

CHAPTER IX

JNANA AND YOGA

- Q. You have been saying that Jnana is essential. Well, what exactly is the function of Jnana?
- A. Jnana makes you realise the *Atma Swarupa*, that is to say, your own Reality.
- Q. And Yoga? If a person has no Yoga, what happens?
- A. He is like a lame man.
- Q. And, if a person has no Jnana?
- A. He is like a blind man.
- Q. They say that Yoga destroys all blemishes, removes all faults. How does that happen?
- A. Can rice become eatable unless it is boiled over a fire? By Yoga and other disciplines, the *Chiththa* (seat

of intellect) becomes soft. It is called *Thapas*, heat; it becomes *Thaptha*, hot. Moreover, Yoga and Jnana are like oil and flame. The oil is Yoga and Jnana is the illumining flame of the lamp.

- Q. Swami! Pardon me for asking this. There are so many teaching Vedantha, now. Have they all realised this truth, experienced this Reality?
- A. How can this be said? You can yourselves judge them. See if they have purity of heart, purity of thought, purity of mind, knowledge of the inherent and immanent Paramatma; only such have the right to teach Vedantha, for they alone can experience the Vedantha.
- Q. The teaching by those who have no such qualities, will it benefit to a certain extent at least?
- A. Fine descriptions of the various delicacies and tasty dishes will not satisfy the hungry man. The Vedantha which stops with words is like that. It has to be experienced in order to satisfy. Again, listening without eagerness to learn, is also ineffective. Unless the teacher has detachment from sense-objects, his teaching is but parrot talk. Those who come to listen, without desire to learn and benefit, are only engaged in showy demonstrations.
- Q. Baba! You say that purity of heart, purity of mind, and knowledge of the immanent and transcendent

Paramatma are essential. Then, of what use is Sadhana done through the body, composed of the Five Elements? Is it not enough if one acquires the Jnana of *Swaswarupa* (one's reality)?

- A. Wonderful fellow! Simply because the rudder is essential, can you take it that the boat is unnecessary? How can you cross the river with the rudder alone? Believe that the Lord has conferred upon you the body as a boat to cross the sea of *Samsaara* (flux), and Chiththa as the main thing in it. That is the first step in Vedantha. Swaswarupa jnana is the rudder really. But that alone is not sufficient. Physical habits and disciplines have also to be attended to. To attain the ethereal eternal stage, the disciplined body is important.
- Q. Another doubt afflicts me, Swami. Talking of physical disciplines, may I know whether *Brahma Vidya* makes any distinction between male and female?
- A. Well, my boy! This boat has no such distinction. *Brahma Vidya* and *Chittha Suddhi* (purity of consciousness) do not depend on sex at all. All who are ill have the right to the drug that cures, is it not? So too, all who have the illness of *bhava* (birth and death) have the right to *Brahma Vidya*, the specific that will cure it. It may be that not all can afford to have access to that wonder drug; but you cannot argue that some have no right to it.

- Q. Why, Swami, some Vedantha scholars themselves say that women have no authority to learn or practise Brahma Vidya! The boats are not of the same nature, it seems.
- A. My child! As I have said, both have equal right to the specific. But both have to follow a regimen in order that the drug might act upon the system. *Brahma Bhavana* or the contemplation of the essential basis of oneself, is the drug. Along with it, the regimen of Jnana and Vairagya has to be rigorously followed. Women may not be able to observe this disciplinary regimen as rigorously as men, since they are weaker. Perhaps the reason for those people denying women the right to this drug is this weakness. But all, whether men or women, who can observe the restrictions and regulations, have an equal right to benefit by the drug of Brahma Vidya. That is my verdict.