanthi Nilayam