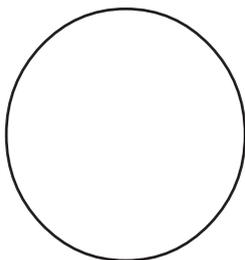


**SUMMER SHOWERS
IN BRINDAVAN
1974**

Part - I

**Discourses by
BHAGAWAN SRI SATHYA SAI BABA
on
Brahman**

**Delivered during the summer course
in Indian Culture and Spirituality
May-June 1974**



PRASANTHI NILAYAM

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The Book “Summer Showers in Brindavan 1974” was first printed in 1993. As this book was of smaller font, the need for a revised and enlarged version with a bigger font was strongly felt. This has resulted in an increase in the number of pages and, therefore, it is being brought out in two parts – first part dealing with *Brahman* and second *Bharath*. Accordingly, the present volume deals with *Brahman*.

There is no doubt that both parts will be cherished and studied with love, faith and concentration for the solution of every manner of difficulty or dilemma one may encounter in spiritual *sadhana*.

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PART I : BRAHMAN

1. Opening Discourse

Do not feel proud of your learning and think that you are a very knowledgeable person. What, after all, is the extent of the knowledge that you have acquired when you are not able to help others with that knowledge? To think that, because of the limited education you have had, you are better than others is a matter of unwarranted pride and ego; and you have to give this up. In truth, you are the embodiment of ignorance. You must realise that out of your limited knowledge and education, correct ideas cannot come to you.

Young students and others who are organisers and patrons of education! Today we are going to begin a very sacred experiment. The purpose of this sacred experiment is to make you realise the meaning of *dharmic* nature and the need for an *adhyatmic* environment. Many

people who are at the helm of education and who are experienced educationists are going to function as *Rithwicks* (Vedic priests) and participate in this great *yajna* or experiment. The sacrifice that we have to make in this endeavour is to give up our pride and selfishness and promote selflessness and concern for others' good. Life strictly symbolises a journey from the position of "I" to the position of "We." In this journey which we have to perform, if only we can give up all incorrect ideas, will we be able to enjoy the unity of this universe.

Nowadays, we are forgetting the sacred Indian culture and we are adopting the pattern of western civilisation. By doing this we are learning various methods of earning money, but neither the students nor those who are at the helm of educational programmes seem to be giving any thought to knowing the purpose of life and how we are to be useful to other human beings during our lifetime. Earning money cannot be the sole purpose of education. Acquiring good qualities can be the only purpose of education. Individual capacities of any special nature are not necessary if we are merely to earn money, learn to sleep, and eat food. From the time of our birth till the time this body perishes, we are making many attempts to earn money and acquire food. In this

process of amassing wealth, we are adopting means and methods which are adopted, also, by the birds and animals. In the matter of acquiring food, different kinds of strength, abilities, and skills are used by us; but these very same skills are used by animals and birds as well. It is not right that we use all our knowledge and skill for doing just what the animals and birds, also, do. In the process of our spending all our energies in acquiring food, we are going far away from the aspect of Atma (Divine principle).

For the purpose of feeding ourselves, many lives are being sacrificed. In this process of our searching for food, many things like trees, birds, fish, and animals are being sacrificed. Because these various living things are being sacrificed and are merging with human beings, they have also been acquiring human lives in their rebirth. None of these *Jivas* (individual souls) are getting any chance of rising higher than human lives.

The entire life is being spent in making an effort to be reborn after one's death, thus repeating the cycle of birth and death. We are becoming slaves to the process of birth and death. We should not allow ourselves to become slaves to this process. We should make an attempt to become one with the great effulgent

spirit. Man today does not make an attempt to understand the basic difference between the *dharma* (code of conduct) that has been entrusted to him as a human being and to others. He does not ask the question as to what he has achieved during his lifetime and how he has been useful to others. He ends his life without answering any of these basic questions.

When one finds around oneself several people who are ridiculing his culture, it is surprising that one is not aroused by such a situation. It is surprising that the great Indian culture—the contents of which have been improved and reformed from time to time—is today an object of ridicule and that we are putting up with such a situation without any discomfort. We should make people realise that no one can ridicule any religion or any good tradition. It is unfortunate that the students of the present day are not able to reply in a fitting manner when others criticise and ridicule our religion and our practices.

This inability on the part of our young people to meet the criticism is a very sorry state of affairs. The reason for this is that our young students do not acquaint themselves with the great traditions of our culture. In the present situation where there is confusion the world over, you young people should understand the aspects

of Indian culture and should, by citing appropriate examples, meet all criticism and expound what is valuable in our culture.

The welfare and the decline of our country's future rests on your shoulders. Those of you who have this burden on your shoulders should be prepared to understand the basis of our culture and put the injunctions of our culture into practice. An average student of today does not understand the sacred contents of our culture. He gets information only from hearsay; he does not read books like the *Ramayana* or the *Bhagavatha* and therefore has wrong and imperfect notions.

The first thing that you should do is to understand the contents of our culture and then you should follow it up by putting the injunctions thereof into practice. There is a small example for this. In all the countries the world over, religious scriptures like the Bible, the Quoran, and the *Vedas* are regarded as important. No one belonging to any one particular religion is asking the reason for these being regarded as important texts. It is a very difficult matter to understand or comprehend divinity. One who does not understand his own individuality is trying to understand divinity and this is a ridiculous situation. For our spiritual life, *dharma* is the basis.

Dharma does not depend on an individual. *Dharma* does not depend on a period of time or a particular situation. *Dharma* depends only on truth. That is why it has been said that there is no *dharma* other than truth. To conduct oneself in a manner which, on the spur of the moment, comes to one's mind and to think that it is *dharma* is very foolish. To think that to conduct oneself in accordance with one's own ideas is practice of *dharma* is very foolish. To be able to develop equal-mindedness and to be able to develop equanimity are the correct aspects of *dharma*; and for this, one must have an unwavering mind and thought.

In the history of Indian thought and Indian culture, the *Mahabharatha* has been often taken as an authority. In Christian thought, the Bible has been taken as an authority. When we read the Bible, we look at Christ as an ideal figure who proclaimed truth to the world. When we learn about his life story, we come to the conclusion that he was born of Virgin Mary. The moment this story of Christ's birth to Virgin Mary is revealed, all those who follow Christianity rightly feel very proud and feel that this mysterious birth is the result of some divine power and that Mary was a very sacred woman. They further proclaim this fact to the

world with great pride. We should understand this aspect and learn how they accept such an event.

On the other hand, if we take an example from our own tradition, we note that when we are told the story of Karna, who was born of Kunthi, at the time when she was an unmarried woman, we feel ashamed about the incident. It is not understandable why we should put ourselves in an embarrassing situation when this story is told. Today, we are taking such stories contained in our tradition and giving them wrong meanings by setting aside the real meanings. We further persist in giving the wrong meanings. Therefore, in the very first instance, you should make an attempt to understand the history and traditions of our culture and get the correct meaning that is implied in each incident. There is no trouble if you are fully knowledgeable. There is also no trouble if you are completely ignorant but there is great trouble if you are neither knowledgeable nor ignorant and you are in a state of great confusion resulting in your taking always the wrong meanings.

In the sacred task to which we have committed ourselves during the next one month, with the help of the elders who will tell you our traditional stories, I hope

that you will be able to understand the full significance of such stories which are part of our culture.

The kind of education that you are getting today cannot be called true education. As a result of the education that you are having today, you are getting only superficial acquaintance with a large number of text books and are not getting the essence thereof or right education. As a result of the vast amount of information that you are getting, you are simply losing all the energy that you have. We cannot find even one student who has acquired general knowledge. He chooses one small part of the totality of knowledge or one special aspect and he tries to acquire a higher sense in that aspect and in this process he loses common sense.

Our Minister explained to you that there is a difference between science and spirituality. He also told you that if only you can synthesise and co-ordinate the two, there is a great deal of similarity between them. Science should grow and as a result of such growth, it should help people. We should acquire such education which will strengthen our physical body organs as well as our mind and spirit. Science is good, science is sacred and science can be useful to the country but we are not learning the correct methodology of science so

as to make it useful to mankind. In developing science they are reaching great heights and they are discovering many things. But because of our inability to use such scientific discoveries for individual and common benefit, we are falling very low in human values.

During the month that follows, in order that you may learn to control your sense organs, we are going to put you to practise the *Yoga Asanas*. If at this time when you are young and when your body, mind, and spirit are all strong, you cannot control your sense organs, how will you be able to do this when you grow old? Good education consists in training you to control your sense organs and to make them grow in the right direction. That process which enables you to control your sense organs should be regarded as the right type of education. The excitement which comes from your sense organs is something which destroys the human qualities and sometimes brings disgrace.

Pavitratma Swarupas!

The country is not made up of dust. It is a conglomeration of human beings. It is the human beings that give it the name of a country. If there are no human beings, it is not called a country. A country is very much

like a human body. The divine strength of the country is the human nature in the body. If there is no divine strength in the human body, what is the use of this body? A body devoid of divine strength is equivalent to dust. Today we see only the human form, but the human nature and human qualities are dormant in this human form. The qualities which are precious and which characterise the human being are morality, adherence to truth and dharma etc. and if these are not evident, then the human nature does not shine at all. We should promote human quality and human nature. We should not cultivate simply the human form and appearance. These two are like the negative and the positive. If the unity and the oneness of these two aspects are not properly brought about, then both of them are useless.

Enshrine divinity in your heart and make it sacred. Then you can use the human form in a manner in which you like. The fact that today you are not enshrining sacred divinity in your heart and thereby becoming distant from it and that you are letting your body go where it likes is not a human quality at all. It is behaving very much like an animal.

Freedom is very necessary but before we enjoy freedom, we should understand what is meant by

freedom. The freedom that is implied here should arise out of wisdom and out of character which you build up as a result of your education.

To make an attempt to transform the human nature in yourself and elevate it to the sacred divine nature should be the purpose of all the education that you wish to have. You should give up the idea of starting from the nature or the environment around you and moving to the aspect of Atma. On the contrary, you should believe that you start from Atma and move on to the aspect of nature. If you start from the base of Atma and get into nature, then the pure ideas that characterise the Atma will be with you. You should believe that all creation is divine.

Paramatma is present everywhere and is all knowing. He is present everywhere in His creation. By seeing Him everywhere, it will be possible for you to live in this world by getting correct knowledge of the nature around you; and by having such *Adhyatmic* knowledge, you will be able to enjoy happiness in the spiritual side of the world. *Paramatma* is the embodiment of truth, wisdom and infinite and in that form He is present in all the organs that make

up your body. He is effulgent in the form of Atma in our body.

Today, many incredible and surprising things are happening in the world. Several people feel very proud that they are very knowledgeable and think that they can attain a very high position by their knowledge of science. These people question the very existence of God and say that even if there is a God, there is no place for Him in their thinking and in their hearts. This is a ridiculous argument. There is need to examine what is implied in this statement with care. A person who claims to be a very knowledgeable person cannot be so, because if he is really a wise person, then God must be in his heart, for God is the very embodiment of knowledge and learning. To say that such a God has no place in his mind is only to say that he has no wisdom in himself. God is the very embodiment of Atma and He is the self that is present in everyone. To say that such a God is not present in one's mind is to say that he, himself, does not exist, and that is the same as proclaiming that one does not believe in himself.

At one time, Hiranyakasipu of our tradition was moving about with great pride saying that he was the only God and that he was all powerful. Even such a

Hiranyakasipu had the need for God on one occasion. Are these proud people of today, who proclaim that there is no need for God, cleverer or stronger than Hiranyakasipu? If with all his physical and mental strength, he had the need for a God, these proud people will certainly need the help of God and will one day recognise this. God exists in everyone and, therefore, to say that God does not exist is to show one's own lame hand and say that he himself does not exist. To say that God does not exist is as ridiculous as saying that he is born to a barren woman. To argue that there is no God is as bad as insisting that the one that is arguing cannot speak. All these are meaningless words intended to make up meaningless arguments.

We should really strive to understand the sacred significance of our culture. You must make up your mind and have it implanted in your mind firmly that you wish to understand and experience what is sacred in our culture and traditions. In the sacred culture of our country, there are five injunctions which form its very basis. These are "*Mathru Devo Bhava*", "*Pithru Devo Bhava*", "*Acharya Devo Bhava*", "*Sathyam Vada*", "*Dharmam Chara*". Regard your mother, father, and *Guru* as Gods. These form the essential basis of our

culture. Added to this, we have to speak the truth and act in the right manner. Our very body, our clothes and our food are such that they tell us that we share our blood with that of our parents. If we cannot show gratitude to such mothers and fathers, what is the human quality that is left in us? If you do not show such gratitude to your parents, can you expect your own children to show you gratitude in the future? If you do not show the gratitude due to your parents now, where is the guarantee that your children will show gratitude to you?

All the future depends on the present and on what you do now. Every action of yours at the present time is bound to have a reaction, resound and reflection in the future. In your ignorance today, you may show disrespect to your elders, you may follow bad ideals and bad paths, you may do these things in fun and in an attitude of humour; but as time goes on, you will have to inescapably experience all the consequences.

It is in this context, therefore, it has been said “Be good, do good, see good. This is the way to God.” Therefore, during the one month of the summer classes, you should have the sacred ideal of learning about Indian culture and concentrate on it and should be able to imbibe the good qualities enshrined in our culture.

May be in the food that you get and in the manner of your living, you will have some inconveniences; but you should not let that hinder the one sacred purpose of your yearning to imbibe the root contents of your culture. We will have to accept and subject ourselves to different kinds of experiences in our life. We should not pay any attention to the inconveniences and call them difficult or undesirable experiences. It is only when we are able to bear several kinds of hardships will we be in a position to experience the sacred truth and pleasures. If there are no two periods of pain, there will be no experience of pleasure, as pleasure is described only as an interval between two pains. In this young age of yours, to be able to sacrifice, to be able to shun all comforts and to be able to develop broad-mindedness will stand in good stead in future. Sacrifice is a very big *yoga* for you. *Bhoga* or enjoyment is a great disease. If you give yourselves to enjoyment and *bhoga* now, you are sure to get into some kind of trouble in the future. On the other hand, if you give yourselves to sacrifice today, you will have happiness tomorrow.

All the boys and girls who have assembled here in Brindavan should regard themselves as brothers and

sisters and they should try and see only the divinity that is present in each one of them. They should use this occasion to develop and promote the sacred principle of brotherhood of man and fatherhood of God. Today, people come on a platform and address others as brothers and sisters, but they do not share their property with them. We should not talk of brothers and sisters in the aspect of a bodily relationship but realise the one divine principle that is present in all, and it is in that context that we should regard all as brothers and sisters. There is no escape from our having to follow this sacred principle. You should spend the next one month in the direction of purifying your vision, your talk, and your hearing.

2. “Brahman” And “Bharath” As The Theme Of The Discourses That Will Follow

We can get the harvest of paddy only by sowing the seeds of paddy. We cannot get such a harvest if we sow fried paddy as seeds. One who has the necessary wisdom will get rid of repeated births. It is only by acquiring the correct kind of knowledge that one can escape repeated birth. Listen to this great truth, Oh brave son of Bharath! Citizens of this country always live on hope. To lose hope is not a characteristic feature of our countrymen. To suffer from lack of faith and to lose hope is a weakness; and by entertaining such weaknesses, you will lose all the human strength that you have. Enthusiasm and care are things which will show the way for the prosperity of man. Every individual having such enthusiasm and care will surely achieve

success and attain glory in any kind of work that he undertakes. Our own culture tells us that one who has care and interest will always succeed. We should make an attempt to go through the journey of our life with interest and enthusiasm.

Citizens of our country believe in *Karma*, the fruits of which come out of our own actions. Because we have strong faith in the doctrine of *karma*, we always undertake to do good deeds and keep away from doing bad deeds. We readily come forward to do good deeds but hesitate to indulge in bad deeds. Vyasa has written in the *Puranas* that we come forward to do good acts and to say good things, but we hesitate to do bad deeds and hesitate to tell unsacred things because we know that this hurts people.

The *karma* philosophy which we accept in this country is something which is very sacred and there is a saying that we believe in doing good *karma*. It is an important characteristic of our culture that as an individual, as a family, and as a society, there is considerable forbearance and mutual dependence towards each other. When one can recognise the connection between these three, and when one can

recognise and respect the *adhyatmic* injunctions given to us even while paying and at the same time, pay sufficient attention to worldly duties, there is no doubt that the society will become prosperous and there will be peace in the world. Because our people have recognised the connection that exists between the worldly thought and the spiritual aspect, it is possible for them to take the correct path and become leaders in the world of thought. They have always taught that the worldly aspect and the spiritual aspect cannot contradict each other.

Imagine that you have a golden necklace around your neck. When you look at the form of this, we call it a necklace; but when we look at the basic material in it, we say it is made up of gold. It cannot be that gold is one thing and the necklace is a different thing. It is not possible to make a necklace without gold. So, when we call it a golden necklace, it only demonstrates the oneness of the basic material that is the gold and the name and form, namely the necklace. It does not give place to any difference between the base and the ornament. In the same manner, we should be able to proclaim the greatness of our culture and of our education by recognising the oneness of humanity on the one hand and underlying divinity on the other hand.

The relationship between the *Jiva*, Easwara, and *Prakruthi* (nature) is an inseparable one. Without cotton, we cannot have yarn and without yarn, we cannot have the cloth. For a piece of cloth to take the shape which it has, the basic material is the thread. While the cloth has for its basis the thread, the thread itself has for its basis, the cotton. Cotton, thread, and cloth are three names for three different forms; but what is contained in all the three is the same and that is cotton.

Prakruthi, or nature, is like the cloth in this analogy. It is the conglomeration of our desires that takes the form of nature. These desires emanate from our heart and have their origin in our heart. We do not see the desires around us. We are able to see in external appearances what is latent in our hearts in the form of desires. It is not possible to see anything externally if its origin does not lie as a latent entity within us. If we close our eyes, all nature around us will look as if it does not exist. But, when we open our eyes, we see so many different heads. Have the people who are here gone away somewhere when we close the eyes, or have they come from somewhere when we open our eyes? No—these people have been here all along. If we do not have eyes, we cannot recognise even our own body. Therefore we

are able to recognise the entire creation only through our vision. There is nothing distinct as a creation; this becomes a reality because of our vision.

In the same manner good and bad, right and wrong, heaven and hell are all appearing to us as a result of our own vision. The mind of man alone is responsible both for his bondage and for his liberation. The difference between bondage and liberation exists only in our thought. There is no intrinsic or basic difference between these two. We will be able to appreciate the aspect of the divine only when we sacrifice the aspect of the *jiva*. There is nothing that we can get by causing harm to the *jiva* and doing *puja* (ritual worship) to the divine. We have to recognise that the living and visible *jiva* and the invisible divine are the same, and we have to recognise the unity between these two aspects.

Our ancients have prescribed various rituals which would enable us to shed our arrogance and ego. These rituals which have been prescribed to us have also been called *Yajna* and *Yaga*. The word *Yajna* has come from the root word *Yaj*. We have come to recognise this ritual *yajna* as important in the context of our worshipping the Lord. The statements that are in our *Vedas* have told us

to sacrifice everything, and through sacrifice we should be able to get a vision of the divine in us. The creation and its maintenance depends only on sacrifice. If there is no sacrifice, the society will not remain intact. If there is no sacrifice, there will be no life and one cannot recognise the truth and if there is no sacrifice, there is no creation and there is no sustenance.

Looking at things from a worldly aspect, if we do not give out the breath that we take in, we cannot live. If we do not give out the food that we take in after digesting it, we cannot live. If the blood is not constantly flowing from one place to another every instant, we cannot live. Unless the clouds that have gathered water give up the water that they have gathered, they cannot remain as clouds. That is why it is said that what you cannot get by your knowledge and effort can be got by sacrifice. Whether it is the good or the bad, we have to keep on sacrificing. In this process one should never pay any attention to the body. If we think that something is good and we welcome what is good, some bad may also come in this process. That which gives you happiness when it comes to you will, also, cause sorrow when it goes away from you.

There is a small example for this. If a son is born in a family, there is considerable happiness; but the death of the same son will cause untold sorrow and grief. It is the same son that is either born or is dead, and the change of the act of birth to an act of death changes the happiness to sorrow. Without sacrificing, man cannot live; but he does not undertake sacrifice knowingly. Every individual does undertake sacrifice, but he does not know that he is sacrificing. One should have sacrifice as his aim, and one should enquire into what is permanent and what is not permanent and enquire into what is to be given up and what is to be accepted.

The body and the country are like the object and the image. The body is the place where the divine resides. The difference between *Kshetra* and *Kshetragna*, that is between the place of residence and the resident, is the one “*Gna*.” We interpret this difference by saying that one who is full of knowledge and wisdom is the one who resides in the body, and since this syllable “*Gna*” is not present in “*Kshetra*” it is said that the body itself is completely devoid of knowledge and wisdom. So, bearing in mind the Lord who is the embodiment of knowledge and wisdom and who resides in the body, we should be able to give sufficient attention for the

well-being of the body. If the All-knowing does not reside in the body, then there is no sanctity of the body.

But, are we giving the name *Kshetra* to everything? No—only specific cities, villages, and rivers go by the name of *Kshetra*. It is only that particular place where there is some sacredness recognised that is called *Kshetra*. Benares, Tirupati, Gaya, Badri, and Prayag are some of the places which are called *Kshetras*. These places are called *Kshetras* because with these places is associated a recognised sacredness, and the presence of such sacredness gives them the name *Kshetra*. In a superficial way, one recognises this as a place where God is residing.

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, our body is described as the *Kshetra* and the *Paramatma* who resides in the body is called the *Kshetragna*. We are not able to realise how we should use our own body in which God resides. Devotees who have a sacred heart and who entertain sacred thoughts go on pilgrimage to such sacred places. They are undertaking a pilgrimage to such centres only because they believe those places to be sacred. If they are not sacred, there is no need for them to undertake such a pilgrimage at such expense of money and energy. As in this analogy, because the human body is sacred,

many people establish connections between each other, and they try to make a pilgrimage and take their life along a sacred path. If truly the body of an individual does not undertake a sacred task and lead a sacred life, no one will want to have any relationship with such a body. Therefore, anyone who claims to keep his body sacred should make an attempt to indulge only in good actions, good thoughts, and good deeds.

If we take a pot which is full of toddy and apply a coating of ghee externally on the pot, does the fragrance of the ghee remove the bad smell of the toddy which is in the pot? In the same manner, if your heart is full of bad ideas and bad thoughts and externally if you pretend to be good and be in good company for purposes of show, does that remove the impurity in your heart? It does not matter if you do not enter good company and do good deeds. It does not matter if you do not participate in *dhyana* (meditation) and *japa* (repetition of holy names), but it is absolutely essential that you should keep your heart pure and clean. The essence of all religions teaches that you should keep your heart clean. Both in the material world and for spiritual attainments, control of your sensory organs is essential. It is not good to completely and rigidly control all your senses nor is it

desirable to give them complete freedom. One should adopt the middle path.

There is a small example for this. Many men are accustomed to shave and they know that if they press the razor too hard they will cut the skin and if they do not press at all, it will not be possible to remove the hair. Therefore, in this process, only when we apply moderate pressure will we be able to attain the necessary result. The human mind is like a razor's edge. Without controlling the mind too rigidly and without allowing it to go too freely, we should encourage it to do good acts and we should control it when there is any tendency to participate in bad acts. Thus by distinguishing between good acts and bad acts, we should be able to guide the mind in a moderate manner between the two extremes. To control the mind and the thoughts is something basic to *Yoga*, and this has been said by many people.

We should regard the body as synonymous with man, and man is synonymous with mind. If one's mind behaves in a manner in which it ought to, then he behaves like man. If one's mind is not in a state in which it ought to be, then he does not behave like a man. The entire country depends on the men that constitute the

country. If the country today is not in the shape in which it ought to be, it simply means that the minds are not behaving as they should. Therefore the country is not what it should be.

The good and bad of a country are entirely determined by the men that make up the country. The confusion that is prevailing in the country and the lack of discipline and fear that are seen all round are the results of our own conduct. Because we are not able to keep our minds in a manner in which we ought to keep them, and because men constituting the country are not conducting themselves in a manner in which they ought to, such a situation is prevailing. If the minds and the thoughts are good, then the men will be good and if the men are good then the country will be prosperous and the country will be enjoying happiness. We say that this is our country, but remember that the country does not have a separate bodily entity. It is the conglomeration of people that is called a country.

There is a small example for this. We refer to a small group of people as a society or association. Neither the society nor the association has any distinctive form. The individuals who constitute the society have specific forms. Because these individuals

with specific forms have become members, that group has been called an association. We should ask the question whether that association has the qualities which it should have.

We should not regard the number of members in a society as a primary criterion. Mere numbers do not justify the name society. It is only the oneness of thought between the various members that makes it a society. It follows that when the individual is right and when all the individuals that compose the society are correct, then the society itself will be right and correct. Today in all spheres—ethical, moral, educational, spiritual, and scientific—because there is no unity or oneness among those that compose a group, there is confusion and lack of peace everywhere. A group consisting of different individuals can be referred to as a society only when all of them stand on one common base and accept one common thought. Today, in a society which has ten people, you find ten different individual thoughts and plans. When these ten people follow ten different paths and when there is no unity among them, is there any meaning in calling them a society or an organisation? Because in such social groups and associations they do not have the strength to bring the individuals together,

these associations and societies are coming to grief. We should make an attempt to convert individual ideas into sacred ideas.

One should not undertake to discuss the good and bad in others. An individual who undertakes to keep the bad in him away from him and attempts to promote the good in him can really go forward. If we use a thousand eyes for locating the faults in others and spend all our time in this process, our heart also gets impure and we develop bad ideas. Our heart is like a camera lens. The object on which we concentrate our attention gets imprinted on the mind by the lens of the heart.

Young people should try to see that qualities like jealousy, hatred, lack of forbearance do not enter their minds. People who have such bad ideas will be destroyed in course of time in spite of the wealth and knowledge that they might possess. If you entertain these bad qualities in your mind, it is taking to a bad path willingly and you will surely fall down.

Pavitratma Swarupas!

It has been the custom in these summer classes to take a particular theme and give importance to the central idea and synthesise and correlate the ideas that

are connected with that theme and imprint them in your mind. This year, the important idea will be the history of the name of our country, Bharath, and the significance of the name Bharath. This country has been called Bharath or Bharatha *desa*. It is customary to associate this with the name of the son of a king who at one time ruled this country. This is not the correct meaning. The whole world has been called Bharatha *desa*. The relationship between the name Bharatha and the *Vedas* has to be understood. We should be able to derive the authority from the *Vedas* for this name Bharatha.

It is, also, common for our people to use the word Brahman very frequently. We must understand what this word Brahman means. Does this mean the traditional four-faced God or does this mean the *Sabda Brahma*, that is sound typified as Brahma, or does it represent the creator of all this creation? In the thirty days that are to follow you should understand the two important words—Brahman and Bharath—by quoting authority from our *Vedas*, *Puranas*, and *Ithihasthas*. I will spend the next thirty days in explaining to you the inner meaning of these two words. If one cannot understand the meaning of the name given to one's own mother country, what is

the use of being born in a country and calling oneself a citizen of Bharath?

One who cannot recognise the significance of the name of one's own mother country should be regarded as blind, not being able to recognise his own body. Today there are many who are not able to recognise the meaning of the name given to their own body. If one does not know the meaning of the name given to his body, how is he going to understand the significance of the name of his motherland? Therefore the first thing that one has to do is to understand the significance of his name and the name of his motherland. During these thirty days, many teachers may tell you the significance of various other matters but I will tell you the significance of the two words "Brahman" and "Bharath." I hope that you will be able to appreciate fully the meaning of these words.

People who have sacred thoughts and ideas will always have the viewpoint of *Adwaita* (Non-dualism) in whatever they say. You should make an attempt to find good in whatever you see. Whether you see good or bad you must regard it as good. On the other hand, if you begin to look for bad in the good things that you see, it is very sinful. In the Bible there is a very good

example provided by Christ for such a situation. There was a dead dog in a particular place, and the birds and other animals were eating the various parts of this dead dog, and the pieces of flesh were thrown all around in a helter skelter fashion. Several people would not look at this repulsive situation. They were turning away from this dead dog and were moving at a distance. At that time Jesus was going along that path and learnt that all the people were abandoning that path because of the dead dog on the path. He then said that one must learn to see the good aspect of everything. He asked if any one has ever thought of the very clean set of teeth which belong to the dog, and he asked if anyone ever brushed these teeth for them to be so clean. He thus advised them to see only the good in all aspects. He, also, taught them the lesson that there is bad blood in everyone and bad flesh in everyone which should in reality keep all persons away. We should practise to see only good things, do only good things, and hear only good things and each of our experiences must become a sacred experience.

Truly, when we come to think of the fact that from such a vast country only a small number of students have had this opportunity of attending this summer course, it shows that you are very lucky. I am hoping that you will

be able to get the best out of this and put into practice all that you learn here. Do not abuse the good opportunity that you have been lucky enough to get. You may have to put up with some difficulties. You must collect all the good that you can get from such an opportunity. I am hoping that you will be able to do this in spite of the fact that you may have to put up with some inconvenience.

3. Brahman Denotes The Totality Of Prajna In The World

Diverse branches of Education are like the details of the art of cooking, but each one of these diverse branches corresponds to each item that we are cooking. Why do we give up the individual item and go to learn only the method of cooking? Listen to the truth that is contained in this question, Oh! youth of Bharath.

The theme of today's discourse is to acquaint you with the meaning of the word Brahman. For the *Vedas* and the *Vedic* religion, this word Brahman is synonymous with all the contents thereof. However, many historians who have given the meaning of this from time to time, have adopted an alternate path

and have also inserted into the commentary their own notions and ideas and have thus made available a distorted version to the people. Although this word Brahman has infinite number of meanings and could be interpreted in infinite number of ways, these commentators have given it a colour and meaning which, in each case, depended on the individual taste and individual experiences.

This word Brahman has been explained by some as having something to do with the Brahmanas in the *Vedas*. On the other hand, when some writers gave it the meaning of the *purohit* (performer of rites) in the *Rig Veda*, they also explained that he is not to be confused with one of several *Rithwicks* of the *yajna*, but they gave him a special place and called him by the name *Hota*. These historians have explained that the particular *Rithwick* who has the responsibility of looking after the sacrificial ceremony of the *Yajna* and seeing that the ritual is conducted properly is called by the name *Hota*, and he has been regarded as the important Brahman in the *Yajna*. Several scholars have been giving this kind of connotation for this word. In this explanation of the word Brahman, they have not taken care to see that the aspect of Easwara or divine is included in this word.

Some other historians have understood this aspect and given this a meaning which covers the aspect of the divine. In this context we have to take into consideration the comments of some of the western scholars who have made an effort to understand our *Vedas*, our civilisation, and our culture. One great western scholar has taken this word Brahman as originating from the root word *Bruh*. This root word indicates expansion, or to swell, or to grow. He has taken this word as the starting point for understanding the divine aspect of the creation.

Another western scholar has given a different meaning for this word Brahman. He has regarded this word as something which is specially related to the divine strength and to the force of will which is directed towards God. There is a necessity for us to enquire into the interpretations given by these western scholars as well.

Apart from these two scholars who may not be so well known in this country, there is another western scholar by name Max Mueller who is more widely known in this country. He has also commented and given a meaning for this word. He started with the idea that this is a word which signifies sound and linked it with names

like *Vachaspati*, and so on. At this point, we have to examine whether all these interpretations have the authority of the *Veda* and whether these interpretations are contained in the *Veda*. We have to examine where and how this word Brahman occurs in the *Vedas* and what meaning is conveyed by the word in that context. This has been mentioned in *Sama Veda* by equivalents like Brahma and *Veda Rupa*. *Sama Veda* has established that the form of *Veda* is Brahman. In the *Rig Veda*, it has also been said that the song of Brahman is the essence of the *Vedas*. Again, when we look at this word from the point of view of *Bhagavad Gita*, we come to the conclusion that everything in the creation is filled with Brahman.

Our *Vedas* have not stopped at this point by merely giving a form and a meaning to this word Brahman. They have also given a more distinctive and special significance for this word Brahman. It has been taught to us that an aspect of the word Brahman means that it is something which has no discernible dimensions and which is limitless. If in this world we have things that can grow, then the aspect of Brahman has the capacity to grow so much that it is far beyond the growth of such things. The growth capacity of whatever is signified by the word Brahman exceeds the growth capacity of

everything that we can comprehend. That aspect which is not discernible, and which is beyond our comprehension, and which is infinite, has been described by the word Brahman. It has been established that this is synonymous with growth and with complete growth. This Brahman which represents complete growth in all respects has been represented as the characteristic of *Purusha*.

This word *Purusha* refers to one who has experienced completeness or fullness. Our *Purushasuktha* has described this aspect of *Purusha* as something which has one thousand heads, one thousand eyes, and one thousand feet. In this interpretation, we are not taking the true inner meaning; instead sometimes we are getting the wrong meaning as well. The words “*Sahasra Seershaha Purushaha*” should not be interpreted in a limited way by thinking of only one thousand heads. This really means that thousands and thousands of heads are contained in this aspect of *Purusha*. The word head immediately conveys to us the meaning and picture of the head that we see in the ordinary worldly way, and we think of the Lord as having a thousand heads. This is not correct. When we use the word head, it connotes *Prajna* or wisdom in this

context. The totality of *Prajna*, or the wisdom that is present in all the heads, represents the concept of *Purusha* here.

When we describe the *Purusha* as *Sahasraksha* what we mean is that we worship the concept that the Lord has thousands of eyes. In accordance with the authority of the *Vedas*, the inner meaning of this is that all the energy and effulgence that comes out from the eyes of the various people, or the totality of that energy, represents *Paramatma*. This is the inner meaning of referring to Him as *Sahasraksha* or one with a thousand eyes.

We also describe him as *Sahasrapad*, or one who has a thousand feet. What is it that we mean by describing God as one who has a thousand eyes, a thousand feet, and a thousand heads; and what benefit do we get by describing him in this manner? The physical ability to carry this material body rests in our feet and in our legs. Because such strength is contained in our feet, however big the body may be, we are able to move the body with comfort. The totality of the capacity to understand or *Prajnana* and the totality of brightness and the effulgence, and the capacity of locomotion have been given the name Brahman.

The ability by which we have our vision and we see, the ability by which we are able to hear, and the ability by which we can have our mind functioning, and the ability by which we can bear the weight of the material body are given to us by God and because all these strengths are given to us by God, God is also referred to as *Prajnanam Brahma*, or the embodiment of wisdom. When we say, *Purusha eva idam sarvam*, what we mean is *Paramatma*, who has got all these strengths in Him, is moving about everywhere manifesting all these strengths.

Whether we talk of the *Veda* or use the word Brahman or the word *Purusha*, these are only different names given to the same aspect and to propagate the same idea that is contained in all these words. The words are different, but they describe one and the same idea. All the energy that is present in the gross form and also in the minutest and infinitesimally small thing represents the aspect of Brahman.

It is only by having this all-knowing, all-powerful, and omnipresent personality of the Lord in his mind that Arjuna prayed to the Lord in the form of *Viswa Virat* (Cosmic being). “Can we understand you? Oh Lord! Krishna, You are smaller than the smallest particle and

bigger than the biggest body. You are present everywhere and always in the eighty-four lakhs of the living species and one knows you as the biggest thief among all the thieves.” Arjuna had prayed to the Lord by understanding these aspects of the Lord.

Because of this, Arjuna could understand the real aspect of the Lord. “*Brahmanam Brahmana Vahanam.*” Brahma has also been described as the carrier of the Brahman. We must examine the meaning of the word Brahma in this context. The word Brahma has been understood to connote *Manthra*. In this place, the meaning is that the *Purusha*, who is the embodiment of *Vedas*, has the *manthra* as his carrier. This is the reason why people in our country have relied on such great men who achieved their greatness on the basis of *manthra*. They started learning these *manthras* and getting purification for themselves with the help of these great people. Mere utterance of words like “*Om Namō Narayana,*” or “*Om Nama Shivaya,*” cannot constitute a *manthra*. A *manthra* has two aspects. The first is *Manana* or what has been learned has to be taken into your mind. The second is the aspect of *Trana* that is what has been taken into your mind has to be established firmly therein. By taking the divine into your mind and firmly

establishing it therein, if you can carry on your life and do the work that is ordained for you, then your life will be full of happiness.

Such meaning of the word Brahman which has the authority of the *Veda* has been distorted by the historians and because of this we have also started getting a distorted picture of the nature and creation that is around us. In this situation, we see that the inner meanings of these words which have the authority of the *Vedas* and the interpreted meaning given by the various historians are very different because the historians brought their own ideas into the interpretation. We should note that there are essential differences between the actual meaning and the interpreted meaning. Common people have begun to lay complete confidence in what has been given by these historians and having accepted the meaning that is given by the historians, they are promoting wrong notions and wrong meaning.

Whether it is for our own countrymen or for people from outside our country, there is no escape from our accepting that the meaning contained in the *Vedas* is the authoritative meaning. *Veda* is something which does not have its origin in human beings. It has come from

sources other than human beings. All history is something that is created by experienced people. In such things which have been created by men, there are possibilities for changes, additions and alterations; but there is no such possibility in the case of the *Vedas* which have not had their origin in human beings.

Because *Veda* has been obtained merely by listening to sound, it has been referred to as *Sruthi*. This is something which is directly connected with the Lord taking in and giving out His breath. Such divine breath, which constitutes the *Vedas*, is our life and if there is no breath and life, there will be no belief and faith; and if there is no faith, man will be lifeless. Therefore, any citizen who has faith in the *Vedas* can really be described as one who has life in him. When the aspect of Easwara is not present in your heart, then you have no human quality in you. Because we have forgotten the *Vedic* culture which has had neither a beginning nor will have an end, and placed our faith in material comfort, and we have tried to give more importance to what we see around us in the form of material comforts, we have given up what is essential for our own culture and brought our life into great difficulty.

To have faith in the *Vedas* and to accept the injunctions of the *Veda* is being regarded by the modern youth as outmoded and uncivilised. Young people today are not making an enquiry as to what is contained in the *Vedas* or in the *Sastras*. They go further and say that those people who have faith in the *Vedas* and the *Sastras* are only having blind faith. This is the kind of attitude which the young people are developing. If one argues, after acquainting oneself with the contents of what he is arguing about, one can argue for any length of time, but if a person is arguing without knowing the contents, it is not possible to argue with him.

A blind man will always see darkness irrespective of how bright a light you might put in his presence. As far as the limited capacity of the blind man is able to discern, the truth is that it is dark even though you might put a bright light there. In the view of the rest of the people, this is not the truth. Therefore, absolute truth is not something which can depend on and vary from individual to individual. It is something which can depend only on the entire cosmos.

But, modern man has recognised the individual aspect and he is proclaiming that what he sees as an individual to be the truth is also the truth for the rest of

the world. He is not making any attempt to recognise the infinite divinity. Our *Vedas* have been teaching us several aspects of *Sathyam* or truth, of *Jnanam* or wisdom, and of *Anantha* or infinity. We should ask ourselves whether the people who describe truth as truth and knowledge as knowledge are foolish, or the people who describe truth as untruth and knowledge as ignorance are foolish. These questions can be answered and decisions reached by yourselves. People who have faith in the *Vedas* are like people who say that $2+2=4$, while those who do not have faith in the *Vedas* are like the people who say that $2+2=5$.

We shall ask ourselves a question regarding the extent and the basis of the world. In the world there are many people. Some of them are believers, some of them are non-believers, and some of them are believing non-believers. There are many people in other countries who have no faith in God and who believe in individual strength. They are proclaiming and honouring individual strength. Not only this, there are people who belong to other countries and many other religions. There are multitudes of people, religions, and faiths. Christians may worship Jesus, Muslims may worship Allah, and Hindus may worship Rama, Krishna, and so on. Different people

have different faiths and they adhere to different faiths. But all these people, although they may have different faiths, and profess different Gods, and worship different Gods, yet none of them can be distant from truth. Truth is something that is common to all of them. Whether the people are Russians or Chinese or Pakistanis, $2+2$ is always four and this truth is recognised by all of them.

People of all countries and all religions must understand that *Vedas* are something which establish the authority of truth. I mentioned yesterday that during this one month I will explain the meaning of Brahman and the meaning of the word Bharath. Some of you may feel that these words Brahman and Bharath are words relevant only to the citizens of this country. This is not correct. These words are significant for people of all countries. Those who belong to Bharath might use the word Brahman and others may use a different name, but no one will be against the aspect of Brahman.

Suppose we take water in a tumbler. Foreigners may describe this as water while people belonging to the north will call this *Pani*, and those people who speak Telugu will describe it as *Neeru*, and so on. Although different names are used, the contents are the same. The place may be different, the names may be different, but

the material for which you have given the name cannot change. In the same manner, the significant divine aspect is the same although different people describe it by different names in different places. What is mainly responsible for growth in different places is being referred to by different names. For Bharath, this is the aspect of Brahman. Some call it the “Force of nature.” They are using the words “Force of nature” to describe the aspect of Brahman, but they do not understand what is signified by the word “nature.”

Every matter in any form must have some basis for its existence. We must examine and find this basis for its existence. Even if you are not able to see the one that is responsible for its birth, there should be present someone who has given birth to it. When you wear a wristwatch, for example, and ask where it was manufactured, you will state that it was made by some Swiss company. We have neither seen the Swiss Company nor the persons who made the watch, but we are using the watch. Has this watch come spontaneously or has someone taken the time to manufacture this in a workshop? The person who has made this watch must know how to divide the time and how time is to be

measured. If he does not know about this, he cannot prepare a watch. Therefore, some individual who knows the process of assembling a watch has to exist somewhere. We readily accept that there must be some individual who has assembled such a watch.

Similarly, there are artificial satellites in the sky which are going round as temporary planets. We accept that some scientists have put them up, but these rockets and satellites are alive only for a limited time. If you accept that these rockets, which have only a limited life, have been created by individuals, we ask who has created the permanent planets that we see. The motion of the sun, the moon, and the earth takes place regularly and without faltering. We have to ask who has given them such steady motion. The creation of this infinite world, the creation of the sun and the moon, which are moving so regularly, or the generation of a steady heat in a human body, the functioning of the lungs, are such mysteries that unquestionably there is a divine hand of creation behind them. Who can create all these things which are so permanent and steady? When we ask such a question, people simply push away the question and say that these are natural. They do not recognise the creator who has created all this.

Not to accept the existence of such a creator is to be very foolish and hard-headed. The divine strength or the divine aspect who is the creator of all these things is Brahman. Our people have been able to go up to a certain point, using their intelligence. Having gone up to a certain point in that manner, they have learnt that there is a limitation and that they cannot go beyond that point. In that context, it is better to accept that there is something which they do not know; instead, to say that nothing exists beyond what they comprehended is very foolish. We must make an attempt to understand and search for the truth and put it into practice.

Even today what the scientists have really learnt is a very small fraction of what there is to learn, but the pride they have accumulated after having learnt such a small fraction is out of all proportion. When we give room to such ego and pride, we are not able to understand even the things which we can understand. The decisions which the scientists are arriving at as a result of their work are being altered in a short time by the scientists themselves. They are criticising and changing the very same conclusion which they arrive at, and there is no scientist who can say that this is the final stage and there is no more to be done.

In the *adhyatmic* path, as well as in our traditions, it has been usual to declare that this is not the truth, this is not the truth, and so on. Ultimately they reach a stage where, by their inner vision, they are able to say that this is the truth and signify the aspect of the Atma and realise what ultimate truth is.

The scientists of today are devoted to a machine philosophy. They do not recognise the capacity of *manthra*. Their knowledge is something which is accumulated from studies of the external. It is not something which is generated from within as an essence. Those who are devoted to machines and those who stuff information from outside into one's self are scientists and those who develop the inner strength and who are devoted to the strength of *Manthra* are saints.

This difference between a scientist and a saint is very deep and is one of essence. It is very difficult to understand this basic difference. Trying to understand this difficult relationship and spending our time in such a pursuit is something which you should not do. That which is the basis for everything and that which constitutes the power and the strength which is at the base of all this creation has been recognised by our culture and has been named Brahman. You may try for

years and years to understand the aspect of Brahman and yet it will not be completed. The moon that we cannot reach can be only pointed at with a finger and shown from a distance. In the same manner, we cannot understand the aspect of the infinite and unreachable Brahman, and we should only recognise its divinity in terms of something we can adopt. The aspect of Brahman is something which is beyond time and easy reach and if we want to understand it, we ourselves must adopt methods which are above and beyond time. It is in this context that our ancients have said “*Brahmavit Brahmaiva Bhavathi*” meaning that one who knows the aspect of Brahman will himself become Brahman.

Vivekananda once said that if anyone wants to understand his sagacity and his ability, he must first himself become an able and sagacious person. The result of your effort would depend on the extent of your effort and your sacrifice. The final result will only correspond to the effort that you put in.

This power or strength which we attempt to describe by the word Brahman is not something which is external to and outside you. It is present in you and is in your own self. If you acquire some good or bad, and if

you have the misapprehension that Brahman outside is causing good or bad to you, or that He is giving some punishment to you, this is not the right attitude. Do not cultivate the habit of building castles in the air and getting tired by thinking that you will do this and that, you will achieve this and that. The fruits that you get will correspond to whatever seeds you plant. If the seed is one thing and if you have the ambition to get a different fruit, how is it possible? You may be very clever, but all the cleverness is of no avail if you are not giving up your mean qualities. Whatever good or bad you may have done, the aspect of Brahman is not going to break the good and bad into separate parts.

Paramatma is going to give you an unbroken garland of all the good and all the bad that you have accumulated. This is the invisible garland which everyone wears round his neck, and it surely consists of all the good and all the bad that you have done. When you are born from your mother’s womb, you do not physically see this necklace. You do not have a necklace of pearls round your neck; nor do you have a golden necklace when you are born. You neither have a necklace of diamond nor one of emerald round your neck. But, while all these things are absent, whatever good or bad

deeds you may have done in your past are being brought along with you when you are born.

By doing a good act, you cannot get an evil result and by doing a bad act, you cannot accumulate good. Whatever kind of work you do, the result will correspond to that kind of work. Therefore, it follows that today you should make up your mind to do only good things and thus you will reap, in your future lives, the benefit of only good things. You should do good things today and thus aspire to get good for yourself. Brahman is present in your own heart and is functioning as a witnessing consciousness all through. To imagine and to deceive ourselves into thinking that there is no one seeing us do a bad thing is not correct. Whether anyone sees it or not, the aspect of Brahman which has been described as one which has thousands of heads and thousands of eyes is always watching you and the good and bad that you do.

This aspect of Brahman is always with you and is constantly present in you. Without recognising and understanding this basic truth that Brahman is always with you, you spend a great deal of time and energy thinking that God is somewhere and that you should find Him elsewhere and outside of your heart. In the

Bhagavad Gita, this is the reason why God has been described as being present wherever you go. When you walk, God is walking along the same footsteps; and in fact, we hear His footsteps often. There are devotees who pray to God and say, “Oh! God, are you not seeing my difficulties and are you not seeing the situation in which I am?” For such people, only the eyes of God become apparent. In the case of devotees who say, “Oh! God, are you not able to hear my prayers and why is it you are not listening to my difficulties?” For such people, it is only the ears of God that become apparent. For one who asks the Lord whether He does not see troubles, only the eyes of Lord become manifest, while for one who asks the Lord whether He does not hear his troubles, just the ears of the Lord become manifest; and to one who wants the Lord to be always present with him following Him in his work, only the feet of the Lord will become manifest.

One devotee once prayed to Krishna, “I have so many difficulties which I want to convey to you, but I am so distant from you and I can convey my difficulties to you only if I get near you.” Then she requested the flute with which Krishna uses to play music, because it goes so close to the lips of Krishna, to convey her trouble to Krishna because the flute has a chance of going very

close to Krishna. Asking for such recommendations is a practice prevalent from that day to this day. Asking such recommendations to the Lord through instruments close to the God was a practice prevalent then and continues even today.

We should also recognise what kind of instruments and what kind of people will be close to the Lord. In this story, the flute has been mentioned and it is a very good example of an instrument close to the Lord. There is one great quality in the flute and that is its complete surrender. There is nothing left in the flute, and there are no residual desires. In fact, the inside of the flute is completely hollow. The flute has nine holes in it, and the flute of our body has also nine holes. That flute has been able to go close to the Lord because there is no pulp left in the flute, and it is completely hollow. So also, if we can remove all the pulp of desires from our body, then there is no doubt that this flute of our body can also go close to the Lord.

This word, surrender, has been misinterpreted and people promote idleness in the name of surrender. We think that our mind, thought, and body have been surrendered to the Lord. This, in fact, is not true and is in the direction of deceiving the Lord. We are undertaking

to cheat the Lord. Your mind is not under your own control and under such circumstances, how can you hold it and give it to the Lord? You have no control over your own body. If you have a small cut, blood oozes from your body and you run to a doctor asking for a bandage. If this is your body and if you have complete control over it, why is it that you are not able to control the outflow of the blood. In this context to say that you have surrendered your mind and body to the Lord is a statement which is untrue.

This word “surrender” conveys that there is someone who gives and someone who accepts and that you are surrendering to someone. There is a feeling of duality implied in this word surrender. A man with a dual mind is half blind. In this manner, while he remains with this dual thought, how can he recognise the non-dual aspect?

The true meaning of surrender is the recognition of the fact that in everyone and everywhere God is present. The recognition of the presence of God in all *Jivas* is the true meaning of the word surrender. We should perform all the tasks enjoined upon us as our duty and it is not right to neglect our duty, sit idly and say that you

have surrendered everything to the Lord. If you have the feeling that all the work that you do is to please God, then that is the right aspect of surrender or *Saranagathi*. It cannot be the meaning of surrender to give the consequences of all the bad that you do to God and take the consequences of all the good that you do to yourself.

The unity that is present in the diversity is the aspect of Brahman. That such an aspect of Brahman is present everywhere and always is the truth that we should recognise. To develop faith in this statement from the bottom of your heart is also an aspect of surrender. Therefore, if you want to understand the meaning and significance of the word Brahman, you have to put in a considerable amount of effort and care and you have to understand and listen with much care and attention to what is being said.

To be able to develop concentration, you should also practise *Yoga*; but the learning and the type of education that you are getting today is giving you habits which are contrary to these requirements. Many experienced educationists are coming and telling you on various aspects every day. You should listen with great care, to what they say. You must never miss the ultimate

objective. The methods to which you are accustomed in your daily college classes must change as a result of your stay here in the Summer classes. Sometimes, even in small classes, when the teacher is teaching some special aspects, some students, sitting in the back benches, keep reading useless novels which have no relevance to what is being taught. When the teacher finds out about this, the students simply grin. Do not do such things in our Summer classes. We have started to learn sacred things in this summer school. Therefore, you should try to control your conduct. There is no reason for excessive talking. This is no place for such talking. If you need something or want to get something, you need not go out. There are people who are assigned with the specific task of helping you in this regard. Do not go out of the campus and lose control over your conduct.

Similarly if you are habituated to smoking or drinking, you must stop such things and any small needs can be obtained with the help of volunteers. You are going to be the future citizens and guardians of the welfare of our country and so you should develop the habit of controlling your behaviour. If you are not able to give up small trivial habits like smoking, how are you going to develop the capacity to control your sensory organs?

How are you going to control the difficult things when you are not able to control the small things? In the course of this month, if you are not able to control these small and trivial habits, how can you achieve the object of controlling bigger things? You would simply have been a burden on the earth and wasted the food that you have eaten. When you go back to your own homes, your parents and your friends should recognise the many desirable changes in you and they should be able to see the good that you have acquired in the summer classes and speak well of the summer classes.

4. Sath Chith Ananda Are Natural To Every Person

One can get wisdom out of participating in work. Whatever work a wise man performs is only for the benefit of the ignorant. If we can follow the path that has been laid down by wise persons, then we will become knowledgeable about the aspect of Atma in this world.

Pavithratma Swarupas, Students, Boys, And Girls!

The *Taitreya Brahmana* begins with the sound of the word Brahman. The word Brahman, which occurs in the *Vedas*, is also used to give the same meaning in the Upanishads. This aspect of Brahman is useful because it has been expounded in the *Vedas*, and

the *Vedas* are also an aspect of Brahman. The word *Veda* as a meaning for the word Brahman and the word Brahman as a meaning for the word *Veda* are inseparably interlinked with each other. There is a sacred saying in the *Rig Veda* which means that the word Brahman is basic and constitutes the basis for all sound and the words that come therefrom. Words compose the *Manthras*. Thus, Brahman is the basis for all the spiritual texts and *Vedas*. In accordance with the syllables that make up words, various words take shape. It is the utterance of the speech in the form of sounds that take the form of words. The conglomeration of such words constitutes the *Veda*.

Whatever is conveyed through speech has got a name *Adhideyam*. This word also means the aspect of Brahman. It is the grouping of such words, which is the *Adhideya*, that constitutes the text of the *Veda*. Therefore, it becomes clear that for everything speech is the basis, and for speech to generate itself the word Brahman is the very foundation.

Amongst the speeches one recognises two different types of speech. One kind of speech is associated with the *Sanskrit* language. The other kind of speech is linked up with the ordinary normal colloquial

language. We will take a small example to illustrate this difference. There are the two words “*Go*” and “*Aswa*,” but when we use them colloquially we use the words “*Cow*” and “*Horse*.” When we examine if there is any difference between the meanings that are conveyed, we come to the conclusion that although the words may be somewhat different, the meaning is exactly the same. In this context, we can consider another example. There is another word *mruthhu* which means dust. This is an ordinary colloquial type of word. There is another word called *ghata* which is the pot and which is the name for a special form made out of mud. These words *ghata* and *mruthhu*, which respectively stand for the pot and the mud which make up the pot, arise out of speech. If this mud which constitutes the basis is not existent, the *ghata* itself would not exist; and we cannot get this special form of mud.

In the same manner, speech is an ordinary and common form and the word arises as a special form of this speech. For the resulting special form called word, the basis is the speech. Here we have to see the intimate connection between the resulting word and speech. In asking ourselves the relationship between the special form and the foundation, or the basis which gives rise to

this special form, we come to the conclusion that this speech stands as the very basis for the special form of word. When we ask ourselves what is the meaning of *Padartha* (matter, object), we come to the conclusion that it signifies the meaning of the word. On account of this inseparable relationship we come to the truth that there cannot be a word without a meaning and there cannot be a sensible meaning without a specific word.

It has been said in the *Rig Veda* that for both the word and the speech which form the basis for this word, Brahman is the very foundation. Therefore, we come to the conclusion that for both these things, the word and its basis—the speech, the foundation is Brahman. In this context, we must realise that the world itself has Brahman as its foundation. Not to realise this is foolishness. Brahman is, therefore, the basis for the world which is simply the conglomeration of various created items. The whole world simply consists of various special forms of speech. In this, we come to the conclusion that the entire world is filled with Brahman.

Whenever we utter any sound, that sound will result in a word, and that word signifies the existence of the item for which the word is a description. This connects our speech with the reality of the world. That

all creation has arisen from sound and speech is something which many people know. By neglecting this common fact that sound is the basis for all the world, we forget the word and we attach greater significance to the material items corresponding to the meaning of the word. In this manner, we forget the Brahman and pay importance to the words which are names of material things. We must first recognise the relationship that exists between the object and its basis or the foundation. Once we get this clearly, we will realise that the sound and the words that come out of the sound constitute the *Vedas*.

Because the *Veda* is simply a grouping of the words, and the *Manthra* is simply the utterance of the words, we come to the conclusion that all that is contained in the *Vedas* is synonymous with Brahman. In this context it follows that *Veda* and Brahman are two inseparable things which are synonymous with each other. By this reasoning, we say that sound is the basic thing and that special form of sound is the word, and words denote the names of various things. Therefore, the entire world which consists of various items, the names of which are words, has sound as its basis. We thus come to the conclusion that the aspect of Brahman

that is contained in the *Veda* is something which connotes the *Veda* itself.

In the Brahmanas it has been said that Brahman is identical with *Sabda* or sound. The aspect of Brahman should not be regarded by us as something separate from what we see in the world. *Sabda* or sound itself is the basis of all things and this sound gives rise to the word. Such words connote what we see around us. This will have association with eight different aspects of life. They are *Sabda* Brahman or the aspect which relates to sound, *Charachara mayi*—that which relates to moving and non-moving, *Jyothir mayi*—the aspect of effulgence, *Vang mayi*—that which relates to speech, *Nityananda mayi*—that which relates to eternal bliss, *Paratpara mayi*—that which relates to this world and the other world, *Maya mayi*—that which relates to illusion, and *Sri mayi*—that which relates to prosperity. All that is filled with sound, with movement, with brightness, with speech, with *maya*, with prosperity, and so on will be called Brahman. Latent in these important Sanskrit words is some very significant meaning. We know that a big tree is latent in a tiny seed. Similarly these small Sanskrit words look ordinary; but when we go deep into their

meaning, we realise that each one of these words contains important and significant inner meaning.

For this endless aspect of Brahman, people have also ascribed three different meanings. They are *Sath* (Being), *Chith* (Awareness) and *Ananda* (Bliss). The first word *Sath* is regarded as more important than the others. *Chith* has been regarded as something which gives knowledge about the infinite. *Ananda* has been regarded as the bliss of happiness of a type quite different from, and higher than, the sensory happiness. The first quality is “Being” and refers to that which signifies permanence. The second quality is Awareness and the third quality is Bliss. These three qualities are associated with Brahman.

For the first word, *Sath*, we shall take an example from common daily life. In this world many people die and we all see the dead bodies being disposed off. In spite of the fact that several people die and leave the world, each individual thinks that he is going to be permanent. In spite of the fact that this person sees so many people die, he still has the desire to live forever for he genuinely feels that he alone is permanent. If we ask ourselves whether this feeling is due to ignorance or lack of knowledge and whether it is an illusion, we come to the conclusion that to him, it is a very important truth.

Within him there is a quality of permanence, and the divine self that is indestructible gives him this feeling of permanence.

Man daily sees and experiences sorrows and pleasures, which are quite common in this world, but he aspires to have bliss and *Ananda*. What does this signify? This signifies the aspect of Brahman and this is the aspect of *Ananda* in him. Everyone knows that when he is in some temporary trouble he tends to say, “Oh God! why not let me die instead of putting me through this torture?” These words are not really coming from the depths of his heart. Nobody would say, from the depths of his heart, that he would prefer to die rather than live a troubled life. This is only an apparent feeling which arises because of the temporary troubled state of his mind.

One day an individual, who lived by the occupation of cutting firewood and selling it, was on the top of a hill. He gathered a lot of firewood. After this, he was running down the hill with the intention of selling this firewood. By the time he came down the hill, he was very tired. He could not continue to carry the load of firewood. He put the firewood on the ground and was resting. Later, he attempted to put the load back onto

his head, but this was not possible. He was very tired and frustrated and in that frame of mind, he said to himself that he was very unlucky and that even the Goddess of death was not taking pity on him and taking him away from his vexatious life. When he was in this frame of mind, the Goddess of death appeared then and there. The Goddess said that she had come because he had called her. But the individual was not willing to give up his life and go with the Goddess of death. Then he said, “I called you because I could not get help for lifting this pile of wood onto my head. All that I wanted was some help.”

Sometimes as a result of distress and difficult circumstances, we think that we better die, but in truth and in fact even an old woman who is not able to use her legs would not want to depart from life. In this, we should see that we are really hankering after permanency, an inherent quality of the Brahman in each one of us. We should ask what is it that makes us want to live forever and hanker after. We get the answer that it is Brahman. So, whether we are in the *adhyatmic* path or in a path completely devoid of belief in God, we are hankering after something, and that is the aspect of Brahman.

When we try to understand the second word, *Chith* or awareness, we should ask ourselves what it is

that we are really wanting to be aware of. We want to be aware of everything that we see or hear. If anyone sees a few people who are grouped together and talking about something, immediately he tries to go there and find out what they are talking about. Even if that is something which is not relevant to us, we want to know about it. Mothers who continually spend their time with their children, and fathers who are affectionate and concerned about their children, will understand this aspect well. When the parents take the children either to a cinema or to an exhibition, the parents will be subjected to a stream of questions about various things. The mother and father are often fed up with the large number of questions which these children ask. Children, accompanying their parents, keep on asking what is this? who is that? why is this? and so on, and so on. They keep on asking these questions till the parents are fed up. In these questions, we see an attempt on the part of the children to look at this beautiful world and take the entire world into themselves.

To what aspect does this desire to know everything belong? Is there any connection between these children and the various things which they want to understand? Is there any relevance of these children to

the things they want to learn? There is no such connection or obvious relevance. There is some internal urge and an intense feeling in these children by which they want to become aware and learn of all the manifestations around them. This is an aspect of Brahman. That is why it has been said that “Awareness is life.” In other words, this desire to be wise about everything is something which is present inside in your heart.

We come to the third aspect, *Ananda*, or bliss. Man always wants to have bliss. In fact man is hankering after bliss. He does not want to have sorrow at any time or under any circumstances. Bliss is something natural to us. Sorrow or pain are unnatural to man. There is a small example. When a child is happy and playing, even the mother does not ask him anything nor does she question how this happiness has come about. But if the same child is crying, the mother will come running, irrespective of the importance of the work in which she is engaged. The cry of the child is something unnatural and immediately attracts the attention of the mother. If someone is happy and is enjoying himself, no one will go and ask him why he is so happy. If someone is crying, anyone who notices it would go and ask why he is

crying. Sorrow is not natural to us. So, only if someone is steeped in sorrow does another person want to enquire why one is in sorrow. If you are happy, no one will come and ask you why you have not been crying in the recent past. So what is natural to us is the *Ananda* or bliss, and this is a strength for us. It is such bliss and happiness that has the form of our Atma. This truth of existence or being, this awareness and this bliss constitute the Brahman in us. If we try to look for these aspects of Brahman somewhere outside of us, we will not find them; that is not the right thing to do. This aspect of Brahman is a part and parcel of our life. This aspect of Brahman has been described by Sankara as “*Jeevo Vedai.*”

All the *Vedas* have also been described by the words, *Thath Thwam Asi*. This means, “That is you.” This kind of identity between the supreme, or the *Paramatma*, and the individual, or the *Jivatma*, has been proclaimed by the *Vedas*. Because we have been associating this immortal aspect of Brahman with our impermanent body and not with our Self, sometimes there is a chance of our taking a wrong meaning. When we touch a pot of cold water, we feel that the pot is cold; but in fact it is not the pot that is cold. It is the water inside

the pot that is cold. Coolness is a natural property of water. If there is no coolness in water, we think that there is something unusual. Many people may have gone on a pilgrimage to Badri, and they will recall that there is a hot spring near Brahma kund. While large quantities of cold water are present in the Alakananda river, no one asks why the water is cold but when they find some hot water in a spring, they ask in surprise how such hot water is coming. Whenever there is something unusual or contrary to the natural situation, then all kinds of doubts arise and questions are asked.

What is the reason for man to become a bundle of doubts? The main reason for man to have so many doubts is that man is not leading his life in the way in which he ought naturally to lead it. He is not conducting himself in a way in which he should. Because he has not understood the real meaning of the Self in him, he is not behaving as a human being which he ought to behave. This is the basis for all his doubts. He must make some enquiry and understand the aspect of Brahman, because this is the basic cause for the relationship between man and man. Therefore, in the very first instance, we should understand these three aspects of Brahman namely *Sath*, *Chith*, and *Ananda*. In everyone there is this aspect of

Sath, in everyone there is wisdom, and everyone has the bliss in him. Therefore, everyone must attach importance only to the aspect of Brahman. But, we are promoting the illusion of attachment to the body and because of this, we are unable to understand the real aspect of Brahman.

Here is one small example. Today we prepare laddus in our house and the main ingredient in this laddu is flour of Bengal gram. Have you ever enjoyed the taste of this flour? The flour, by itself, cannot give any taste. It is because we have added sugar to the flour, it has acquired a special taste. In some other parts of the country they prepare special sweets with rice powder which by itself has no taste. The sugar that is added converts the rice powder into a sweet and gives it a sweet taste. In other places they prepare a rava laddu, and this is prepared with wheat flour which has no taste at all. It acquires sweetness only when sugar is added to it. Thus, in all the different kinds of sweets, the basic ingredient is sugar. The thing that is common in all these is the sugar.

As in this analogy, because in all the things that we see around us in the world, the divine sweetness is present as a common constituent, it gives the sweet taste to all of them.

In the same manner, Brahman in the form of *Prema* (love) enters various minds and creates attachment between man and man. If a mother shows affection to a child, we should interpret it as an aspect of the divine Brahman and not just a body relationship. This is the aspect of Brahman present as *Prema* in the mother. This aspect of Brahman enters the mind of the mother in the form of *Prema* and takes the shape of affection. When this aspect enters the minds of friends, it takes the shape of friendship. When this enters various relations it takes the form of bodily relationship. When this enters the husband and wife, it takes the aspect of lust and attachment. When this spreads to various things that we like, it takes the form of desire. If this aspect is directed towards God, we call it *Bhakthi*. This *prema* is the aspect of Brahman and because this *prema* is present in everyone, when we say, “*Sarvam Vishnu mayam, Sarvam Brahma mayam,*” (All this is Brahman) we are stating a truth, an irrefutable truth. This is also why we say, “Love is God, Live in Love.” We also say, “Start the day with Love; spend the day with Love; fill the day with Love; end the day with Love, and this is the way to God.” The one aspect which fills the day, and is synonymous with God, is Love; and so we should fill the mind with the aspect of *Prema*.

Prema is not multifarious or manifold. It is just one, and in the same way Brahman is also not manifold. That is why we say, “*Ekam Eva Adwithiyam Brahma.*” That is, Brahman is One and is the only One without a second. If, therefore, we wish to understand the oneness in everything, we can understand that oneness by recognising the latent Brahman in the different living beings. If we are to understand this aspect of Brahman, we will have to start from the aspect of man and gradually rise to the aspect of Brahman.

Simply because you have acquired the human form, you should not think that you are truly human in nature. Only the external form indicates that you are human. The inner aspect is the real aspect of Brahman. Brahman is One with no specific form or qualities and such Brahman is present in the depths of your heart. While He is present in your heart, it is not right for you to put up several pretences and false appearances. The body is the temple, and the *Jiva* is the eternal Lord residing in that temple. Therefore, the aspect of Brahman which is permanent and is symbolic of truth is resident in your heart and if under those circumstances, you begin to exhibit desires and show distortions, it will be doing injustice to this permanent aspect resident in

your heart. Therefore, we should make an effort to enter this aspect of Brahman, even if it be to a small extent, and thereby help others take to good actions, and a good path, and enjoy the fruits of such good deeds.

Boys And Girls!

Your minds are sacred; in this one month, while you learn sacred things, you should be transforming your lives into ideal lives and be an example to others. In order that such a transformation may take place in you, several elders who are acquainted with the culture of our country have undertaken to give you their knowledge and share with you their experiences to help you achieve this goal. Having been born as a citizen of Bharath, if you are not able to bring credit to your motherland and understand and assimilate our culture and our history, it will be a matter of shame and disgrace. Therefore, in understanding the culture of our country, the first attempt that you should make is to understand the divine aspect that permeates our culture. This divine aspect of Brahman and its connection with the material world, and the spiritual world, and how it manifests itself in various situations will be told to you in the coming days. The discourses that you will listen to in the coming

days about this divine aspect of Brahman must be recounted and recapitulated by you when you go to your rooms and you must get your doubts, if any, cleared from elders.

After the lectures for the day are over, you should not spend your time in irrelevant things but you should try to recapitulate and put into practice what you learn here. You hear while you sit here and you must eat and digest this material when you go to your rooms. After taking in what you have listened to here, you must put it into practice so that you may digest it. After you have been able to digest all this, all the doubts will be cleared and you will get the strength of doubtlessness. One who does not have the capacity for digestion will get the disease of indigestion. Unless you try to digest and put into practice all that you listen to, learn, and assimilate, it is of no use. The person who keeps on saying that he is full of doubts is the one who suffers from indigestion. One who can understand himself clearly will never have doubts. The person who cannot understand himself and who cannot understand what others tell him, is always full of doubts.

5. All Religions Lead To The Same Goal

If one can conquer one's mind, peace will result. If one can find peace, he can look at all other things with an equal mind. Good and bad, respect and disrespect, likes and dislikes are all aspects of one and the same thing and that is Brahman.

Boys and girls!

The words that come out of the *Vedas* refer to and contain in themselves, the names of all forms and for this reason it also has a name *Bibarthi*. This has been explained in *Manusmriti* by saying that all the *Jivas* have this aspect of *Bibarthi* in them. Thus, identity of this aspect of *Bibarthi* with the Brahman follows. In this sequence, the identity between the *Veda* and the word *Rishi* has been established as the very first

step. While expanding the meaning of the word *Rishi*, we need to take account of the aspect of the *Vedas*.

In this context, we recognise the inner meaning of the word *rishi*. For that individual who can experience the *Vedas* and Brahman directly, the name *Rishi* is appropriate. One who can explain and expound the essential form of the *Veda* can be called a *Rishi*. Our *Puranas* have been telling us that Vasishta is the first *Rishi*. Vasishta had the aspect of Brahman in him, and he was called the *Brahmarishi*. Viswamithra, also, wanted to acquire this name of a *Brahmarishi* and he himself undertook great penance and then acquired the aspect of Brahman. As a result of his penance, Viswamithra could have the vision of Brahman. As soon as he had the vision of Brahman, he was addressed as *Brahmarishi* by Brahma Himself. Viswamithra was not satisfied and he told Brahma that he was not satisfied by his merely being addressed as a *Brahmarishi*. He said that he wanted to directly experience the *Om* and the *vashatkara* which the *Veda* has explained. Viswamithra understood that by getting merely the name of *Brahmarishi* he was not going to get the aspect of *Brahmarishi*. He would truly become a *Brahmarishi* only when he grasped fully the meaning of the sound *Om* and of *Veda*.

Vasishta had a title which meant that Vasishta had understood all that was known to the *Suras*, the sacred people, and Vasishta was known as the head of all these sacred people. It is quite easy to call oneself by the name *Brahmarishi*, but it is very difficult to get the qualities of a *Brahmarishi*. If one wants to acquire the aspect of *Brahmarishi*, one should merge in the Brahman and become identical with Brahman. Because Viswamithra had surrendered everything to Brahma, these aspects were taught to Viswamithra by Brahma Himself.

If one is able to get the grace of Brahma, then everything will be under control. If you are far away from the grace of Brahman, all the evil planets will begin to influence you. Viswamithra was one who had no acquaintance whatsoever with the contents of the *Veda*. He did not understand the aspect of *Om*. In spite of this, Brahman himself taught him these things because of His grace. *Sakthipata* was given to Viswamithra by the Lord and we have to examine the meaning of this word. *Sakthipata* means that the *guru* hands over in one shower all the capacities to the disciple. This, however, is not the correct meaning. When we make this statement, it means that there is a *guru* and there is a disciple to whom the *Sakthi* is being handed down. It is

in contradiction to the statement, “*Sarvam Brahma mayam*” (Brahman is immanent in all). This *sakthipata* is something that is given only when there is a deservedness. It is not given where there is no deservedness. In all individuals this *sakthi* is present in a hidden manner and is in a latent form. What the guru does is simply to remove the veil of ignorance which is hiding the power that is intrinsically present. He does not hand out anything new.

The aspect of Brahman is not something which can be given by one to another. But today, because of the influence of Kali, it looks as if someone pays for this and someone else receives payment and sells it or transfers it to a disciple. This bliss is such that one can only experience it. If we do what we should do and adopt the path that we should adopt, then naturally the strength of Brahman will automatically come to us. Because the ancient scholars of our country have been describing Brahman as something which is unattainable and indescribable, our people always felt discouraged and disappointed. In fact, they have been abandoning attempts to understand this aspect of Brahman. To explain this aspect of Brahman, they have been using inappropriate and confusing words.

If we ask any of the ancient scholars to tell us the meaning of the word Brahman, they simply use various words, the meaning of which they themselves do not know. These are not the right type of interpretations. It is very easy to recognise the aspect of Brahman. It is even more easy to experience Brahman. In the absence of knowledge about the methodology of understanding Brahman, man is unable to recognise what is right in front of him. He is groping in the dark.

There is a small example for this which can go straight into your heart and which you can understand easily. Suppose you have a book in your hand and you go to a friend when you are reading the book. On seeing the friend you ask for a loan of ten rupees. The friend is willing to give you the loan but before that, he wishes to see the book you are holding in your hand. While the friend was looking at this book, he finds a ten rupee note inside the book and asks the person who asked him for a loan why he was asking for a loan when the ten rupee note was already inside the book. Immediately the former says that he had forgotten about the ten rupee note that was placed in the book and that he no longer requires a loan and he goes away. Now we have to ask if this friend has given the ten rupee note from somewhere or whether

he simply pointed out to an already existing ten rupee note which belonged to him. The fact is that the ten rupee note really belonged to him and he had kept it in a book which was pointed out by his friend. He was not aware of the existence of the ten rupee note which is his own property.

In the same manner, nowadays, we are having the book of our heart and forgetting that there is wisdom latent in our heart. We go to some *pundit* and request him to show us the sacred path of wisdom and knowledge. This *guru*, who has been approached, simply says that there is the basic wisdom in the book of his heart and only points this out to him. On realising this aspect, the disciple feels that there is a divine aspect in him and feels that he no longer needs a *guru*. So when we talk of a *guru* and the *sakthipata*, it is not as if we are communicating something which is exterior to us. What we are doing is simply drawing our attention to the existing strength and wisdom in our own heart.

As in this analogy, what Brahma did to Viswamithra was to simply remove the clouds that have been hiding the strength that was present in Viswamithra intrinsically. The *thapas* (austerities) which Viswamithra went through gave him the *darshan* of Brahma, and then

Brahma enabled him to realise the strength which was already present in him. He taught Viswamithra to recognise the presence of Brahman everywhere and told him to sing about the grace of the Lord and about Brahma's presence everywhere and then he disappeared. So the aspect of Brahman is not something which is separate or distinctive but is present everywhere. It is not a material item which has some specific features. It is *parartha* (spirit) and not *padartha* (matter, object). It is something present everywhere.

There are many names for Brahman. This aspect of Brahman can be called as *Vakpathi* or *Vachaspathi* or *Brihaspathi*. These are identical and synonymous names for Brahman. We may get a doubt as to why Brahman should have so many different names. In our own houses, we are worshipping God with a thousand names and each of these names refers to a particular quality of the Lord. We may get a doubt as to whether each one of these thousand names is appropriate to the Lord or not and whether they really signify a true aspect of the Lord. In our daily life we are experiencing the significance of these different names. When there is a householder who is the head of a family, we know that the son comes and addresses him as father, while the daughter-in-law

addresses him as father-in-law, the grandson addresses him as grandfather, and the wife will address him as “My dear husband”. Here we see that because he has established different types of relationships, he is addressed by different names by different people. A Brahmin is called a *pujari* if he is performing *puja* and he is called a cook if he is cooking. He acquires a different name depending on the nature of work that he performs. Similarly, depending on the time, situation and the country, Brahman has been given different names which are appropriate to the situation and work.

Yesterday we have understood the meaning of the names *Vakpathi* and *Vachaspathi*. Today we shall take the names *Brahmanaspathi* and *Brihaspathi*. Indra and Varuna have recognised the *Manthra* as the basis for everything, because Brahma is the master of these *Manthras* he is called *Brahmanaspathi*. Because he is the one who controls these *Manthras* they have accepted him as *Brahmanaspathi*. *Brahmana* is a word which comes from Brahman. Brahma rides over these *Manthras* or the *Manthras* carry Brahman and, therefore, he has also been called *Brahmanaspathi*. If we want to get control over Brahman or gain his grace, then his carriers, namely the *Manthras* over which he rides, must first be brought under control.

Such inner meanings are contained in our *Bharatha* and *Bhagavatha* in many ways. On one occasion Brahma came to Valmiki and told him that the gift of Saraswathi was given to him and that he should write the *Ramayana*. When we say that Brahma came to Valmiki and handed over Saraswathi to him as a gift, we find it difficult to understand the statement because we regard Saraswathi as the wife of Brahma. Because of the word *Pati* we take Brahma as the husband of Saraswathi. That is not correct. *Pati* really means *Kartha* or the head of a situation. When we say that Brahma is the head or controller of all *Manthras*, we should not readily interpret Brahma as the husband of Saraswathi. Brahma is to be regarded as the master of *Manthras*. Brahma is really the controller or the master of the *Manthras*, and to misinterpret by saying that he has a wife and a family is not correct. Brahma, the master, does not have any such relationship and such an interpretation is erroneous.

Here, we should understand the meaning of Saraswathi and what she stands for. Saraswathi has for her vehicle the *Hamsa* (Swan). This word *Hamsa* stands for *Soham* or the taking in and giving out of the breath. Thus, what Brahma has handed over to Valmiki as a gift

is the aspect of *Soham*. You cannot get a word out without taking in a proper breath. Here breath is the carrier *Hamsa*, or the Swan, and who rides over it is Saraswathi. This means that Brahma has given to Valmiki the aspect of *Soham* or the breath which brings out the words, and he asked him to use this in writing the *Ramayana*.

By the title *Brahmanaspathi*, we have to understand that Brahman is the master, and that he is in full control of the *Manthras*. The world is made up of all the material items that we see around us. Matter has arisen out of words. The meaning of the various words arises from the words themselves. We learnt that Brahman is responsible for the sounds that emerge. If, therefore, the meaning of the word *Brihaspathi* is that Brahma is the master of this whole world, we come to the conclusion that *Brihaspathi* is only an alternative name for Brahman. In this way, if we recognise the true meaning and interpret each of the names appropriate to Brahman, we can easily understand the presence of Brahman everywhere and the significance of these names.

Citizens of Bharath always liked to move closer and closer to God and, therefore, they created more and more names which are appropriate to God. For this reason and because each one is close to God, each

individual has given an appropriate name to the Lord. Each individual has given Him a name which pleases him most. They have enjoyed giving different names and forms. Westerners have questioned why we create different names and forms while God is only one. They think that we ought to have had only one name and form. We have been creating various forms of God based on our ideas and our capacity.

There is a small example for this. Ten children go to a cloth shop and choose some material which is to their liking. These children take the cloth to a tailor, and each one gives measurements appropriate to himself and gets a suitably stitched shirt. All the children have used the same cloth for making their shirts, but each one will have to adopt appropriate measurements. This is the right thing to do; but if the tailor stitched all bush shirts to the same size and asked all the children to somehow manage with that shirt, it would not be proper. If each one wears a bush shirt appropriate to his size, that gives satisfaction. If this were not so, they would not be satisfied. If one is given a shirt that is not suitable to him, he would rather go without a shirt than wear a shirt which is not suitable.

Therefore, if any religion tells all individuals to follow only one path and accept one uniform interpretation,

then it is something which is meaningless. To dictate uniformity is not right. There should not be any difficulty in allowing devotees to take into consideration their desire and strength and create a form which pleases them. In the old days, Westerners used to compel people to adopt one uniform religion and this is a situation similar to asking all the people to wear the same bush shirt. This is not the correct method. Whether it is for the citizens of our country or of other countries, this is not an acceptable situation.

The aspect of Brahman is shining in the heart of everyone and depending upon his own picture of the effulgent Brahman, which is present in him, he has the right to adopt that particular aspect. If we do not accept this much choice, how can we understand the aspect of Brahman? When we use the words “freedom of choice,” we use these words only with regard to our understanding of the divine. The reason for this is that God is limitless, and one can have freedom in this regard and yet enjoy the limitless aspect of God.

In order to understand this limitless aspect, it has been said, “*Ananto vai vedaha,*” which means that the *Vedas*, through which we can get an idea of the divine,

are limitless. Sometimes we may ask why there should be so many *Vedas* to describe the one aspect of God. If we want to understand this well, we must realise that religions are all different but all of them lead to the same goal. The cloth may be different but the basic material, namely the thread which makes the cloth of different kinds, is the same. Ornaments are all different, but the gold which goes into making the ornaments is the same. The colour of the cattle may vary from one to another, but the milk that comes from these cattle is the same. The flowers may be of different types, but the worship for which they are used is one and the same.

Human beings have missed the essential point and are unable to understand this as a result of their ignorance, and men have submitted themselves to a great many difficulties because of such ignorance. God is one, but each individual should be able to create a form for himself according to his taste. When salt is in the sea, it is not distinct from the sea. It is a part of the ocean. When we talk of this salty taste, it is a quality present in the ocean. When we say that the water of the ocean is salty, have we to drink and taste the entire ocean to experience this? One drop of water is enough to tell us that the ocean water is salty.

In the same manner, even if you experience a small part of the aspect of Brahman which is in your heart, you can understand the entire divine aspect of the Brahman. So when we talk of Brahman, we need not think that there is one Brahman in each country. There is only one Brahman all over, and He is not different in different persons. There are many tube lights here, and we think that there are different tube lights. Indeed the light coming from each tube light appears to be different, but the current that flows through all the tube lights is the same. All the human bodies in this world are like tube lights, and the aspect of Brahman, in the form of *Sakthipata*, flows in all these human tube lights. However, in some of these tubes the fuse is absent because of ignorance and the light does not glow in such tubes. Simply because there is no light in him, the individual should not say that there is no Brahman in him. In everyone this capacity to shine is present, and it has been said, “*Prajnanam Brahma*” or Brahma is *Prajnana*.

From the four *Vedas*, our ancients have picked up four very special statements and taught their meaning to us. These four are “*Prajnanam Brahma*”, “*Ayam Atma Brahma*”, “*Thath Thwam Asi*”, “*Aham Brahmasmi*”.

These statements imply that Brahma is synonymous to *Prajnana*, and that the *Atma* is Brahma, and that Brahman is yourself. In these we will be able to see that in the dissolved state everything is one and the same. In this state of dissolution all bad and good, things that are attractive and things that are not attractive, appear as one and the same. All things look as if they are one and the same. We will not recognise the difference between names and forms. In this state one can only experience bliss.

There is a small example for this. They bring a large number of oranges in a lorry and dump them in a factory. Out of these oranges, they extract the juice and bottle it under a trade name. When the oranges are brought in, some of them are green, some of them are yellow, some of them are ripe, and some of them are overripe and so on. But once the juice is extracted and put in a bottle, you do not any longer see the different forms of the oranges which were present before. You will not be able to say that this part of the juice comes from this orange and so on. It is indistinguishable.

If all of us have merged ourselves in the aspect of Brahman, it will not be possible for us to recognise the individual form and name. We can only see the common

aspect of Brahman in all the individuals. Only one who is clearly above the concept of name and form can be called *Brahmarishi*. There are cases of people who are in the stage of a *Brahmarishi* but for the sake of the prosperity of the world, they will be doing certain things. They do such things, not because they do not have the aspect of equality in them. Today in the world there are several people who go by the name *Brahmarishis*. There are also several *yogis*, *Rishis*, *Maharishis* and *Yogeswaras*. But these people are not recognising nor possessing the qualities that are essential for deserving these titles. The meaning and the significance of the word *Yoga* was being expounded to you by several people in the past few days. How can individuals who do not get control over their own mind get control over other things? When we are not able to divert our mind from bad desires, how can we call ourselves *Yogis* and *Yogeswaras*? It is such people who are bringing disgrace and misunderstanding on the true meaning of the word *yogi*.

One who sees the dirty water in the drain alongside the road on which he moves should not think that the rain water which comes from the clouds is also dirty. To think so is foolishness. Simply because the water which one has seen is dirty or the experience which one

has had is dirty, it does not follow that all water is dirty. Because many persons only see such unclean and impure water, they do not even make an attempt to see if there is clean water anywhere. They cannot even recognise clean water when they see it. They are wasting their time in this manner. Such persons are bringing disrepute to our own culture and traditions thereby giving scope to others who do not belong to this country to ridicule us.

It should be the aim of the students and the young people who have gathered here to understand our culture well and to know what *Yoga* truly means. They should also put such knowledge into practice. I firmly believe that students are the only people who can set things right in future and can demonstrate the strength of these principles by putting them into practice. Do not undertake to follow anything in a blind manner. Always make an enquiry into the truth and the permanent or impermanent nature of what you are seeing.

In every country of this world good and bad come as a mixture. We should believe only in the good and forget what is bad. If people are not able to control their minds in trivial matters, what is it that they can control in their lives?

Pavitratma Swarupas!

With the hope that you will understand the sacredness of our culture and develop the strength to establish our culture, I am explaining to you these things and not with a view to criticise anyone. In the coming fifteen days, when you make an attempt to understand the meaning and the aspect of Brahman, you will find everything becomes as clear as if you are seeing it in a mirror. When all of you look at this piece of cloth in my hand you will call it a handkerchief but if I do not let you see it in its entirety and show you only one corner and ask you what it is, you will not be able to say what it is. Today what you know about Brahman is a very small aspect and in the next fifteen days you will see it in its entirety. Once you do see this, there will be no room for any further doubt in this matter. Similarly, after you have learnt all about Brahman, you will know it in all its detailed aspects.

6. Brahman Is Within You And Is Realisable By An Unwavering Mind

Morality and discipline bring respect and reputation to man. Whatever one acquires in his young age remains with him in his later life. People who could convey such noble ideas were accepted as teachers in ancient days. In the human body, such of the organs in which the life force is not specifically present gradually decay and perish. On the contrary, such organs in which the life force is present will remain healthy and continue to show vitality. One can say in this context that the life force is the essence of all organs. For this reason, the life force has been called in our *Vedanta* by the names as *Angirasa Bhuta*. Such *Angirasa*, taking the form of essence of life, protects all the organs and enables people to live in this material world comprising of different forms and names.

This *Angirasa* has also been called the God of life. Because this God of life with the name *Angirasa* is closely associated with *Brihaspati*, *Angirasa* has acquired an alternative name *Brihaspati*. *Sruthi* demonstrated that *Angirasa* and *Brihaspati* are synonymous. The word *Bruhati* means voice. One who is the master of *Bruhati* or voice is called *Brihaspati*. It is in the context of such *Brihaspati* that words which have special significance have been named *Riks*. *Sama* is another name for such *Riks*. These *Riks* are associated with *Bruhat* and are called *Brihita* prosody.

There is another meter by name *Anushtup*. This meter is associated with the *Riks*. Thus *Anushtup*, *Brihita*, *Brihaspati*, *Sama* are all synonymous words. In the word *Sama*, there is something which we have to know by a special effort. *Sa* here signifies voice. *Ama* signifies life. The combination of voice and life is the meaning of the word *Sama*. Thus *Bruhu*, the word which is a combination of voice and life, is equivalent to *Brihaspati* and it has manifested itself as *Sama* or Brahman in this material world. The material world which is made up of name and form has been taken by people as the manifestation of *Purusha*. *Brihaspati*, *Brahman* and *Sama* have all appeared in this world as the *Purusha*.

Name and form have an inseparable connection between each other. It is not possible to separate the name from the form in this world. When we point our finger towards the eye, we call attention to the eye. The name and form of the eye are inseparably connected to each other. Thus *Angirasa* and *Brihaspati*, who have created the name and form for each item in this material world are closely connected to each other. In fact, *Angirasa* is *Brihaspati* and *Brihaspati* is *Angirasa*.

Brahman does not have a specific name and form. It encompasses all names and forms that we encounter in this world. All the business of this material world is contained in the words that signify all forms and names. Whether it is in the tiny insects or in the huge forms that we see in this world, the all-pervading aspect is that of Brahman. Since the aspect is equal in all living things, Brahma is also called *Sama*, one who is equal-minded. Because this aspect of Brahman is not confined to equal mindedness to living things only, but since it is all-pervading and covers the entire creation, it has been said that Easwara is present everywhere and envelops the entire universe. Just as from the shining sun, the sun's rays come spontaneously, so also from God, who is the source of all energy, come spontaneously all

the words of the *Veda* which are like the rays of wisdom. The kind of inseparable relationship that exists between the sun's rays and the sun also exists between the *Vedas* and God who is their source.

If today, students recognise such sacredness in our *Vedas*, you will turn into future citizens of this country who will have the capacity to re-establish the supremacy of Vedic culture. Our elders have taught us that the understanding of God is above the sensory capacities of man. To be able to experience the aspect of Brahman which itself is above sensory capacities, we should also rise above the senses. How can we understand something above the senses while we remain in a stage which is below the senses? When we become equal-minded, we can rise above the trivialities of name and form.

There is deep significance in saying that all the world is filled with Brahman. We recall that Sankara has said that Brahman is truth and the world is an illusion. This is a piece of cloth. How can this be made without the yarn? Here is a golden ring. Can this be made without the gold? Can there be a pot without the mud? Thus cloth without the yarn, pot without the mud, ornament without the gold, world without Brahman cannot

exist. Thus, the entire world is permeated by Brahman. Without Brahman, there is no world. The whole universe is only an illusory manifestation of Brahman. One devotee described this situation saying,

“When the whole universe is the Lord's mansion, where do we search for a main entrance to this mansion? Play on the strings of life as you play on the strings of a veena so that tears of joy and bliss flow. The door to the Lord's mansion is always open. There is something unnatural in asking such an open door to be opened for you. Queries and doubts are only the result of distortions of one's mind.”

One does not have to search for Brahman in some distant chosen place. One should find Brahman in one's daily life in all things from the smallest thing that one comes across to the biggest thing that one sees. If with some reason and with some depth we make an enquiry, there is a chance of finding Brahman in our own heart and within ourselves. If we can get into a state of meditation, we can enjoy the bliss of recognising Brahman everywhere. If the mind is made steady and unwavering, we can enjoy permanent bliss and see the aspect of Brahman.

If the mind is wandering like a monkey, we can never enjoy all this. If in the *Adhyatmic* path we wish to attain the bliss of Brahman, we generally go to a pilgrimage centre or meet elders and learned people. Brahman is not to be sought in a pilgrimage centre nor is it to be looked for in the teachings of elders. It is within you and can be known by controlling your own mind.

It is in this context that Meera sang:

“Oh! mind, travel to the banks of Ganga and Yamuna. Ganga and Yamuna represent the two *Nadis* (nerves), Ida and Pingala. Move on to where these two *Nadis*, through which one inhales the breath and exhales the breath, meet. Move on and locate yourself in the clear, clean and pure place, the centre of your forehead.”

When one tries to understand the inner meaning of what has just been said, he comes to the conclusion that Brahman can be realised only in a quiet, clear, and pure place. Is there such a place in this world and how can we find and reach it? Such a place does not exist outside you. It is present in your own internal self. From time immemorial, *Maharishis* have searched for a place of that kind all over and in the end, they came to the

conclusion that they should turn their vision and their thoughts inward to find such a place. By such a process they could get a glimpse of Brahman and enjoy the bliss thereof. They spread these processes, which they discovered, to the rest of the world. While such an omnipotent, all-knowing and sacred Brahman is present within one's own self, it is ununderstandable that one goes about searching for it in all places outside himself.

When you have the wish-fulfilling tree, the *Kalpavriksha*, available to you, why look for ordinary fruits? When you have the *Kamadhenu* available to you, why look for milk from ordinary cows? When you have the mountain of gold available to you, why go about purchasing silver? Today we have turned ourselves into persons who, while having rich food in their own homes, go after stale food that one can get by asking for it from one's neighbour. The aspect of Brahman is not outside yourself. You should not waste your time and life looking for it externally. Time is Brahman. Rendering such time unsacred is wasting your life and rendering Brahman unsacred. What we should do today is to make an attempt to develop an inner vision to realise the Divine strength of Brahman which is omnipresent.

I will give you an illustration for this which I have given you several times earlier. There are two important statements. The entire world is filled with Vishnu. While Brahman is the only truth, the world is an illusion. Both these statements arise from the *Veda*; but people are likely to get a doubt as to which one of them is correct, as there is an apparent contradiction between them.

I will now cite an example from daily experience. Ninety-nine percent of the boys and girls assembled here are used to going to a cinema. When you go to see a picture, you sit looking at the screen. One would not like to sit looking at a blank screen for too long a time. After some time, when pictures appear on the screen you feel relieved. But if the same pictures remain there, you feel impatient. You expect the pictures to change. Even as you feel that a set of pictures are real, they disappear and others come. The pictures are not real. Their disappearing and others appearing in their place is a reality. Thus, this is neither truth nor untruth. In *Vedantic* language, this phenomenon is termed true-untruth, a mixture of truth and untruth also called by a special word *Mithya*. These pictures, which are coming and going, depend on the screen for their appearance. The screen neither comes nor goes. The pictures are not stationary.

They come and go. The screen is a reality. The pictures are a *Mithya*. In this analogy, the screen is comparable to Brahman and is a reality. The pictures are comparable to the creation and the men and women who come and go are a *Mithya*. That is why we say Brahman is truth and the world is a *Mithya*. The illusory world is like the pictures that depend for their manifestation on the screen, in this case, Brahman.

The second statement talks of the entire world being filled with Vishnu. When the illusory pictures come on the screen, the true screen is mixed up with the unreal pictures. Just like this, the true Brahman is mixed up inextricably with the *Mithya* of creation. If there is no Brahman, there is no creation. We are like pictures which come again and again on the screen of Brahman.

It is in this context that Sankara described our coming into and going out of this world in a *sloka* saying, we are born and die again to be born, and so on; the cycle of birth and death envelops us. If we live a life, die, and are reborn again, what is it that we are achieving in each life? We must try and make an attempt to see that once we come into this life and go, we should not come back again into this world.

Boys and girls!

This world is like a newspaper. Once we read a newspaper from the beginning to end, we do not want to read it again. It becomes a waste paper and we throw it away in the basket. In the same manner, once we see this newspaper of the world, we do not wish to see it again and again. All our experiences in this world are like a newspaper. This has been described in two concepts, viz., no birth, rebirth. What is the meaning of these two. To be born again is rebirth. Not to be born again is no birth. When does one get rebirth? It is only when there is a residuary life force in him that one gets rebirth.

There is a small illustration for this. We have the case of paddy. If we sow paddy in the earth and water it, we note that it sprouts. There is some rice inside the paddy, covered by husk. This is the reason why it sprouts. If we remove the husk and plant the rice alone it does not sprout. Because of the presence of husk, we call it paddy. If there is no husk, we call it rice. If the grain with husk is planted, it sprouts. In this analogy, rice has no rebirth and paddy has rebirth. Our life, when it is covered with the husk of desire, has rebirth. Once we remove this husk of desire, there is no birth.

In this context, it has been said that man's mind alone is responsible for his bondage as well as liberation. Thus in the content of Brahman, life plus desire is man and life minus desire is God. How can it be possible to live without desires? It is not possible to eliminate all desires. If, however, we turn all our desires towards God and whatever we do, if we do it remembering that we do it for the pleasure of God, those desires will not bind us for rebirth. Whatever work we wish to undertake, we should do so without the desire to claim the fruit thereof. We have the right to do work, but we have no right to the fruit thereof. This is what the Gita also says.

One may ask what does it matter if we desire to enjoy the fruits of work. It is possible to have peace in our life only if such desires are limited and kept under control. Take your own experience as an example. You have come here for a stay of one month. You would have argued that if you carried a small bag with a limited number of clothes in it, that would suffice. A big bag would be a burden and would make your journey uncomfortable. Not only this, there are instructions in the railway carriages to the effect, "Less luggage gives more comfort and makes travel a pleasure." Thus, when on a trivial journey which lasts for a few days, we try to lessen

our luggage should we not lessen our luggage in the long journey of our life?

Desires constitute the luggage of our life. In *Vedantic* parlance, giving up desires is called *vairagya*. *Vairagya* does not consist in giving up one's home, one's family, and going away to the forest. There is also another meaning for this word. It does not matter if you live in the world, but do not let the world live in you. You may undertake work to the extent necessary for living in the world, but do not let the consequences and results fill your mind and bother you. Do not entertain high desires in your heart because if you wish to fulfil them, you will be subjected to troubles. Are such desires appropriate to us? Are they such that you are entitled to entertain them? In promoting your desires, do not be selfish.

You should also consider the well-being of others. Your life should be such that you do not give trouble to others and to yourself. Be good to others. Giving trouble to one aspect of Brahman and worshipping another aspect of Brahman is not the right path. Follow a good path. Do not harm others. Do not harm yourself. Recognise the aspect of Brahman in every living thing and in all the work you do. Promote this aspect in you and lead a life filled with such ideals and principles. You will be happy and will have no worries.

7. Karma And Dharma Lead To Realisation Of Brahman

Amongst all the qualities, the quality of truth is the greatest. This quality of truth will be shining as the most prominent one in the whole world. One who has such a quality in his daily life can be termed as a *punyaatma* or a person who has done good.

Pavitratma Swarupas, Students!

The *Vedas* are referred to by several names. Of these, *adhyayana* and *swadhyaya* are two names which we should understand well. *Adhyayana* also means practice. When we use this word, we have also to understand what it is that we practise. What we practise is *Brahma Yajna*. It has been said that *adhyayana* begins with *Brahma Yajna*. In the context of our attempting to know

the inner meaning of the word *adhyayana*, we come to the conclusion that *Veda* and Brahman are one and the same because we utter them together. When we want to understand the meaning of the word *swadhyaya*, many people regard this as representing one's own branch. Taking the meaning of this word as *Swasakha* or one's own chosen special branch, they are misinterpreting the *Veda*. If we regard *swadhyaya* as *swasakha* or a special branch of the *Vedas*, then we imply that the *Vedas* do not deal with other aspects. The word *Swadhyaya* has been given the meaning *swasakha*, implying that the *Veda* has the form of *swasakha*. If one wants to feel that one belongs to a particular branch or sect, *Veda* does not accept such an interpretation.

Other scholars like Jaimini and Badarayana have interpreted this word by calling it *Dharma jijnasa* and *Brahma jijnasa*; that is the desire to learn the meaning of dharma and of Brahma. Even if we want to go along with the meaning of *Swasakha* as one particular branch, it is the interpretation of these two *Rishis* that after reading of *swasakha*, or one particular branch, one has also to follow *dharma* and Brahman. When we say that the knowledge of *Vedas* or of *dharma* and Brahma relates to all branches of knowledge, there is no

meaning in regarding *Veda* as referring to one particular sect. Many people have argued on this point as well and said that this cannot be referred to as one branch or *swasakhadhyaya*.

We must understand the inner meaning of this word “*swa*” which has been given in *Amnaya* which tells us about the word *swa* and its intimate relationship with Atma. In our daily life we are using the words *swa* and *bhava* combined as one word *swabhava*. In common parlance, we interpret the word *swabhava* as the natural condition of man. This is not correct, and the word *swa* relates to Atma. All ideas emanating from one's own mind cannot be described as *swabhava*.

There is another word *swa-ichha* (or *swechha*) in which this *swa* comes. This word does not mean that we can move about in an uncontrolled manner. *Swechha* can be described as the desire which comes from the depths of one's heart, or the seat of Atma. Today we neither recognise the correct meaning of *swabhava* nor do we recognise the correct meaning of the word *swechha*. We also do not conduct ourselves on right lines. In these two words *swa* has to be taken to imply something which relates to the Atma or Brahman. In all aspects of *Veda*, this should be the correct interpretation.

Several *Rishis* have described how we should understand the meaning of the word *swa* in the two places—*Swasakha* and *Swechha*. They have enquired into and provided an answer as to which people can read the *Vedas* with reference to *Swasakha* and *Swadhyaya*. When we are on the *swadhyaya*, we must understand the *Vedas* with special reference to *mimamsa*. We will take the first injunction, “*Adhato Dharma jijnasa.*” We have to first understand the details of the methodology and duties which go with the word *dharma*. It becomes clear that the aspect which envelops everything or that which we see all around us is *dharma*. Before *dharma jijnasa* and *Brahma jijnasa*, we must recognise the need for *karma jijnasa*. Only when we understand *karma jijnasa*, or the knowledge relating to *karma*, can we understand *dharma jijnasa*. Only after that can we understand *Brahma jijnasa*, or knowledge of Brahman.

The relationship between *Karma*, *Dharma*, and Brahman can be best explained by using an example with which we are familiar in our daily life. When we do a particular type of cooking and then undertake to eat the food, we should remember that bringing together the things that we need—namely various ingredients like the fire, the vessel, etc.—constitutes the primary process.

The fire that is necessary for the cooking and the vessel and the various ingredients form part and parcel of the work of the *karma*. Once we have brought all these together, we undertake to do the cooking. The act of cooking is the *karma* or work. After having made all the preparations, eating the cooked food is like *dharma jijnasa*. If we then try to find the merits and demerits, such as shortage of salt, sugar, pepper, etc. in the cooked food, that is *Brahma jijnasa*.

If we want to compare these with different stages in another analogy, our being born is itself *karma jijnasa*. After being born, realising the details of life and doing the duties that are appropriate to the time and circumstances is *dharma jijnasa*. After fulfilling such duties, the realisation of the fact that merely fulfilling such duties gives no *Ananda* or the realisation that there is no *Ananda* in *dharma jijnasa* alone is *Brahma jijnasa*. If one is not born at all there is no possibility of performing one’s duty, and unless you perform the duties, there is no possibility of realising that there is no *Ananda* in performing these duties. In other words, from the *karma* of birth follows the doing of *dharma*, and from doing *dharma* follows the realisation of lack of *Ananda* and therefrom follows *Brahma jijnasa*. The connection

between birth or *karma*, *dharma* and Brahma is very close and one must follow the other.

If we take another analogy, *karma* occupies the very first step of a pollinated flower. Slowly, and as time goes on, the petals drop out and what is left is the bud of the fruit. When these petals drop out and we do what we have to do to the bud, it develops into a fruit. When we taste the unripe fruit, we realise that there is no sweetness in such a fruit and we keep doing what has to be done until the unripe fruit becomes ripe and sweet. Thus, gradually sweetness replaces the sourness. In this whole process, the flower, the unripe fruit, and the fruit are all transformations of one and the same and they are not essentially different. In the same manner *Karma*, *Dharma*, and Brahma are simply three different aspects of the same Brahman. In the two early stages of *karma* and *dharma*, there may be some difficulty, but in the third stage of Brahman there is no difficulty and one is full of *Ananda* or bliss. But whatever path one follows, the goal which one reaches is the same.

There are four *purusharthas* (Goals of life) namely, *Dharma*, *Artha* (wealth, prosperity), *Kama* (desire) and *Moksha* (liberation). For *Kama* and *Artha*, we have

Dharma and *Moksha* on either side. We should try to regroup the four into two groups. If we take these four and treat them as four separate entities, we will not get any benefit out of our actions. If we can combine *dharma* with *artha* and *kama* with *moksha*, then we realise that we will have to acquire wealth for the sake of *dharma* and we must turn all our desires to acquire *moksha*. Wealth is not permanent and *kama* is something which wavers. Wealth and lust are things which are impermanent and keep on changing. It is not possible that man can become happy by the possession of these two things. The reason for this is that they are unsteady and impermanent and such things cannot give happiness to man. When these impermanent things, wealth and lust, are combined with permanent things like *dharma* and *moksha*, they also acquire such sanctity and become somewhat true and permanent. If wealth is combined with a permanent truth like *dharma* and similarly, lust, which is a wavering type, is combined with permanent *moksha*, then we will be able to acquire *Ananda* in the aspect of Brahman. Our purpose should be to combine the impermanent things with the permanent things of life. We should strive to move on from the minutest aspect to one of infinity.

When we have a drop of water in our hand, it will appear to us only like a small drop. When we take this drop of water and merge it with the infinite ocean, the drop also takes the form of the infinite ocean. *Moksha* is an endless and infinite thing and *dharma* is equally limitless. Our purpose should be to take all our temporary desires which have several limitations and merge them with more permanent things like *dharma* and *moksha*.

The word *moksha* does not represent something which is exhaustible and which you can purchase from a shop. *Moksha* is regarded as a limitless entity. So long as there is attachment in you, the world will appear permanent. On the lotus of your heart, this attachment always moves like mercury. This kind of mercurial lust which is continually moving from place to place should be removed, and this process of *mohakshaya* (attrition of attachment) is *moksha*. Once this attachment goes, what remains is simply *Ananda*. To convert our lives, to some extent, in this manner is the path of Brahman. Once we make a proper enquiry and understand this aspect of Brahman, we realise that Brahman is latent in *Karma*. *Karma*, or work, is latent in *Dharma*, and *Dharma* is latent in Brahman as well. One's own self is the aspect

of Brahman, and to recognise this aspect of Brahman in everyone is the state of bliss which we should seek.

One who is in the path of *karma* will be thinking, "I am in the light." One who is following the path of *dharma* will be thinking, "The light is in me." One who has moved on to the aspect of Brahman and learnt to experience Brahman in everything will say, "I am the light." Thus, "I am the light" is the aspect of Brahman while "I am in the light" is the aspect of *karma* and "the light is in me" is the aspect of *dharma*.

So long as you say, "I am in the light," you are not an independent person; but you are dependent. To say that you are in the light is to imply that you are dependent on the light. If we state that "this cloth is in my hand," we imply that the hand is in control of the cloth. The cloth is not an independent entity. When you say that the light is in you, you control the light. This implies that there is something which is being controlled and someone who controls and, therefore, a dual aspect is introduced by implication. Here we have two things—one is the nature and the other one is following the injunction laid down by nature. That is why we say, "*Adhato Dharma Jijnasa*." It is only when there is

Prakruthi or world around you, that you require a code of *dharma* to follow.

In this context, if you came to the conclusion that those who are in the family, living as a part thereof, do not have the right to follow the path of Brahman, it is not the right idea. There is a good example for this in the *Ramayana*. The family life is like a chariot. Husband and wife are the horses. *Dharma* is the charioteer. Family, or the bundle of worldly desires, is the path and *moksha* is the goal. Thus the horses, namely the husband and wife, can lead the chariot of life to *moksha* if they follow the path of *dharma*. It is not right and it is a weakness to think that only *yogis*, *jnanis*, and *rishis* are entitled to *moksha*. The destination is available for everyone. Whether one is a *brahmachari* or a *vanaprastha* or a *sanyasi*, the destination is the same for all of them. From one point of view what we see in our daily life the four states—*Brahmacharya*, *Grihastha*, *Vanaprasatha*, *Sanyasi*—may be different but in the aspect of Brahman, they are one and the same. The four have taken the paths *arthi*, *artharthi*, *jijnasu*, and *jnani*, and by journeying on these four different paths, they all reach the same goal. When one aspires to reach the right destination, God is always ready to respond to everyone

with the same attitude. He is even prepared to lead them to the destination. God does not have different thoughts or opinions about different people. Such differences arise only from the different ideas which we have. It is wrong to attribute differences to God.

There is a small story for this. One rich businessman was conducting his business. He had four wives. The first one was continuously ill and suffering from some disease or other. The second wife was given to worldly pleasures. The third wife was always pursuing a spiritual path and was wanting to meet learned persons and learn about religious aspects. The fourth wife was very healthy but was not given to worldly pleasures and had no desires of any kind. She had only one thought and that was to become one with the Divine. The businessman went to a foreign land and wrote to the four wives just before coming back, asked them what they wanted to be brought. The first wife replied that she wanted a special kind of medicine for her illness. The second wife asked for special gifts like saris, jewels, etc. The third wife asked for religious books of the foreign land. She also asked him to search for information given by learned scholars concerning the aspect of Brahman. The fourth wife had nothing to ask

except the safe return of her husband. As soon as he gave all the things which he had brought with him from the foreign land to the respective wives, he himself went to the house of the fourth wife. The other wives grew jealous and asked him why he was spending all the time with the fourth wife especially after being absent from the house for such a long time. He replied that he had given each wife what she had asked for and as the fourth wife asked for him, he had gone to her house.

In the same manner Brahman is the master of *arthi*, *artharthi*, *jnani* and *jijnasu*, and gives each one what he asks for. Brahman will give bodily comforts to one who is an *arthi*. For one who is a *jnani*, Brahman will tell him about the paths of journey to the state of bliss or wisdom. For the *jijnasu*, He gives Himself as that is what he desires. Difference may exist in the method of our asking and what we ask for, but there is no difference in the aspect of Brahman. Changes that come about in your prayer and in the manner of your prayer have their origins in you. Those changes do not belong to Brahman. It is in this context that we come across the statement, “*Yadbhavam tad bhavati*” (The thoughts will determine the action). Therefore, if your thoughts are pure and sacred, whatever experience results from this will also

be pure and sacred. Out of such pure and sacred experience will result *jnana*.

Many people do not see faults in them as their own and try to hide them. By way of excuses for their failings, they blame God. Such defects or faults are not present in God. In fact, God is like fire and whatever goes near the fire is burnt up and so also all bad qualities are burnt up in the presence of God. This is the reason why Brahman is often compared with fire by saying *Agni* Brahman. There is a significant meaning here in recognising Brahman as the fire of wisdom. To associate an impurity with such sacred and effulgent wisdom is a sign of our own impurity. Therefore, we must purify our thoughts and ideas. We can then recognise the aspect of Brahman.

The *Vedas* demonstrate and establish the all-knowing aspect of Brahman and that everyone has the right to study *Vedas*. There is some amount of lack of knowledge and misconception in thinking that only some class of people can study the *Vedas*. We were told that the Pandavas had studied the *Vedas* and that they had full acquaintance with the *Vedas*. This is told to us in the *Mahabharatha*. In the *Ramayana*, while Dasaratha was performing *Aswamedha yaga* (Horse sacrifice) he was

advised by Vashishta to invite King Janaka who was fully conversant with the *Vedas*. In the *Bhagavatha* also we know that Krishna himself was well versed in the *Vedas*. Further, when Valmiki completed composing his *Ramayana* and was looking for people to whom he could communicate this, Lava and Kusa (Rama's sons) came running to him to learn this and Valmiki taught them all the *Vedas*. If we examine to what sect or class these individuals Lava, Kusa, the Pandavas, Rama, Krishna, etc. belonged, we come to the conclusion that everyone has the right to study and imbibe all that is contained in the *Vedas*. Because everyone has the right to study and put into practice the *Vedas*, the first thing that you have to do is to recognise the existence of such a right. Then you should be in a position to read and also communicate their contents to others. This is what I am hoping you will be able to achieve.

8. All Creation And All Streams Of Life Ultimately Merge In Brahman

As the poison in the fangs of the snake does not affect the snake itself, the *maya* that is present in Brahman does not affect Brahman. It is only trying to come round into the world and cause an illusion in the world. Listen to this truth, students—boys and girls!

For the past six days, we have been trying to understand and recognise the aspect of Brahman. You have been told that Brahman is known by several names. Today, we will pick up one such name and acquaint ourselves with it. The name which we will take today is *Prathishta*!

The correct meaning of *Prathishta* is what we generally regard as the basis. Because nature appears to be the basis for all things that you see around us, nature has also got a name *Prathishta*. There is an authority from *Taitriya Bhashya* for such an interpretation. Because this name *Prathishta* signifies the basis for all creation and maintenance, such an interpretation gets support. For the rise and fall of a bird, it is its tail that is responsible. Just as the tail in this example is the basis for the rise and fall of the bird, there is a basis for everything in the creation. Brahman is this basis and it is known as *Prathishta*.

In this context, the basis for the world is the *Veda* and *Veda* is, therefore, the *Prathishta*. For *Veda*, Brahman is *Prathishta* or the basis. In other words, if we look at the basis and the thing that depends on the basis, we come to the conclusion that between the basis and what depends on the basis, that which is important is the basis or the *Prathishta*. Created matter which arises in one's mind from an illusion simply gets merged in what constitutes the basis.

For instance, by illusion, we imagine a snake when we see a rope. This created or illusory snake gets merged in the basis or the rope, once the illusion is removed. In

the same manner, this entire world which is the result of an illusion gets completely merged in the basis or the Brahman, once the illusion is removed.

There is a small example for this. With our eyes we look at several created things. Here we ask what is the basis and what is it that is supported? What is supported is the creation and the basis is the eye.

If there is no eye, we cannot look at this created world. Therefore, the created world is dependent, whereas the vision is the basis on which the created world depends. If we go deeper and enquire if the eye is the basis or the vision is the basis, we come to the conclusion that neither of them is really the basis. Behind both is the real basis and this is the mind.

If we merely open the eyes, it is not possible to recognise the things that we see with the eye. If the mind is not concentrated on this process and does not constitute the basis, we will not be able to recognise what we see.

If the mind is engrossed elsewhere and even if the eyes are open, it is not possible to recognise all the items that we see.

If the mind and the vision are directed at different places, it is not possible to recognise the true form of what one sees.

In this context, we say that what we see or what is being seen has the eye as its basis. Further, the mind is the basis for the eye.

In this chain, even as we recognise the mind as the basis, we note that there is still a further basis for the mind and that is one's intelligence.

When the intelligence takes the place of the basis, the mind becomes what is being seen. By going one more step, the intelligence itself becomes what is being seen and the Atma takes the place of the basis.

For the vision the basis is the eye and for one's eye the mind is the basis and in some circumstances the intelligence becomes the basis for the mind, and at a later stage the Atma becomes the basis for the intelligence. Atma is the final step and there is no possibility of having another basis for the Atma. Atma as the final step is Brahman itself. When we consider that for all creation *Prajapati* (Creator) is the basis, for *Prajapati* who represents all the material aspects of the world, Brahman becomes the basis. As the rays spread out from Brahman, we should recognise Brahman as the basis for everything.

In another example we can take the case of a river. If we examine what the basis is for the river, we conclude

that rain drops are the basis. There must be some other basis for these drops of rain. When we look for the basis of the rain, we come to the conclusion that the basis is cloud and for the clouds themselves, the basis is the water vapour. The origin for the water vapour is the ocean and that which connects this result of water vapour and the source, namely the ocean, is the Sun. Sun provides the connection between the ocean—the basis—and the resulting water vapour and water vapour in turn forms into clouds and the clouds are the basis for the drops of rain and the drops of rain in turn constitute the basis for the river which is the end.

Finally the created water vapour, clouds, rain, and the river, all go and merge in the original basis itself, namely the ocean. The statement "*Nadeenam Sagaro Gathi*" means that all the rivers go and merge in the ocean and in the same manner all the created things and all the streams of life go and merge with the source, namely Brahman.

The inner meaning of this is to recognise that Brahman is in the place of *Prathishta* and that Brahman is the basis of all creation. Understanding this inner significance, we must recognise that all aspects of our life have Brahman as the source. In this, we have to

recognise that truth alone establishes the basis of everything. That is why in *Rig Veda* it is said, “*Tasmat Paramam Vadanti.*” This is an answer provided to a question asked by Aruni when he wanted to know from his *Guru* the path that he must adopt to know the Brahman. It has also been said that in a manner of speaking, truth constitutes the basis for all things. It is in this context that Brahman itself was described as *Sathyam Jnanam Anantam*. In this, we must examine the meaning of the word *sathya* or truth. Does this relate to saying that what you have seen is as you have seen it or saying that what you have experienced is as you have experienced it or saying that what you have heard is as you heard it? This is not the real meaning. Truth is something which is beyond time and is unchangeable. It has for its basis Brahman itself. That is why in this world they have described truth as being one and not two. That is why they have described Brahman as “*Ekam Eva Adviteyam Brahma,*” i.e., Brahman is one and only one without a second. Our primary duty is to understand and recognise the unchanging truth.

We have learnt yesterday that wherever the word *Swa* occurs, it pertains to the heart or the Atma or the place of Brahman himself. This establishes that any work

or any sentence that comes from the depth of your heart is a form of truth. Therefore, when we take the sacred place where Brahman resides as the basis, then every word that we utter becomes a true word of Brahman. This *Swasthana*, the place which is the source of Brahman, will give only words of truth. For illustrating this, a very good example has been provided in the *Ramayana*. Ravana recognised and understood that taking away Sita was wrong and in spite of knowing that he was doing wrong, he did the wrong thing. Since he committed the sin knowingly, he was put to a great many difficulties later on.

If there is a person who has recognised and understood the truth and yet adopts a bad path contrary to the dictates of his own heart, then the fact that he has taken to a wrong act must be due to qualities like anger or jealousy. Such qualities must have prompted him to do the wrong act. One night, Vibheeshana, brother of Ravana, went to Ravana to tell him that what Ravana did was wrong. Vibheeshana held his brother's hands in great endearment and said that the sin which Ravana had committed had brought distress to all the citizens of Lanka. He said that because of Ravana's sin, there were snakes and cobras moving freely in every house where

there should have been only recitation of the *Vedas*. In the temples where Shiva should have been worshipped, there were all kinds of insects and bad omens were seen because of the sin committed by Ravana. That there were insects in the food offered to God and that in places where Shiva was worshipped, there were snakes were all consequences of the fact that Ravana, though well versed in all the *Vedas* and knowing what was righteous conduct, still committed sin.

It is only when an attempt is made to refrain from committing a sin that we do justice to human life. Even if a single individual commits the wrong, its consequence spreads to his entire household and to his family. If the King of a land commits a sin, then the entire land becomes a sinful land. This is why we say “*Yatha Raja thatha praja*”. The happiness and joy of the people depend on the happiness and prosperity of the king. The country’s welfare and prosperity depends on the rulers of the country. If our country, which is known for its immortal spirit and which is the embodiment of the spirit of Brahman and of all that is good, has today fallen to a desperate and frustrated level, there is no doubt that our rulers are responsible for this. If you young people are desirous of rectifying this deplorable situation into which

our country has fallen, you must be able to cultivate good thoughts, do good deeds and have a strong determination to remove the evil in our country. Recognising the importance of truth, righteousness and morality and still not being able to put those values into practice is the greatest sin.

Once, Adi Sankaracharya went to Benares and prayed there to Lord Viswanath specifically for three of his sins to be pardoned. The disciples who followed Sankaracharya were surprised and were wondering what those three sins were for which he was seeking pardon. Sankaracharya then explained that the first sin was that knowing fully well that the Lord is omnipresent and all powerful, he had undertaken the journey all the way to Benares to have the Lord’s *darshan* as if the Lord was present only in Benares. This, according to him, was the first sin. The significance of this is that his practice was contrary to what he already knew.

His second sin was that after recognising the Lord as one whose glory cannot be described, or as one whose infinite nature cannot be described in mere words, he had attempted to describe him in a string of words and thus had ignored what he already knew about the Lord.

His third sin was that having recognised that the human body itself is the temple of the Lord and having recognised that it is made of five perishable elements, he had not put this knowledge into practice. The *jiva*, that lives in the body, is indestructible and if studied carefully, we come to the conclusion that the one who resides in the body has no birth and death and neither attachment nor detachment. He realised that the almighty is residing in him as the Atma and yet he undertook the long journey to get the *darshan* of the almighty in a place outside to his body. This was his third sin. Knowing that the Lord is in him, he has committed the sin of undertaking the journey to see the Lord.

If we examine the matter in this way, we will realise what actually sin is. When we think of what sin is, we ask the Lord, “I have not killed anyone. I have not hurt anyone and yet why do I get this punishment.” Sin does not consist of these things only. Sin is not a separate entity. All the sins and all the good deeds are contained in your own actions and in what you do and are not external to you. Atma takes the form of Brahman and adopts the human body as his chariot and moves about the world. Therefore, the world is Brahman; the market is Brahman; the body is Brahman; Brahman is Brahman;

and everything is Brahman. Sankaracharya has demonstrated that everyone is Brahma. Everyone is the same and should not be treated as being different from any other. It is in this context that Sankara advocated the *Adwaita* or non-dual philosophy. Sankaracharya is a great individual who handed to the world the non-dual philosophy. His is not merely knowledge by learning, but by experiencing it himself.

When the individuals who are accustomed to the righteous path take to the wrong path, then everything that comes one's way is also distorted and crooked. There is a small example for this. A shepherd was once looking after his goats and sheep and found a nice shining jewel in the open fields. He thought that if this precious stone was tied round the neck of one of his black sheep, it will shine even more brightly. He tied it round the neck of one of his black sheep after putting a small hole in the stone. His sheep were very endearing to him and all his *prema* and affection were being showered on those sheep. He never bothered about the value of this stone and whatever precious thing he got he used it for adorning the sheep that were very dear to him. One day he put the goats and sheep to rest under a big tree. On that day, a businessman also came to rest under the same

tree. During this period of rest, the merchant, who deals in precious stones was attracted by the shining stone and he realised that it was worth several lakhs of rupees. He approached the shepherd and offered fifty rupees for the precious stone. The shepherd then thought that fifty rupees would enable him to adorn fifty of his goats and so he gave the valuable stone to the merchant. While the merchant was gloating over his acquisition, the stone broke into a thousand pieces and the merchant heard an unseen voice emanating from the stone to say, “You know that I am very valuable and yet you paid the shepherd a very small sum of money for me and therefore with a broken heart, I have broken into a thousand pieces”. Here we see the moral in this story. The individual who knew the truth and the correct value of this stone did not follow the correct path and wanted to acquire the stone cheaply. In those days, truth was so important and powerful that it got angry and the stone broke into a thousand parts.

Divyatma Swarupas!

Once you have recognised truth, you must always follow the path dictated by the truth. It is the aspect of Brahman which teaches us the nature of truth. We should understand that Brahman stands as the basis for all that

you see in this world. It is possible that we commit some wrong, but we must not commit it after realising it is wrong. It is inescapable that you will have to suffer the consequences of all that you do. Even when Vibheeshana explained the truth to Ravana, he could not recognise the truth because he was steeped in lust. This was responsible for his losing his kingdom and his getting into a lot of trouble. Ravana knew all the four *Vedas* and all the *Sastras* and did penance for hundreds of years to get the vision of Brahman. Yet his knowledge did not get him out of his difficulties. He was also acquainted with several branches of material learning and could even travel in the air. There is evidence for this in the *Ramayana*. In spite of all this knowledge, Ravana ran into difficulties because of one bad quality, namely lust. It does not matter how many branches of *Vedas* one knows, but all this is useless if you do not put the knowledge into practice. If you understand the omnipresent nature of Brahman, you would have understood all the *Vedas*, as that is the essence of all the *Vedas*. I am hoping that from today you will acquire the strength and determination to put into practice what you learn during your stay here.

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.

10. All That We Take In Through The Five Senses Constitutes Our Food

If one's feet slip and he falls, one can pick one's self again and set matters right; but if one lets his tongue slip, one has no remedy. Similarly, if one has taken to wrong path, no one can change his path and pull him out of such a situation. We will see today that *Pratishtha*, *Swadhyaya* and *Srihi* stand for one and the same thing. The aspect of Brahman which has been described by the names *Pratishtha*, *Swadhyaya* and *Srihi* will now be described by another name *Swadha*. In one of the Brahmanas, the same thing has been called *Pitru yagnesu Swadha bhoota*. Taking such sacred words of the *Vedas* as the basis, we should try to give the relevant meaning for the word *swadha*. In the *Aitreya Brahmana*, it has also been said, "*Swadha name iti vashatkara*". This means that this aspect of *vashatkara* will also be taught to us by the word *swadha*.

In common parlance, the word *swadha* has the meaning of food. When we give this meaning, it becomes possible for us to recognise the equivalent word food as what we normally eat by our mouth. In this word *swadha*, we must take it to mean not only the food that we normally eat but all other things that we take in. Here, there is a meaning which we may extend so as to include the five senses, that is *śabda* (sound), *sparsa* (touch), *rūpa* (seeing, form), *rasa* (taste), *gandha* (smell) and regard all that is absorbed through the sense organs as included in the word *swadha*. All the items that we see around us that can be experienced with the five senses have been included in the meaning of this word *swadha*. For all things which we can experience and enjoy in this world, this word *swadha* has stood as the basis. Therefore, this word is the very basis for the environment around it.

It is in this context that our scriptures have been explaining that for nature or *Prakruthi* a synonym would be *swadha*. This kind of *Prakruthi* does not manifest itself in different aspects but manifests itself in a chosen way and is called *Parameswari*.

This *Sakthi* or energy which goes by the name of *Parameswari* is the basis for *swadha* because *swadha* is

the equivalent of this *Parameswari* or *Sakthi*. In the context of this, we see that *maya* or illusion, *avidya* or lack of knowledge and *karma* or work have been explained as the basis of creation. Here illusion and ignorance are synonymous.

It is not possible for us to undertake work without a basis. For work, desire is the basis. For desire, ignorance is the basis. Here we see that the basis of all work is desire and the basis for desire is ignorance and for all these things, this word *swadha* has been standing as the basis. In other words, when we try and see the inner meaning of this, we come to the conclusion that for whatever we see in the world, *swadha* becomes the basis. For this word *swadha* in all its forms, the *Parameswari Sakthi* is the basis. This *Parameswari sakthi* is no doubt the basis, but this *sakthi* does not by itself independently do anything.

Parameswara (Almighty God) is the one who has *maya* as his instrument. This *maya* is taking the form of ignorance. Ignorance also occasionally takes the form of illusion. The body that is *maya* and the *Parameswara*, who is resident in the body are closely associated with each other. These two aspects, *maya* and *Parameswara*, are inextricably linked to each other. We have seen that

swadha is the basis for *maya*, ignorance and creation; and therefore, *swadha* also becomes a meaning for the word *Parameswari*. For this *Parameswari sakthi*, *Parabrahma* is the *pratishta* or the basis and therefore, this word *swadha* also becomes appropriate for *Parabrahma*. Here the ignorance which is the *Parameswara sakthi* can be experienced and enjoyed. In this context, *Parameswara*, who is the basis for *sakthi*, turns out to be the one who experiences. This relationship between the experience and the experiencer itself has been established by *swadha*.

This word *swadha* has also given a meaning to *Prakruthi* as if it was a woman, and a meaning to *Parabrahma* as if He was a *Purusha*; and *swadha* gives the relationship between these two. If the aspects of *Parameswara* and *Sakthi* do not come together, there cannot be creation in the world. Specifically these two aspects are such that one cannot exist without the other. In this context, there is no objection to regarding the whole of *Prakruthi* as a woman and the aspect of *Parabrahma* as *Purusha*. The fact that ignorance and *Parabrahma* are intermixed with each other is implied by the word *swadha*.

Creation is something which is the result of our imagination. This creation by imagination has desire as

its basis. If this *sankalpa* which is latent in us is not there, it is not possible to have a view of the created world. In order that this *sankalpa* or desire in us may be of the right type, we shall have to perform the necessary *sadhana*.

The seeds that we plant will determine the kind of tree that will sprout and the kind of tree will determine the kind of fruit that we will get. The *sankalpa* is the seed and when *sankalpa* gets into action, the result will be the tree. The fruit that will come on the tree is the final result. The kind of seed that we put in will determine the kind of fruit that we get from it. If an individual desires to have sweet and good fruit, he must take care to see that he selects sweet and good seeds. Therefore, that which is the basis for our *sankalpa*, or desires and the world is the aspect of *swadha*. This *swadha* which is the aspect of Brahman is the basis for all these things.

We should recognise and understand the meaning of the statement *Sarvam Brahmamaya Jagat*. This means that the aspect of Brahman is the basis for all the work we do. Keeping this in mind, we should not be disappointed with the result that we may get. If we understand correctly the meaning of what has been said,

then we will understand the spirit of the *Shiva Sakthi Atma* of the world. We have to recognise the oneness of the experience and the experiencer himself.

The mother of the universe is *maya*, and the father, *Parabrahma*. If there is no *maya*, we will not even attempt to understand the aspect of *Parabrahma*. *Maya* is the form of God, whereas *Parabrahma* is the name of God Himself. This form and name are related to each other in an inseparable manner.

Therefore, this ignorance or *maya*, which is a form of God, can be controlled only by praying to get over it. There is a good example for this in the *Ramayana*. In the forest, Rama, the embodiment of *dharma*, is showing the path and going ahead and behind him was his wife, Sita, following him. Lakshmana is following both of them as the protector. The point here is that Rama, Sita, and Lakshmana are going one behind the other in a single line. At that time, Lakshmana representing the *Jiva*, decided to have the darshan of Rama, the symbol of Brahman. But if he wants to have a glimpse of Rama, he has Sita, representing *Maya*, standing as an obstruction between him and Rama. Thus if *jiva* wants to have a glimpse of *Parabrahma*, *Maya* stands as an obstruction in between them. Under those circumstances, Lakshmana cannot use

harsh words and ask Sita—representing *Maya*—to make way for him. This will only make matters worse. Rama would not like to hear such harsh words. In such a situation, neither using harsh words nor getting angry with Sita would be the right way. The only method, therefore, would be to pray and ask Sita to move aside a little, thus allowing Lakshmana to have Rama's *darshan*. Then Sita will take pity on Lakshmana and will move aside to enable Lakshmana to have a glimpse of the Divinity.

Sita symbolises *Maya* and accompanies Rama like an inseparable shadow. One cannot become angry with Sita because Rama will not like such a situation. God wears this *maya* as “form” and because of this, we must bear with *maya* and welcome it and treat it with reverence. *Swadha* constitutes the basis for *maya sakthi* as well. Either for the creation or for the existence of the world both *Maya* and *Parabrahma* constitute the basis.

If we examine this aspect carefully, we will come to the conclusion that *Parabrahma* alone cannot be responsible for creation that we see around us. Creation is possible only when *Parabrahma* and *Sakthi* or *Maya* come together. This becomes the basis for creation. A potter cannot make pots with dry clay. If he wants to

make pots, he has to use both water as well as clay. We cannot make pots with clay alone or with water alone, but pots can be made only when both water and clay are mixed together.

One cannot run a machine like a railway engine with fire alone, nor can such a machine be run with water alone. It is only by bringing fire and water into intimate contact and generating steam that we can run a machine. *Parabrahma Sakthi* and *Parabrahma* are interdependent and are both needed for creation like the clay and water for a potter or like the fire and water for a railway engine. Thus, we get a basis to regard the entire *Prakruthi* as having the nature of a woman. The one who has taken endearingly to this woman called *Prakruthi* is the *Parabrahma*. Such a *Parabrahma* is also pictured as wearing the ignorance or the *maya sakthi* as His form.

In this context, there is only one *Purusha* and the entire creation consists of women only. You may get a doubt at this point and may feel that when so many *purushas* are sitting here, how is it possible to describe the entire creation as women only with just one *Purusha*? You are all only wearing the apparel of a *Purusha*, but you are all not really *purushas*. The qualities that mark

out the word *Purusha* are not present in you, and therefore you cannot be appropriately called *Purusha*. You can call yourselves *purushas* only when you develop qualities which are above the *gunas* and above all worldly ideas and thoughts. You may get a doubt here and ask how God who is present everywhere and in all the *gunas*, is described as being above *gunas*. *Gunas* are all artificial creations. God exists in all these created *gunas*, but the *gunas* themselves do not exist in God and therefore we can correctly describe Him as being above *gunas*.

In the example that we have considered, we get an understanding of this aspect. We have considered pots as having been made out of soil and water and therefore in all the pots there is soil, but there are no pots in the soil. The pot has been artificially prepared, like the *gunas*, and in the pot there is soil but in the soil there is no pot. In a similar manner, God is present in the artificially created *gunas*, but the *gunas* are not present in God. Therefore, *gunas* are also described as those that bind one. They may be understood as the ropes that bind one. In this context, it may be mentioned that you are all bound and not free. You are all bonded to this artificially created world. God has no such bondage and is a free individual at all times. You can call yourself a *Purusha* only when

you get rid of these bondages and become a free individual. To call yourself a *Purusha* without doing this is not correct. You are having the aspect of *Purusha* in your inner self but you are not giving any attention to the qualities that go to make a *Purusha* or that entitle one to call himself a *Purusha*. When you aspire to become a *Purusha*, you must be prepared to accept and imbibe all the qualities of a *Purusha*.

If a man or woman is hungry, both the woman and the man eat food, irrespective of their gender and thus both men and women react to such situations in an identical manner. It follows that man is as weak as a woman. In this sense, they both have a weakness for hunger. A *Purusha* should have strength. On the contrast, a woman is characterised by weakness. It is for this reason that a woman is described by the word *abala* or one without strength. Today in order to fulfil the normal requirements in the world and in order to do the various tasks on the stage of this world, some of us are calling ourselves men and others go by the name of women. This is purely related to the worldly life but spiritually and in truth, all are characterised by the qualities of a woman.

You can take a very good example for this. During the college day at the Anantapur girls' College,

usually *adhyatmic* playlets are staged. In one such playlet, one of the girls played the role of Sakkubai while another girl played the part of Kasipat; but behind the screen, she knows and calls herself by her real name, say "Sudha". In a similar manner on the stage of this world, some of us call ourselves men while others call themselves women. Such a nomenclature is appropriate only for the purposes of acting on the world stage; but so long as one does not possess the qualities of a *Purusha*, one should not call oneself as a *Purusha*.

In the realm of the Divine, I mentioned yesterday that there are five different aspects, namely—Being, Awareness, *Ananda*, Name and Form. Of these five, name and form are relevant only to the aspect of the body and the world, but in matters relating to the realm of God, name and form have no significance at all. Even if we cannot fully understand the aspects of Brahman, it is possible for us to study the *Vedas*, scriptures and the *Sastras*. Since we are students and since we want to study something, it becomes imperative for us to submit ourselves to some kinds of discipline, to observe some rules and to accept some limitations in our daily lives. Whatever work we undertake, we should recognise our duty and discipline appropriate to the work that we have

undertaken. If we strictly adhere to the rules and discipline of the work allotted to us, then we will not meet with any obstruction and nobody can stop us from fulfilling our task.

There is a small story illustrating this aspect in the *Mahabharatha*. Once Kausika was sitting under a tree and was reciting the *Vedas* and doing penance to understand the aspect of the Brahman. As he was continuously engaged in *thapas* and always uttering the name of Brahman, his mind was full of Brahman and he acquired a special kind of strength.

There is a small example in this context which will clear some doubts regarding the Grace of God. If we take two pieces of wood and rub them against each other vigorously for sometime, we can generate fire. Thus by these two pieces of wood coming together and rubbing against each other, a new feature, namely fire, has been generated. This fire is not apparently visible in either of the two pieces. In a similar manner, if we concentrate on the name and form of the Lord and continuously strive to bring them together, in that process there will be generated a new feature, the fire of Wisdom. Our sacred culture has taught us many processes by which this fire of wisdom can be generated.

In this manner, while Kausika was sitting under the tree and continually reciting the *Vedas*, a bird sitting on top of that tree dropped excreta and it fell on the head of Kausika. This enraged Kausika and he angrily stared at the bird. Because of this anger, the bird was instantly killed by the fire generated from Kausika's eyes as a result of the discipline to which he was submitting himself. At this display of strength, Kausika felt proud and elated that his vision had the power to burn things. So long as he was one of pure and unwavering mind, this wisdom was like a burning fire; but the moment he started feeling proud and allowed a certain amount of ego to enter his mind, the great divine strength began diminishing slowly. The moment this ego entered his mind, a small desire sprouted in him and he wanted to test his newly acquired strength. He went to the front of a village house. The woman of the household was very dutiful and would not swerve from her duty. At that time, her husband was not in good health and she was serving her husband and was thus immersed in her duty. Kausika asked for alms but the woman did not pay any attention to this because of her immediate preoccupation. Finally when she did come out, she found that Kausika was very angry and that his eyes were red with anger. The woman was so devoted to

her husband and so disciplined that she could immediately see through the mind of Kausika. She said, “I am not a poor bird to be killed by your anger. I am a woman who has been discharging her duties, and I have not done anything wrong”. In fact she advised Kausika to get rid of his anger as that was not a quality which a *Rishi* can have. The lady said that whoever protects *dharma* will be protected in turn by *dharma*. Not only did she have confidence in herself but she conveyed the truth and strength of self-confidence to the *Rishi*, also.

Education should bring humility. A person who is educated should be humble. Humility will lead you to deservedness and deservedness will, in turn, get you wealth. Wealth, in turn, will get you righteousness or *dharma* and you will be able to give charity of the right kind. If you want to realise the aspect of *Parabrahma*, you should not feel proud that you are an educated person. You should first show humility if you want to realise yourself and have happiness. If you show ego and feel proud of your qualifications and your degree, you will be bringing disgrace to the qualifications that you have acquired. If one is not humble, he will not be called an educated person. He may think himself to be educated. Our scriptures, which have given the

injunction that a person who has acquired ordinary education should be humble, surely lay down much more rigid rules for those who are well versed in *Vedas*. For all this, the word *swadha* is the basis. Whether it is the *Vedas* or the *Veda Purushas* or even the creator of the *Vedas*, they are all one and the same and merge in this one word *swadha*. Therefore, in our being able to perform, with discipline, the tasks that arise out of certain duties, there is pleasure. Having *dharma* as our objective, recognising our objective and not swerving from the path of *dharma* if we conduct ourselves, then we can get the blessings of the *Vedas* and the grace of God.

11. A Child begins to take Shape even as It Grows in the Womb of the Mother

Swa is truth, *swa* is dharma, *swa* stands for *Veda*, *swa* stands for *ahimsa*, *swa* is *yajna*, *swa* is conduct, *swa* is kindness, *swa* is, in fact, everything that we find in all the worlds.

Prema Swarupas! Students!

What has been given to you yesterday as the meaning of the word *swadha* is also the meaning of the word *swaha* according to the *Vedas*. This word *swaha* is something in which there is considerable importance. Some persons have argued that the origin for this word *swaha* is not in the *Vedas*. It has been said that this word *swaha* has something to do with the ceremony of *homa* (offering ritual articles in sacrificial

fire) and is not directly derived from the *Vedas*. In the context of *homa*, while we offer something to the Gods, the word which describes the offering usually ends with *swaha*, and hence people thought that it has nothing to do with the *Veda*. Others believed that the word *swadha* has some relationship to our forefathers because we use the word *swadha* when making an offering to our forefathers, while in fact, the word *swaha* is associated with gods. The meaning of these two words *swadha* and *swaha* has been explained as if the two are related to each other. This word *swaha* has also been seen as an ending for words such as *Kesava ya swaha*, *Madhava ya swaha*, *Indra ya swaha* and so on. In our daily ritual, these words have been occurring quite frequently. While making the offering, we use several words and several materials are placed in the fire and the word *swaha* is used to mean that everything should be burnt up and digested. They also use the word *Suhuta* to mean the same thing.

One is bound to get a doubt in this connection. Whether you utter the word *swaha* or not, whatever you put in the fire is sure to be burnt up. It is the nature and quality of fire to burn up and swallow everything that is put in it. If this is the case, why is it that we use the words *swaha* and *swadha* and pray that what we offer to

the fire be burnt up? However, in the *Vedas*, they have been using the words *swadha* and *swaha*. *Veda* has been giving us the inner meaning that these two words are intended to satisfy the God in the context of the *homa* and also satisfy the person who is the head of the ceremony. If you look at the word *swaha*, we come to the conclusion that the word comes from the combination *swavakaha*. In such a combination, we also understand that this word *swaha* is the spoken word of *Prajapati*.

In this word, *swaha*, we describe Saraswathi as *vakrupuni* or the embodiment of all speech. We have also to understand that this word signifies the fact that she is the embodiment of all that is contained in the *Vedas*. Another way of looking at the origin of this word is to look at it as *Su-aha*. This means that the prosperity which goes along with the voice of *Prajapati* is being handed over to the world. There is another combination *Swa-atmanam-aha* which gives the word *swaha*. We understand this to mean something which deals with the knowledge of Atma and this will give us the full meaning of the word *Sakthi*.

In this manner, this word *swaha* has been interpreted in different ways and several alternative

meanings have been given. We understand that it is something related to the *sakthi* of *Prajapati*, but to mistake it as something to do with the ending of the offering is not correct. For every word in the *Veda*, there are two aspects: one of *Prathyaksha* and another of *Paroksha*, that is—what you see directly and what you have to infer.

For the word *Agnihi* there is an aspect which comes from *Agrihi* the form of direct authority. These words *Agrihi* and *Agnihi* represent *Prathyaksha* and *Paroksha*, the direct manifestation and the inference. The same aspect has been described by Kalidasa in the text *Kumara Sambhavam*, that *Prajapati* has two aspects—one direct and the other the aspect of *Paroksha*. What is the evidence that enables us to understand that the word *swaha* will satisfy the Gods and by being satisfied Gods will confer satisfaction to the master of ceremonies? Our *Vedas* have told us that because of the strength of life contained in the word *swaha*, Gods are satisfied by the use of this word and thereby they give satisfaction to the master of ceremonies.

Manthras contain various types of strength. We sometimes feel that *manthras* are simply a collection of

words without any specific strength. The power behind the *manthra* can be understood only by those who are well versed in them. Although we are not able to see directly the connection that exists between the divine and the humans, yet as a *paroksha* or by inferential evidence, we are able to feel that through the *manthras* there is a connection between the divine and the human. In simple things, like the machines which are created by man, we see direct evidence of their strength, but to think that the *manthras* created by God do not have such strength in them is not correct.

There is an example for this. Suppose you are travelling by plane from Bangalore to Delhi. You know that the pilot of the plane can keep in contact with Delhi as well as Bangalore airports even though you are unable to see any direct and visual evidence of a connection between the plane and either of the airports. In this case, we don't see *pratyaksha*, or direct evidence, but the strength that is present in the machines at the airport and in the plane enables them to have contact. This kind of connection is an inferential connection.

As an example of direct and visible evidence, we can take the case of a telephone conversation between

here and Bangalore. In this case, we see that there are wires which connect one station to another and that these wires are transmitting the information. This is an example illustrating *pratyaksha*.

Today, when we offer different materials into fire we see they are being reduced to ashes. This is what we may call *pratyaksha* or seeing directly. But the fact that the material which was reduced to ashes gets conveyed to the person for whom it is intended by the *manthra sakthi* is something which we cannot directly see as *pratyaksha*. It is the *paroksha* or inferential connection that is responsible for such a transmission. Only those who have complete mastery over the *Vedas* can understand this aspect. The inference that the sacrifice made while uttering the name of Indra, Rudra or Varuna really reaches them is *paroksha* and can be well understood by those who know the power of these *manthras*. For them it is as good as direct evidence.

We will take another worldly example for this. Once an old man who had faith in the formal ritual was offering something to his dead father on his death anniversary. A somewhat modernised young grandson of this old man approached the grandfather and ridiculed

the old man for thinking that the offering would really reach his father and for his having such blind faith. The wise old man told the grandson that the power of the *manthra* was such that it would definitely convey the offering to the dead father and he also told him that this was really beyond the understanding of the common people as only those well-versed in such aspects of *manthras* can appreciate this. This grandson was clever but was lacking in good qualities. He wanted to put his grandfather on the first floor of the house and see if the offering reached him when the *manthra* was recited. He asked his grandfather to go to the first floor and related the *manthra* while making the offering and asked him if the offering had reached him. When the grandfather said that the offering did not reach him, he began to argue that if with the help of the *manthra*, the offering could not even reach the first floor, how could it reach his grandfather's father who was probably very far away in a distant world? The experienced grandfather then told him that the *manthra* which was recited was appropriate to a different world and asked how under these circumstances, could this be reaching the grandfather who was in the first floor of the same house. He further asked, if your father is resident in Madras and if you write a letter to

him and address it to Bombay, how can it reach him in Madras? *Manthra Sakthi* is something which is related to the other world but the grandfather is sitting in the first floor of the same house and how can the offering reach him. Therefore, if you recite the appropriate mantra relevant to the place where you want the results to appear, surely there is no doubt that the result will appear, where it ought to appear. Even if you do not know the place where the offering has to reach and even if you are not acquainted with the person who is to carry the offering, there is no doubt that such persons whose duty it is to carry the offering to that place will be ready to do so.

In this context, we can also take a worldly example. Suppose one of your friends is in California living in a house on Napoleon Drive and you post a letter to that address. You know neither the people in the post office that are handling the letters nor have you seen the house, street, or address in California; but the letter reaches your friend. How do you reconcile this situation when the persons whom you have not seen and known are taking the letter to a place which you have not seen? Will you have any doubt about the letter being delivered to him just because you are not acquainted with the individuals

who work in the postal department and because you are not acquainted with the place to which the letter is addressed? Your duty is only to write the correct address on the envelope. Responsibility for delivering the letter is that of the postal department and not yours. Although the individuals who are to deliver the letter are not known to you, your letter is being delivered at the correct address.

In a similar manner, if you have uttered the words *swaha* and *swadha* and uttered the appropriate *manthra* and made the offering to the Fire God, there is no doubt whatsoever that the God of fire will deliver it to the intended destination.

Because in those ancient days there were sacred people who understood the strength of such *manthras*, it was possible for them to hold the entire world in their palms. There is a small story for this. Uddalaka had a daughter by name Sujatha. She was married to a great scholar by name of Ekapada, who was happily spending his time teaching *Vedas* to his disciples. While the husband was thus teaching *Vedas*, the wife was also engaged herself in the work connected with the teaching of *Vedas* or by helping her husband. Sujatha who was spending her time in this manner learnt the proper accent and pronunciation of the *Vedic manthras*. Every time a mistake

was made, the baby in the womb was saying that it was a mistake. Uddalaka was enraged that a baby inside the womb was already correcting him and cursed that the baby would be born as a crooked one. In course of time, a son was born to Sujatha and the boy had eight crooked curves on his body because of the curses of Uddalaka. The name of the son was Ashtavakra.

When Sujatha was in her ninth month, Uddalaka left home to go to the court of Janaka to participate in a *Vedic* argument, attain victory and thereby earn money. In those days, the *Rishis* were not in the habit of saving for the future because they realised that life is a transient thing and they were not thinking far ahead of the present. In the present day, we try to see far into the future and even as the son is born, we deposit money in the bank to send him abroad for higher education without giving a thought to whether the boy would even live that long and even if he lived whether he would be able to learn that much. Therefore, Ekapada set out to get some money for the expenses of the baby. When he learnt of *Vedic* argument in King Janaka's court, he went there. However, due to bad luck, Ekapada lost the argument which he had with the other scholars and having lost the argument he became a bonded person at the court of King Janaka.

After some time Sujatha realised that her husband was not coming back. At this time she gave birth to the son, Ashtavakra. At the same time Uddalaka's wife also gave birth to a son called Svetaketu. Svetaketu and Ashtavakra were thus cousins. Uddalaka brought Ashtavakra and Sujatha to his house, as Sujatha's husband was not there. From that day Svetaketu and Ashtavakra grew up together as very close companions and Ashtavakra thought that Uddalaka was his father. One day when Ashtavakra was sitting on the lap of Uddalaka, Svetaketu came and asked him to get down and sit on his own father's lap if he wanted to.

At this Ashtavakra ran to his mother and asked for the true story of his birth and for the name of his father. Sujatha then told him the entire story and on hearing this news, both Svetaketu and Ashtavakra went to the court of King Janaka and attained victory in the arguments there. In this manner they liberated Ekapada and brought him back home. The mother Sujatha was very pleased and happy and said that although many fathers had got their sons released or given birth to them, this was a rare case where the son gave back a father and she praised him for giving her such a gift. The child in the womb got these qualities only because of the power of the *manthra*.

Another instance in our *Puranas* where the child in the womb got such knowledge was the case of Abhimanyu, who learnt the details of *Padmavyuha* (labyrinth of lotus shape, particular type of maze), while in the womb of his mother. In view of this, it was the custom in those days that pregnant women were taken care of with great effort and they were always kept happy and were permitted to listen only to sacred stories and sacred things. They were always given only good news. It is in this context that the baby in the womb will be experiencing only happy situations and as a result will turn out to be a happy individual. But today, pregnant women see various kinds of pictures during the period of pregnancy and in this process the child also develops bad ideas even from the time of its being in the mother's womb and they take to an unsacred path once they are born. Thus the entire future of a child depends on the manner and conduct of the pregnant woman in whose womb the child is growing.

If today we take to a sacred path and do the right thing, there is no doubt that our children in the future will also attain reputation and will take to a sacred path. Although one does not directly see the greatness of a *manthra*, it is sure to hand in the consequence by

inference. Some people argue that it may not be necessary to read the *manthras* with the proper accent and the proper stress at the right place and that it may be looked upon as a mere collection of words. Our youth have no understanding and familiarity with the divine path or with anything that relates to the culture of our country. It has become a fashion to take a crooked view of everything and they give a reply which is quite irrelevant.

A devout grandfather was once reciting his *Sandhya manthra* and in the process he was uttering “*Kesavayaswaha*,” “*Narayanayaswaha*,” “*Madhavayaswaha*”, and so on; and with each of the names he was swallowing a small quantity of water. The grandson who was sitting at a nearby table and doing his homework was watching all this and asked his grandfather why he did not take the entire glass full of water in one gulp, if he was feeling so thirsty. The grandfather did not reply immediately because he did not want to be disturbed while doing the *Sandhya Manthra*.

Later, the grandson was doing his homework and in this process he was constantly dipping his pen in the ink bottle and writing. He was doing this each time whenever the ink dried out. The grandfather saw this

and asked the grandson why he was doing this instead of overturning the entire ink bottle at one time and have the entire ink in one lot. The grandson replied that if the entire ink was put on the paper, the words would not be seen. The grandfather said that if he swallowed the entire water at one time, the *manthras* cannot be heard. In the case of the *manthra*, unless you utter the proper name at each time and have the appendage of *swaha* each time and do what has to be done, you will not get the real benefit. Just as in the case of the writing, unless you use the ink moderately, bit by bit, the letters will not be distinct but will be muddled up; so also, we must recognise the situation when the *Vedas* held sway. If you do not understand, it is much better if you refrain from raising irrelevant questions. You should try to understand the significance of these *manthras*.

In the one month that you are attending the classes here, I am hoping that you will listen to the content that is conveyed to you by different scholars and acquire the necessary strength to understand what is being taught to you by the teachers during the evening discourses.

12. Ghora And Aghora Aspects Of God Are Only Reflections Of Your Thoughts In The Mirror Of Brahman

It is only after a digit that the zero will have any significance and value. Similarly we must first think of God who is only one, and the living world after Him. The world will acquire some value only if it comes after God.

A *dharva* is one of several names for *Parabrahma* who is also known by the name *Swaha*. The meaning of the word *Adharva* is something which is steady and unchanging. In addition to this, in the *Vedas* it is also known as *Pranatma* or *Prajapati*. The *Adharvana Veda* has declared that this *Adharva* was the first to generate fire. The *Rishis* first used this fire

generated by *Parabrahma* for their rituals and ceremonies and gave names like Brahma, Vasishta, Prajapati, Brihaspati and so on. In this way while performing the sacrifice, they recognised the importance of *Atharva*—the source of the fire—and also the aspects that were implied in these names given to persons functioning as *Rithwicks*. This *Atharva* has been installed as the basis in many places of origin and used as the basis for the prosperity of the world. In the context of the name Prajapati, *Atharva* was understood as *Atharva Veda* and in the context of *Rithwicks* some other aspects were also recognised. These *Vedas* were propagated in the world through the name of Prajapati. For all the *manthras* in the *Vedas*, there is a beginning and an end. The sound that is uttered in the beginning and in the end is called *Pranava*. That this *Pranava* is the same as *Atharva* has been said in the *Atharva Veda*.

In this *Veda*, it has been said that Prajapati has two distinct aspects. One of these is called *Rudra Akara* and the other is the opposite of it and it is *Arudra Akara*. In the context of Shiva, one of these aspects has been described as *Mangalakara* or one who gives prosperity and good. There is an opposite side of it called *Rudra Akara*. These two aspects differ in form and appearance,

but we have not tried to realise the oneness or unity that is present in both aspects. Not only in God do we see these two aspects of anger and peace, we see them also in the whole created world—occurring side by side. The aspect that one really notices depends totally on the attitude of one's mind. When the fearsome Narasimha (Man-lion god), emerged out of the pillar, Prahlada witnessed His form but enjoyed the serenity enshrined within.

Prahlada was deeply immersed in happiness when he looked at this peaceful attitude. To Hiranyakasipu, who regarded himself as an enemy of God, the very same Narasimha appeared in an angry mood. That the same was seen by one as Shiva and another as Rudra has to be interpreted by saying that these two aspects are not intrinsic to God but arise from the different attitudes which the devotees themselves possess. As an illustration, we note that when we eat some things within limits it is not going to cause any harm and will be useful. On the other hand, if we exceed the limit and overeat, the very same thing can cause disease and lead us even to death. *Atharva Veda* has been telling us that this word food has been coming from the root word *Ad* which means to eat. *Adyate* means some material which is edible. *Aditi* stands

for something that is being eaten. The one who eats, the material that is being eaten, and the act of eating are all represented by the root words *Ad*, *Adyate* and *Adti*.

This sacred name which applies to what is edible and to the act of eating and to the one that is eating has been recognised as a form of Brahman in the word *Angirasa*.

By the grace of Prajapati and the *Rithwicks* and with the help of *Atharva Veda*, we are able to recognise the great qualities in this. This *Veda* has been called by other names like *Kshatra Veda*, *Brahma Veda*, *Angarva Veda* and so on.

The *Atharva Veda* which has these alternative names has acquired and incorporated into itself some changes which are important. According to tradition, for *Gayatri Parameswari*, there are three feet namely *Yajur*, *Rig* and *Sama Vedas*. *Mimamsa* stood as her body and *Atharva* stood as the head of *Gayatri Parameswari*. Thus, while *Atharva Veda* had acquired such a prominent place over time, we are still giving prominence only to the other three *Vedas*.

Amongst all the *Vedas* the *Atharva Veda* has the distinction of being the oldest and the most important. The *Atharva Veda* has also been telling us that one

aspect of *Parabrahma* is not simply the words in the *Veda* but is the *Veda* itself. It was proclaiming the aspect of Shiva for the prosperity of the world and in addition to this, it has been giving us *manthras* which are directly responsible for the creation, sustenance, and dissolution. In the *Atharva Veda*, these aspects are represented by two words *Ghora* and *Aghora*.

In common parlance, we use these words only when we want to describe some fearful or troublesome things. In this context, the word *Ghora* has, however, been used to signify something which is an obstacle to *Ananda*. But if we do what we should do and if we follow the right path which we should follow in this life, we can get a kind of *Ananda* called *Aghora*. Limited eating gives us *Ananda* which may be called *Aghora*. Unlimited and uncontrolled eating gives something different from *Ananda*. It gives trouble which may be called *Ghora*. We should ask ourselves if it is the food we eat that is responsible for this *Ghora* or *Aghora*. The food is not responsible for either the feeling of *Ghora* or *Aghora*. These are only results of the aspects of the mind and the desires of man.

With a sharp knife, we can do several useful things like cutting fruits and vegetables; but if one gets into a

fit of temper, one can also cause harm to the lives of other people. If a doctor has a sharp knife with him, he will put it to good use. If the same sharp knife is in the hands of a murderer, he will kill people. For both these things, it is the attitude of the individual that is responsible and not the knife. The inner meaning of what has been said above regarding the attitude of the mind is contained in the statement, *Manayeva Karanam Manushyanam Bandha mokshayoh*. That is, as a result of the attitude of mind, these two aspects *Ghora* and *Aghora* arise. Because Brahman is omnipresent, Brahman is present even in the minds of all people. The *Ghora* and *Aghora* have been used to represent the two aspects of mind. *Ghora* and *Aghora* are not two distinct attitudes nor are they separate situations. One happens to be the opposite of the other.

This may be referred to as one being a reaction of the other. Such contraries or opposites are present in every aspect and in every situation. Pain and pleasure always come together and no one can separate them. Pleasure is something which we cannot see in an isolated condition. If pain fructifies, we call it pleasure. Just as pain and pleasure are not two separate things, so also, *Ghora* and *Aghora* are not two separate entities.

For the prosperity of the world, Prajapati is taking the aspect of *Ghora* as a kind of cure. The aspect of *Ghora* which Prajapati is taking for a specific purpose is being regarded as something which signifies terror. This is not right. From time immemorial, several *Maharishis* were performing *thapas* and used to undergo many troubles. In this process, in order that the person who is doing *thapas* may reach a certain stage and get recognition, God creates obstacles in his path. This is not a trick on the part of God nor is it the purpose of God to give trouble to the devotee. After a year of education, the University conducts an examination. This examination is being conducted with a view to sending you to a higher class and is for your own good. It is not conducted to trouble you. We are calling this examination a test. So also, God introduces an occasional test to find out the strength of the person performing the *thapas*. Because our attitude towards the test is not correct, it sometimes gives us the feeling that the test is causing us great trouble. Sometimes, we pray to God and say: “Oh God! why are you subjecting me to all these tests?” We pray that these tests be stopped. If the tests are stopped, you cannot rise to a higher level. If one wants to learn to drive a plane or a boat, one must obtain a certificate of fitness or a licence

and for this one will have to go through a test. In order that we may receive a certificate, these tests are an absolute must. If one desires that there should be no test, it means that there is no desire to reach a higher level and that one wants to remain where one is.

There is a good example in our ancient *Puranas*. King Sibi was a person who had sacrificed many things. He had all the good qualities and was always immersed in the thought of God. While Sibi was a great king and had all the wealth, Indra and Agni had a plan to test the real sacrificing nature of this king. Agni took the form of a dove and Indra took the form of an eagle which attacks the dove. Agni, in the form of a dove came running to the King and appealed to him to save him as he was being attacked by a big eagle. The king promised to protect the dove which was being attacked and therefore the eagle could not get hold of the dove. At this time, the eagle started arguing that since it was hungry and since it came as a hungry bird, it was the duty of the King to give up the dove to satisfy its hunger. The King then said that since he had undertaken to protect the dove, it was not possible for him to hand over the dove but he would instead offer to give an amount of his own flesh equivalent to the flesh of the dove and thereby

satisfy the eagle's hunger. The King got a pair of weighing pans and placed the dove in one of the pans. In the other, he began placing chunks of his own flesh. Even after large amounts of flesh from his body were put in, the pans were not balanced. Finally, finding that he had nothing more to offer, he himself sat in the pan and offered his entire body to the eagle. Agni and Indra, in the form of the dove and the eagle, were very much moved at this selfless spirit of sacrifice. They presented themselves before the King in their true form. Indra and Agni then said that no amount of learning in the *Vedas* can bring one as much satisfaction as the spirit of sacrifice would, and in this manner they praised the King.

When such tests come from God, they come in order to shower grace and not to trouble the devotee. It is not possible for all persons to understand and comprehend God's strength. One who knows Brahman becomes Brahman himself. The saying *Brahmavid Brahmaiva Bhavati* means this. In other words, unless one rises to the stature of Brahman, he will not understand Brahman. Similarly, through truth alone can one comprehend truth. One cannot understand truth through untrue methods.

Neither we nor our minds are behaving in a manner in which they should. Because our minds are

not what they ought to be, the world is not as it ought to be. Man is synonymous with mind and mind is synonymous with desires. If there are no desires, there is no mind. If there is no mind, there is no man. Therefore, if you really want to recognise the country, we should realise that the country consists of men and it is the conglomeration or grouping of men that constitutes the country.

This is a piece of cloth and it is prepared from a bundle of threads. If there are no threads, there cannot be a piece of cloth. This thread has been prepared from cotton. If there is no cotton, there can be no thread and if there is no thread, there is no cloth. Our desires which are in the form of cotton get woven up into our mind which is in the form of thread and our mind which is in the form of thread comes together and makes up the man. The desires have, no doubt, to be there and they need not be completely eliminated, but these desires have to be consistent with our education and culture, and they should be such as will bring us respect.

One must examine the desires that one has in him in the context of his country, his education and the reputation of his parents and one must ask if he is conducting himself appropriately. Therefore, the kind of

desires with which we fill our heads should be such that they are consistent with accepted norms. If these are not so, it is better to have an empty head rather than fill it up with the wrong kind of desires. You can introduce anything you wish into an empty head, but it is not possible to put anything into a head already filled with all kinds of things. If the head is filled with things which are characteristic of this Kali Yuga, how can your head have any place for good things. If you cannot get good things in the head, then what is the use of this head?

Because there is no place in our country where righteousness can thrive, *dharma* has fled to the forest. Cruelty and sin that should have remained in the forest have entered the populated villages. The reason is that our ideas and thoughts are not in a position to retain *dharma*. Pandavas who were the embodiment of *dharma*, had to go to the forest because all the habitable places were occupied by people like Duryodhana. The latter did not leave any place for *dharma*.

Today in the Kali Yuga, the behaviour of people is taking a weird shape by which heads filled with bad thoughts, ears always prepared to listen to criticism of the people around and eyes with which people constantly

watch stealthily what is happening elsewhere, are in evidence everywhere. Our talk is such that it wants to deceive others. If such bad actions and thoughts prevail, how can *dharma* stay on? These good and bad aspects are called *Ghora* and *Aghora*.

In this context, you may have a doubt as to how these terms *Ghora* and *Aghora* are relevant to the aspects of God. It is easy to understand that if bad thoughts and actions are in an ordinary person, that is *Ghora* and if they do not occur, it is *Aghora*; but one may ask how one can associate these with God. Are there good and bad qualities associated with God as well? But when we ask this question, there is one truth which we have to recognise in the aspects of Brahman. Brahman has no form. Brahman has no qualities or *gunas*. Brahman has only a name and is like a mirror and looking into the mirror, we create a form.

If we go and stand in front of a clean mirror, what we see is a reflection of ourselves. In this context we have to ask whether the image we see is simply a reflection of ourselves or whether it is a part of the mirror. This clean mirror is only reflecting the image of yourself, but your image is not already present in the

mirror. The bad and the good that are present in you are reflected. God has neither good nor bad qualities. When you stand in front of the mirror, your own image is reflected therein. If you do good, it is reflected as good or *Aghora*; and if you do bad, it is reflected as bad or *Ghora*. Thus, these bad and good aspects are arising from within your own self. One cannot find fault with God and attribute motives to Him. If, inspite of it, you do so they are only artificial and are the result of your own imagination.

If you do not notice or experience the grace of God, you think that God is not close to you. You also sometimes say that you have tried your best in many ways to go close to God and God is going farther away from you. This is a meaningless statement. There is no point in saying that you are going close to God and God is going farther away from you.

Here is a small example for this. A person who is standing close to me may be thinking that Swami is far away from him. We can examine this statement on the basis of the laws of physics. If the distance from a person to me is small, the distance from me to that person cannot be different and larger. Similarly if I hit a

piece of wood, I say that I have hit the piece of wood but that is not all. The piece of wood has also hit me equally hard. This is in the nature of a reaction. It can never be that the reaction is unequal to the action. In the same manner, in the spiritual aspect as well, there is no question of your thinking that you are going close to God and that God is going away from you or your thinking that God is keeping at a distance in spite of your getting closer to Him. As close as you are to God, so close is God to you. If you understand this truth, then you will realise that God is everywhere. There is no such thing as God being far away from you when you are close to Him. Those who recognise the truth in this statement and realise that God is omnipresent will experience the proximity to Divinity.

The *Atharva Veda* has given us clearly a description of what nature is and the laws that govern matter as well as spirit. From this *Veda*, we can also learn what path we must take in order that we may escape the sorrows and pain which are to be found in this world. Because *Atharva Veda* has taught us how to overcome the strength and power that is stronger than ours, it is also regarded as one which tells us about all the weapons with which we should defend ourselves. We should not

consider *Atharva Veda* as something connected with the secrets of material weapons, or weapons with which one fights another in this material world. *Atharva Veda* has really given us the weapons with which we can fight the inner human problems like sorrow and pain.

An individual who has gained control over the mind is far stronger than an individual who has gained control over the material world. An individual who has discovered the atom bomb may be able to destroy the world and reduce it to ashes, but he has no weapons with which he can diminish or destroy the *Ananda* in a place. If one can gain mastery over one's own senses, then he can get *Ananda* in an abundant measure. The contradiction that arises between the internal aspects or feelings and the external aspects or feelings can be removed by the knowledge of *Adharva Veda*. Today we are regarding *Atharva Veda* as something that is separate from the other three *Vedas*—*Yajur*, *Rig*, and *Sama*. This is not correct. The *Atharva Veda* is something which is latent and is in fact present in all the three *Vedas*. Just as Yoga is latent and is present in all the *Karma*, *Upasana* and *Jnana*, so also, *Atharva Veda* is present in all the *Vedas*.

In *Bhagavad Gita* we have all the chapters taking the name *Yoga* like *Karma Yoga*, *Jnana Yoga*, *Vibhuthi*

Yoga and so on. It is not possible to say that one is more important than the other. This is because *Yoga* is common to all the chapters and is indeed most important. If we want basically to look at all things as one and find the common content, then the position is different. On the other hand, if you do not have this oneness as the basis, then you look at individuals and say that one is wearing a blue shirt, another a red shirt and yet another a yellow shirt; it means that our eyes are giving importance to the differences rather than the oneness that is present in all of them. If we put blue glasses on our eyes, then all the shirts will look blue. Similarly if we wear the glasses of *Prema* or love, then all that you see in the world will be *prema*. If your vision is not filled with *prema*, how can the things that you see with your vision be full of *prema*? It is the *Atharva Veda* which tells us that if you want to see Brahman in the entire creation, you must have your vision filled with *prema*.

It is a great folly to neglect the sacred *Vedas* which teach us such sacred paths. It is very undesirable to come to regard the *Vedas* as useless books and to put them aside. When we go to bed, we make an attempt to read storybooks which do not bring you any noble thoughts. We are not willing to read books which give us valuable

advice in life. Some students have a few other bad habits, too. They have transistor radios by their bedsides which play some music and they regard this as a lullaby for sending them to sleep. Some other students wish to read some useless story books and put them on their chests. Then only they will go to sleep.

You must regard your heart as a temple. You should make an attempt to install God in the temple of your heart. The human body is like a temple and in this lives *Jiva*, who is an ancient representative of God. To be born as a human being is an exceptional gift. To enable such a human birth to reach its destination and make it sacred, our *Vedas* have been teaching various paths. The *Sastras* and *Puranas* also enable the *Jiva* in the body to reach the sacred destination.

13. One Who Protects Dharma Will In Turn Be Protected By Dharma

When one is prosperous, one will not care for God. In that condition he will be a sinner and he will be moving about without caring for the Lord. On the other hand, he will open his eyes when his prosperity disappears. Listen to this plain truth, oh boys and girls of Bharath.

Pavitratma Swarupas

The *Veda* Brahman has many names and today we will take one particular name, *Chandas*, and try to understand Him through this name. This word *Chandas* is known in several ways. *Vedas* have been divided into four parts. Some parts constitute the *manthras* and the other parts constitute the *Brahmanas*.

These four parts have the names *Samhita*, *Aranyaka*, *Brahmana* and the *Upanishad*. *Samhita* has been taken to mean that part which contains *manthras* and the other three parts together have been given the other names. *Chandas* has been given different kinds of original or root meaning and it has also been described in many different ways. Not only this, sometimes the *Sruthi* which contains the *manthra* and the *Brahmana* have also been called *Chandas*. *Gayatri*, *Vishtubh*, *Anushtubh* and *Sishtubh* have also been called *Chandas*. The sacred *Sruthis* have been describing this *Chandas* in different ways they have been introducing this word into various descriptions and thus spreading prosperity to the rest of the world.

Although *Chandas* in a way is synonymous with the *manthras* and the *Brahmanas*, some people consider that this word has nothing to do with the *Vedas* or *Swadhyaya* or *Amnaya* and they have been arguing in a different way. Some also argued that this word *Chandas* can be applied only to *Gayatri* and that we cannot use this word in relation to the *manthras* and *Brahmanas*. Some have even undertaken to argue that it has no relation to the *Vedas* either. They have been arguing and criticising the views expressed earlier, in this manner. In

all these cases, the people who argue thus, do it on the strength of their own intelligence and the prejudices which they have in their minds. We have to say that these arguments have nothing to do with the actual merits of the problem. They are more related to their own individual prejudices. Not only in the various texts and branches of learning such as *Viseshika*, *Nyaya*, and so on, but in the *Mimamsikas* such as *Poorvamimamsa*, *Uttaramimamsa* and the *Darshanas*, they have explained that the word *Chandas* has the full meaning and significance as has been just described here.

Some who took a limited and restricted view of things were of the opinion that what is contained here may at best be described as *Puranas* and *Ithihasas*, but you cannot ascribe to it the authority of the *Vedas*. In one particular *Kosa* (*Vijnanamaya Kosa*) it has been maintained that the *Chandas* can be related to this *Kosa*. In *vyakarana* or grammar, a *rishi* by the name of *Aruni* has also been supporting this in several ways. In this way, by drawing authorities from the *Sruthi* and the *Smruthi*, they have been establishing that the word *Chandas* relates to the *Veda*.

In this context, it is necessary for us to understand as to how this word *Chandas* has come to represent the

important statements in the different *Vedas* and what exactly the origin of the word *Chandas* is. There are some authorities which tell us that particular *manthra* which makes you distant from death and which gives you immortality should be called *Chandas*. This is the reason why the great *rishis* who have understood and identified themselves with Brahman, while uttering the *manthras* in the three *Vedas*—*Rig*, *Yajur* and *Sama*—were seeking immortality for themselves. While offering the *Havis* (oblation) for the God of fire, these *rishis* were uttering the *manthras* which were life-giving *manthras*; and by uttering such *manthras*, they have given a distinctive meaning to the word *Chandas*.

Here we have to clearly understand the meaning of the words death and immortality. We regard death as synonymous with all kinds of strength in the body being lost. In other words, death is the ebbing away of the life force from the body. If the life force remains in the body forever, we regard that situation as immortality. These are not the correct meanings. It is a mistake to think of immortality as life remaining permanently in the body. To be able to completely identify one's self with the aspect of God and completely forget the aspect of the body is true immortality. If at all times we are totally

immersed only in the thought of the body and its comforts, and forget the aspect of Atma, that is death. It is only when we are able to clearly recognise the connection between birth and death that the sacred desire for securing immortality will sprout in us. There is birth and death for the body, but there is no birth or death for the Atma. To be able to understand this eternity of the Atma is the real meaning of attaining immortality. We must enquire about the process by which we can attain this immortality. Not only by doing good deeds, by keeping good company and by having good thoughts in the material world and in all matters relating to our daily life but also by imbibing the *sakthi* obtained from reciting the sacred *manthras* can we secure this aspect of immortality.

The *rishis* have shown us this alternative path. In the context of the daily life, the good work that we do is like a negative pole but the divine *sakthi* which we can get through the utterance of the *Veda manthras* is like a positive pole. In this process, both the negative and the positive will have to be in their appropriate strength. It is true that by doing good deeds we can keep this negative terminal in a good condition but, if we have no regard for the strength that we can get from the divine *manthras*, then there would be no positive terminal and we cannot

get the full strength. Here we have to recognise the close relationship between the negative and the positive principles.

Today, whatever good work we are undertaking in the world is being done in a casual manner without understanding its significance so that it may be imprinted in the heart. In the worldly aspect, we are doing several things either to attain a high position or to attain a reputation or just for the sake of exhibition or in the hope of getting some material gain. Each one can judge for himself whether he is undertaking a particular work to get some gain or not.

Of all things that we do, those intended for attaining self-satisfaction are very few. All kinds of work that we do, which are not intended for the satisfaction of the self (*Atma*), can be described as actions which are temporal or actions which are related to the material world. I have told you several times that we can get self-satisfaction only when we have confidence in our own self. It is only when there is self-confidence along with self-satisfaction will you get the capacity for self-sacrifice. It is only after you have the capacity for self-sacrifice, can you get self-realisation.

Thus, you attain immortality only out of sacrifice (*tyaga*). It is for this reason that all the *yajnas* and other rituals in this country have been intended to symbolise sacrifice. These *yajnas* are not undertaken just for their own sake. They have a definite purpose of promoting divine strength. Once upon a time even the *devas* lost the spirit of sacrifice. It was then realised that the *devas* of the *yajnas* could not be in their place and the goddess of the *yajna* took the form of a deer and left the place. The form of a deer is called the form of a *Krishnamriga*. When the goddess of *yajna* took the form of a deer and left the place, the *devas* could not bear this and so they also followed this animal. The *Devas* wanted to get the deer but they were unable to do so. They could get hold of the skin of the deer and so they brought back the skin. In the skin of the deer, there are three colours, namely *Sukla* (white), *Krishna* (dark), and *Babru* (brown). These three colours have been identified with the *Rig*, *Yajur*, and *Sama Vedas*. This is the reason why the master of ceremonies in a *yajna* sits on a deer skin. This is symbolic of the fact that the ceremony represents God, and thereby they want to get God's grace. Since God likes *Veda* and *manthra*, our *rishis* have regarded the skin of the deer as something which is pleasing to the Lord. It was their

belief that God is pleased with the deer skin and therefore by having the deer skin with them they thought that they would please God and obtain His grace.

So, those individuals who wish to acquire scholarship and knowledge of *Brahma Vidya* put a piece of the deer skin in their sacred thread before they begin studying *Brahma Vidya*. Since the deer skin has the three colours, *sukla*, *krishna*, and *babru*, it is considered to be symbolic of all the three *Vedas* and the trinity of the gods. Although in the common worldly parlance it may simply be viewed as a deer skin, in the *yajna* when it is used for the sacred purpose it is described by a special name *Sarma*. *Sarma* here stands for happiness or bliss. This kind of *Ananda*, which is beyond and above the sensual pleasures is called bliss. This bliss which is different from the ordinary pleasures can come to us only through *Brahma Vidya*.

What we generally call happiness relates to the bodily comforts and is transient. Such transient pleasure which relates only to the body comes to us in a few moments, but immediately afterwards it plunges us into deep a sorrow since it is only momentary. But the kind of bliss that one gets through the *Atma* is permanent, pure and selfless. This is the reason why *Brahma Vidya*

has been preaching to us that *prema* has to be cultivated for the sake of *prema* only.

You should not show *prema* for the sake of obtaining material benefits. If *prema* is shown for the sake of obtaining some material benefit, then it will last for a very short time and will wear out quickly. No material object is permanent and therefore *prema* shown for acquiring such object is also not permanent. *Atma* symbolises truth and hence is permanent. Therefore, *prema*, which is attached to *Atma* will also be true and permanent. This kind of *prema* and truth are present in every *jiva*. If we develop *prema* and truth for their own sake, then the *prema* and truth which each one develops and the *prema* and truth present in everyone will all join together and will become *prema* and truth in infinity. That is why it has been said in the Upanishads, “*Satyasya satyam*” or the truth of truth.

We should understand the purpose for which this life has been given to us. It is but proper that we devote our life for achieving that purpose. For every *manthra* an appropriate path has also been shown by that *manthra*. While uttering the *manthras* our ancestors took care to see that they were observing the cleanliness and the path

which was demanded by that particular *manthra*. Just as these root words *at*, *adyathe*, *aththa* represent eating, the act of eating, the subject who is eating and together they represent the unified aspect of food, the work that one is doing, the act of doing work, and the subject who is doing the work should all be unified. Then only will the work that you are doing be sacred.

Students can easily understand if these concepts are explained in terms of the subject, the object and the predicate. It is common knowledge that a proper sentence can be formed only when these three come together and when there is proper co-ordination between them. When there is no correlation between these three, there is room for several doubts and questions. If there is a sentence such as “Rama has beaten”, then, the one who has heard this sentence will ask who was beaten. This will further give rise to another question as to who has beaten whom. Then, the question will also arise about what has been beaten. If instead of all this, we say, “Rama has beaten the dog”, there will be no further questions. In the same manner, when the *manthra*, the utterance of the *manthra*, and the fruit of the *manthra* are all properly explained and co-ordinated, there will be no room for further doubt or question. It is because *Veda* had the strength of

establishing the *triputi* (Trinity of thought, word, and deed), it encompasses the three aspects—the subject, the object, and the predicate.

There is a very appropriate incident in the *Mahabharatha* which illustrates this. While going about in the forest, the Pandavas had the desire of helping one Brahmin. They therefore started chasing one animal and in the process they were very tired and stopped under a tree for rest. All the five Pandavas were there. After some time, Dharmaraja was feeling thirsty and he asked his brother Bhima to look round and bring some water. Bhima, who went looking for water, did not return for quite some time. Bhima was a strong person and could defend himself, but even he had not returned and so Dharmaraja asked Nakula and Sahadeva to go together and look for Bhima as well as water. But Nakula and Sahadeva also did not return for quite some time. After this, he asked Arjuna to go and even he did not return for a very long time. Finally Dharmaraja went himself, looking for the other brothers. Under a tree near a small tank, he found all the four brothers lying in a state of unconsciousness. They were looking as if they had no life in them. Dharmaraja could not contain his thirst and he thought that he would drink some water and then do

something about his brothers. At that time, he heard some unseen celestial voice asking him questions. This voice said that Dharmaraja will get the right to drink water from the tank only after the questions have been answered. But, Dharmaraja said that he will be able to give replies to the questions only after he knows who the questioner was. Then the voice gave a reply that He was a Yaksha. These questions are referred to as *Yaksha-prasnas*. Dharmaraja replied to all these questions with good and appropriate meaning and he passed the test with flying colours.

The Yaksha was happy and pleased and permitted Dharmaraja to ask for any boon but with some conditions. According to the conditions Dharmaraja can ask for only one of his four dead brothers to be brought back to life if he so chose. At that time Dharmaraja started to think deeply. After having given deep thought, Dharmaraja said that Nakula might be brought back to life. At that, the Yaksha, in surprise asked another question. You are to face the battle of *Mahabharatha* in the near future and in that you will need the support of Bhima, who is full of strength and Arjuna who is well versed in the use of weapons. How is it that you have chosen Nakula instead of Bhima or Arjuna? Then Dharmaraja said that his father

had two wives—Kunthi and Madri. While he, Arjuna and Bhima were Kunthi's sons, Nakula and Sahadeva were Madri's sons. Since he was alive as a son of Kunthi, it is but appropriate that he asked for the life of one of the sons of Madri. He said that he could not ask for the life of another son of Kunthi while Madri is left without a son. Yaksha was very much pleased with this reasoning and he immediately said that he was giving life back to all the four brothers.

Following the true path of *dharma*, we will be in a position to receive much more benefit than what is anticipated. To Dharmaraja, who asked for the life of only one of his brothers by treading the path of *dharma*, the Yaksha was prepared to grant him the life of all the brothers. On the other hand, if we tread a path different from *dharma*, then we will find that if we have a thousand desires, not even one of those desires will be fulfilled. One who destroys *dharma* will in turn be destroyed by *dharma*, but one who protects *dharma* will in turn be protected by *dharma*. Whether it is punishment or protection it can arise only out of *dharma*. It is only by *dharma* that we can attain prosperity. We should try to follow the path followed by Dharmaraja at least to a certain extent.

It is natural that enmity and bitterness grows between the children of stepmothers but in these days of Kali, even the sons born of the same mother are quarrelling among themselves. In this Age, when there is so much hatred developed between two brothers born to the same mother, where is the question of anyone protecting the life of a brother born to a stepmother? When there is no unity between two brothers born to the same mother, is it possible for us to bring about unity amidst all persons in this world? In the discourses of platform speeches we hear every day people addressing others as brothers and sisters. It is necessary to ask ourselves whether such words are coming from the depths of our hearts or whether we are simply reading them from a piece of paper.

Students, boys and girls!

If you use the words “brothers and sisters” from the depths of your hearts, then there is no doubt whatsoever that you will merit the grace of the Lord and good consequences will follow. Just because you say “brothers and sisters”, you do not have to worry and fear that you may have to distribute your ancestral property to those brothers and sisters or that you may have to distribute your wealth and ornaments amongst

them. What you have to realise is the one common divinity that is present in all of you and that is the basis for accepting the brotherhood of all humanity. When you have recognised that the divine Atma present in each one is the same and when you have recognised that this is the only truth, then you will become truly brothers and sisters. It is because they entertained such good ideas and ideals that the scholars, the kings, the people, and the *rishis* of ancient days had one common idea. They thought as one body and enjoyed all the common aspects.

Students:

It is necessary for you to understand the good that is contained in the sacred Indian culture and *Vedas*, the *Ithihasas* and *Puranas*. With great care you should understand the sacred inner meaning of all these things. For the last ten days we have been trying to grasp the aspect of omnipresence of Brahman and learning that Brahman is not affected by changes in time or environment and that Brahman is present everywhere. If you understand this aspect, then there will be no room for differences between any two people, for Brahman is present in all. There is no room for cruel and bad ideas, and it is possible for everyone to lead a good and happy life.

14. Following The Path Of Dharma Will Always Lead One To Victory

When the mind that is comparable to a root gets destroyed, then the big tree of nature will fall. Thereafter, man's desires grow in the form of big horns. This is the bare truth I am revealing to you.

Prema Swarupas students, boys, and girls!

Today, *Veda* which is the embodiment of the *manthras* and the *Brahmanas* will be described by one of its many names i.e., *Prusni*. This sacred word *Prusni* has an inner meaning and through this inner meaning it has been giving prosperity to the entire world. *Prusni* indicates cleanliness, the cleanliness of the *Antahkarana*. The correct meaning for this word

is clean, clear and unwavering. On the basis of the meaning of this word, many *rishis* have been getting different kinds of strength from the *manthras*. The *manthras* are sacred and faultless. Hence, they are referred to as *Prusni*. By chanting these faultless *manthras*, great *rishis* were also described by the name *Prusni*.

What is contained in these sacred *manthras* is the *Veda Rasa*. Therefore the *Veda* which is a conglomeration of such *manthras* is also referred to as *Prusni*. The basis for this *Veda Rasa* is the aspect of Brahman and this has also been called by the name *Prusni*. Off and on, when we try to understand the real inner meaning and significance of this word *Prusni*, we realise that it represents everything that is faultless, clean and clear. Since these words signify the establishment of the clear and clean aspect of the *Parabrahma*, this word also refers to God in the common parlance.

There is another synonym for the word *Prusni* that is *Ajaha*. Since our ancient *rishis* were able to attain that stage of immortality by uttering such sacred and faultless *manthras*, they were also called *ajaha*. Every individual who does *karma* is after the fruits of the work which he does. On the other hand, the wise people, because of their wisdom, do not crave for the fruit of their *karma*,

but perform it for the benefit and prosperity of humanity at large. Because of this, they are called *ajahas*.

One can attain wisdom out of doing *karma*, but we have to understand that wise people undertake action for the benefit of the ignorant and whatever *karma* they perform are for the sake of setting an example or ideal for the ignorant people to follow. The sacred *rishis* could hear the sacred word of the *Veda* through their *thapas* and because of this they could also hear the sacred *manthras*. Hence, they were sometimes called *tapoja*. Because these sacred words of the *Veda* could be listened to only through the strength and the power of *thapas*, these words have also been referred to as *Brihaspati*, *Vakpati*, and *Vachaspati*. The sacred words, which could be heard because of the power of *rishis*, were described by these names.

The source for these immaculate *manthras* has been Brahman himself. Hence, Brahman is also described as *Prusni garbha*. It is not possible for such a sacred Brahman to have any faults. In fact, Brahman is without any attributes.

We have the authority of the word *Rasovaisaha*, which is a description of the Lord. Out of *Rasa*, we can get only *rasa* that is out of Brahman, who is full of *rasa*, we can get only *rasa* and nothing else. Therefore, what

has originated from such a Brahman, namely the entire universe must be viewed as Brahman Himself. But what has originated from Brahman—faultless aspects of all creation which have come out of Brahman—if it is compared with what originates from us which is often full of faults, we find that there is no comparison at all.

In order that we may understand this aspect of Brahman, we have ourselves to reach a stage which corresponds to that aspect. We have made a statement that *rishis* have acquired this aspect of *Prusni* with the help of *thapas*. We have to ask ourselves whether they have by their power of *thapas* outlined something which does not exist or whether they have revealed to themselves something which already exists.

It is impossible for anyone to find something which does not already exist. What already exists has been learnt by the power of the *thapas*. One can reveal the existence of something which already exists. In the same manner, we can try and understand something which already exists but no one can comprehend what does not already exist. The *rishis* have understood this immaculate aspect of the Brahman by means of their *thapas*. This only means that they have uncovered this aspect of Brahman which already exists.

There is a small example for this. When one enters the elementary class, one learns the alphabets: A, B, C, D. Thereafter, one tries to combine these letters into words. The twenty-six letters can thus be grouped to form different words. When we undertake to compose one word God, we have to group three of the existing twenty-six letters to form the required word. There is a very subtle aspect which we have to comprehend fully here. In forming this word God, we must ask ourselves whether we have used the letters which already exist in the language or whether we have used a new alphabet in forming this word God. When we look at this with some care, we realise that our effort was only in picking up some letters and making them into a word like God. Taking the words *Prusni*, *Apishtuhu*, *Thistuhum*, we see that we are taking them out of the *manthras*, and by grouping them together we form another *manthra*.

On the same analogy, from what already exists in us in the form of divine strength, namely the aspect of Brahman, we pick up things and formulate other *sadhanas* which go by the names *Dhyana*, *Yoga*, or *Manthra*. We are able to do this only by combining what already exists in us. We are observing the already existing divine aspect in some form. The form depends on the

time, circumstances and the country where one resides. After the lapse of some time one may change this aspect in accordance with changes in environment, culture or country.

At one time, on a particular piece of land you may see that there is nothing green growing on it. On another day you may see that there is rain and as a result of which there may be green vegetation in its place. A barren land becomes full of greenery because of rain and because of seeds which were there already. What was present as latent seeds have now sprouted and become a green pasture.

What is present in you is a desire in the form of a seed and out of this seed of desire sprouts a small plant which is your mind and out of this small plant, namely the mind, grows a big tree. Out of this big tree, we are attempting to get fruits and flowers. On the same analogy, out of the seeds of *karma* you will have to grow the plant of *upasana* and through the plant of *upasana*, you have to grow the tree of wisdom and from this tree of wisdom, you can get the fruits and flowers namely *Ananda* or Bliss.

Therefore, what you find as the aspect of Brahman is not something which was not already present in you.

In fact, it is something already present but latent and unseen. The *thapas* simply uncovers what is already there.

In this context, there is another name for the word *Prusni*, namely, *Devayuvam*. This alternative word has come because people constantly fixed their mind on *Deva*. The *Maharishis* have also used the word *Devayuvam* for the same thing. The meaning of this word is to have your objective as God, fix your attention on God and reach a stage when you experience the identity of your self and God. That stage is called *Devayuvam*. Thus, while having the aspect of God, the aspect of Brahman, and the aspect of faultless *manthras* within ourselves, to spend our time as ordinary human beings and on several occasions less than human beings that is, as if we are animals, is a very futile exercise.

“*Veda iti Dharmadi itihi vedaha*” means that which expounds *dharma* is *Veda*. In common usage, it is also said “*Veda ititi vedaha*” meaning that which explains the meaning, is *Veda*. *Veda* is that which cannot be known by *Pratyaksha pramana*, or by inference. That is the aspect of the *Parabrahma*.

Since *Veda* tells you something which cannot be understood by either direct evidence or inferential

evidence, these two aspects are called *dharma* and *moksha*. Of the four aspects—*dharma*, *artha*, *kama* and *moksha*—*artha* and *kama* are matters which relate to the world or they are worldly transactions. We are attaching importance to *artha* and *kama* which are the common transactions in the routine world and neglecting *dharma* and *moksha* which are the divine aspects. Today, what we see in the daily life as direct evidence are matters relating to *artha* (wealth) *kama* (desire). We should ask ourselves whether these two things are giving us any happiness. We find that these are giving us only sorrow, lack of peace and some types of anger. In the environment in which man lives, he has all the necessary strengths—physical and mental—but is not utilising any of these to realise truth. Even if one uses a very small part of the strength that he possesses, he will be able to get infinite happiness. Without realising the sacredness of our objective and without realising our own strength we are also borrowing strength which we do not possess and we put on an exhibitionist appearance and we indulge in such things which are not backed by natural strength and frequently land ourselves in troublesome situations. In accordance with our culture, I will give an illustration which is common knowledge with young boys and girls.

It is customary in our country that when one goes to have *darshan* of the Lord in a temple, one removes the shirt, pant and other appurtenances like shoes, tie, etc. and puts on a simple apparel of only a dhoti and an upper cloth. The inner meaning of this is that God is not attracted by your appearance but that God will look at the cleanliness of the inner self. This is interpreted by saying that you give up your external decorations and that God will see you in your natural condition. Another way of saying the same is that you have to give up whatever you have acquired as additions to your body before presenting yourself before God, but nowadays many somehow try to get hold of a special dress—even on hire, if need be—to attend special functions. You can see for yourselves how degrading it is to borrow something on loan and put it on instead of wearing what belongs to you. The meaning of all this is that everything that is artificially created is bound to be full of faults whereas what is natural is bound to be good. What you borrow and add to yourself artificially will have no relationship whatsoever to you in the context of the divine. We should realise that “Imitation is human while creation is divine.” Merely imitating what you see in the world around you is purely human and there is no

divine aspect in it at all. On the other hand, what comes from your own Atma contains divinity. What binds man in all circumstances are these artificial attitudes but really, the divine aspect never lands man in bondage. What is contained in the *Vedas* must be accepted, adopted and put into practice. This is the *sadhana* that is appropriate for the youth. *Dharma* is something which makes the entire world prosperous in addition to stirring your heart and body to right action.

In the *Mahabharatha*, there is a very good example for this. The Kauravas and the Pandavas had made themselves ready in the battle array in the *Kurukshetra*. They were all holding weapons and wearing dress appropriate for the oncoming war. They were blowing their respective conches and uttering war cries. Thus everything was getting ready for the battle. Their blood was boiling and even as the situation was tense, Dharmaraja just looked at the Kaurava army and noticed his *Guru* Dronacharya and his grandfather Bhishma. Immediately, he removed his footwear and the battle armour and started walking with folded hands and bare feet towards Bhishma. On seeing this, the Kauravas felt very happy and thought that Dharmaraja was coming to ask for peace. The Pandavas were also very much

disturbed by the sight of their eldest brother behaving like this at a very critical moment. Everyone became very angry. At this, Krishna who was on the Pandava's side, signalled to Arjuna and others that they should follow Dharmaraja as they had all done on earlier occasions. Dharmaraja would never do any meaningless thing. Whatever he did was always right. He had never done anything contrary to the injunctions of the *Vedas* or contrary to the right path because he knew all aspects of righteousness and had a name very appropriate to his qualities. Following the orders of Krishna, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula, and Sahadeva also put down their weapons and followed suit. Dharmaraja requested the grandfather to bless them and said "Our father died when we were very young and ever since we have regarded you as our father. It is not right for us to fight with one who has been like a father to us. Hence, we request you to pardon us and bless us at this moment and give us permission". Bhishma immediately recognised the *dharma* in Dharmaraja and the right kind of conduct which he was adopting. He shed tears of joy. Realising that Dharmaraja was exhibiting the highest kind of *dharma*, he blessed him and said *Dharmo rakshati rakshitaha*. *Dharma* will itself protect one who protects

dharma. Since you are following *dharma* to the very letter, *dharma* itself will protect you. Thereafter, Dharmaraja went to Drona and addressing him as *guru* said that it is not appropriate for them to fight with him as he was in the position of their *guru* but on account of situations beyond their control they were forced to wage a battle with their *guru* and requested him to give them permission and blessing. At this, Drona too was deeply moved as he recognised in this act of Dharmaraja an extraordinary quality of sticking to *dharma* even in the most fearful conditions. Drona affirmed that this very quality will bring the Pandavas victory in the battle. Because the Pandavas were full of *dharma*, they went and asked Bhishma and Drona for permission and blessing and won. Otherwise, could anyone defeat Bhishma and Drona in a battle? Only the path of *dharma* followed by Dharmaraja brought victory to the Pandavas. Contrary to this situation, today, we find that the very first people with whom one wants to fight are one's parents and *guru*. Those who go against the wishes of their father, mother, *gurus* and God are Kauravas and not Pandavas.

Gandhari, the blind mother of the Kauravas, tried to convince them to stick to the path of righteousness.

Dhritarashtra, their blind father also tried to put them on the right path but they would not listen. God Himself, in the form of Krishna, went to the Kauravas on a mission of peace and tried to put them on the right path. Their *Guru* Drona, also tried his best to put them on the right path but they did not listen.

Such people who are not following the right path and who are not showing respect either to God or the parents are to be described as Kauravas. They cannot be called as Pandavas. Like the Pandavas, we have to recognise the five aspects or the five *pranas* (vital airs) that are present in us as divine, and thereby we should recognise the aspect of Brahman. This is absolutely necessary for us. I wish to bless you young people who are participating in this session and hope that you will give up foolish ideas and take to sacred ideas and try and understand what is being expounded as part of Indian culture in the form of *Puranas*, stories and *Vedas*.

15. Strength Arising From One's Own Righteous Conduct Is The Only Meaningful Strength

Without having any attachment to work and without swerving from the *dharmic* path, if you do all work in the name of God, then God will always be with you in good and bad, in happiness and sorrow. He will be the witness and a constant companion with you. It is quite natural that the infinite *Parabrahma* has a large number of names. It is also natural that one who has so many forms and names has an infinite number of eyes, legs, and heads. For such a *Parabrahma*, who answers these two descriptions, they have also given the names *prathamaja* and *poorvaja*. In addition, there is another meaningful name for Him and that is *Suparna*. It is essential for us to know the aspect of Brahman who answers such a description.

In order that man gets the fruit of the meaning of this description and to put the meaning into practice, to constantly think of this meaning is a sort of natural action. In common practice we know the nature of the writer who writes stories, books, and legends and we know how he works. If a writer wants to produce a story or a drama, he first creates a mental picture and then starts to write and finally builds a story with the picture as the basis. In the same manner, when God wanted to create the world in His aspect of the *Parabrahma*, He first created His basis and that basis was the sound. This primordial sound was the first picture which was created. Because it represents the sound, it has been called the *Vachaspati*, *Brihaspati*, *Prajapati*. Since this is the first aspect of creation, it has also been called *prathamaja*.

For *Vedas*, the first important thing is the sound and so it has been called *prathama*, or the first word has been called *prathamaja*. In the same manner, if we enquire about who was the basis for this *prathamaja*, we come to the conclusion that it is *Prajapati*. Since *Prajapati* is the earlier basis than *prathamaja*, He is also called *poorvaja*. These names *poorvaja* and *prathamaja* have thus been given to the *Vedas* and we must make an

attempt to find the basis for giving these names to the *Vedas*. The very first in creation, namely *Hiranyagrabha* (Cosmic womb), uttered the very first sound as “*Bhoo*”. After uttering this sound, He created the form *bhooradi* and so this created - earth is called *Bhoomi*. In the *Veda*, it has also been referred to as *bhoomamu*.

This has also been referred to by another name *Sthirappravaham*. This *bhoomi* or *bhoomamu* is called *Sthirappravaha* because it is a creation which has neither a beginning nor an end. *Bhoomamu* also means a *manthra* which is sacred and permanent. The inner meaning of this word is that *bhoomi* is born in the form of the *manthras* and the *Brahmanas*. This is the reason why the *Sastras* have been creating three different aspects—*manthra*, *yantra* and *tantra* in man. The *yantra* is the body itself, the *manthra* is the breath which we take in and give out, and the *tantra* is the heart inside.

We must understand how one’s breath itself becomes *manthra*. It is so because we have the word *Soham* in the breath itself and when we inhale and exhale the breath we continuously utter the word *Soham*. This word *Soham* means “I am God”, I am that and simply means *Thath thwam asi* or “That are thou.” Therefore, this *manthra* of breath represents the *swaswarupa*.

As soon as one is born and even before one is able to see anything and experience anything, this breath is the very first thing that a new-born baby will experience. This breath and *manthra* tells us the aspect of life and expounds it to the world through the sound *koham* which means “Who am I?” This word *koham* comes in the form of a *manthra* and takes the form of a question. With the question “Who am I?” everyone begins his life. Because one starts his life with this question in the first instance, *Brihaspati* can also be called *Prathama*.

Because *Brihaspati* and *Vachaspati* could answer this very first question, they turned into *Maharishis*. To this question the answer they gave towards the end of one’s life is *Soham*. If we really understand the work of the *rishis* we will find that these *rishis* have raised the question *koham* and provided the answer to this question. Because they were able to give the answer to this very basic question, they have passed this worldly test. Life is the very foundation for living and this is a thing which we know. Just as for living, life is the basis so also for question, *manthra* is the basis.

Neither creation nor life are in the control of man. Because man is fully in the control of *Paramatma*, He is

also called *Prajapati*. Such aspects of *Prajapati* are latent and are contained in man. That is the reason why the sound or speech is latent in man. We have said earlier “*Brahmanam Brahma Vahanam*,” that is, Brahma has the *manthras* as his *vahana* or carrier.

While we perform the *yagas* and *yajnas*, we come across the statement “*yagnanga yagnavahana*”. This *yagnavahana* has also been referred to as *vrishavahana*. This implies that it is a form of *dharma*. This *dharma* is understood as something which is standing on four different legs. The four legs on which it is supported are *sathya*, *yajna*, *thapas*, and *dana* (charity) and because *dharma* takes these four legs as the support, one also called *Paramatma* as the *Vrishavahana*. *Suparna* is a name for Garuda. When we call Vishnu as *Supranavahana*, it also means that Vishnu is *Garudavahana*, and in this context Garuda also means *manthras*.

The *Puranas* tell us that while Vishnu was going to the rescue of Gajendra, Vishnu did not take his *vahana*. Lakshmi was afraid that there might be defeat for Vishnu because he had not taken the aspect of *manthras* with Him. Even in her excitement, Lakshmi realised that there was considerable strength in the *manthras* and that

Vishnu should not have left them behind. But, she was rather afraid to tell her husband to take these *manthras* along as his *vahana*. The poet has described her predicament in a beautiful manner. She wanted to move forward and ask a question of the Lord but she was afraid that the Lord might not reply and so she was going forward and backward. It becomes clear here that *manthra* is a very good support even for the Lord. Without the carrier of the *manthra*, even God cannot move forward and this is a moral which has been told to us in the story of Gajendramoksha.

We must take the inner meaning and the significance of the stories told in our *Puranas*. Instead of that, if we simply think literally that Garuda is a carrier and that Vishnu is being carried by Garuda, it is not correct. Garuda stands for *manthra* and *dharma* stands for *vrishaba* and because of this *Suparna* is a name given to our *Vedas*.

Yesterday we explained to you the significance of the use of the deer skin in the *yajnas*. In the same manner several words are used in the *Vedas* to signify different kinds of carriers. We should know the inner meaning of such words. Because the sacred meaning of the words that occur in our *Vedas* has not been properly

explained to the people by our scholars, it has become the practice for the youth to lose faith in our *Vedas* and *Sastras* and to think that they only lead us on the wrong path. This feeling has become common among the youth. This is only a result of the inability on the part of the scholars to explain the sacred inner meaning of the various words which appear in the *Vedas*.

You may be thinking that the *Vedas* and *Sastras* simply bind a man to several compulsory duties and that they do not give you any enlightenment. This is not correct. In fact, the *Vedas* and the *Sastras* do give knowledge to the ignorant people. One cannot come to the conclusion that our *Vedas* have told us to give up everything, sacrifice everything, run away from the family and retire into a forest. Our *Vedas* have taught us to regard all activities and all our duties as Brahman, do the duties that are enjoined on us and be in the worldly life in this manner. This has been taught to us by our scriptures. However much one may be in *upasana*, however much one may be after spiritual attainments, it is necessary for one to adjust his *upasana* to suit his country and the conditions in which he is living.

The *Mahabharatha* is something which has given us various stories and illustrations about *dharma*. The

Mahabharatha has shown several paths and several illustrations to lift man from the human level to the divine heights. For this reason our ancestors have referred to it as *Panchamaveda* or the fifth *Veda*. On one occasion, with a view to attaining victory and success in his efforts, Arjuna performed the *Aswametha yaga* (Horse sacrifice). According to the tradition, the person who captures the horse in such a *yaga* must be willing to pay the money for this or agree to fight and win. After the horse was thus traditionally released by Arjuna, it was captured by one called Maharaja Mayuradhawaja. According to the rules, Arjuna was preparing for a fight with this Rajah. It so happened that this Maharaja was a great devotee of Lord Krishna. When Arjuna met Krishna, he was told that it would be wise to first investigate the circumstances under which the horse was captured by the king and only then undertake to fight for the horse. Krishna said that the horse may even be released without a fight. Krishna did not stop at that. He told Arjuna that King Mayuradhawaja was a great devotee and it is not right for Arjuna to go and fight with him. He even warned Arjuna that it may not be possible to attain victory over a sincere devotee of the Lord. Krishna also told Arjuna that Mayura was a very

disciplined man. Not only did the King go through the prescribed *dharmic* paths, but he was also very well versed in the *Karma Kanda*, *Upasana* and *Jnana* and was thus a very capable person. When Krishna described Mayura in such glowing terms, Arjuna became somewhat jealous because he always thought that he was the greatest devotee of Krishna and was under the proud impression that there was none greater than him. However, Arjuna took Krishna and went to King Mayura.

On the way, Krishna hatched a small plan. Krishna told Arjuna that it is not correct to go in their normal forms because Mayura may not respect them. He advised Arjuna that it may be better to go disguised as two Brahmins. Krishna said that Mayura will then look after them better as they will then be guests in the house of King Mayura. As these two persons went as guests, Mayura also set aside his kingly status and became a normal householder. He received the two persons who had come to his house in the guise of two Brahmins as guests. It is the first duty of a householder to welcome guests without worrying about who they are. This is our tradition. In this context, when the two Brahmins were received well, treated well and given ample food, Krishna wanted to further play a small drama. Krishna wanted to

show Arjuna that he had unwarranted and unbecoming pride in thinking that he was the greatest of the devotees of Krishna, because Mayura also was a great devotee.

Just before they started eating their food, Krishna told Mayura “We are two Brahmins, the second Brahmin is my friend. My friend has a son and we were going round with a view to settle the marriage of this son. On our way we saw a tiger which swallowed my friend’s son, but strangely, half the body of my friend’s son is in the tiger while the other half is outside. We wanted to release the boy from the tiger but the tiger did not yield. After some time the tiger uttered a sacred cry and said that it was willing to release the body if we were able to feed it with half the body of a person who strictly adheres to *dharma*. Krishna then said that he had enquired from the tiger who was such a righteous person, and the tiger had immediately replied that King Mayuradhwaja was the best person to satisfy her requirements. Krishna then said that they would be willing to eat food and accept the King’s hospitality only if King Mayura agreed to give up half of his body to feed the tiger. King Mayura readily agreed to this as he did not want to displease the guests who were about to eat their food in his house. But Arjuna did not believe

these promises and thought that this promise was made only to make them eat the food. It is understandable that Arjuna expressed such a doubt because no one will ordinarily believe such an impossible promise. Krishna was assuring Arjuna that Mayura was not an ordinary person and that he would certainly stick to his promise.

Immediately after the food, King Mayura started getting ready to give away half of his body to the guests. He had his wife on one side and his son on the other and was preparing to give his body. Even in this act of his, he asked his wife to stand behind him because according to our tradition no wife should see the face of her husband being split into two. He asked his son to stand by his side and asked his wife to stand behind him. Krishna and Arjuna who were in the disguise of Brahmins were seated and the process of cutting the body into two halves with a saw had started. After the saw had split the body to a certain extent, they noticed that there were tears in the left eye.

Here we will understand how hardhearted Krishna can be when he puts any devotee to a test although he is a very soft-hearted person in the context of the slightest trouble for others. Yet, when he undertakes to put

someone to a test, he will be hard as a diamond. While looking at this, Arjuna was trembling at the sight of Mayura being cut like this, but Krishna said that a sacrifice made with sorrow in one's heart and a tear in one's eye was not good and that he was not prepared to accept such a sacrifice. Mayura immediately said that he was not one who will fulfil his promise with sorrow and tears. To clear this, one has to understand why there were tears only in one eye and not in both eyes. He begged the guests to examine the situation in detail.

Krishna wanted to demonstrate the sacredness of Mayura to Arjuna and so conducted all this drama. He asked Mayura to explain the significance of tears appearing only in one eye. Mayura addressed Krishna and said that there were tears only in the left eye because the right half of the body is having the privilege of saving the life of the son of a sacred Brahmin guest while the left side would merely be eaten by crows and jackals when it is thrown away and this is the reason for the sorrow and tears on the left side. When the truth was revealed in this manner, Arjuna's heart melted. He realised with surprise that there were such great devotees of the Lord. He prayed to Lord Krishna to stop this extraordinary and severe test for his sacred devotee.

When Arjuna uttered these words, Krishna appeared before Mayura in his glorious divine form with all the insignia, namely *Sankha*, *Chakra*, *Padma*, and *Gada*, blessed him and said that he and his children will have Krishna permanently in their hearts. Krishna revealed that He had brought about this test with a view to showing to the world the great devotion of Mayura.

In this context, it is also necessary for us to understand the meaning of the insignia which were worn by Krishna. Youth must also understand the true meaning of the four symbols with which the Lord is associated. Here, *Sankha* or the Conch stands for the *sabda* or primordial sound. The meaning of this is that sound is generated from the *Paramatma* and the sound is under the control of the Lord. The *chakra* or the wheel, represents the wheel of time which signifies that time is under the full control of the Lord. *Gada* or the mace represents physical strength. *Padma* the lotus represents the heart of every individual. The meaning of this is that all these are under the full control of the Lord.

Our strength should not be regarded as animal strength. All physical strength should be understood as the divine strength derived from Brahman. So also, the time which we spend must be associated with Brahman

Himself and the lotus should be regarded as the Lord Himself. If we develop these ideas, we will be able to lead a happy and meaningful life in the world.

The Kauravas were completely defeated and destroyed because they relied on their physical strength and on their strength of wealth. The Pandavas were victorious because they relied on the strength of *dharm*a and on God. Young people should know that the strength arising from one's own wealth and physical prowess is not real strength. The strength arising from one's own righteous conduct is the only meaningful strength.

16. Karma Marga, Jnana Marga, Bhakthi Marga: All Lead To The Same Destination

From the time you wake up in the morning until you go back to sleep in the night, you are spending all your time earning some food for your stomach. All the education, knowledge and ability that you have is being spent for this trivial purpose. Think of this, Oh man! and find out what happiness you are getting by forgetting the Lord in this process. What is the use of your feeling very proud that you have read many books and learnt many *Sastras* if you cannot have devotion to God? All such pursuits which do not enable you to strengthen your devotion to God are utterly useless. You should ponder over this truth.

Pavitratma Swarupas!

During the past fifteen days, you have learnt about some aspects of sacred Brahman. However, realising that the worldly affairs in which you have to live everyday are equally important, I will speak to you today about some of these worldly aspects.

If man lives properly as a human being, it will be occasionally possible for him to turn towards the divine but if man does not live as man, it will not be possible for him to even occasionally think of the divine. It is only when man makes an attempt to know who he is, can he understand the divine. Only then is there a chance for him to enter the realm of *Atma* and enjoy bliss and happiness.

It is in the context of this daily living that the great *acharyas*, Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhwa have given their philosophical expositions. Sankara established and expounded that whatever we see around us in the world is simply a manifestation of Easwara. He has been proclaiming that whether in the aspect of the *Jiva* or in the aspect of the Lord or in the aspect of material creation, everything is one and the same and there is no second. In all the three aspects, *Jiva*, Easwara, *Prakruthi*

and all the things that we see around us, what is present is the *Paramatma*; and appearances are an illusion.

Although the coconut appears to us as one single fruit, it still has three distinct parts, the fibre on the outside, the shell as a cover beneath it and the kernal inside. These parts though being distinct, yet constitute one single aspect of the coconut. In the same manner, Sankara regarded *Jiva*, Easwara and *Prakruthi* as three aspects, though apparently different, in reality are one and the same and thus he preached *Adwaita*. The world consists of several ideas: there are many things that we see, there are many desires on the material side and this was treated by Sankara as analogous to the outer fibre of the coconut. He further compared the human body to the shell below the fibre of the coconut. He realised that the human body was made of destructible items like flesh and blood and so he compared it to the shell. But the *Paramatma* which has the form of a lotus in each individual has been compared to the coconut kernal. By comparing this triple aspect of *Jiva*, Easwara and *Prakruthi* to these three constituents of the coconut, Sankara preached the philosophy of *Adwaita*.

Since he was propounding that everything in the world consists of only Brahman, the ordinary people were

somewhat confused. They were not able to clearly grasp the basis of *Adwaita*. He was explaining through the *Mahavakyas* like *Thath thwam asi* (That thou art), *Aham Brahmasmi* (I am Brahman) that all that one sees in this world is Brahman. There was some difficulty for ordinary people to comprehend the profound truths being preached by Sankara.

People find it quite easy to utter various words but they find it difficult to put them into practice. It is easy to mentally identify oneself with Brahman but to be able to really feel and practise that identity and to realise divinity in everyone is a difficult matter. By merely uttering such statements without understanding their true meaning, human nature is likely to deteriorate.

Realising this, Ramanuja with a view to arrest such deterioration, expounded what is called qualified *Adwaita* or *Visishta Adwaita*. Sankara, in the seventh century, preached *Adwaita* or the non-dualistic philosophy. On the other hand, in the eleventh century, Ramanuja was preaching qualified non-dualism. If *Adwaita* took deep roots, he was afraid that faith and devotion might become weaker. Therefore, he started preaching *Adwaita* in a special and qualified manner. He gave it some distinctiveness and explained that *Jiva* and Brahman always remain as separate entities.

While Sankara explained and propounded that *Jiva* and Brahman were identical with each other, Ramanuja introduced a special theory that though *Jiva* and Brahman were close and similar to each other, they were not really identical. In this context and in accordance with such teachings, people tried to get closer and closer to the Lord by their devotion.

Later in the 12th century, Madhwacharya propounded that *Jiva*, Brahman and *Prakruthi* were more distant than what had been conceived by the earlier schools of thought. He propounded that *Jiva* and Easwara are to be regarded as distinct and separate from each other and that they can never get close to each other. Madhwacharya opposed and contradicted the view of Sankara according to which Brahman was the only reality and the world was illusory. He asserted that Brahman, *Jiva* and *Prakruthi* were distinct and that each one of them was as real as the other two. We have to interpret this as simply meaning that Madhwacharya preached the concept of *Salokya* (Constant thought of godhead) and that *Jiva* simply lived in the domain of the Lord but it was not identical with the Lord. In this context, one can say that these three great *acharyas* were teaching three different aspects of the same reality.

Sankara was propounding *Sayujya* or identity with the Lord, while Ramanuja was talking in terms of *Sameepya* or closeness to the Lord and Madwacharya was preaching in terms of *Salokya* or living in the domain of the Lord.

In this way, these three acharyas preached three paths for realisation of the same truth, namely the *Jnana Marga*, the *Bhakthi Marga* and the *Karma Marga*. One should not think that these three paths are contradictory to one another. If we can sanctify the work that we do, the time that we spend and sanctify the use to which we put our body, then it will be possible to realise the truth and therefore they have gone from one step to another. They have gone from *Karma*—sanctifying the work—to *Bhakthi* and *Jnana*. That is the reason why all these aspects must be treated as complementary and not contradictory.

If man's effort is noble, then God will support it. The coming together of man's effort and God's grace is responsible for happiness. What is called *purushartha*, or man's effort, must be put in by man. Without this it is not possible for him to acquire the grace of the Lord. Ramanuja realised this and so he talked of different kinds of effort to be put in by man and the support of God.

Sankara taught that “*Sarvam Brahmanam jagat*” (The aspect of Brahman is the basis for all the work we do). He preached that there is nothing which is different from the Lord and that everything was the Lord Himself. Even Sankara, who preached pure *Adwaitha* undertook to establish four important religious centres in our country. Through them he tried to propagate the aspect of *Adwaitha*. Sankara taught that “*Ekam eva Adwaithiyam Brahma*” that is, Brahman is one and only one, there is no second to Brahman. Even while so preaching, at some places he supported the *Upasana Kanda* at some places.

When we look at them in a superficial manner, we feel that the philosophies expounded by these *Acharyas* are distinct and different from each other. This is not correct. If we examine them in detail and in the context of the time at which they were propounded, we will realise that they are not different in essence or in the basic content. The correct attitude is to see the unity among these three aspects and not to regard them as distinct and different from each other. We shall have to take the essence and inner meaning of all these and appreciate the underlying unity in them.

Sankara always taught pure and undiluted *Adwaitha* and he even encouraged *upasana* in the four

centres he established. This practice is continued even today. The people in charge there accept and participate in offerings to the Lord. By such offerings and *puja*, devotees have been attempting to get the grace of the Lord, even in these centres of *Adwaita*. Not only is there a meaning in performing such *upasanas*. they want common people to do the same thing in their daily lives. This is the purpose of participating in *upasana*.

There are two kinds of people—the *Jnanis* and ordinary people. The ordinary people can do the right thing by looking at and imitating the path followed by the *Jnanis*. It is only in the aspect of the body, mind and the daily life that these three philosophies—*Dwaita*, *Adwaita* and *Visishta Adwaita*—were being taught. From the point of view of the body, the path of *karma* or work was taught. From the point of view of the mind, the path of *bhakti* or devotion was taught. From the point of view of one's own daily life, the path of wisdom or *jnana* was taught. Therefore, in order to enable the person to practise these, Sankara, Madhwacharya and Ramanuja taught the three paths which can be called the royal paths for humanity to attain salvation.

One must recognise the purpose and the essence of these three approaches. It is not correct to see only the

outward differences and apparent contradictions between them. If we follow the pure non-dualistic path taught by Sankara and regard everything in the world as Brahman, then we have to ask ourselves what is it that we are able to see in the ordinary human life? Only when we take the other approaches will we be able to understand the human aspects of divinity. It is only from a superficial point of view that these paths appear different. But from the point of view of the ultimate goal, these three are one and the same. It is necessary for us to accept the *upasana* or the work aspect having this common goal in mind.

While recognising the importance of the *Karma Marga* and involving ourselves in the necessary duties that we have to perform, we should also realise the importance of the *Bhakti Marga* and know that we can reach the Lord by the path of devotion. Without inner cleanliness, whatever work you might do will become waste. It will not yield any results. What Sankara taught was that we should have *bhakti* or devotion towards the Lord in view of the temporary and transient nature of the world. In this material world, some kinds of desires and diseases relating to the senses are natural and they appear in human beings. In order to cure these

diseases it is necessary to take the appropriate medicine. There is a small story in support of this.

There was a housewife who had great faith in the Lord and whenever she had time, she used to take a *japamala* and chant the name of the Lord. In this manner, with the idea of sanctifying the time that is available to her, she used to always utter the name of the Lord. She was feeling that her body was like the container and her *prema* like the oil in the lamp. She thought that divinity was a *jyothi* or a bright lamp. In this manner she was spending her life with a view to making it useful. She came to the ultimate conclusion that even while the lamp of life still glowing in her, she should be able to fulfil the duties that are entrusted to her. If this light is extinguished, she would not be able to perform her duties. Hence, she thought that even while living, she must make the best use of it and attain salvation.

Her husband who saw this kind of devotion and attachment to the Lord on the part of his wife, told her that she will not be able to find time for looking after the family if she spends all the time in the contemplation of Lord. He was also of the opinion that they should think of the Lord only after they grow much older. The wife did not agree with this contention. She argued that they

should think of the Lord only when one is physically and mentally sound and not in the old age when these faculties are failing. While strengthening her own belief and conviction in this manner, she was from time to time trying to convince her husband. Once while she was alone and her husband was in a good mood, she told him that the body was temporary like a water bubble. It is not known how long the body will survive and it is wrong to go on postponing one's duties to a later period in life. *Maya* is something which will make one forget the purpose for which one has come into this world. To forget the Lord is due to *Maya*. Therefore, one should think of the Lord while one is still strong and should not postpone it to a later date because the body may disappear at any time.

On the other hand, the husband was arguing that she was out of her mind and asked her to think about who was going to feed them if they spend all their time thinking of the Lord. He asked her if the Lord would come and look after the children and attend to other needs if they spend their time in the thought of the Lord. He said that they will have to earn money because no one will look at them if they do not have sufficient wealth.

He was thus trying to divert the attention of his wife. But the wife who had a total commitment and faith

in the Lord said that the Lord who had sown the seed will also water the plant. God who has given us this life will also provide food for us. If you spend all your time thinking that you have to find food for yourself, you are just like an animal. The one difference between man and the other animals is that man has wisdom which the animals lack. This is the only faculty that distinguishes man from an animal. If you always talk of finding food, you are behaving just like an animal.

Such line of thinking on the part of his wife made a deep impression on his mind and finally he came to the conclusion that these statements were really true. However, He told her that he had to think of the marriages of the children and other such commitments. He said that after these commitments were fulfilled, he would think only of the Lord. He said that he does have faith and devotion but he has other duties as well.

That day had gone in such conversation. As days passed the husband contracted a dreaded disease and the lady had to consult various doctors and specialists. In those difficult days, she went to the bedside of her husband and told him to think of the Lord at least under those circumstances and try to earn His grace. She said that the grace of the Lord was the best medicine for the husband.

The husband had great faith in the doctors and so he forced her to call the doctors again. One doctor who was liked by the husband came and after examination gave a bottle of some liquid and told the wife to give the mixture to the husband three times a day. This was told by the doctor and the husband saw the bottle being handed over to the wife. He knew the instructions that had been given. The wife took the bottle but did not give the husband the medicine regularly. After three days, the husband asked the wife why the medicine had not been given according to instructions. The wife had a very good opportunity to teach a lesson to the husband. She said that after all, the doctor had given a medicine but why should it be taken in the manner in which it was prescribed. It can as well be swallowed in one go. The husband said that the medicine should be taken when the disease was there but what is the use of taking it later. Then the wife explained that on the same analogy, we should take the medicine for the *Bhavaroga* (birth-death cycle), immediately after we are born and not postpone it to a later date. He was told that the medicine given by the doctor was for the physical illness which he got a few days ago, but, for the *Bhavaroga*, which starts right from the birth itself, the

medicine is constant contemplation on the Lord. The husband was convinced at last and he started contemplation seriously on the Lord. Consequently his disease was quickly cured. Since then both of them were very happy.

Students, boys and girls!

Our life is like that. As soon as we are born, our material desires start. Hence, it is very necessary for us to constantly think of the Lord to acquire happiness and bliss right from the time when these desires crop up. To take the view that you will think of the Lord only when you are in difficulties is foolish. It is not correct to postpone thinking of the Lord till you retire from service. We must begin to think of the Lord early. That is why, it is said: Start early, drive slowly and reach safely. If you think that you can think of God after you grow old, it is not right. When the messengers of Yama, the God of death, come and drag you to your end, at the time when your body is put outside the house just before your death, at the time when the anguishing cries of your wife and children are being heard, is it possible for you to utter the name of the Lord? You should think of the Lord while you have all your faculties under your control and when

you have all your mental and physical strength unimpaired. You must earn His grace when you are young and store it for the future.

Prema Swarupas!

When you are still young, your body and mind are like fruits which are just ripe. When your body is in good and ripe condition, you must surrender the body to God. Will he accept it, if you surrender it to Him after it becomes bad, old and rotten? From now on, surrender yourself to the Lord, do good work with the body, have good ideas in your mind and purify your thoughts. It will then be possible for you to earn the grace of God. Such good deeds and the grace thus earned will stand you in good stead in your old age when you can do nothing. If today you are prepared to do good work, then the kind of happiness which you want will be available. If you postpone thinking of the Lord till you become old, there is no guarantee that you will earn His grace.

If you go early enough in the morning to a hotel and buy a ticket for your lunch, you are sure of your meal whether you go at twelve o'clock or at one o'clock, because you have purchased the ticket early enough. If you go for lunch at one o'clock without buying a ticket

early, the hotel keeper may inform you that lunch is not available. Therefore, try and purchase the ticket for God's Grace, which you will want in your old age, while you are young. With that ticket purchased early, it will be available whenever you go, but if you think that you will buy the ticket for the grace of the Lord when you grow old, it may not be available for you. The availability of the Lord's grace will depend upon your luck and fortune.

Students, boys and girls!

The young age in which you now are is a sacred age. That you are born as a human being is a special gift given to you by the Lord. All the animals in the world want to become human beings. If you do not use this gift given by the Lord to earn His grace in this sacred age, it will not be possible when you grow older. As I told you in the beginning, I intend to speak to you about the aspect of Bharath from tomorrow. I thought that between these two—namely Brahman and Bharath—certain ordinary things which relate to daily life should also be communicated to you and therefore, today's discourse has been about matters which relate to normal daily life.