

9. Man Lives For Himself, For His Family And For The Whole Society

If rain falls on sand, it gets completely absorbed. If the same rain falls on soft earth, the rain drops will form into a pool and will not be absorbed. On the other hand, if rain falls in an oyster shell the rain drops will turn into pearls. In the same manner, education which comes to each individual will take a final form which depends on his own deservedness.

Brahman has an infinite number of names and yesterday we had understood in detail the meaning of one of these names “*Prathishta*”. Today we will take another name “*Srihi*” for Brahman. For

recognising the aspect of God, we shall have to make several attempts. Brahman is an aspect which constitutes the basis for *Rig*, *Yajur*, and *Sama Vedas*. If properly understood, it will not only help one to attain realisation but will give all the wealth and prosperity that one desires. That is why it has been given the name *Srihi*. This has also been recognised as the beginning of creation and hence called *Hiranyagarbha* which stands for a bright *jyothi* and for this reason it was also called *Adhyatmika*. The same thing has also been called as *Mahagni* or the great fire. The name *Srihi* has become immortal and is an aspect of Brahman which has gone into *Rig*, *Yajur*, and *Sama Vedas*. In this manner it has taken a particular form called *Sri Vidya*, which is synonymous with *Brahma Vidya*.

In the context of *Brahma Vidya*, this has taken the aspect of a Goddess and in our scriptures it has the name *Sreesukta*. In one of the Brahmanas, it has attained a particular name “*Subrahmanya Sama*”. This song of *Subrahmanya* has also taken another appropriate name, “*Brahmasri*”. In this word, *Brahmasri*, the aspect of Brahman is joined to the aspect of *Srihi* and this has the fuller name *Subrahmanya*. When we take the root meaning of the word *Subrahama* we realise that it means

prosperity. The appellation *Brahmasri* has been used before the name of people who are well versed in the *Vedas*.

If we want to understand the *Vedas*, we shall have to study the *Sastras*, *Puranas*, and *Ithihasas* and understand the aspect of Brahman. It is not enough if one only recites the *Vedas*. He has to understand and imbibe the full meaning thereof. The *Vedas* and the authorities that one derives from the *Vedas* are intended for and are valid for the entire world and not for India alone.

Veda is made up of and consists of words which are arising from sound as the basis. In this context, we have to regard *Vedas* as a personification of sound. Sound in the form of words that compose the *Vedas* is something which is essential and necessary for all the people the world over. This has the form of three different kinds of knowledge. Only when the words that appear in the *Vedas* are used correctly, will there be proper significance for the *Vedas*. The sweetness of the *Vedas* is apparent only if the proper meaning of the words is taken.

Brahman has infinite number of names and is to be understood in infinite number of ways. We should regard these aspects as endless. We should be aware of

the unity and the oneness in reaching all these diverse aspects. It is in this context that the citizens of Bharath have been trying to follow the injunctions that are given in the *Vedas*.

A lead in this regard was given by the three great scholars—Ramanuja, Sankara, and Madhwa. Although what has come from these scholars has been given to us under different names such as dualistic philosophy, non-dualistic thought, and qualified non-dualism, we will see that there is a basic oneness in all these three types of philosophy if one carefully looks at them. Our own people have treated illusory differences between these three philosophies without realising the inner meaning. They have been creating unnecessary arguments among themselves regarding the differences between the three basic philosophies—*Dwaitha*, *Adwaitha*, and *Visishta Adwaitha*. I hope that you young people will recognise the basic truth that is contained in all these three systems of philosophy with the help of the teachings that are available to you here. Having recognised this truth, I hope that you will endeavour to spread this divine message throughout the world. It is only when you undertake such a sacred task would you have justified

having been born in India and only then would you be doing appropriate service to your country.

Participating in active work will always create the belief in you that the world is real and you will never reach the conclusion that the world is *maya*. Man generally undertakes work only if he wants some benefit from it. In this context, we will understand that the result is dependent on the kind of work you do. The meaning of this is that we should undertake to do good work and thus expect to receive good results and hand over those good results for the benefit of the society around us and the country.

Good and bad are not intrinsic qualities of things that you see. They really come out of the work that you do. If your heart is filled with good, the result that you get will also be good. Therefore, you young people should fill your hearts with good ideas. Your first attempt should be to promote good ideas, good thoughts and good actions in your homes. Man cannot live isolated and separated from the society. Even before one is born, the society stands before him as his guide and, therefore, an individual should recognise the society and direct his actions in consonance with the society in which he lives.

If you ask anyone for whose benefit he is living, he will reply immediately without any hesitation that he is living for himself. He will state that he is living for his own sake. To support this, he gives an example to say that when his leg is broken, he will bandage his own leg but he will not put a bandage on his mother's or his wife's leg. Further, even if two persons are sleeping on one and the same cot, they will have different dreams and the dreams which they have are not going to be common to both. In this context, he clearly states, with the support of such examples that both in the waking state and in the dreaming state he lives for himself but not for others.

While in these two examples man asserts that he is living for himself, we see that even when a person is engaged in eating something which he likes very much, he will abandon that and go out quickly if someone comes and tells him that his son has been involved in a car accident. So also, if he learns that his wife is seriously ill, he will be prepared to take leave with loss of pay or even resign the job and be present in the hospital for the sake of his wife. In these two examples, we see that this individual, who has been asserting that he is living for himself, lives for his family as well as for himself. In this context, the individual who lives for his own sake

and for the sake of his family must ask a question relating to his role in a society. If the society were not there, his family would not be there. It is only when several other families which constitute a village, along with his own family are all in good shape that his own family can experience happiness and pleasure. If the village is in some danger, his family will also be subjected to the same danger as it is a part of the village. This situation is similar to a body of which several limbs are a part and even if one of these limbs is damaged, the entire body will suffer. Only when all the limbs of a body are well will the entire body be happy. It is the safety of all the individual limbs and organs that results in the safety of the entire body and its happiness. It is only when the whole society which is composed of so many individuals, is happy that one can feel that the family which consists of these individuals, is also happy. This makes it quite clear that our own happiness is synonymous with the pleasure and happiness of all the individuals of a society of which we are a part.

The world is full of *Ananda* or bliss. What then is the reason for so many difficulties and so much sorrow in this world? It is only the change in our own attitudes that is responsible for such unwanted situations.

When we are in the aspect of the Atma or Brahman, then everything looks like *Ananda*. If we are immersed in the bodily aspect, everything looks like sorrow to us. For this I shall give you a small example which is appropriate to all three systems namely *Dwaitha*, *Adwaitha*, and *Visishta Adwaitha*. Not only can one give an answer to this from our own culture, but one can give a good example from the Bible as well. In the Bible, Jesus Christ said at one stage, “I am the messenger of God”; at a later stage he said “I am the son of God” and at a third stage he said “I and my Father are one” and in the final stage he said “Holy Ghost”. We must examine the basis on which he said that he was the messenger of God and then that he was the Son of God, and finally that he and the Father were one and the same.

Let us think of a water surface on a big tank. The surface of the water keeps on swaying and moving when there is a breeze. We see the reflection of the moon or the sun in this water. This reflection of the sun or the moon also appears to move along with the surface of the water. But the original sun or moon is not moving. They are steady. That is, while the image of the sun appears to be shaking or trembling, the original is not moving. If the water is steady, the image of the sun will not move

because the water surface is not moving. Both the stationary and the moving images of the sun are not the original, but they are the images. Because of illusion, the moving image of the sun may be called a messenger of God. The stationary image of the sun has been described as the Son of God. One who has understood the situation properly and one who has recognised the fact that both the stationary sun and the moving sun are only images of the true sun will proclaim in this context “I and my Father are the same”.

These three ways of looking at this phenomenon have been called *Dwaitha*, *Adwaitha*, and *Visishta Adwaitha*, that is dual, non-dual, and qualified non-dualism. *Jiva*, *Easwara* and *Prakruthi* are three names given to these three aspects. Although the Sun, as the original object, is the same in all the three cases, just as the divine principle is the same in all these three situations, we are looking at it in different ways. In one case we are looking at it from the aspect of one’s own mind and in another case we are looking at it from the aspect of one’s own body and depending upon how we look at this, we have been calling it by different names.

There will be no result coming from all our efforts if we spend all our time in the dual aspect. We

must strive to move from dualism to qualified non-dualism and from there to pure non-dualism. On the very first day, I mentioned to you that you should recognise that your life is a journey from the aspect of “I” to the aspect of “We”. In this aspect, Prahlada gave a very good example. Prahlada’s devotion was never confined to a particular name and form. Hiranyakasipu came to the conclusion that God does not exist anywhere; Prahlada, however, believed and demonstrated that God exists in all places where you look for Him. Hiranyakasipu’s belief was that God is not to be found wherever you look for him, whereas Prahlada’s view was that God is to be found wherever you look for Him. If we examine the difference between these two attitudes, we will come to the conclusion that Prahlada’s attitude was to see Narayana everywhere and in everyone while Hiranyakasipu recognised only the particular name and form. Among the five attributes,—*Sath*, *Chith*, *Ananda*, *Nama* and *Rupa*—the last two refer to temporary things and the first three relate to the Divine. When we are considering the aspect of Brahman, there is no point in paying attention to a particular name and form which keeps on changing. It is important only to bear the aspect of Brahman in mind.

If you want to enjoy the divine, we should be able to develop the inner vision and towards that end go through certain practices. This has been taught to us in our scriptures as the embodiment of the divine strength and it has also been called *Parameswari*. This is the Universal mother. Ability to appreciate and understand this aspect of the universal mother depends on the strength that each individual has in him. It is quite common that this gift of *Sri* appears to us in this world in the form of wealth and prosperity, as a very transient one and not a permanent *Ananda*. However, you should understand the true significance of this word *Sri* and then alone will you enjoy permanent *Ananda*. It is only by recognising this feature and meaning that we can experience daily the continued bliss which is above all ideas and *gunas* (attributes). That is just one and has no second and is totally free from the aspects of *gunas*.

This is how our scriptures have described the aspects of *Sri*. If we are desirous of having *Ananda* and moving into the sphere of bliss, we should recognise this sacred and all-powerful aspect which is present everywhere. Having recognised this aspect, we should completely surrender ourselves to this aspect. Only then can we have complete bliss.