

IX

SWAMI: O, you have come! Well. What is the news?

Bhaktha: What other news have we except yours? I heard that Your Kerala tour was most pleasant and wonderful. I am sad I was not destined to join.

Swami: Why are you sad for it? Listen to the account and be happy, that is all. Have the confidence and the hope that when next such an opportunity presents itself, you may be able to join. Do not be brooding over the past.

Bhaktha: What is the use of confidence and hope when one is not destined? Hope will only cause greater disappointment.

Swami: Has destiny a shape and a personality so that you can recognise it even before it shows itself? You should not hang on its favour, talking all the time of Destiny,

Destiny.... How can that destiny itself fructify without your will and wish, taking practical form, as action? Whatever be the destiny, it is essential to continue acting. Karma has to be done, even to attain one's destiny.

Bhaktha: If one is destined, everything will come of itself, isn't it?

Swami: That is a big mistake. If you sit quiet with the fruit in your hand, hoping that its juice will reach the mouth, how can you take it? It is sheer stupidity to complain that destiny denied you the juice, without squeezing and swallowing the fruit. Destiny gave the fruit into your hand; karma alone can make you enjoy it. Karma is the duty; Destiny the result. Result cannot emerge without action.

Bhaktha: So, Swami, we should not sit with folded hands, placing all burdens on Destiny, isn't it?

Swami: Listen. You should never underestimate your powers; engage yourselves in action commensurate with that power. For the rest, talk of Destiny to your heart's content. It is wrong to desist from the appropriate Karma, placing reliance on Destiny. If you do so, even Destiny will slip out of your hands. Whoever he be, he must engage himself in Karma.

Bhaktha: Yes, yes, Swami. In the Gita also Arjuna is told, "Even I do Karma. The Universe cannot go on if I

desist from Karma.” And so, if you withdraw from it, how can you realise the result?” I believe now that Karma is *Purushalakshana*, the hallmark of men.

Swami: And of women too. It is Prakriti-lakshana. All beings, men or women, trees or animals, worms, insects, all have to do Karma. Everything in the Universe is bound by this law. There is no escaping this obligation. Karma is the characteristic of Prakriti. Do not refer to it as Purushalakshana. Paramathma is the one and only Purusha. Prakriti is all Sakthi, Feminine. You are all not Purushas, remember.

Bhaktha: But Swami, there is that distinction in Nature; how is it correct to say that all are Feminine?

Swami: You may imagine it to be so, guided by your natural reason, but the reality is not that. All this is just secular experience, temporal, temporary. They are not the basic truth. This is simply play acting, mere impersonation. In some plays, men take the role of women. Sometimes women enact the role of men in plays. Are they, therefore, men? In the drama, Prakriti, all the actors are feminine, though there may be men’s roles too. The genuine Purusha is only one, that is Siva, the Atma. The Atma is immanent in everyone, but for this reason alone, all cannot be deemed masculine. The Prakriti theatre is like a girls’ school where all the roles of the play are taken up by girls. Sakthi, which is feminine, puts on all these parts. But do not take the drama as real, my dear fellow.

Bhaktha: Swami, even after hearing all this, the nature of the world remains an enigma to me. When one side is seen, it strikes me as Real. When the other side is presented, it strikes me as unreal. Nothing is definite.

Swami: That is exactly the nature of *Mithya* (apparent truth). It means that the world is neither Sathya nor Asathya, it is real as well as unreal. You are born in Mithya, you are enmeshed in it, and so you cannot distinguish this from that, the Sathya from the Asathya.

Bhaktha: Then setting aside this discussion of Mithya, tell me something, Swami, about that Sathya, that Purusha, whoever He is.

Swami: The Purusha has neither birth nor death, he undergoes no change. He is *Chith swaroop*, *Jnanaswaroop*. *Dharma* or codes of social conduct are not of His nature; so, he is not *Dharmaswaroop*. The Jnana which is his nature does not change, is not corrected or supplemented from time to time; it is eternal wisdom. Light is its nature and so it does not admit of a dot of darkness. The sun does not have effulgence added to it from the world it illumines. It will emit splendour whether there are worlds or no.

The Purusha is self-luminous. He is always the object of knowledge; he cognises all vrittis or mutations of the chittha or consciousness; he is modification-less, *aparinaami*, unevolved. The Chittha is *parinaami*, it

changes and evolves. The Purusha is sentience itself; he is not affected by apprehension or non-apprehension. No *vyapara* or activity can affect Him. Even when unmanifested, effulgence is his nature.

The seed in the soil grows into a tree, the tree is the manifested form of the seed. This change from seed to tree and tree to seed shows that the Sakthi in the seed has *vyapara*. This is *parinaama*. But the Purusha is unchanging, unaffected; He is the See-er. He is completely apart from Prakriti. No deed can diminish His glory, nor exhaust His Personality.

Bhaktha: Then which is Prakriti? Who is Purusha?

Swami: The principle behind the Seen is Prakriti; the principle behind the see-er is Purusha. *Amoolam* (no root), *moolam* (root cause), it is said; the root cause has no root! Causeless, both Prakriti and Purusha have no beginning.

Bhaktha: Then this *Samsara* (birth-death cycle) too should be beginningless, isn't it Swami? It resulted from the union of the two.

Swami: That union is the result of delusion; prompted by delusion, it produces delusion again. That is the law of the seed and the tree.

Bhaktha: Union means what, Swami? What is the condition?

Swami: The reflection of the Purusha in the *Gunas*, which evolve from Prakriti, that is union. Listen, just an example. The Sun is not water, neither is water, Sun. Still, by their juxtaposition, reflection is produced. The image has the characteristic neither of the Sun nor of water nor can it be said that it is devoid of these. When the water is agitated, the image too gets agitated. The image also shines a little. Again, the magnet is distinct from the iron, but when the two are brought near, the magnet affects the iron and makes it similar to itself. This is the relationship called *Samyoga*, or union.

Bhaktha: Of these, which is the real Purusha and which is the active Purusha, tell me.

Swami: Did I not speak of the Sun and the Image? The Image-Purusha is the doer, the enjoyer, the experiencer. The original, the *Bimba* is unaffected. He is the Non-doer, the Non-experiencer. The Image-Purusha is known therefore, as the *Vyavaharikapurusha* or *Grihitha*, the Acceptor. The *Bimba* is the True, the Eternal, the Real, the *Atmaswaroopa*. The *Grihitha* is the knower and by that act of knowing, he has undergone modification.

Bhaktha: Right, Swami. Wonderful. How many books one should have conned in order to know all this! And even then, to grasp the meaning is so hard. I have now known that Purusha is not in the world, that all this is merely a drama, Paramathma being the One Purusha.

To attain Him, everything in Prakriti is striving; this is probably what is spoken of as Siva-Sakthi. Fine, fine.

Swami: You are right. It is also referred to as Jiva-Brahma Union. Everyone must strive for this Union. The Jiva cannot exist alone; *Moksha sadhana* has to be done, willy-nilly, by every living thing. Without it, there can be no Peace.

Bhaktha: What does Moksha mean exactly, Swami? And what is *Mukthi*?

Swami: Both mean the same. That which is burdened with the Manas is the Jivi; when the Manas and the Nama and Rupa which it spins from out of its substance, are destroyed, then the Jivi attains Moksha. Then it becomes one with Brahman; that is Moksha. When the Ganga or the Godavari reach the sea, their separate names, forms, tastes and limits all disappear and they acquire the name, form, taste and limit of the sea itself.

Until the Jivas attain the end of the Mind, they bear the Nama, Rupa and the *Ruchi* of Delusion, Myselfness and I-ness; when the Jiva nears the sea, these characteristics begin to disappear slowly; when the Gunas as well as the mutations of the mind are destroyed, then one can say that union has been accomplished with Brahman. How can the Ganga which has merged with the ocean be sweet? If it is said that one has merged in Brahman, he should not have the three Gunas, nor any taste of Manas. Such full union is known as *Sayujyamukthi*.

Bhaktha: Oh, how grand, Swami. Bless everyone to attain that union; then the world will really be happy.

Swami: What? For Me to bless so would be to go against the freedom you are endowed with. Take up the Sadhana prescribed for winning that blessing; gain the blessing by effort, that is the way. It is not something that is given away. You do not pray to the Sun to make the rays fall on you, do you? Shining is His Nature. He is doing it always. Remove the obstacles between you and the sun and the rays are on you. So too, keeping the obstacles of Delusion, Myselfness and I-ness between you and the rays of Grace, what is the use of complaining that they do not fall on you? What can the rays do?

Bhaktha: That is as good as saying that we must remove all traces of I-ness and Myselfness from our minds.

Swami: Why do you say, “As good as saying?” I am saying it emphatically, over and over again. If you seek the rays of Grace, try and remove the obstacles. Remember, even if you do not strive for it now, you will feel the urge sometime later; you cannot escape that urge. It has to happen some day, this shuffling off the coils of Delusion. Why postpone the day of joy, the day of liberation? Strive for this from this very day, nay, this very minute. You may leave now, my boy. But come again, I must tell you one more thing. Do not go to extremes; be steady; be patient.

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SWAMI: Well! You look so full of joy today!

Bhaktha: You have yourself said that man is the embodiment of joy, isn't it?

Swami: Then you must always be in this mood; do you remain so?

Bhaktha: I am trying as far as possible.

Swami: Why do you say "trying"? Does not sorrow flee the instant Reality is known?

Bhaktha: But what is the Reality, Swami?

Swami: All that "is" is unreal! The efforts you undertake, the words you utter, are all unreal; when you know this, the Reality will be evident. Remove all the unreal ideas, opinions, acts and the Truth that is hidden can

be seen. Piling up all this on top, if you ask, what is Reality, how can it be seen?

Bhaktha: How is it possible to take all that is done, spoken, seen, felt, listened to, as unreal?

Swami: First, understand who is experiencing all these. You refer to the body as "I," "I," isn't it? That is unreal. When the experiencing "I" is itself unreal, how can the experiences be real? All have the same Atma. The person who experienced is not "you," the person who listened is not "you." You only witnessed all this.

Bhaktha: You said, Swami, that in everything there is Atma. Is there Atma in a dead man?

Swami: Oh! a good question indeed! Is it more to solve your doubt or the doubt of a dead person?

Bhaktha: Mine.

Swami: Well it is only when you have awakened from deep sleep or *Sushupthi* that you are aware there is an "I," isn't it? In the same manner, there is the Atma in the corpse also.

Bhaktha: Then how can it be called dead, how can death happen, when there is Atma?

Swami: If you discriminate properly, there is not dying and no living. A moving body is called living and a still one dead. In dreams any number of living bodies and

corpses are seen. On waking they do not exist. Similarly, this world, both moving and still, is non-existent.... Death means the fading out of the “I” consciousness. Rebirth happens when “I” consciousness comes again. This is what is called birth and death, my boy! Ahamkaara is born, Ahamkaara dies, that is all.

Bhaktha: So, I exist always, is it?

Swami: Of course, you do! When the “I” consciousness is there, you exist. When it is not there also you exist. You are only the base for the awareness. You are not the awareness.

Bhaktha: But they say, “attained liberation,” “attained Mukthi,” etc. What is that?

Swami: Understanding the root of death and birth, one must destroy completely the awareness of the separate “I”; that condition is “Mukthi.”

Bhaktha: So, when I die, I and You are One, isn’t it?

Swami: Who said “No”? That feeling of One when you are firmly established in it, there is nothing separate at all.

Bhaktha: Until then, in order to identify the real “I” in the unreal “I,” they say that the support of a Guru is wanted; how far is that true, Swami?

Swami: It is only when you have so many “I”s that you need someone’s support, is it not? When all is One,

why seek another? Still, until that *Aham* or that “I” fades out, this speaking “I” and this listening “You” have to be there. When that “I” is gone, whom to speak to? Who listens? All are one. The reflection of Atma, conditioned by Chith is Easwara: Easwara conditioned by the Antahkarana is the Jiva, is it not?

Bhaktha: But what exactly is this *Chidaabhaasa*?

Swami: Chidaabhaasa means the “I” awareness conditioned by the Chith; that One became Three, the Three became Five, the Five became Many. The “I” awareness (*Sathwa*) became Three on account of contact with *Rajas* and *Thamas*; in those Three the five *Bhootas* or elements arose; and through those Five, the Manifold happened. It is this that causes the illusion that the “I” is the body. Speaking in terms of *Aakasa*, there are three: *Chidaakaasam*, *Chitthaakaasam*, and *Bhootaakaasam*.

Bhaktha: What is Chidaakaasam?

Swami: That is the Atma.

Bhaktha: Chitthaakaasam?

Swami: Its deflection. That is to say, Chiththam. When that changes into Manas, Buddhi and Ahamkaaram, it is called Antahkaranam, a word which means the internal senses, the inner Indriyas. *Chidaabhaasam* having the Antahkaranam is the Jiva.

Bhaktha: And, Bhoothaakaasam?

Swami: Chidaakaasam conditioned by Chitthaakaasam. When it sees the elemental Akaasam, (the Bhoothaakaasam), it is *Manoaakaasam*; when it sees the object; the *Vasthu*, it is *Chinmaya*. That is why, my dear fellow, it is said, “The Manas alone is for Man the cause for both bondage and liberation.” The Mind manufactures any amount of delusion.

Bhaktha: How can that delusion disappear, Swami?

Swami: When you grasp its secret through inquiry, the many merge in five, the three in one, and the I exists as I. You get headache, you apply ointment, it disappears, you are as you were. The delusion that “I am the Body” is similar to this. It will disappear, if you apply the ointment of *Vichara* or Inquiry.

Bhaktha: Can everyone adopt this path of Inquiry?

Swami: No, my boy. It is only for those whose Chiththa has become ripe.

Bhaktha: Then what should we do to reach that ripe stage?

Swami: Now we have come to the place from which we started! Have you not got things like Japam, Dhyanam, Puja and Pranayama for this? Steadily, through these, you become ripe and become capable of understanding the “I” by inquiry into Reality. For such men, the Atma

is not something different from themselves or your self. All is Atman!

Bhaktha: But Swami, You mentioned only Japam, Dhyanam, Bhajana. etc. Some advanced persons adopt *Mounam*, the Vow of Silence. Of what use is it? What exactly is Mounam?

Swami: The illumination of the soul is Mounam! How can there be Mounam without the Atma being illuminated? Without that, merely keeping the mouth shut is not Silence. Some adopt the Vow of Silence, but communicate, writing on paper or slate; or they point successively to the letters of the alphabet on a chart! All this is pseudo-mounam! It is only another way of talking without interruption! There is no need to *attain* Silence. Silence is ever with you. What you have to do is only to remove all things that disturb it!

Bhaktha: But many persons do not open their mouth to speak. You mean that this is useless?

Swami: Who said so? If you do not use the tongue, if you are silent in order to keep out the external obstacles to Sadhana, you certainly can develop your thoughts, you can desist from disturbing others, you can escape criticism and worry from others, you will get concentration, your brain will be saved from unnecessary burdens and it can improve much. With such a brain, you carry on Smarana of the Lord’s name

better. All these advantages you will realise when you do Sadhana.

Bhaktha: Then for the full Jnani all this is unnecessary?

Swami: There is no full Jnani in the world! He is in no need of the world itself; then, why does he need all this?

Bhaktha: If that is so, who are those people called Jnanis?

Swami: The silent men I spoke about just now. Jnani is a term applied by courtesy. A full Jnani is non-existent in the world. The Jnani must know “All as one”! Your Jnanis are all either experts in logic, or experts in the knowledge of world; they have not known the Reality.

Bhaktha: Who are the real Jnanis?

Swami: He who knows the Atma as Atma will know himself, as milk added to milk, oil to oil, or water to water. When the physical body dies, they likewise merge in the Atma. But some may have some traits still persisting. They continue to have some resolutions and desires. Until these are exhausted, they will wander in the world, with body. Such men are called also “Bits of Divinity born as Men, *Daivaamsasambhuthas.*” This is also as per the Lord’s Will.

Bhaktha: Why should this difference arise, Swami?

Swami: It arises out of each one’s Sadhana and Sankalpa. Eat a mango and you belch its smell. How can you

prevent it? The belch brings the perfume of the thing eaten.

Bhaktha: Will such men too have limitations? *Upadhis*?

Swami: Without *Upadhis*, how can work get on? They too have it. But only in a subtle form, until they attain Transcorporeal Mukthi, *Videha* Mukthi.

Bhaktha: What is that, Swami?

Swami: Their acts are like the line drawn on water, seen while the line is being drawn; absent as soon as it is finished. While being done, you notice it, in an instant it is not noticeable any more.

Bhaktha: Swami, you said that a Jnani has Renunciation as his hallmark. How does this agree with that?

Swami: That is true! Renunciation is his hallmark. If out of the traits of previous birth he gets attached, he must know that it is only for the body and not for him. This attachment damages the bliss of *Jivanmukthi*; *Jnana* is most important for *Videhamukthi*.

Bhaktha: Even if one has no *Jnana*, can one attain *Mukthi* by mere *Vairagyam* (renunciation)?

Swami: What a foolish question! How can the fruit be sweet without ripening? *Vairagyam* cannot arise except from *Jnana*. There is no *Moksha* without *Vairagyam*. Be sure of that!

Bhaktha: Then where does Bhakthi come in?

Swami: We have come to the very beginning again! Earlier than Jnana it is in the form of Bhakthi. Earlier than Bhakthi it is in the form of *Anurakthi*, affection. All these are one. Anurakthi is the flower, Bhakthi is the fruit; it is ripe as Jnanam; Vairagyam is the sweet juicy final stage. Without one, you cannot have the next. In order to tend the fruit until the juice and taste are developed, you must practise daily prayer, etc., mentioned above. But from the first, have in view the Oneness of all. Understand that there is no “other.”

Bhaktha: At least, to keep up appearances in the world one has sometime to say “this is mine.” What is one to do then?

Swami: Of course, you may have to say so. But simply because you say so, what need is there for you to feel separateness between I and You? When you travel in a carriage, do you take the carriage as “I”? Look at the Sun. He gets reflected in a small pot filled with water, in a broad river, in a mirror, or on a polished pot. For this reason does the Sun feel that all these things are “He”? Does He get sad when the pot breaks, or the river gets dry? This is exactly like that. If you take “I” to be the body, then it is all bother! If you don’t take it so, you will shine like the Sun, independent of anything else. Besides, You will be immanent everywhere.

Bhaktha: That is as much as to say each must first discover for himself who he is.

Swami: Exactly. Inquire into that first. Of course for those who are not competent, this will be too hard. So, those experienced in this line say that such men should not be told these things. If you tell— “You are Yourself Brahman,” “You have attained Moksha, You are in that Stage,”—to those not competent, they will do no sadhana, they will act without any rule or order, and they will pay no regard to right and wrong. This must be revealed only by a Guru or by the command of the Lord! Those who have the thirst and the determination to undergo the discipline, of course, can ask about it! But it must be practised. There is no use simply hearing it and repeating, “All is One.” That is meaningless.

Bhaktha: Swami, Sankara has already said, “*Viswamdarpana drsyamaanaganagaree thulyam hi anthargatham,*” etc. (the world, if you really penetrate into its inner meaning, is like a city seen through a mirror). This vision that the Jagath is unreal; that it is all Maya—is this for common people or for Jnanis also?

Swami: The Jnani’s eye sees all things as Brahman! The Ajnani or the person without Jnana cannot understand whatever is said! So, all Sastras are intended to benefit the middlings.

Bhaktha: This means that all Sadhanas are included in the *Vicharana Marga*, the Path of Inquiry?

Swami: Yes. The teaching of the Vedantha is about “Who am I?” And to make this inquiry, only those equipped with the Four Instruments are competent. The purpose of the four is to realise that the Atma is real and that all else is unreal; also, to discriminate between Atma and all else.

Bhaktha: How is that to be realised, Swami?

Swami: By inquiring into the nature of the Atma! First they do all varieties of Sadhana and finally enter upon this. While a child, they teach you A B C D isn't it? Even M.A., and B.A. curricula consist of the A B C D and their permutations and combinations! But to realise this fact one has to complete one's studies! The Sastras are based on *Akshara*; meaning both letter and the Imperishable. All margas are based on the Vichara Marga.

Bhaktha: But there are some who attain Samadhi. Will they have all this enquiry, etc. in Samadhi?

Swami: Wonderful fellow! How can there be inquiry in Samadhi? When you sleep soundly, do you have any thoughts about the world around you? This is also like that.

Bhaktha: There will be no Manas in Samadhi, isn't it?

Swami: The Manas that persists in sleep will be there also.

Bhaktha: They talk of a *Thuriya* Stage (a Beyond Stage) in Samadhi. What is that, Swami?

Swami: Beyond the Waking, the Dreaming and the Deep Sleep Stages.

Bhaktha: Why is it that those stages are absent there? What are the characteristics of that stage?

Swami: Those three are the characteristics of I-ness. *Ahamkaara*, the Person with Manas, who does all acts. That will not be present in the *Thuriya* Stage. It would have disappeared long ago. For them, it is all the same, with eyes open or with eyes closed. It is all One.

Bhaktha: Swami, without that *Aham*, how can they talk?

Swami: What was *Aham* in the beginning, when the Reality is grasped, is transformed as *swaroopaa*, the True Entity; this is referred to as the Destruction of the Mind, *Manonaasanam*.

Bhaktha: So, this *Nirvikalpa* Samadhi is all *Naasanam*?

Swami: Well, my boy, Samadhis are all Merging, *Laya*, not destruction. The *Sadhaka* stage is when you have both construction and destruction.

Bhaktha: This subject is very interesting, Swami.

Swami: Don't sit quiet, merely appreciating it. Practise it in daily life. All right, you can take leave.

Bhaktha: Very good Swami. Please bless me in that practice. I shall be back soon.

Swami: If you dearly love a dog, that dog too is Brahman! The dog has a name and form. If you remove both your name and form and its name and form, then Brahman alone remains. Name and form are “past obstructions,” *Bhoutha Prathibandha*. The absence of name and form is Brahman. In all the multifold Names and Forms, there is inherent just One Brahman. You have to recognise that “*is-ness*” in all. The *is-ness* is *Asthi*, the knowledge of the knower is the *Bhaati*, the effulgence, the shining splendour. That too is Brahman.

There is a yearning, isn’t it, to see it, experience it, to seek for it? That is due to the *Priyam*, the attraction, the charm. These three are basically characteristic of Brahman, my dear boy!

Bhaktha: What is this Satchidananda they speak of?

Swami: Atma itself is known as Sath-Chith-Ananda, because its nature is *Asthi-Bhaati-Priyam*.

Bhaktha: Swami, since “lovableness,” *priyam*, is also its nature, should not everything be loveable? But scorpions, snakes and wild animals, these do not evoke love!

Swami: You may not love them. But they love each other, don’t they? A thief likes another thief; a devotee likes another devotee; each loves his own kind.

Bhaktha: I do not understand all this clearly, Swami. Tell me some example, if there is any, of this *Asthi-Bhaati-Priyam*, from the present world?

Swami: My dear boy, why say, “if there is any”? When all is Brahman, which one is not an example of that? Now, you go to a picture. The picture exists on the screen; it persists, it is. That is “*Asthi*.” Who sees it and understands it? You. So it is “*Bhaati*.” The names and forms which are *Priyam*, loveable, come and go. Even if you set them aside without being deluded by them, the screen is always there. One point has to be noted here. The pictures fall on the screen, by means of a beam of light projected through a small slit in the wall of the machine room. But, if it comes from the entire room without the slit, escaping from that limitation, the figures will not be seen! The screen will be fully bathed in light! So too, if the world is seen through the small slit of one’s mind, the manifold multicoloured creation will be cognisable. If the floodlight of *Atmajnana* is poured, and you see it through the *Atma*, it will be One Unlimited Light and no individual picture can be cognised. That is to say, all will be cognised as the one indivisible Brahman. Do you understand?