

Dwell in God Consciousness

*Bend the body
Mend the senses
End the mind.*

This is one of the chief governing principles of the culture of Bharat. Every *Bharatiya* (Indian) is the inheritor of this legacy. So, *Bharatiyas* should make proper use of this legacy to redeem their lives. If a person abuses another, he really abuses his own self, because the abuser and the abused are both one and the same, because the indwelling *Atma* is the same in both. Who reprimands whom? The principle of the *Atma* is the same in all. On this basis, the scriptures declare: “*Ekam sath viprah bahudha vadanti* (the truth is one, but wise men speak of it in many ways).”

There is water in this tumbler. Telugu people call it '*neeru*', Tamilians call it '*thanni*', Hindi speaking people call it '*pani*',

Englishmen say 'water', while those who speak Sanskrit say 'vaari'. Though it is called by different names, yet water remains the same; its basic quality does not undergo any change. In this vast world of diverse species, human beings have different names and forms. Despite these outward variations, the *Atmic* principle in all of them is the same. The recognition of this unity in diversity constitutes spiritual *sadhana*. When one enquires deeply into the question whom one is praising or denigrating, loving or trusting, it will become *evident* that one indeed praises, denigrates, loves, or trusts only one's Self and none else.

Fundamental unity of mankind

Though lakhs of years have passed since the advent of man on this earth, yet he does not know his real Self even today. The entire creation has divine origin, and the Creator is God. He willed: "*Ekoham Bahusyam* (I am alone, let Me be many)," and the creation manifested by His Will. *Srishti* (creation) has its origin from *Parameshti* (supreme power). *Samashti* (society) is a limb of *srishti*. Similarly, *vyashti* (individual) is a limb of *samashti*. Without *srishti*, *samashti* has no existence, and without *samashti*, there can be no *vyashti*.

Since man has limbs such as hands, feet, head, etc., which constitute his body, likewise man is a limb of society and society is a limb of creation (*srishti*). Man is therefore not separate from *samashti*, *srishti*, and *Parameshti*. All human beings are just the limbs of the same body of God.

If man realizes his intimate relationship with *samashti*, *srishti*, and *Parameshti*, he will not hate or abuse anyone because all are the limbs of the same body. To recognize the truth of the relationship between the limbs and the body, i.e., the

relation between the part and the whole is a major element in *Sadhana*. One who recognizes this truth will be unaffected by praise or blame.

Story of a noble person

Once, a noble person was proceeding from one village to another. He was followed by an ungodly man, who went on criticizing and abusing the noble person all the way. But the noble man was unaffected by the abusive attacks on him. He never paid any heed to them, nor did he show any anger or worry. As they approached the village, the villagers came in large numbers to welcome the noble man. This was noticed by the other man also. The noble soul spoke to one of the villagers, "Before attending to my needs, please serve this person with some butter milk and food, since he is very much tired from continuously abusing me all along the way."

The critic then realized the greatness of the person whom he had abused all along. He thought to himself, "He is unaffected by abuse and is indifferent to praise or blame. He must be very noble and worthy of veneration." He fell at the feet of the noble soul and said, "Swami, even though I abused you so much, you did not show any anger."

The saintly man replied, "You simpleton, you do not realise that the same spirit resides in you and me. What are you condemning, the body or the self? If you are condemning the self, you are condemning yourself, because the same self is present in you and me. If you are abusing my body, I am, myself, every moment condemning this body of mine, which is made up of the five elements and is full of foul smelling dirt and fecal matter. I decrying my own body because I am myself

disgusted with it. So, if you are abusing my body, you are only helping me.”

The nature of Brahman

Thinking that you are only a body is delusion (*Bhramatathwa*) since you see multiplicity in unity. On the other hand, when you see unity in multiplicity, you attain self realization (*Brahmatathwa*). So, the perception of unity as diversity is *Bhramatathwa*, while discerning unity in all things is *Brahmatathwa* (perception of the divine).

The stories of the Lord (Vishnu Charitra) are full of wonder (*chitra*). They sanctify the lives of the people of all the three worlds (*Trailokya Pavitra*) and are the tools that cut the creepers of worldly bondage (*bhavalatalavitra*). They are like noble friends (*sanmitra*). For the gardens of sages and seers, they are like spring season (*munijanavanachaitra*).

The Divine is beyond description. Even great sages like Narada, son of Brahma, could not understand the majesty and mystery of God. Some people have a wrong notion that Narada is one who always creates discord. This is not correct. Narada means one who propagates wisdom. It was he who proclaimed that understanding nonduality is wisdom. He could go to *Kailasa* (Siva’s abode) or *Vaikunta* (Vishnu’s abode) in a moment.

The ever-wandering Narada once went to *Vaikunta*. He met Vishnu there. Vishnu wanted to test Narada. He said, “Narada, you have no attachments. You are constantly wandering in the three worlds, chanting My name continually. But have you tried to understand the mystery of My creation? I created the five elements. This entire cosmos is made up of these five elements. Which of these five elements is most important?”

Narada replied, “How can I not know this, my Lord? I have cognized everything in this creation. If I cannot understand this truth, who else can?”

The Lord then asked, “Which among the five elements is most important?”

Narada replied, “Water is most important, for three-fourths of the earth is enveloped by water. Land is only one-fourth of the earth's surface.”

Vishnu remarked, “But the sage Agastya drank up the ocean in a single gulp. So, is Agastya greater or water?”

Narada replied, “You are right my Lord, Agastya is greater than water.”

Vishnu asked again, “But this Agastya is a tiny star in the sky (*akasa*). Now, is this star greater or the sky?”

Narada replied, “It is the sky that is greater.”

The Lord agreed and said, “Your understanding is correct. The sky indeed is greater. In His incarnation as Vamana, the Lord asked for three steps from king Bali. And in the course of taking the gift of three steps, Vamana assumed the form of Thrivikrama and covered the entire earth in one step, the space from the earth to the sky in second, and there was no room for the third step. King Bali had to offer his head for the third step. So now, is God great or the sky?”

Narada replied, “Swami, when the mere foot of the Lord covers the entire sky, how much greater His full form would be? God indeed is greater.”

Vishnu now asked, “God, who envelops the entire cosmos dwells in the heart of His *bhakta* (devotee). So now, is the heart of the devotee greater or God?”

Narada replied, “Indeed, the devotee’s heart is greater.”

So, you see there is nothing greater than the heart of the devotee. The infinite God is enshrined in the heart of a true devotee in His subtlest form. That is why He is described as "*Anoraneeyan mahato maheeyan*" (subtler than the subtlest and vaster than the vastest). How can anyone grasp or describe the truth about the Divine?

Live like a lotus

If you want to understand the divine principle, you have to understand the essence of *Bharatiya* culture. The culture of Bharat teaches that to be reputed as a great man is of no consequence. To acquire a good name is all that matters. Ravana was a great personality in the *Ramayana*. But Rama was the embodiment of goodness. Ravana was great; Rama was good. What is the difference between greatness and goodness? A great man sees *nara* (man) in Narayana (God), while a good man sees Narayana in every *nara*. Greatness lies in seeing the divine in man. This is true *Vedanta*. *Sarvam khalvidam Brahma* (all this is verily *Brahman*). *Sarvam Vishnumayam jagat* (the universe is permeated by the Divine). *Ishwara sarva bhutanam* (God is immanent in all creatures). The one who knows this truth is a good man.

What is the difference between man and God? The one with the feeling of separateness and individuality (*vyakti*) is human, while God sees everything in the cosmos as His manifestation. Recognizing the truth that all are His forms is the perception of the divine. A noble man will perceive himself as part of society (*samashti*). The nobler man will perceive himself as part of the entire creation. The one who perceives the entire creation as the manifestation, of God (*Vishnumayam*) is a *Paramahansa* (fully self-realized one). He sees the divine in

every part of this creation. What are the attributes of a *Paramahamsa*? The heart of a *Paramahamsa* is like a lotus. Where is the lotus born? It is born in mud. Where does it live? It lives on the surface of water. The lotus is neither defiled by mud nor wetted by water. Yet it cannot survive even for a second without mud and water. Man's accumulated *samskaras* of past lives are like mud. The present life can be compared to water. A *Paramahamsa* is one who is not affected by his past life. Though his present life is the consequence of his past *samskaras*, yet it can be pure and free from the mud of past traits.

Jealousy and its three sons

The divinity present in man endows him with sacred qualities as mere means of his worldly existence. He wastes time by spending it in mundane activities. Why? The main reason is man's *ahamkara* (ego) and *mamakara* (attachment). Besides these two, man is also a victim of *asuya* (jealousy). Jealousy is the source of great danger. No matter how great a scholar one may be, or a man of authority and position, or one with great virtues, when once one falls prey to jealousy, one loses everything in life.

Here is a green tree full of blooming flowers. A pest enters this tree and destroys it in a short time. The pest is not visible as it eats away the tree's roots. Jealousy is like this pest. The Kauravas met their ruin due to jealousy. A jealous man is not happy to see the happiness, health, wealth, or higher performance of others. The feeling that no one should excel one in life is the root of jealousy. Jealousy has three sons. They are *kama* (desire), *krodha* (anger) and *dwesha* (hatred). But this jealousy has a sister named *anasuya* (one without jealousy).

Anasuya, the wife of sage Atri, made Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheswara, the Supreme Trinity, into babes. She could make the gods forget their Divinity. She could make Divinity her child. However, in this world, jealousy is growing beyond limits. It is highly dangerous. Jealousy causes the fall of man. One should eschew jealousy. Jealousy is totally contrary to the culture of Bharat. *Bharatiya* culture has always considered humanity as one entity. That is the import of the *Vedic* prayer:

Saha Navavathu
Saha Nau Bhunakthu
Saha Veeryam Karavavahai
Tejaswi Navadheethamasthu
Ma Vidvisavahai
Om Santhi Santhi Santhih.

May we be protected and nourished together!
 May we perform heroic deeds!
 May we be filled with divine effulgence.
 May we never have any hatred between us!
Om peace, peace, peace.

How sacred are these words of the *Vedas*, which are a part of the heritage of Bharat! There are so many similar sacred tenets in the *sanskriti* (culture) of Bharat. What is *sanskriti*? That which refines. Man has forgotten his tenet of refinement. He has also forgotten his humanness. He is fostering animal nature. This animal nature in turn becomes demonic. Strive to get rid of the animal traits and develop human qualities.

Offer the sacred food to God first

Man undertakes several spiritual practices today. But what is their effect on him? The body of man is like a tender plan-

tain leaf. On this fresh green leaf, you serve five items of delicious food of nectarine qualities. These items of food are composed of the five elements (earth, water, fire, air, and ether), the five life principles (*prana, apana, vyana, udana, and samana*), and the five senses of man. To whom do you offer this sacred food first? Instead of offering to God first, you offer it to demons of *kama, krodha, lobha, moha, mada, matsarya* (desire, anger, greed, attachment, pride, jealousy). Thus, you offer all your five senses to these demons. After these demons have satiated themselves, and when the tender plantain leaf of the body has become a tattered remnant, you turn to offer it to God. Is this what you should do? As soon as the food is served, it should be offered to God. Then you partake of it. Why do you offer this wonderful feast to the demons of desire, anger, greed, pride, jealousy etc.?

*When old age overtakes you, the body becomes
weak, vision fails, the face is full of wrinkles;
Urchins surround you and tease you as stuffed
monkey
And your body itself becomes a burden of misery.
Is that when you should offer your body to God?
No, not at all. Offer yourself to God in your youth,
when all your faculties
Are at their peak performance and the body is full
of vigor and vitality.*

[Telugu Poem]

Start prayer and devotion to God at early age

How can you do that? You can do it by following the principles of *sathya, dharma, santhi, prema, and ahimsa*. These are sacred delicious items of food to be offered to God. And they

must be offered on the fresh, green plantain leaf of tender, supple, and efficient body. Prayer and devotion to God at early age will bring fulfillment in your life. You have forgotten this truth. When somebody asks why you don't think of God, you say, there is still time for it; you can do so after retirement. Even after retirement, some people run after re-employment.

*What is the use of all your earnings,
when your end is near?
You fool, think, who will follow you in death.
It is a folly to forget God while striving to live.
Look after your family, perform your duties,
but hold in your heart always God.*

[Telugu Poem]

Lead a worthy and noble life as a human being

That is the real meaning of *manava* (human being). What does *manava* imply? *Ma* means ignorance, *na* means without, and *va* is to act. Thus, *manava* is one who acts without ignorance. There is another interpretation of *manava*, viz. *ma* = not, *nava* = new. Man is not new. He has had several previous lives. He has not become a human being all of a sudden. So it is quite natural for him to know how to lead a worthy and noble life as a human being.

Here is a small example. A cow gives birth to a calf. The new-born calf instinctively goes to the udder of the cow to drink milk. Who has taught the calf? Similarly, a new born babe seeks its mother's milk. All this is only carryover from several previous births. A new-born animal needs no training to seek milk from its mother. You must realize from this that you are not a brand new creation, but one in fact truly ancient.

You have taken several births, but you are yet to realize God. Merely repeating Krishna, Rama, Govinda is of no use. You must have full faith in God. Only then can you attain salvation. You should consider *viswasa* (faith) as your *swasa* (life breath). Without *swasa* (life breath), you cannot live.

Where there is breath, there is life.
 Where there is faith, there is love (*prema*).
 Where there is love, there is peace (*santhi*).
 Where there is peace, there is truth (*sathya*).
 Where there is truth, there is God.
 Where there is God, there is bliss (*ananda*).

Experience inner bliss

Human life should begin with faith and end in bliss (*ananda*). When you have no faith, how can you attain happiness? Increase your faith in God and attain peace (*santhi*). Through truth experience God. God is bliss. The experience of divinity is true bliss.

Bliss is with you. Bliss is in you. It is behind you, above you, below you and all around you. When you are immersed in bliss, what is it that you need to search? The way to experience this bliss is what I mentioned in the beginning —bend the body, mend the senses, end the mind. This is true culture. Have faith in this culture, lead a pure and meaningful life and attain the goal of human life.

Perform your duty. *Karthavyam yogamuchyate* (performing your duty properly is indeed *yoga*). Duty is God. Today, you have forgotten *yoga* and are running after *udyoga* (job). In the job you may get promotion, but you have to face retirement too. There is no retirement in *yoga*. It is *nithya* and *sathya* (eternal and true). *Yoga karmasu kausalam* (perfection in ac-

tion is true *yoga*). Discharging one's duty efficiently and with love is *yoga*. Duty is God.

Divinity permeates everything in this universe. God has ingrained mystery and beauty in nature. Everyone must try to discover this divine mystery in nature. Nature is invested with divine beauty. No man can create this wonderful beauty. At sunrise, everything looks golden. God's creation is described in various ways. If God's creation is so beautiful, how much more beautiful would God be? Before trying to visualise the beauty of Creator, discover and appreciate beauty of nature.

As long as you are in this world, carry out your duties diligently. While discharging your duties, spend time in thoughts of divinity. Today, you waste time. Time is the very form of God. The *Vedas* says: "*Samvatsaraya Namah.*" In fact, *Samvatsara* is God's name. We even say *Nutana Samvatsara* (New Year). God is ever new. This ever new effulgent God takes the form of man, and is called *Avatar*. Actually, every new human birth is an *Avatar* as God resides in each heart as the *Atma*.

There is no living body without *Atma*. It is not possible to realize *Atma* without the body. The body and soul are related. They are interdependent. The body should be maintained strong and healthy to experience the divine bliss. Do not waste all your time in eating, sleeping, and in sensual pleasures. Perform your worldly duties at their proper time, and set apart the time when you offer yourself to God.

Start early, drive slowly, reach safely

Perform all your actions in the service of God. "*Sarvaka-rma Bhagavad preethartham* (all your actions should be to please God)." Do not have any worldly preferences. Actions performed for personal satisfaction are attributed to *pravritti*

marga (worldly path); those to please God relate to *nivritti marga* (inward path). Do not wait till you are unable to move, your vision fails, folds and wrinkles appear on the face, and hair turns gray. Why don't you think of God from the beginning? Start early, drive slowly, reach safely. This should be your guiding principle for your life's journey as well.

*Think of God early in life.
Be not proud, oh man, of your beautiful body,
youth, and power.
Do not forget the fact that very soon you will have
to face the misery of old age.
Your body is nothing but a mere puppet, a doll of
skin.
Understand the truth of this 'puppet dance'.*

[Telugu Poem]

This is not life. Make proper use of the body and experience the ultimate reality. Within this *mrinmaya* (body of clay) is *Chinmaya* (awareness of the *Atma*), which imparts value to the body.

*The body is a box of rusty tin.
Inside the box are priceless gems — diamonds,
emeralds, sapphires.
The box is worthless,
but the gems are highly valuable.
The body is of little worth,
but the indwelling Lord is of real worth.
The body is a mud doll, leather puppet,
a delusive toy.*

[Telugu Poem]

But the nectarine, non-dual, eternal bliss (*amritananda, advaitananda, amarananda*) is in you. With this treasure inside you, you search around and undertake pilgrimages. No need. Bliss is inside you. Make it come out. This is real *sadhana*. Do not bother about worldly problems. They are passing clouds. There is only one permanent truth. This is the principle of the *Atma*. The body is temporary. But what is inside is the permanent, eternal *Atmatathwa*.

Embodiments of Love! All of you are embodiments of divinity. God is in you as the *Atma*. Make proper use of the body. How? Speak in a pure way, speak the truth. Act righteously. Discriminate between right and wrong and act accordingly. Do not act under the impulses of anger and hatred. Do not lie or abuse. Do not cause hurt to anybody.

We see pollution everywhere. We should not give room to this. What is the solution? Fill your heart with love.

27 April 1999

Sai Sruthi, Kodaikanal

My mission is to raise the consciousness of man to a level at which he neither rejoices nor mourns over anything. In that supreme state, one is going through re-birth and re-death each moment, for these acts are one and the same, emerging from the formless into form, merging from the form into the formless. Then, there is no success or adversity, no joy or pain. When the devotee attains this Oneness, their journey toward Me ceases. For, they will be with Me endlessly.

—Baba