

## The Real Nature of The Life of Man

**T**o a superficial observer, the life of man appears as a rotation of eating and drinking, toiling and sleeping. But verily life has a much greater meaning, a much deeper significance. Life is a sacrifice, a *yagna*. Each little act is an offering to the Lord. If the day is spent in deeds performed in this spirit of surrender, what else can sleep be, except samaadhi?

Man commits the great fault of identifying himself with the body. He has accumulated a variety of things for the upkeep and comfort of the body. Even when the body becomes weak and decrepit with age, he attempts to bolster it up, by some means or other. But how long can death be postponed? When Yama's warrant comes, each has to depart. Before Death, position, pride and power, all vanish. Realising this, strive day and night, with purity of body and mind and spirit, to realise the Higher Self, by the service of

all living beings. The body must be preserved as a vehicle for this service. But remember, you are not this body. This body cannot be you. *Thath Thwam Asi*. Thou art That. This is the highest and holiest *Mahavakya* (Divine axiom). You are the indestructible *Atmathatwa* (Principle of the Eternal Self). It is for the sake of that *Atmathatwa* that you have this body and so in the attempt to realise *Parameshwara* (The Supreme Lord) here and now, you must be prepared to offer this body, at any moment, as a sacrifice. Utilise your authority over this body to foster the welfare of the world. This body is but an instrument, an implement given by God. Let it serve its purpose.

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But until the realisation of the purpose for which the implement is given, it is your duty to watch over it vigilantly and protect it from injury and disablement. During winter, woollen clothes are worn to withstand the rigor of the cold gales. But when the cold subsides they are discarded. So too, when the cold gales of material life do not affect us in the least, the material body is no longer essential. One is conscious of only the incorporeal body.

When the rains come, earth and sky are one in the sheety downpour. It is indeed a beautiful inspiring scene, a scene by which creation itself is teaching you to become One, in unison with it. There are three lessons that can be learned—the impermanence of created things, the role of Man as the servant, and God as the Master. This creation is the wherewithal of the *Puja*, Man is the worshipper, and

God, the worshipped. The game called Life is played with these.

Man must be happy that the *Purushothama* (Lord of all) has placed around him newer and newer materials for serving Him and gets done through him Puja in various forms. He must pray for newer and newer opportunities and exult in the chance that his hands receive. This attitude gives immeasurable joy. To lead a life suffused with this joy is indeed bliss.

Whatever is done from sunrise to sunset must be consecrated, as if it is the worship of the Lord. As care is taken to pluck only fresh flowers and to keep them clean and unfaded, so too ceaseless effort should be made to do deeds which are pure and unsullied.

If everyday, this vision is kept before the mind's eye and life is lived accordingly, then it becomes one long unbroken service of the Lord. The feeling of I and Thou will soon disappear; all trace of self will be destroyed. Life then transmutes itself into a veritable *Hariparayanam*. "I am the *sevaka* (servant). This world is the offering. God is the master who is worshipped"—when one attains this stage of thought, feeling and action, all difference between mine and thine will disappear.

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