

21. When Wisdom Dawns, Ignorance And Illusion Disappear

The reputation of our motherland has been known all the world over from time immemorial. That reputation is now being sharpened by the Sai ideals and the Sai teachings. You young people should give it a further shining with your care and attention.

Pavitratma Swarupas:

Amongst the four *Purusharthas*: *Dharma, Artha, Kama* and *Moksha*; *Moksha* takes the most important place. The other three take a subsidiary place. They are only steps to reach *moksha*. The bliss that one aspires for by doing *yagna, punya* and various other types of rituals is transient and temporary. When the good and the *punya* earned by any individual get exhausted, it becomes inevitable that he returns back to human birth. This is the reason why man should attempt to reach what is permanent, and sustaining.

Our *Sruthis* have taught us that only people who know *Paramatma* can reach *Paramatma*. Only those who can understand *Brahman* will become identical with *Brahman*. The meaning of this is that only such people, who acquire familiarity and expertise in the *Brahma Vidya* can attain *moksha* or liberation. When the moonshine is somewhat dull and when one cannot see clearly, it is quite natural that one looks at a rope and thinks, in illusion, that he is seeing a snake and gets afraid. Although what exists is only a rope, his own illusion makes him think that it is a snake and he gets afraid. In the same manner, although *Atma* is not bound by connections and attachments in the world, yet it is natural to reflect and

think that there is something material and worldly about the *Atma*. Our ignorance is responsible for our not being able to recognise the elementary truth that is contained here. This ignorance is described by several names. It is sometimes called *thamas* and sometimes called *moha*. These are different names for this ignorance. There are many other names like *avyaktha*, *maya*, and so on. These are words used to describe this state of ignorance. It is in the context of such ignorance that man tries to create an illusion in his own mind about what does not really exist. Man also tries to forget what really exists. The creation of something which does not exist is described as *Vikshepana*. This is also to forget what really exists. In these two things, man experiences illusion. Just as in the case of a rope mistaken for a snake, the rope constitutes the basis, so also for all the creation we see around us, the basis is *Paramatma*, the Lord.

One aspect is to find that reality is covered by something called *Avarana*. For this process, there are three states of our body: one is the gross body, the other is the subtle body and the third is the causal body. In creation, there are two methods. One is the individual purpose and the other is the collective purpose. A tree represents an individual form and the forest indicates the community, the totality of trees. The house is an individual form. A village consisting of several houses is a total form. Without a tree, we cannot have a forest and without a house we cannot have a village. Here, one human body becomes an individual form. The combination of several such individual forms becomes a total community. Without an individual form, we cannot have a total group form. The most important characteristic of the human form is the blood; the life blood that flows from head to toe. The total life flow that is contained in all the individuals that make up the community gives you the total group form.

The causal body is the third aspect of the body. The totality of all such forms constitutes the *jiva*. The totality of the subtle forms is called *Hiranyagarbha*. The individual form of the subtle is called the *taijasa*. The totality of the gross body is called the *virata*. The individual gross body is *Viswa*. Here, we have indicated the individual gross body as *Viswa*, the individual subtle body as *taijasa*, the individual causal body as the *Atma*. This aspect of *Atma* has been taught to us by presenting one and the same individual in three different forms: the gross, the subtle and the causal form.

It has become common for us to hide the connection that exists between the five elements that constitute the basis of creation and of the *Atma*. Because ignorance covers the reality here, it has been called *avarana*. This *avarana* is of two kinds. One is called *asat*, related to untruth, and the other is called *abhava* related to wrong ideas. The idea that sprouts from the feeling that the particular thing does not exist is represented by untruth or *asat*. If there is a feeling that one does not know whether that particular item exists or does not exist, it is referred to as *abhava*. This type of *abhava* is responsible for *samsara*. *Vikshepa* is the main path for liberation or *moksha*.

Manana and *nididhyasana* are two other processes by which this ignorance of *asat* can be got rid of. *Manana* consists of thinking over or contemplation of what you listen to, and *nididhyasana* consists of digesting what you have taken in the form of the listen-ing. This implies that we will not get the result just by listening. By this process, one can understand the nature of a particular aspect. *Vikshepa* denotes recognition of these two and getting rid of them. In *avarana*, there is something that is being covered due to ignorance in us, and that is the aspect of *asat*. What arises out of untruth can be got rid of by listening to truth. The best way in which we can

remove a doubt is to listen to people who know the truth. When such people come and tell us the existence of that truth, we can get rid of our ignorance. By listening to others, who know the reality, there is a possibility of our being able to get rid of this ignorance of *asat*.

By using two other processes, (*manana* and *nididhyasana*) that is, to contemplate and digest what you have listened to, *abhava* can be got rid of. This implies that we will not get the result just by *sravana* or listening. By just listening, one can understand only to a limited extent the nature of the item. But to experience it fully, two other stages, *manana* (that is to contemplate on what we have listened to) and *nididhyasana* (absorbing what you have listened to) are necessary. It is only after going through these three steps: *sravana*, *manana* and *nididhyasana* that one can remove this ignorance of *asat*.

Divya Atma Swarupas:

Because of our illusion, we are creating in our mind things which do not exist. By lack of belief and faith, we are forgetting the existence of even what exists. Although, what really exists is the rope, by imagination we think that it is a snake. What is the reason for this? The reason is the darkness which arises in you out of your ignorance. Because of this thought that the rope is the snake, several consequences follow. The fear that is not in you, enters you; and also you run away from the situation. These consequences follow. There is no snake there. The fear that comes into you is simply illusory and running away from it is also the result of illusion. Truly, if with the help of a light, you remove this illusion and this ignorance and you discover that there is no snake there, then you go close to it and fear will disappear. In fact you will handle it with your hand, take it and throw it away. In the whole world, what

really exists, is only the aspect of *Brahman*. Because we do not believe in this aspect of *Brahman*, creation, which is only a projection on the substratum of *Brahman*, appears to us as real. By proper experience, we can make an attempt to understand this myth. Truly, once we understand the nature of *Brahman*, and once we get the meaning of that word, then we will be in a position to use the right word to describe a particular situation. In a given situation, when we do not know the correct meaning of the words and when we are ignorant of the aspect of *Brahman*, then we begin to give a misrepresentation.

There is one small example for this. One uneducated and unsophisticated person joins an army. By joining the army, he learns something by practice and moves forward. One day, the General, who is commanding this army, comes to inspect the camp. On that day, the person who is the local Commanding Officer of that group was giving certain instructions to the member of the group. This particular person does not understand English. The language known to the cadets in the camp is not known to the General. Nobody knows what kind of questions the General will ask each one of them. But the one who is in charge of this particular group has been trying to explain to the cadets and train them in a general way. When the group leader came to this uneducated person, he tried to tell him that the General may visit the camp and ask him, "How many years have you been in this unit?" The cadet has been asked to reply that he has been in the army for two years. Maybe, the second question will be about his age. The cadet was told to say that he was twenty-two years old. The third question he may ask will probably be whether the cadet is feeling happier in his home or happier in this unit? This uneducated person was told that he should say that he feels the same in the camp as well as at home. Unfortunately, the General came to the individual and the very first question he

asked was, "How old are you?" He replied that he was two years old. The second question was, "How many years ago have you joined this Unit?" The reply was twenty-two years. The General thought that he was in great confusion and he asked, what the matter was? "Are you mad or am I mad?" The cadet then said, "Both are mad, both are the same." The lesson which we have to get from this conversation is that in the presence of an educated individual, an uneducated person can only follow his symbols and signs. Unless the second person is also an educated person, there will be no rapport between them. There will be confusion and any question will only lead to a wrong and confusing answer.

As in this analogy, if one wants to learn *Brahma Vidya*, one has to have a deep desire for that. It will be wrong for us to think, that *Brahma Vidya* is like ordinary worldly education. If we look at it from one point of view, *Brahma Vidya* is really easier to learn than some of the things which we learn in the worldly sphere. If we can recognise this properly, then it will provide an easy path for us to learn. On the other hand, if we take a superficial aspect, that will create great difficulty for us.

Today, the tendency to make comparisons between various things has increased. A very bad quality, by which you present the faults of others, is becoming widespread. If we can get rid of these two things, then it will be possible for us to understand this aspect of *Brahma Vidya*. What we are experiencing usually relates only to the material world around us. It is necessary for us to interpret and see what the subtlety that is contained in our experience is. On the same occasion and at the same time, both the aspect of *varana* and *vikshepana* may come. In the illusion by which we called the rope a snake, what really has happened is, the existing rope has disappeared and a snake which does not exist there has appeared in our mind.

Here two things have hap-pened. The rope that exists there is not seen by you. The snake that does not exist there has come into your mind. Today every human being is getting into trouble by the presence of both these illusions. He is unable to recognise the truth that, in the very individual of a human being, there is the community aspect as well. This individual aspect of a human being has become permanently fixed in his mind.

There is one small story. A great devotee, who was a very wealthy person, took a lot of gold and out of that gold he had prepared several fine items, each of twenty tolas of gold. He made a fine idol of Krishna, a seat for putting that idol, an umbrella and also a cow to go along with Krishna. Each one of the items weighed twenty tolas, the total being 100 tolas of gold. In this way, he was experiencing Divinity of God in the forms made of gold. Time is such that things continu-ally go on changing; and with the passage of time, misfortune came to him and there was poverty in his house. A time had come when he did not have food to eat. He was driven to sell away the gold things which he was worshipping. He went to a person who would buy these items, and he wanted to get each one of them weighed and find out what price he would get for each item. The other wealthy person who was to buy the items, weighed the idol of Krishna. After finding the weight of Krishna, he offered to pay Rs. 10,000 for it. After that, he weighed the pedestal and he said that he would pay Rs. 10,000 for that. Then he weighed the cow and he said that also will fetch Rs. 10,000. The devotee was in great pain. The devotee asked how it is that Krishna, the pedestal and the cow will each fetch the same Rs. 10,000? The person who was going to purchase them was obviously not going to pay more money because it was the figure of Krishna. He will merely pay the cost of the weight of gold in each one of the items and not

value the idol of Krishna differently from the cow. So, also, in the case of an individual, his value will depend on the Divinity that is in the individual and not on his wealth or his appearance, or his material possessions. The cup, the cow, the pedestal and the figure of Krishna are only different in their forms and in their names. The man who is going to value them, will value them on the basis of the amount of gold which is contained in each of them, and this is the same in all of them. The basic content of all these things is gold; and although each has a different form, it is the same gold. In the same manner, in this world many things appear to have different names and different forms and may create different impressions on different people. But what exists as a common base in all these things is the aspect of *Brahman*.

Divya Atma Swarupas,

It has become common to recognise each body and its form separately, and the common divine content is not seen by anyone. We are only looking at those different bodies and forms in an external way, but the real connection and comparison between one and another is through the *Atma*.

There is one other small example here. There was a father who had an only son. His only son was looking after the father very dearly and was serving him with great affection. In his 61st year, the father passed away. This son was sitting by the side of the dead body of his father and was crying, "Oh father, you have left me and gone. Who else will look after me in this world?" We should examine this carefully. When he says, "Father, you have left me and gone," for sixty years he has been calling that body his father. The body, which has been described as his father, is still there. What is it that has gone away? Truly, if that body was his father, the body is still there and he can retain that body as his father. No, it is not right.

What has left and what he was regarding as his father is the life-force that was in the body and this life-force has left the body and gone away. What has left the body is his father and the dead body that is remaining there is not his father. It is the life-force, or the *chaitanya* which entered the body that gives him the illusory feeling that the body was his father.

We see here that so long as there is life in a body, we promote the connections and the relation-ships with that body are experienced, but the moment that life goes away from that body, we will hesitate to keep that body in our home. We will have no attachment or affection to that body once the life-force has gone away. This body has taken a form which is made up of all the five elements. This is only a casual and artificial appearance. There is a distinct difference between this body, which is composed of the five elements, and the *Atma* which is in the body. We should get the knowledge by which we can recognise the distinctive difference between the body and the *Atma*.

This human birth has come to us with the purpose of establishing to the world the oneness that exists in all the creation. The nature of this oneness can be recognised by promoting the two qualities *sama* and *dama*. By promoting the qualities of *sama* and *dama* (control of mind and of the sensory organs), it is possible for us to recognise divinity in the various *chakras* that exist between the *muladhara* and the *sahasrara*. When we understand the nature of these six *chakras* and also understand the importance of these two qualities, *sama* and *dama*, we will know the nature of *Brahman*.

Students:

To some extent this difficult aspect which you cannot easily understand may create some impatience in you. If you

take some care and try to understand the meaning of this aspect, then you will become successful. You have been given a human birth to enable you to understand your own nature. When you do not know the nature of yourself, how are you going to know the nature of the world? The aspect of divine creation is spread and present all through the world. The life-force in this world and the life-force that exists in you are inseparable aspects of one and the same divine aspect. Although air is present every-where around you, yet we do not see it. So also, this life-force, though present in the whole world, can be recognised only in some places and by some human being.

It is in this context that the *Bhagavad Gita* pro-claims that divinity is everywhere in speech, in action, in words, and in all places. In the presence of an individual who goes on praying and asking God, “Oh God, are you listening to my prayer?” God will exist by his side listening with His ears. For one who prays, “Oh God, are you always with me and accompanying me?” God will always be by his side and the devotee can listen to the footsteps of the Lord. For one who prays, “Oh God, are You looking at me?” God’s eyes will always be with him. Everything is a result of your own devotion and faith. But in God’s view, there is no difference between one devotee and another. “*Yad bhavam tat Bhavathi,*” whatever your ideas may be, they are merely reflected. All blame and blemish are in you and in your ideas. It is not right to ascribe any blame or blemish to God. It is not possible for any insect to survive in fire. While the blame and blemish and all contradictory ideas are really in you, to attribute them to God is a weakness. When the capacity to experience these things becomes weak, then you take recourse to an alternative and put the blame on God and begin to find fault with Him.

There are some proverbs appropriate to such a situation which are used commonly. For instance, if one cannot sing well, one will find fault with the person who is the drummer. Like that, in order to condone and justify the faults and weakness that are in you, you put the blame on God. This is the way of the world. This is not right. It is man's duty to try and search for the fault in him, to remove the fault and increase the sacredness in him.