

Sense Control is the Highest Sadhana

*Sarvarupa Dharam Shantham
Sarvanama Dharam Shivam
Satchidanandam Advaitam
Sathyam Shivam Sundaram*



*All the names and forms are but the manifestations of
the Supreme Being who is the embodiment of peace
and auspiciousness. He is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss
Absolute and non-dual. He is Sathyam, Sivam,
Sundaram (Truth, Goodness, Beauty).*

(Sanskrit Verse)

Embodiments of Love!

MAN makes frantic efforts to attain happiness. He reads scriptures, visits noble souls, undertakes spiritual pursuits and searches everywhere in the outer world to find happiness. But he fails to find happiness anywhere.

Buddha too made similar efforts to find the source of happiness. He searched everywhere and at last found that happiness was within him and not in the outer world. He realized that he himself was the embodiment of *Ananda* (bliss). The ephemeral happiness derived through the senses is not true happiness at all.

Bliss Results from Sense Control

God permeates the entire universe in the form of *Sat-Chit-Ananda* (Existence-Knowledge-Bliss). The five elements, earth, water, fire, air and ether are the embodiments of God, who manifests in the entire creation as *Sathyam, Sivam, Sundaram*. Every human being is therefore a manifestation of *Sat-Chit-Ananda*. God manifests as sound, touch, form, taste and smell in the elements – ether, air, fire, water and earth, respectively. Since He permeates all the five elements and the entire creation, the Upanishads declare, *Isavasyam Idam Jagat* (the entire world is permeated by God). God is omnipresent. There is no place in the world where He does not exist. *Sarvata Panipadam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvata Sruthimalloke Sarvamavruthya Thishthati* (with hands, feet, eyes, heads, mouth and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe).

If God is present everywhere, people ask why we are not able to see Him. The ocean water reflects the sun above. When the water is disturbed, the reflection of

the sun is also disturbed. Similarly, God is in every man. But he is not able to see Him because of his disturbed mind. A disturbed and vacillating mind can never reflect God. A disturbed mind causes confusion and depression. As Arjuna says in the Bhagavadgita, *Chanchalam Hi Manah Krishna Pramathi Balavadrudham* (this mind is very unsteady, turbulent and is agitated strongly), the mind is highly fickle and vacillating. All the *Sadhana* that man performs aims at making his mind steady. There is no use doing *Japa, Dhyana* and *Yoga* if the mind is not steady. Once you have the five senses under control, you can experience God. He is not far away from you. He is in you, below you, above you and all around you. God, in fact, is the indweller of man. Yet man is not able to see Him. What is the reason? Man's limitless and wayward desires prevent him from seeing God. Desires are the root cause of man's disturbance. Sense control and ceiling on desires will help him to see God all around and experience bliss. So, we have to keep our desires under check. We should not be worried by the evil talk in which others indulge in. We should not be affected by calumny and criticism.

Attain the Supreme State of Desirelessness like Buddha

Buddha wanted to control the five senses. He decided, first and foremost, to acquire *Samyak Drishti*

(right vision). Man today is not able to control his vision because of the fickleness of his mind. Cinema, video, TV, etc., have polluted the mind of man. He does not see good and hear good. Man is the cause of his own restlessness. Besides *Samyak Drishti*, Buddha emphasized the need for *Samyak Sravanam* (right hearing), *Samyak Vak* (right speech), *Samyak Bhavam* (right feeling) and *Samyak Chintanam* (right thinking). Due to lack of these, humanness is fast giving way to devilishness and beastliness. Animal qualities are fast increasing in man. Animals have a season and a reason but man has none. Man today has become worse than animals. Human qualities like compassion, kindness, love and forbearance are absent in him. He should be free from evil thoughts which are the root cause of his worries. This requires *Abhyasa* (constant and sustained practice). Man can control the mind and attain peace by *Abhyasa*. It is only in a peaceful mind that noble thoughts arise. The mind should be under the control of man. *Master the mind and be a mastermind*. Unfortunately, instead of controlling the mind, man has become the slave of his senses. That is the main cause of his unsteadiness. Moreover, he has body attachment (*Dehabhimana*). This is the reason he gets easily disturbed if people find fault with him. Why should he worry about the body when the body is like a water bubble? You should get rid of body attachment.

Man today has unlimited and unnecessary desires. Take, for example, a person who wants to become the

President of a Village Panchayat. If he is elected, he desires to become a minister, then the Chief Minister of the State and later the Prime Minister of the country. What are these positions after all? What does a man get from these posts of high status if he has only evil desires? The outcome of evil desires is evil. So, man should not give room to evil desires and thoughts. Their reaction, reflection and resound is also evil. Evil desires cause evil and sinful thoughts in man. First of all, Buddha developed pure, steady, sacred and selfless vision. He made a great sacrifice by renouncing all worldly comforts, his family and even his tender son. He then gradually reduced body attachment and finally cut it off completely. That is how he attained the state of desirelessness.

Body Attachment is the Cause of Man's Delusion

It is a mistake on our part to identify ourselves with the body. When we say, "This is my body, my mind, my *Buddhi*, my *Chitta*, my *Antahkarana*", it means that we are separate from the mind, body, *Buddhi*, etc. It is a *Bhrama* (delusion) to think that we are the body. As we go on cultivating *Bhrama*, we distance ourselves from Brahma (God). The more we leave this *Bhrama*, the closer we go to Brahma. Buddha approached many Gurus and listened to their teachings. He studied sacred texts. He realized that this was only a wasteful exercise.

Modern students go abroad for higher studies, spending a lot of money. This craze for foreign

countries is utter foolishness. The parents too encourage their children to go abroad by fanning their desires. They feel proud that their children have gone to a foreign country. They actually spoil their children. It is better to work hard in your own country than to go like a beggar to a foreign land just for the sake of earning money. What do people earn there? When they return to India, they bring with them only the *Papa* (sin) they earn there. Stay in your country and earn *Punya* (merit) instead. Unlimited ambitions of man are the cause of this craze for going to foreign countries to earn money.

For the last several decades, people of many countries have been inviting me to their countries. But I do not like to go anywhere. They say, “Swami, come to my country.” But which is your country? You do not belong to any particular country. Nothing is permanent. Your body itself is not permanent. The body has however to be maintained. But there should be no body attachment, which leads man to endless cycle of birth and death. That is why Adi Sankara said:

*“Punarapi Jananam Punarapi Maranam
Punarapi Janani Jathare Sayanam
Iha Samsare Bahu Dustare
Kripayapare Pahi Murare.”*

(I am caught up in this cycle of birth and death; time and again, I am undergoing the agony of staying in the mother’s womb. It is very difficult to cross this ocean

of worldly life. Oh Lord! take me across this ocean and grant me liberation.)

Worldly life is full of sorrow and suffering. Lord Krishna said, “Anityam Asukham Lokam Imam Prapya Bhajasva Maam” (as the world is temporary and full of misery, contemplate on Me constantly). Having taken human birth, you must find fulfilment in life. You must pursue a noble path. Do not be inflated by praise. You should be above praise and blame. Foster peace. Where is peace? It is not available in the market for you to buy. Peace is inside. Outside you find only pieces. In fact, everything is there in you.

*You are the embodiment of peace,
You are the embodiment of truth,
You are the embodiment of love,
You are the embodiment of God.*

What a pity that man goes here and there in search of happiness ignoring the divinity within! It is the result of sins committed over many lives. Why do you want to earn sin in the outside worldly life? Better direct your vision inward. You will find *Ananda* (bliss) there. Bliss is your property. You cannot live without bliss even for a moment. Bliss is your true nature.

Supreme Sacrifice of Buddha

Embodiments of Love!

Buddha was not an ordinary person. He was born in a royal family and brought up amidst princely

comforts. But he renounced everything overnight. He performed a supreme sacrifice. *Na Karmana Na Prajaya Dhanena Thyagenaikena Amrutatva-manasu* (immortality is not attained through action, progeny or wealth; it is attained only by sacrifice). Buddha followed this Vedic injunction. He had no attachment. Hence, he could detach himself from his kith and kin. His father suffered because he had attachment.

Buddha travelled far and wide. He carried on his ascetic practices. Once a lady wanted to offer food to him. Buddha said, “This is not the food I want. I want *Jnana Bhiksha* (food of wisdom). I am wandering in search of the food of *Jnana*, not this worldly food.”

One day he saw a farmer distributing grains. Buddha went to him and asked, “Where is my share of alms?” The farmer said to him, “Oh lazy monk! Why should I give you alms? I give food to those who work hard. I also work hard. I till the soil. I sow the seeds, remove the weeds, water the fields and harvest the grains. But you do not do anything.” The farmer thought that he was working hard. Buddha replied, “I cultivate the land of the heart, I water it with love, I remove the weeds of bad tendencies, I harvest the grains of wisdom and I get the fruit of bliss.” There are many such stories related to the life of Buddha. In fact, they are not mere stories but his personal experiences. He made

tremendous sacrifice at a young age. The joy that you derive from sacrifice is immeasurable. Experience the joy of sacrifice.

The joy you get by singing Bhajans and by performing worship is temporary. But you will get eternal joy by experiencing the *Soham* Mantra. *Soham* is also known as *Hamsa Gayatri*. “*So*” means “That” (God), “*Ham*” means “I am”. “I am That” is the meaning of *Soham*. You should experience it with every breath. When you breathe in, you listen to the sound “*So*” and while exhaling, you hear the sound “*Ham*”. Watch your breath carefully and experience the reality of *Soham* with every breath. The word WATCH has an important message to convey. WATCH means

W – Watch your Words

A – Watch your Actions

T – Watch your Thoughts

C – Watch your Character

H – Watch your Heart

The watch you have may break some day or the other. But this “watch” is unbreakable. So, possess this “watch”. Watch whether you are speaking good or bad. Watch whether you abuse others or appreciate them. You should not use your tongue to abuse others. Abusing others is a sin. Do not let your tongue indulge in such sins. You cannot escape the consequences of your

sinful acts. Everything has reaction, reflection and resound and it comes back to you in some form or the other. Hence, exercise control over the tongue.

Buddha observed *Mounam* and became quiet. Every sacred act has manifold rewards. By being quiet, Buddha began to experience *Soham* within him. You may chant the Names of Rama, Krishna, Govinda, Buddha and Sai to steady your mind. Once the mind becomes steady, you do not need to chant. Observe total silence. That is why it is said, silence is golden. Once words become less, the activities and vagaries of the mind also become less. As words increase, the vagaries of the mind also increase. Annihilate the mind by quietude. However, it is easier said than done. Man may die but the mind will not die. The mind vanishes when words vanish from it. Observing *Mounam* (silence) is one of the ways of silencing the mind. That is why our ancients practised *Mounam*. We should not allow the mind to go wherever it likes and do whatever it likes. We should not allow the mind to ridicule, hurt and hate others. If you hurt anybody, you will be hurt ten times more. You may take pride that you have abused somebody. But there will come somebody who will abuse you also some day. The sin you commit today will bring retribution to you later amplified manifold.

Embodiments of Love!

We have taken human birth. What should we do having taken birth as a human being? Should we use

human birth for earning wealth? No, not at all. We should earn the wealth of virtues. Modern students are interested in acquiring wealth, power and friendship but not virtues. What is the use of leading a life without acquiring virtues?

“In spite of his education and intelligence, a foolish man will not know his true Self and a mean-minded person will not give up his wicked qualities. Modern education leads only to argumentation, not to total wisdom. What is the use of acquiring worldly education if it cannot lead you to immortality? Acquire the knowledge that will make you immortal.”

(Telugu Poem)

The body is temporary like a water bubble. The body comes and goes as the water bubbles arise and burst.

“This body is a storehouse of dirt, and prone to diseases; it cannot cross the ocean of Samsara. O mind, do not be under the delusion that body is permanent. Instead take refuge at the Divine Lotus Feet.”

(Telugu Poem)

First and foremost, we should develop the spirit of surrender. Perform all deeds with a spirit of devotion to God and as an offering to Him. Then every action will become divine. This is the teaching of Buddha. In this world, the five senses of man play a most important role. Buddha gave utmost importance to sense control.

To control the mind, we should control the five senses. Only then will we be able to realise God. Everything can be acquired by love alone. *Love is God, live in love.* We can understand spirituality only by cultivating love. That is why I often say,

*“Start the day with love,
Fill the day with love,
Spend the day with love,
End the day with love,
This is the way to God”.*

Everything is possible by the power of love. Love is everything in this world. The world cannot exist without love. Do not entertain bad desires. They will bring about your ruin. Those having bad desires cannot have a peaceful death. We must keep the mind peaceful and sacred. We can acquire peace of mind only by love for God.

Embodiments of Love!

You have come here from distant countries bearing many difficulties and inconveniences. Lead a life full of peace and bliss. You may have troubles. But you should not allow the troubles to gain hold over you. You can have peace only when you ignore the troubles. Sing the glory of God with love. It is not enough if you pray to God. You should consider that you are God. Say emphatically, “I am God” and contemplate on it

incessantly. Buddha also declared that man was divine. God is always in you, with you, around you, below you, above you. See, for example, the word ‘GOD’. If you start with the letter ‘G’, you read it as God. But if you start with the letter ‘D’, it becomes ‘Dog’. The difference lies in your vision. Everything in this world is divine. So, cultivate the feeling of oneness with God.

Body is the Temple of God

You have come here from different parts of the world. I bless you all that you go back home safe and sound full of peace and bliss. Cultivate the faith that everything happens by the Will of God. Buddha tried different kinds of *Sadhana*. He studied sacred texts. But no literature explained clearly the nature of the five senses. Ultimately, he came to the conclusion that there was no other *Sadhana* superior to sense control. He realised that the control of the five senses was the real spiritual practice. We should not allow the senses to go wayward. Senses can be controlled only by love. Always live in love. Make others happy by your love. Never harbour hatred or ill-will towards anybody. The quintessence of Vedanta is: *Help ever, hurt never.* As the scriptures say, *Paropakara Punyaya, Papaya Parapeedanam* (one attains merit by serving others and commits sin by hurting them).

Your mind will remain steady once you believe that God is in you. In the beginning, your *Sadhana* may not

give you immediate results. But if you continue contemplating on God within you, you are sure to achieve peace and bliss. God is not present in temples, mosques and churches. Body is the temple of God.

*“God does not exist in a foreign land, He is in you.
Sin is not elsewhere. It is there where a wrong
action is committed.”* (Telugu Poem)

Everything is within you. You do not need to study scriptures. All that you need is self-confidence. Self-confidence is most important for spiritual development.

Where there is self-confidence, there is truth.

Where there is truth, there is bliss.

Where there is bliss, there is peace.

Where there is peace, there is God.

Hence you must cultivate self-confidence. Otherwise, there will be utter confusion. Take, for example, this very building. It stands on its foundation. The building cannot exist without the foundation. Similarly, self-confidence is the foundation for everything in life. You can achieve everything with self-confidence. Perform your duty with sincerity and self-confidence and follow the ideals set by Buddha. Buddha had all the luxuries at his command. But he renounced everything. Bliss lies only in *Thyaga* (sacrifice) and not in *Bhoga* (sensual pleasures). Once you take to the path of sacrifice, you will attain bliss. That is the sacred teaching of Buddha.

Embodiments of Love!

First and foremost, reduce your attachment to the body. As your attachment to the body increases, your suffering also increases. The body is the temple of God. Think that this is not your body but the temple of God. The body is sacred as God resides in it. It is God's gift to man. Hence, use the body for performing sacred deeds and attaining bliss therefrom. When you share bliss with others, you will experience divinity. Continue your spiritual practices. But remain always suffused with the feeling that God is in you, above you, below you, around you. Never think that God is away from you. “I am not alone. God is with me.” Strengthen this feeling in you and shape your life accordingly. Lead your life with love.

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