

2. Science and Spirituality

Svabhode Naanyabodhe Cha

Bodha Roopa Atmanah

Sva Deepenya Deepe Cha

Yadaasvaatma Prakaashate

To search for a flame,

Another light is not required.

To know the omnipresent, effulgent *Atma*

Another type of knowledge is not required.

Students!

You do not need a flame to find another flame. In the same way, it is ignorance and foolishness to search for the self-effulgent, omnipresent *Atma* using other forms of knowledge. No one tries to search for himself in the world outside. In the same way, when you are the *Atma*, is it not plain ignorance to look for the *Atma* elsewhere? Such pure teachings on the *Atma* have been propagated by Bharath since ancient times, era after era.

Bharath—the birthplace of spirituality

Bharath is the birthplace of spirituality and *dharma*. Peace and nonviolence also took birth in Bharath. The search for Truth done in Bharath has not been done anywhere else. This land is the birthplace of the *Sapta Rishis*.¹ This is the country in which the first poet, Valmiki,² and the classifier of the *Vedas*, Vyasa³, took birth. This is the supremely sacred land of *dharma* in which Krishna taught the *Bhagavad Gita*. This is Rama's kingdom. This is the soil on which Buddha was born. Bharath has always been replete with minds inquiring into the Truth, hands engaged in *dharma*, and hearts immersed in the Lord.

Devotion has no distinctions of caste, age, and language. It is easy for everyone to contemplate on God. God is as essential for the mind as food is for the body. In the devotion of *Bharathiyas* we sometimes find situations bordering on the absurd. But spiritual feelings and love are the undercurrents even in this seemingly senseless behavior. A student prays to God to do well in exams. A man prays to God to win a court case. Why go that far? People pray even to secure a seat in a bus! In this way, *Bharathiyas* depend on God from the smallest to the biggest things. This may be called divine madness. Some call it foolishness. Whatever anyone may say, each is entitled to their own hunger, their own faith, their own kind of madness. No one has the right to deny another's faith.

But certain foundations are necessary even for faith. The presence of the groom doesn't mean that the marriage is done. Having money does not imply that you can run a business. Some additional know-how is required. You cannot be considered a writer by knowing the alphabet. Only one who understands meanings of words can be an author. Similarly, you cannot recognize God with worldly knowledge. Spiritual knowledge is essential. To acquire it, inquire into the Truth.

Scientific investigations into the truth

Everyone must understand the universe and the nature of the individual souls living in it. Those who recognize the secrets of the Cosmos and of the beings living in it can understand the nature of Divinity. Since ancient times, men of wisdom have investigated into Nature. The astronomer Galileo discovered many facts about the universe. The Earth revolves at a

speed of 18,500 miles per second. It circles the Sun once a year. “Who is turning the Earth? Why does it revolve? What is the basis for its revolution?” asked Galileo. He found that the parabola is the basis of motion.

If there is such a basis for even small objects, there must be a significance to the Earth’s movement as well. Once upon a time the Earth was hot. Then it took millions of years to cool down. Why should the burning planet revolve? Galileo pondered the answer to this question. Rotation causes day and night, which provide opportunities for men to undertake action. Revolution produces seasons, which are responsible for rain, harvest, and food. Every act of God, big or small, is for the good for mankind. There is a hidden power running everything. Galileo recognized it and called it God. Therefore, a natural scientist recognized this unchanging power.

That which is present always is Truth. Within this Truth we find both worldly and spiritual knowledge. It is not possible for anyone to know this power through any means. To know the unchanging power behind Nature is to know God. This is what Galileo finally concluded.

Einstein, the father of modern science, talked about the interchangeability of matter and energy. He said that these could neither be created nor destroyed. But energy may change forms. How? Magnetic energy can be turned into electricity, electricity into atomic power, atomic power into light and light into heat. Students should recognize a small fact. You can create water by combining hydrogen and oxygen. But who created hydrogen and oxygen? Water is the effect, hydrogen and oxy-

gen are the causes. Nothing can exist without a cause. The effect gradually changes. That which changes is science. The changeless cause is spirituality.

Live human values

We say “culture and spirituality”. We came to know this morning that culture is a “way of life”. It means heritage. Spirituality is necessary for transformation. What is spirituality? We consider only worship and good actions to be spirituality. But in truth:

Spirituality = Spirit of Love.

Science = Split of Love.

“Split of Love” changes but the “Spirit of Love” is permanent. Culture has love as its basis. No love means no culture. Culture and spirituality really mean the power of love. This changeless power cannot be destroyed. This power could be God, said Einstein, adding that nothing may be spoken of with equal certainty.

People asked Buddha if he understood Divinity. Buddha was silent on the existence of God. He said, “It is a waste of time to argue about an unknowable subject like Divinity, which is beyond the mind.” *Yatho Vaacho Nivartante Apraapya Manasaa Saha*—From where words and thoughts return, unable to grasp anything, That is Divinity. “For me, *Sathya*, *Dharma*, and *Ahimsa* are equivalent to Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva,” he said.

Truth and *dharma* are the highest. Follow them and practice ahimsa in your life. This is true spiritual effort, Buddha said. There is no God higher than Truth. For this reason, *Vedas* say, *Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara*—speak the truth and uphold righteousness. God is present wherever these are upheld. Vashishta said, “*Ramo Vighrahavaan Dharmah*”—Rama is the very embodiment of *dharma*—because Rama never spoke a lie and always stuck to the path of *dharma*. He walked barefoot in forests and sacrificed everything for the sake of righteousness. To uphold a promise given by His father, He took great burdens upon Himself. Without ever faltering, Rama adhered unflinchingly to *sathya* and *dharma*. That is why He is the embodiment of Divinity.

Even in this *Kali Yuga* people went to Ramakrishna Paramahansa and asked him if he had seen God. Yes, he replied. In what form, they asked. Ramakrishna said, “Just as I see you, I have seen God.” When asked how it was possible, he explained, “With yearning. You strive for wealth and family. You cry for small and big things. Have you ever cried for God?”

*Yaa Chintaa Bhuvi Putra Mitra Bharanau Vyaapaara
Sambhaashane*

*Yaa Chintaa Dhana Dhaanya Bhoga Yashase Laabhe Sa-
daa Jaayate*

*Saa Chintaa Bhuvi Nanda Nandana Pada Dvand-
vaaravinde Kshane*

*Kaa Chintaa Yamaraaja Bhima Sadana Dvaara Prayaani
Prabho.*

You cry for wife, children, friends,

Wealth, business, pleasures, name and fame.
 But if you yearn for Krishna's Lotus Feet even for a moment,
 You can easily cross the terrible doors of Death.

If you desire God, work for Him. Then God will easily come within your grasp. You struggle for worldly benefits but expect God's Vision. With such hypocrisy you can never acquire God."

Invisible causes and visible manifestations

These days scientists, atheists and argumentative people demand direct perception of God. "I must see with my eyes, touch with my hands, and taste with my tongue to believe. How can I believe in something I cannot see, touch or taste?" they question. With such arguments scientists deride devotees as fools. Truly, no one is more foolish than these scientists.

Why? An example: You see a man who is 5'6" tall, weighs 63kg, and is bald. These are all direct perceptions. Are they true? Definitely. But they are truths only for the external vision. The man also has qualities like sacrifice, kindness, and determination that cannot be touched or measured. Even if you cut the man into pieces, these qualities are not visible! So do you deny their existence? In fact, the man exists only due to these qualities. The invisible qualities are the basis for the visible attributes.

You say only what is seen is true, nothing else. You have accumulated past *karma*, which makes you suffer, but can

you see it? It is foolishness to deny what is not visible or tangible. You see a tree with branches. Scientists see the fruits, branches, and leaves, which are readily visible. But spirituality perceives the unseen roots. Without roots how can you have branches? Which are more important, branches or roots? In the same way, an invisible force is the foundation for the visible universe. We see and experience this world only by the power of that force.

A few more examples. Love and fragrance have no form, but we experience them. Can they be denied because they are invisible or intangible? So why do we believe in them? It is because even invisible entities have visible or tangible manifestations.

Love has no form, but the Mother, who gives Love, has a form. Fragrance has no form, but the fragrant flower has a form. Bliss has no form, but God, whose Nature is Bliss, has a form!

***Bhaava Roopam*—the Form of God**

What is this form of God? It is unattainable, beyond comprehension. It can be anything. For example, what is the form of wind or water? You can see water and feel wind but they have no forms. When do they acquire forms? When you fill air in a balloon, it assumes the corresponding form. Water acquires the form of its container.

In the same way, the formless God assumes the form cherished by the devotee. The devotee's feeling itself is the form of God. This has been called *bhaava-roopam*⁴ in our

scriptures. To know this form of God, meditation is recommended. God appears as the embodiment of whatever feelings the devotee meditates upon. If we think of God as benevolent, He appears so. If we think of Him as destructive, that is how He appears. So, all forms of God are dependent on your feeling. It is not possible to limit Divinity as being “this” or “that.”

Sarvatah Paani Paadam, Thath Sarvatokshi

Siro Mukham

Sarvatah Srutimal Loke, Sarvamaavritya

*Tishtati*⁵

With hands, feet, eyes, heads, mouth,
And ears pervading everything,
He permeates all worlds.

God is everywhere as energy. This is what scientists call atomic energy. But even the atom can be subdivided. There is nothing in this world without a form. Even Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh⁶ have forms, seen in a map. That is why ancient Hindus worshipped Mother Earth as a manifestation of Divinity. But modern scientists ridicule this practice.

Scientists question: Earth is just soil and rock. Why pray to it?

Our ancients explain: Soil gives us food. The Sun causes rain, day and night. All these are necessary for life. It is our culture to worship those whose benevolence sustains us. Nothing can exist without the five. Elements —earth, water, sky, fire and ether. So what is wrong in praying to them?

Scientists say: Fine, the five elements are okay. But why pray to a stone idol? How can it be God?

The ancients reply: God is everywhere! Why not worship Him in the rock?

Scientists argue: But the rock has no awareness.

Here students should realize an important point. On the 15th of August⁷, we raise our national flag aloft. We salute it. Why? It is just a piece of cloth, composed of threads. It has no qualities or awareness. It flutters with the wind and lies limp in still air. What virtues of the flag make it worthy of respect? It is a symbol of independence won after arduous struggle. Similarly, although divine Consciousness is everywhere, we need signs and symbols to remind us of it.

Atheism simply cannot exist when we inquire in this manner. *Dhanamoolam Idam Jagat*—Today the world revolves around money. Sometimes when you drop a currency note on the ground by mistake, you touch it to your eyes as a mark of respect. Why? The currency is only bamboo and grass pulp, isn't it? What awareness or individuality does it have? None. Then why do you honor it? Not just devotees, atheists also worship money! Do atheists say, "No, thank you, I do not want money"? No, atheists also desire it! They honor the seal of the Reserve Bank, which makes the paper valuable. Similarly you display your grandfather's photo and garland it when he passes away. Does your grandfather still exist in the

photo? No, the photo is only paper pulp. So why do you respect it? It is his symbol.

Yes, this is rock. But the rock is a symbol of the omnipresent God. The *bhaava-roopam* of the devotee is concentrated in the rock! Thus, Hindus worship not rocks, but God in rocks, in the Earth and in idols. You may ignore some practices if you wish, but no one has the right to condemn or weaken another's faith. Each one is entitled to his own faith. Just as one person's breathing (*shvaasam*) cannot be substituted for another person, one's faith (*vishvaasam*) is personal also.

Absolute truth, relative truth, and untruth

Such search for the Truth is described in the *Vedas*. What does it mean to search for the Truth? The Truth is everywhere, so it is meaningless to search for it, some argue. An example. You see your mother, daughter, sister, wife, and mother-in-law with your eyes. The eyes that see are the same. Now, the feeling used in each case is the "search." Having eyes is not enough. You must ask yourself, "How do I look at my mother?" The answer: With motherly feeling. This is the "search for the Truth". Just because the eyes are one and the same, can you look upon everyone with the same outlook?

The vision is the same but the underlying feelings are different. In the same way, all our senses are one but each has its own faculties and limits. The search for the Truth means discriminating between what is *sathyam* (Truth), *nijam* (relative truth or fact), and *asathyam* (untruth).

What is the difference between a relative truth and the Truth? There is a vast difference. Students, you know the Earth is a globe. But the ground near your house is flat. The flatness is relative truth. That is how you see it. But when you search for the Truth, it turns out to be a globe. So, a relative truth is really an untruth perceived to be the Truth. You see a man wearing a suit. That is today's truth. Tomorrow he might wear a *dhoti*.⁸ What is present today but absent tomorrow is relative truth. The unchanging Truth is ever true. That is Divinity.

Untruth is opposed to both Truth and relative truth. What is untruth? To see something and say otherwise is falsehood. In darkness you see a rope and call it a snake. That is delusion born of improper discrimination. You jumped to a conclusion. Shine a torch and you will realize it is a rope. To consider the rope as a snake is illusion.

In this manner, spirituality conceals many subtle secrets. This has been called *sathya-rahasyam*—Secret of Truth. Why should the Truth be called “secret”? Because it is veiled to the unripe intellect and must be churned from effort. Thus, *Vedas* say, *Ekam Sath, Vipraah Bahudaa Vadant i*—Truth is one, but sages interpret it in many ways. *Vedas* also say, *Ekam Eva Adviteeyam Brahma*—God is One, not many. The *Vedas* prove these truths in a beautiful manner.

See God through love

Scientists have also come across divine Power in their experiments. They acknowledge the existence of a changeless power without calling it “God”. Whatever name they may use,

they cannot change the substance. There is water in this tumbler. The Telugu man calls it *neeru*, the Tamil man says *tanni*, the Hindi man calls it *paani*, and the Englishman, water. The names change, not the water. People also worship God in countless names and forms depending on their personal attitudes. But only One God exists.

The world cannot exist without God. You say that this cloth is a collection of threads, which, in turn, are nothing but cotton. But the cloth, threads, and cotton are one and the same. Apply such logic in spiritual inquiry as well.

But to believe blindly without inquiry is also great devotion because it is born of total faith. The infant places unquestionable faith in the mother and believes whatever the mother says. This cannot be called foolishness. Even Jesus said, "How happy I would be if I could be an innocent child for a moment every day!" Meaning, we must have the innocence of infants. We shouldn't nurture manipulation, deceit, and secrecy. With straightforwardness, we achieve purity, and Truth is present within purity. But today, staying aloof from such purity, we trust that polluted conduct pays.

Students! Do not entertain frivolous talk and shallow opinions in matters concerning Divinity. What scientists know today is close to nothing. You must understand this well. Knowledge is small but the exhibition is gargantuan. Those who know the Truth are calm and silent. The pot full of water is steady while the half-full pot rocks back and forth noisily. Those who argue are half-full pots.

To be a scientist, first control your senses and grow in Love. “God is Love, Love is God, Live in Love.” Love cannot be bought or sold. No company manufactures and supplies Love. The only machine that generates Love is within us—the heart. Heart is called *hridaya*. That which is full of compassion (*daya*) alone is a *hridaya*. But modern hearts are stones, with no traces of kindness. Such hearts cannot be called human hearts. No, no. God is the resident of the heart. A heart with compassion is the temple of God. Develop compassion and you will perceive God in your heart. If we look only outside, we are confused. What we see outside must be seen inside as well. The *Vedas* say, *Antar Bahischatat-sarva Vyaapya Narayana Sthitah*—Narayana is present inside, outside ... everywhere.

Creation speaks of the Creator

Divinity is everywhere. In every step, in every breath, there is God. In every syllable you utter, God is present. That is Divinity in the form of speech. Therefore, God is described as *Sabda Brahma Mayi, Charaachara Mayi*—Manifestation of sound, pervading sentient and non-sentient things.

A small example. Someone is singing in a radio station in Delhi. When we power the radio here, we hear that song. So is it present everywhere or not? Radio waves are present everywhere. They are manifestations of divine Power, as are magnetic energy, atomic energy, light, and heat.

Following such inquiry, we realize that God’s creation has endless secrets. In Bharath alone there are 900 million people. The world has 5.8 billion people. It was 5 billion sometime

ago but now it has grown by 800 million. With growth in population, there is growth in sin as well. Now, among these millions, are any two persons identical? Who can understand such mysteries? Even among twins there are differences. They are not made from a mold. Only God could create such a wonderful cosmos.

The *Bhagavatham* says that the stories and deeds of God are beyond comprehension. No one can understand His sports, but listening to them generates Bliss in the heart and grants immortality. Such is the nature of Divinity.

Consider radio waves transmitted from Delhi, Bangalore, Madras, Calcutta, Sri Lanka, even America. No two waves mingle. What a mystery! There is no confusion between the millions of waves in the air. When does the confusion arise? Only when we do not tune into the correct station. This “tuning” is meditation. Tune your mind with concentration to receive the “news,” namely, divine Vision. When the mind is divergent, the reception is unclear or meaningless.

The Sun shines over a pond. The water has ripples due to wind. The Sun appears unsteady in the pond. But in reality, only the image wavers, not the Sun. The waves in your mind make you perceive Divinity in various moods, names, forms. But Divinity is One. It is not Divinity but only your feelings that change with time. Meditation is the process of uniting the mind’s scattered thoughts.

Everyone can see diversity in unity. We must see unity in diversity, the underlying principle, the *Atma*. How? Here are a plate, a tumbler and a spoon. Names and forms are different.

The value of each object is also different. But the value of silver is the same, whether in the plate, tumbler or spoon. Divinity has assumed the name and form of every single entity in creation. You may respect and value one person and ridicule another. These are attitudes based on the behavior of those persons. But the *Atma* Principle is One.

Do your duty

Mud is found all over, so it has no value. But gold has great value. Why? It is difficult to obtain. In the same way, a man with a pure heart is given great respect. His actions carry weight. A happy life and good reputation depend on your actions, nothing else. To scale the heights of greatness, one must engage in sacred deeds. Human life is indeed very valuable. The first student speaker today told you: "Men are more valuable than all the wealth of the world." Who gives value to gold and diamonds? Man alone. Why do you pay huge amount of money for a tiny plot of land in the city? Only because that's the value given to it by man. Unfortunately, the man who values everything does not value himself today! This is because human values are disregarded.

Realize that the body has no value. Everyone has a body composed of the five elements. The body becomes meaningful only when sanctified with noble actions and ideals. For example, a glass jar can preserve savories and pickles for many months. But if you eat these pickles, they cannot be preserved by the body even for a few hours! So the glass jar is much better than this body!

Remember: Your respect in society depends not on looks, personality, or wealth but only on behavior. If you adhere to virtue, you are automatically honored. You do not need to ask for respect. Therefore:

Adugakuve O Manasa!
Adugu Koladi Adi Adugunu Padunani
Adugakunna Pani Vadigaanagunani
Adugani Sabarini Aadarinchade!

Do not ask, O Mind!

The more you ask, the lower it is placed.

Without asking, the task proceeds quickly.

Sabari, who never asked, was showered with Grace!

An example: Dasharatha, the father of Rama, cried for Rama repeatedly and begged Him to stay near. But poor Dasharatha died a broken-hearted man, separated from Rama. On the other hand, Jatayu did not beg Rama for favors. He did his duty, to the extent that he sacrificed his life trying to save Sita Devi. Even in his last moments, Jatayu worried only about Rama's troubles. As a result, Rama rested Jatayu on His thigh and performed his funeral rites like a son.

Many sages begged Rama for favors and waited for Him in their hermitages. Instead of rewarding them, Rama chose to go to Sabari. Sabari didn't ask Him anything directly but only through her heart. God knows what to give to whom, when, where, and how. Therefore, do your duty and God's Grace will overflow, unasked.

We must pose five questions to everything: who, where, why, when and how. If you simply overwhelm God in your flood of desires without asking yourself these questions, do you think God will fulfill your wishes? You should know when, where, how, and what to ask of God. Cultivate the intellect to recognize the right time and situation for the fulfillment of desires. This discrimination is called Constant Integrated Awareness or *Prajnaanam Brahma*.

You and God are One

The Vedas consist of great declarations: *Prajnaanam Brahma. Aham Brahmaasmi. Ayam Atma Brahma*. What is meant by *Ayam Atma Brahma*? Simply, “I am *Atma*, I am *Brahma*.” Scholars give elaborate interpretations but the meaning is simply, “I am *Atma*.” You and *Atma* are not different, but are one and the same.

When you speak, you must weigh each word carefully. What you say, demonstrate in action. Have faith in the concept first, then practice it.

Some time ago, Swami asked a college boy, “Who are you?” The boy recollected that Swami teaches *Ayam Atma Brahma*. He replied, “I and You are One, Swami.” Swami said, “It seems your intellect has really blossomed today! Are you really the same as Swami?” He said, “Yes, Swami, You and I are the same.” “Then go outside and give *darshan* to the devotees,” I said! Who would look at him if he went to give *darshan*? [laughter] But if faith is deep, God will definitely appear through you as well. People only talk without practicing. “The proper study of mankind is man.” To give credence to your

words, put them into action. Practice grants experience. Only then will you realize the Truth.

The *Bhagavatham*

Students! Your Vice-chancellor requested today that I explain the *Bhagavatham* to you. It is necessary for students to understand this scripture, its secrets, and the nature of the child Krishna. *Bhagavatham* rhymes with *baagavutam*, which means, “we will improve.”⁹ By listening to it, we will become better persons, permeated with devotion and wisdom. The *Bhagavatham* contains the fruits of all spiritual practices.

The word *Bhagavatamu*¹⁰ has five syllables:

BHA	stands for	<i>Bhakti</i> (Devotion)
GA		<i>Gnannam</i> (Wisdom)
VA		<i>Vairagyam</i> (Detachment)
TA		<i>Tatwam</i> (Nature)
MU		<i>Mukti</i> (Liberation)

Therefore, the *Bhagavatham* is the gist of all scriptures and texts, the goal of all paths, the essence of all fruits.

From tomorrow I have decided to dole out to you all, cool helpings of the *Bhagavatham*. Don’t just listen to it. Is your hunger satisfied by listening to the names of foods? No, eating alone fills the stomach.

Therefore, I do not ask you to listen to *Bhagavatham*, but to eat it. You are future citizens of this country. Your virtue alone will guarantee progress in the nation.

Help ever, hurt never

Embodiments of Love! Make your hearts pure with selfless actions and serve society. Don't indulge in wasteful deeds and pollute your mind. First understand what it means to be human and then progress towards Divinity. I told you in the morning how scientists are developing many complex machines. They don't recognize the one machine that invents all machines: the human body. They ask, "Who are you?" but never, "Who am I?" They spend all their time discussing others instead of themselves. Self-inquiry is very essential. It makes everything else easy to understand.

Embodiments of Love! In these ten days you will listen to the words of elders. It is not possible to remember everything that you hear here. Vyasa wrote eighteen *Puranas*, which were elaborate texts. They were so voluminous that they could possibly be placed under the head as pillows but not inside the head! Vyasa pondered the solution to this problem. He finally concluded and propagated that all *Puranas* could be condensed into two teachings: "Help Ever, Hurt Never."

Of all that you hear in this Summer Course, practice one or two teachings. Do not hurt anyone. If you cannot help, stay away—that itself is a great help. Remember God always. Consider yourself as a form of God, and you will gradually realize your Divinity.

[Bhagavan concluded with the *bhajan* "*Hari Bhajana Bina Sukha Shanthi Nahi*".]

¹. Seven Eternal Sages.

² . Author of the epic *Ramayana*.

³ . He classified ancient Indian spiritual knowledge into the four *Vedas*. He was also the author of the Puranas, and the epics *Mahabharatha* and *Bhagavatham*.

⁴ . Form born of feeling. (*Bhaava*=Feeling, *Roopam*=Form).

⁵ . Bhagavad Gita (XIII:13).

⁶ . States in Southern India.

⁷ . Independence Day of India.

⁸ . Traditional Indian dress for men.

⁹ . In Telugu.

¹⁰ . As pronounced in Telugu.