

17. THE ATMA TATTWA IS ONE IN ALL

Date: 21 Oct 2003 Occasion: - Place: Prasanthi Nilayam

Oh foolish man! Why do you go in search of God here and there when He is very much within you? Turn your vision inward and you will find Him there.

(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

You are under the mistaken notion that God is separate from you. In order to have the vision of God, you follow various paths such as Japa, Dhyana, Bhajans, etc. So long as you think God is present elsewhere, you cannot find Him. He is present in you. Make efforts to realise the indwelling divinity.

On 20th October 1940, while going to school after returning from Hampi, Baba's collar pin was lost and could not be found. The collar pin symbolised worldly desires. That pin was presented to Me by Narayana Raju, the then Municipal Chairman of Bellary.

The Municipal Chairman took us to the Virupaksha temple in Hampi. After reaching the temple, Seshama Raju (elder brother of Swami) told Me to keep a watch over their belongings as they went inside to have Darshan of the deity. I readily agreed and remained outside. They went inside the temple. To their utter astonishment, they found Me standing inside the sanctum sanctorum in the place of Lord Virupaksha. Seshama Raju could not believe his eyes. Seshama Raju said to himself: "Why has He come here when I told Him specifically to remain outside and take care of our belongings?" He thought it was improper on My part to have entered the sanctum sanctorum. He at once came out of the temple only to find Me there! He again went inside and found Me there also! Still he was having doubts. He told his wife, "You go outside and keep a watch over Sathya. Do not allow Him to go anywhere. Meanwhile, I will go inside and see whether He is still there." She did accordingly. He again saw a smiling Sathya standing in the sanctum sanctorum. He wondered whether it was a dream, a mere hallucination or reality.

In those days, wearing a collar pin was considered to be a fashion. Narayana Raju presented Me a collar pin with a prayer that I should remember him always. After we returned from Hampi to Uravakonda, the collar pin dropped on the way as I was proceeding to the school holding books in one hand. It could not be found. But I was least affected by its loss. Yet, I pretended as though I was anxiously searching for it. Some boys who were coming behind Me enquired, "Raju, what are You

searching for?" I told them that I lost the collar pin. They too started searching all over the place. I laughed and remarked, "You are going to school to study. Why are you bothered about the collar pin? Don't worry about it." They said, "It looked so good when You were wearing it." One of those boys ran to Seshama Raju's house. At that time, Seshama Raju and Narayana Raju were discussing as to what could be inferred of My mysterious behaviour. When the boy reported the matter to them, they at once rushed to Me. Narayana Raju very lovingly put his hand around My shoulder and asked, "My dear, what are you searching for?" I said, "I am searching for something." He understood that there was some inner significance in My reply. He said, "Raju, how can You search for something that You do not know?" I told him that I had lost the collar pin which he had presented to Me. He said, "I will give you ten such collar pins. Don't worry about it. Come, let's go home."

That day was the day of change. The link with worldly ties had gone in the form of the pin; the pilgrimage to Hampi also served its purpose. Baba left home saying that Maya could not bind Him any longer.

(Telugu Song)

Man has two types of desires: One is worldly and the other spiritual. It is said, worldly education is for life here while spiritual knowledge is for the life hereafter. However, man gives importance to worldly education only. He is always in search of worldly happiness. However, I am not interested in such happiness. I told Narayana Raju that the bondage of worldly attachment was lost in the form of collar pin. On coming to know of this incident, the Excise Commissioner Hanumantha Rao came in his car and said to Me, "Raju, what are You looking for? Please come with me. I will give You whatever You want." He had intense love for Me. I told him that I was not searching for anything. People around Me asked, "Are You searching for God?" I replied, "One need not search for God, for He is everywhere. Nor am I searching for a trivial thing like a collar pin." Then I was taken to the house of one H.S. Ramana, who was a lecturer in English. They questioned Me, "What do You want? Is it the pin or God?" I told them, "I don't need a pin. I can get any number of pins, for everything is in My hand. Then, do you think that I am searching for God? He is everywhere. I don't need to search for Him." Narayana Raju asked, "Where is God? Can we see Him?" Earlier I had given him a ring. It disappeared from his finger and appeared on My finger. He was stunned. He asked, "How did it happen?" I said, "I can do anything. Everything is in My hand." (Swami with a wave of His hand, materialised the same ring which He had given to Narayana Raju. He held it aloft and showed it to the congregation.) Watching all this, Seshama Raju was also astonished. He gave up the feeling that He was My elder brother. Shedding tears of joy and repentance, he asked, "My dear, You are all-knowing; everything is in Your hand. Then, what are You searching for?" I also did not address him as brother. I told him that I was no longer bound by worldly relationship. I held the hand of Narayana Raju and asked, "What is this?"

He said, "It is my hand." I took out the pen from his pocket and asked, "What is this?" "It is my pen", he said. "You say, it is my hand, my pen, my body, my mind, my senses, etc. The word 'my' indicates that you are different from all this. Then who are you?" I asked him. Then everyone started thinking, "Yes, what Raju says is correct. We say, this is mine and that is mine, but we do not know who we are." Everybody was silent. They accepted that they did not know their true identity. I told them that I had come down in human form only to make people realise their true identity.

It is the eye that sees and the mind that thinks. (Showing the ring and handkerchief, Bhagawan said) Your eyes can see the ring and the handkerchief. On what basis can you call this a ring? Similarly, what makes you say that it is a handkerchief? You say, mind is the basis for all this. What is mind? Whom does it belong to? You do not know. What you think you know, in reality, you do not know, that is your true Self. Make efforts to realise it.

From that day onwards, many seekers of Truth started visiting Me. They used to say, "Raju, what You are saying is correct. But how are we to realise our true identity?" People quote from scriptures and talk high philosophy but do not know their real meaning. "You say, this is my ring, my body, my handkerchief, so on and so forth. Then who are you?" I questioned them. They had no answer. Then I started explaining thus: "There are two important aspects that you have to consider, one is *Drishyam* (seen) and the other is *Drashta* (seer). *Yad Drishyam Thannasyam* (all that is seen is bound to perish). So, whatever you see is only an illusion. You are the *Drashta*, that is your true identity."

The English lecturer, H.S. Ramana was a noble person. His house was on the way to My school. He used to sit in the front verandah of his house. As soon as he saw Me, he used to call 'Raju!', take Me into his house and offer Me coffee and snacks. But, I was not interested in these worldly things. Earlier, I used to address him as 'Sir'. But, from that day onwards, the worldly relationship of teacher-student had ceased between us. I used to tell him that all that was seen by the eye is merely *Drishyam* which was perishable and that one had to go beyond and search for the *Drashta*. From that day onwards wherever I went and whomever I met, I used to teach these higher principles.

Then, one day Ramana called Seshama Raju and told him, "Seshama Raju! Do not trouble yourself much in trying to understand the behaviour of Sathya. This boy is delving deeper and deeper into the mysteries of life. It is not possible for anybody to fathom His true nature. Let us wait for some time and see", saying thus, he took Me into his house and offered snacks, coffee, meals, etc., with great love. Poor man! He did not realise that I was never interested in those worldly matters. I did not touch any of these food stuffs. In My view, they were all worldly things which underwent constant change. They were never permanent. I explained to him, "You brought this *Upma* for Me. How real is this stuff?"

Only till one consumes it. What happens to it after eating? Nobody can see its shape thereafter. It just disappears. You are all considering these unreal worldly things as real." Thus, I started teaching them higher Vedantic concepts. H.S. Ramana was astonished at My knowledge of these higher principles. Till then, he was addressing Me as "Raju! Raju!" But, from then on he started addressing Me as 'Guruji!' Holding My feet, he pleaded with Me "Guruji! Please come to my house." Those who were witnessing the scene were amazed that this elderly gentleman who was a teacher was holding the feet of this young boy, his student.

Then Ramana declared in front of all those people, **"Not only me; a day will come when the entire world will fall at His feet."** The people gathered there on that occasion were all powerful, holding high positions in society. There was a neighbour by name Ramanarayana Sastri, who was an astrologer. He was called in and appraised of all those higher truths of life which I was explaining to them. Sri Sastri was amazed at My knowledge of Vedantic concepts at such a young age and shed tears of joy. One or two drops of tears fell at My feet. From then onwards, everybody in Uravakonda started addressing Me as Sathya Sai Baba. I told them that I had come only for the purpose of revealing this truth. Unable to comprehend the full truth about My revelations, some of them questioned Me, "How can You declare Yourself to be Sai Baba?" I just took some flowers in My hand and threw them on the floor. Lo and behold! The flowers arranged themselves as Sathya Sai Baba in Telugu letters. On witnessing this miracle, they were wonderstruck and dumbfounded! Then, everybody started chanting in chorus "Sathya Sai Baba Ki Jai", "Sathya Sai Baba Ki Jai"! I emphatically told them that this was a name which they themselves had ascribed to Me and, in fact, I had no name at all! I declared thus on the occasion thus:

***Know that I am Sai in reality,
Cast off your worldly relationships,
Give up your efforts to restrain Me,
The worldly attachments can no longer bind Me,
None, however great he may be, can hold Me.***

(Telugu Poem)

I got up and started walking away. In the meanwhile, all those assembled there including Ramana and Sastri tried to follow Me. I advised them not to be after Me, but, to strive for self-introspection and mental transformation. Since I am not the body, none can hold Me. Therefore, I advised them to follow My ideals. Only then can they realise My true nature.

In this vast expanse of the universe, right from the minutest atom to the mightiest, everything is permeated by the Atmic reality. It appears as the minutest of the minute and mightiest of the mighty. In fact, the principle of oneness that pervades microcosm and macrocosm is the fundamental reality which you have to enquire into. That is why Ramana Maharishi

used to say, "Enquire, who you really are?"

You are not a single entity. You are, in fact, three-in-one,

*The one you think you are, (body)
The one others think you are (mind) and
The one you really are (Atma).*

The Atma is known as conscience and the body which consists of the senses is called conscious. The Chaitanya (consciousness) which is present in all, transcends the senses. There is yet another principle that is beyond consciousness. It is called Super Consciousness.

In the earlier days, not many people knew who Sai Baba was. He was considered a Muslim saint. When I first returned to Puttaparthi declaring Myself as Sai Baba, people thought that I had taken a Muslim name. But, no one can bind Me to a particular religion like Hinduism or Islam.

The Vaishnavites say that Lord Vishnu is the greatest while the Saivites declare that Lord Siva is the greatest of all. Gaanapatyas (the worshippers of Ganapati) declare that Ganapati is the greatest. The educated say Goddess Sarada is the greatest. Shaaktas (worshippers of Shakti) proclaim that Goddess Shakti is the greatest. My devotees say I am the greatest. Some others say all are one. People may speak on the basis of their feelings but in truth, there is only one GOD and the rest are names.

(Telugu Poem)

Different people may ascribe different names to the Atmic Reality and try to define it in different ways. But, the underlying Atma Tattwa is one and the same. This truth has to be explained to the people in an understandable language. You can see that there are some houses beyond. In the front portion of the house, you will find a verandah; then a living room and then a kitchen. Thereafter, you will find a bathroom and a toilet. Thus, there are different names for different utilities. How did they acquire these names? It is only because they are so divided by walls, for different purposes. But, the truth is they are all parts of the same house. Similarly, different people have different names and they establish different relationships with people like mother, father, brother, etc. From where did you acquire these relationships? Everything is your own making. Remove these barriers. What remains is a vast expanse of oneness. One person refers to Divinity as Atma, another refers to it as Brahman and the third one calls it as Vishnu. These are only names ascribed by human beings to the nameless, formless, attributeless Divinity. The Brahma Tattwa is one that has no names ascribed to it.

Where did the Brahman come from? The Atmic consciousness that permeates every living being is referred to as Brahman. When it is individualised, it is called conscience. It is also referred to as Jiva. When the Atma Tattwa is encased in a body, it becomes an individual. The

individual, the Atma and consciousness - all the three are one and the same. People think they are different because they are given different names. Remove the names. There is only one Atma Tattwa in every individual. It has no form. It assumes different forms by joining different individuals. Supposing you name this object (showing a handkerchief) as Atma. It is a handkerchief in common parlance. But, when you look at it from a spiritual angle, it is an object. I call it as thread. Again, after some time I refer to it as cotton; whether we call it as handkerchief or thread or cotton, it refers to only one object. Only different names are given to the object. Take for instance the names of Rama and Krishna. Rama was not born with that particular name. He was christened Rama only after His birth. No. Similarly, the name Krishna. Since He was an embodiment of bliss, He was referred to as Krishna. *Akarshati Iti Krishna* (because He attracts, He is Krishna). But, His real nature is Ananda. He is Ananda Swarupa (embodiment of bliss). The same principle of Ananda has taken different names. This one single principle of Ananda is:

*Brahmanandam, Parama Sukhadam, KevalamJnanamurtim,
Dwandwateetam, Gagana Sadrisham, Tattwamasyadi Lakshyam, Ekam,
Nityam, Vimalam, Achalam, Sarvadhee Sakshibhutam, Bhavateetam,
Trigunarahitam*

(God is the embodiment of supreme bliss, He is wisdom absolute, the One without a second, beyond the pair of opposites, expansive and pervasive like the sky, the goal indicated by the Mahavakya Tattwamasi, the eternal, pure, unchanging, the witness of all functions of the intellect, beyond all mental conditions and the three Gunas of Sattwa, Rajas and Thamas).

Divinity has no attributes. How can one give a name to it? Since it is not possible to assign any particular name to this principle, they named it as Atma. This Atma Tattwa is permeating every individual. It has no specific form. Explaining thus, I told those people that it is only for making them realise this principle that I have come. Then, Seshama Raju put a big question. He was a Telugu Pandit. Whatever question he put, had certain value. He questioned, "Who are You?" I answered, "Since you are calling Me as Sathya, I am Sathya. Since you are referring to Me as your brother, I am your brother. Since you call Me as a student, I am a student. By whatever name and form you refer to Me, I assume that name and form. In fact, no one is able to realise the truth. No one has any relationship whatsoever with Me. Call Me by any name, I will answer. If you call Me "Sai", I will answer. If you call Me "Baba", I will respond. By whatever name you call Me, it is the same for Me. All these names are only names ascribed to Me. I have, in fact, come to make you realise this truth."

In the classroom, three of us used to share a desk - Myself in the middle, flanked by Ramesh and Suresh on either side. They were very young. One was eight years old, the other nine years and I was 8 ½ years old. Ramesh and Suresh were not good in studies. Whenever the teachers asked them questions, they would give the answers prompted by Me. It

was the time of our E.S.L.C. public examination. The roll numbers of our seats in the examination hall were so arranged that we had to sit separately, quite at a distance from each other. It was not possible for them to get any help from Me. They were much worried. I infused courage in them saying, "You need not write anything. You just attend the examination. I will take care of the rest."

I completed My answer paper in a few minutes. I took some more answer sheets from the invigilator and wrote the answers in Ramesh's handwriting. After completing it, I took another set of answer sheets and wrote the answers in Suresh's handwriting. I also wrote their names on the answer sheets. When the final bell rang, all the students got up, and I silently placed all the three answer sheets on the table of the examiner. When the results were announced, only we three got first class. The teachers were surprised as to how Ramesh and Suresh also got first class. The mathematics teacher Thirumal Rao called the three of us. He asked Ramesh and Suresh whether they had written the answers on their own. Prior to this, I had cautioned Ramesh and Suresh not to reveal the truth under any circumstances. I told them, "If they ask you any question, tell them that you remembered the answers then and now have forgotten. If you follow My command, I am yours and you are Mine." They obeyed My command and told Thirumal Rao that they had written the answers on their own. There was no scope for any doubt. They could not have copied from Me, since we were seated far from each other. Their answer sheets were in their own handwriting. The local people were overjoyed. They took out a grand procession carrying us on their shoulders.

There was a businessman by name Kote Subbanna. Somehow he came to know that I could compose excellent poetry. One day he came to Me and pleaded, "Raju, there is a new medicine by name Bala Bhaskara in my stores. Please write a song on the efficacy of the medicine which would serve as an advertisement. I will give You whatever You want. I am prepared to pay You any amount of money." I told him, "I am not here to sell My poetry. You give Me the details of the medicine. I will certainly compose a song for you." Then I composed the following song:

***There it is! There it is! Oh, children! come, come!
There is the medicine Bala Bhaskara;
Be it an upset stomach or a swollen leg;
Be it a joint pain or flatulence;
Be it any ailment, known or unknown;
Take this Bala Bhaskara for an instant cure!
If you wish to know where it is available:
There is the shop of Kote Subbanna;
It is in that shop that you can pick it up.
Come here boys! come here!
It is an excellent tonic
Prepared by the famous physician Gopalacharya himself,
Come here boys! come here!***

(Telugu Song)

This song was taught to ten children who went about carrying placards and singing the song composed by Me in the streets. Everybody came to know of the medicine and all the stock was sold out in no time. Kote Subbanna became very popular. His joy knew no bounds. He brought a new pair of dress stitched for Me as an expression of his gratitude, but I refused to accept them.

Meanwhile, our headmaster Lakshmipathy Sastri was transferred. All the students felt sorry about it. Seshama Raju was also transferred from Uravakonda to Kamalapuram. Hence, I had to leave Uravakonda. Ramesh and Suresh were very much attached to Me. Such intense love cannot be found even among parents and siblings. When I left Uravakonda, the other children in the school became inconsolable. Ramesh and Suresh did not shed tears but they could not bear the separation from Me. I was very young at that time and had to obey the command of Seshama Raju. Hence, I boarded the bus and left Uravakonda. Ramesh, utterly dejected, fell into a well and died. The second boy went on repeating "Raju, Raju, Raju ..." and ultimately turned mad. He was taken to various mental hospitals but there was no improvement. Finally, his father came to Me and prayed, "Suresh will be cured of his madness if he sees You at least once. Please come and see him." I went to the mental hospital to see him. He was continuously repeating "Raju, Raju, Raju ..." Seeing Me, he shed tears and breathed his last.

Later, Ramesh and Suresh were born as two dogs and were brought to Me by an officer from Bangalore. They used to be with Me always when I was in Old Mandir. They were named Jack and Jill. One day, the Maharani of Mysore came to have My Darshan. She was a great devotee and a very orthodox woman. She would always maintain distance from others. She would not touch anything that was touched by others. She was so orthodox that she would insist upon giving a bath to the cow before milking it. As there was no proper road to Puttaparthi, she alighted from the car at Karnatanagepalli and walked the rest of the distance to the Old Mandir. How did she come? She did not want to put her foot on the road used by others. Hence, she had brought four wooden planks with her. She put her steps on each of those planks and reached the Mandir. The Maharani decided to rest for the night in the Mandir. The driver had his dinner and was returning to Karnatanagepalli where the car was parked. During night, there was heavy rain. The driver slept in the car and Jack slept under the car near the wheel. Next morning, the driver started the car, not knowing that Jack was sleeping under it. The wheel of the car ran over the back of Jack and its backbone broke. Jack dragged itself across the river, wailing all the while. A washerman named Subbanna used to take care of the Old Mandir day and night. He came running to Me and said, "Swami, Jack might have met with an accident. It is coming wailing in pain." I came out at once. Jack came close to Me, wailing loudly, fell at My feet and breathed its last. It was buried behind the Old Mandir and a Brindavanam was erected there. As Jack had passed away, Jill stopped

eating food and died after a few days. It was also buried by the side of Jack. In this manner, Ramesh and Suresh did penance to be with Me always. Even after their death, they took birth as dogs to be with Me.

During My childhood, I used to compose several songs with deep meaning and gave joy to the villagers by having them sung. One day, a communist party leader by name Narayana Reddy from Bukkapatnam, approached Me with a request to compose some songs which could inspire our freedom fighters. A doll was placed in a cradle on the stage. I then composed a song in the form of a lullaby to the doll.

***Do not cry, my child, do not cry.
If you cry, you will not be called a valiant son of Bharat.
Go to sleep, my child, go to sleep.
Did you get scared because the terrible Hitler has invaded the
invincible Russia?
Go to sleep, my child, go to sleep.
Do not cry, my child, do not cry.
For the Red Army is marching under Stalin.
They will put an end to Hitler.
Why do you cry my child?
Is it because the country is suffering under foreign rule?
Do not cry, my child, do not cry.
All the countrymen shall unite and fight to win freedom;
Go to sleep, my child, go to sleep."***

(Telugu Song)

The villagers listened to the song with appreciation and amazement. Many of them wondered as to how this young boy Sathyanarayana Raju had come to know about Hitler and Stalin. These names were unknown to the people in this region. This song was printed in a pamphlet and distributed in the villages. People from other political parties started coming to Me, requesting Me to write songs for them. Seshama Raju scolded Me, saying that I should not involve Myself in political affairs. I told him, "I have nothing to do with political parties. I don't belong to any party. All parties are Mine. I belong to all."

The song became very popular in the village. They brought a few pants, shirts and towels for Me. But I refused to accept them. I distributed them to other children right in their presence. I told them, "I composed the song only to encourage you, not for any monetary benefits." From that day I stopped writing such songs. Nowadays, I don't even compose Bhajans. I am not writing any articles even for Sanathana Sarathi. Kasturi used to plead with Me to write articles. He would say, "Swami, unless Your Name appears in Sanathana Sarathi, it has no value at all."

All the children in the school were very fond of Me. I too loved them dearly. Whenever there were any special preparations at home like Vadas and Pakodas, I used to take them to school and distribute to other

children. I was friendly with all. I had no enmity towards anyone. Seeing My noble deeds, Ramesh and Suresh developed great attachment towards Me and ultimately offered their lives to Me. Because of their love and devotion, I helped them in their examinations. After that I never involved Myself in matters related to examinations. Once a government official asked Me, "Swami, how could You write exams on their behalf?" I replied, "Why not, Ramesh and Suresh are also My names." In this manner, I can go on narrating various incidents in My life story. There is no end to it. In fact, words are inadequate to describe My story.

I always have special love for students. Similarly, students have intense love for Me. They seek My guidance whenever they have any problem. Even yesterday, a research scholar prayed for My guidance in the preparation of His thesis. He is writing a thesis on Mahabharata. He asked Me a few questions about characters like Bhishma, Bhima and Dharmaraja. I told him that he should find the answers by himself. Right now, you can find the research scholar sitting behind in the verandah. I told him to enquire within to find the right answers.

Students are full of love for Swami. They consider Swami as their mother, father and everything. They address Me as Sai Matha. They sing, "We are the children of Sai Matha." When they consider Me as their mother, how can I not respond to their prayers? Hence, I too shower motherly love on them. *Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavati* (as is the feeling, so is the result). It is only a reflection of the love they have for Me. The love that exists between Swami and students is that of a mother and her children. Let anybody say anything, Swami is Your mother. I am the mother to those who consider Me as their mother, father to those who believe I am their father. I respond to you in accordance with your feelings. Even your own mother cannot give you as much love as Swami showers on you.

Students!

Work hard and study well. The two boys who are sitting down by My side are feeling anxious that Swami has been standing for a long time. They have been praying that I should sit.

(In the end, Bhagawan permitted two former students of the Institute, who are presently working in different institutions of the Ashram to address the youth.)

Date: 21 Oct 2003, Occasion: -, Place: Prasanthi Nilayam