

Chapter IV. The Miracle of Miracles

The children of India (*Bharathiyas*) believe that they are, each one, the *Atma*, the eternal Self. They are aware that the *Atma* cannot be cut in twain by the sword, that fire cannot burn It, that water cannot wet It, and that the wind cannot dry It. The *Atma* has no bounds. Its centre is in the body, but, its circumference is nowhere. Death means the *Atma* has shifted from one body to another. This is the belief that every Indian has firmly in mind.

The *Atma* is not subject to material or worldly limitations or laws. By Its very nature, It is free; It is Unbounded; It is Purity; It is Holiness; It is Fullness. But, since it is associated with material, inert, bodies, It imagines that it is also a product of material composition. This is the wonder, the mystery, the miracle that It manifests! To unravel this mystery and explain this miracle are beyond the capacity of anyone.

Atma is unbound, eternal, full

How could the Full (*purna*) *Atma* get entangled in the delusion that It is “not full” (*a-purna*), “a fraction”, “incomplete”? Some people might say that the Indians (*Bharathiyas*) who declare that the awareness of incompleteness itself can never arise are attempting to wriggle out of an impossible situation. They might say that this is but a stratagem to cover up their ignorance of the Truth. How can the Pure, the Unpartitionable, lose Its nature to the slightest extent? The Indians are simple and sincere, and their nature is seldom artificial. They would never attempt to wriggle out of a situation by resorting to specious arguments. They have the courage to encounter in a brave way any problem before them.

Therefore, the answer to the question posed is: The delusion cannot happen! There is no basis for the error of imputing “incompleteness” for the “complete”. The “full” entity called *Atma* can never imagine Itself as “wanting” or “less than full” or feel that It is limited or controlled by the material sheath whose core It is.

Everyone knows that they feel they are the body. Can anyone announce how this feeling arose and persisted? No one can offer to answer this question. For, to say, as some do, that it is the will of God, is no answer at all. The plain statement, “I do not know” conveys the same meaning, as the statement “It is the will of God”. One is no wiser at the latter statement than after hearing the first. What remains is this: “The *Atma* in the individual (*jivatma*) is eternal, immortal, full. There is no death; what appears so is the shifting of its centre.”

Past deeds affect the present

Our present condition and circumstances are decided by deeds done in previous lives. In a similar manner, the conditions in which we have to spend the future are determined by what we are doing now. Between one life and another, one death and the next, the individual either progresses or regresses, expands or shrinks. Like a frail ship caught in a stormy sea, one climbs the froth-rimmed peak of some gigantic wave and, the next moment, is hurled with terrific speed into the deepest trough. The rise and fall result inevitably from good and bad deeds.

O ye children of immortality! Listen! Listen to the answer given in the message of the sages (*rishis*) who had the vision of the Most Majestic of Persons (*Purushothama*) who dwells beyond the realms of delusion and darkness:

O, ye human beings! Brothers! The only means for you to liberate yourselves from the

succession of deaths is “knowing Him”. Do not imagine that you are sinners, for you are heirs to eternal bliss (*ananda*). You are “images” of God, sharers in undiminishable bliss. You are by nature holy, ever-full; you are indeed God moving on earth. Is there a sin greater than calling such as you sinners? You are dishonouring and defaming yourselves when you acknowledge the appellation “sinners”! Arise! Cast off the feeling that you are sheep. Don’t be deluded into that idea. You are *Atmas*. You are drops of divine nectar of Immortality, which know neither beginning nor end. All things material are your bondslaves; you are not their bondslaves.

These are the words of the sages (*rishis*). How can those who have not themselves delved into this truth appreciate this Indian (*Bharathiya*) interpretation? Indians are the fortunate ones who have achieved great strength in spirit by holding God as father, mother, guru, friend, and the beloved. They have adored God as dearer to them than anything or anyone, here or hereafter. How can those who are aware only of mere sensual pleasure know this supreme truth? The craving for sensual pleasure veils the truth from the inner eye. That craving manifests in multiple ways, creating more and more desires and laying down more and more urges to action. These desires and urgings hide the truth like a thick curtain.

Inner search for breaking out of illusion

The recognition of this curtain is a big stage in spiritual progress. This is the illusion (*maya*) principle of *Vedanta*. From immemorial times, though the truth was self-evident, this curtain has hidden it from people. This was discovered by Indians ages ago as the prime obstacle. How to remove the curtain and cognize truth? Indians knew that the solution does not lie in the objective, external world, so it would be futile to seek it there. The search in the external world, even for ages, cannot ensure success. Only inner experience can guarantee conviction.

To gain experience, Indians entered into austerities and disciplined inquiry until they “identified” the Truth and announced it to the world. They discarded the urges of the senses and the manifold attractions of active involvement in the objective world. They taught the world this lesson. The mind was the instrument for the Indian seekers to discover this secret, which is the basic principle of wisdom as treasured by them. It became imperative for them to use the mind itself and study its nature and characteristics. They realized soon enough that study of the external world led them nowhere. They diverted their attention to the internal “regions” of their consciousness. Thus, they laid the foundation for the *Vedantic* structure; this was the beginning of *Vedantic* inquiry.

God at the core of our Self

There is no need to seek truth anywhere else. Seek it in people themselves: they are the miracle of miracles. Whatever is not in humanity cannot be anywhere outside. What is visible outside people is but a rough reflection of what is really inside! The ancient belief was that God (Iswara) ruled over the world, with Himself being outside it; the Indian seekers tested this belief through spiritual practice (*sadhana*) and revealed that God was and is in the world and of it. This is the first contribution of Indians to the spiritual world: God is not external to people but is their very inner core. They declared that it is impossible to remove Him from the heart where He has installed Himself. He is the very *Atma* of our *Atma*, the soul of our soul, the inner Reality of each.

Bharath: unique region of God-loving people

Those who desire to grasp the supreme vision of *Vedantic* philosophy have to understand a few fundamental ideas. Philosophy is neither a book nor the work of one person. The supremely great Manu named this India as the region of Brahma (*Brahmavartha*), the spiritual area where the quest of the ONE immanent and transcendent Principle originated and succeeded. The festive cavalcade of saints engaged in the quest began its march over the continents from this India (Bharath) itself. Like mighty rivers from huge mountain ranges, the stream of spiritual discipline (*sadhana*) for the discovery of the higher truth sprang from this land itself. This land announced to the world its spiritual message with the confidence and courage of thunder blasts emanating from the womb of clouds.

When inimical forces blasted into India, this holy land bore the brunt of the blow; it had to present its heroic chest before the attack and absorb the initial impact. Many times this land had to bear these invading thrusts and suffer fierce injuries. Yet, this land has not fully lost its fame and glory and its steadfast strength on this path.

From this land, Nanak the Great, the embodiment of equanimity and compassion, preached his highly wonderful message of love. His all-embracing heart blossomed in this land. The children of this land, inheritors of this culture, spread their arms to receive in loving embrace not only the Hindu or *Vedic* world but the Islamic world too.

Among those who shone as heroic supporters of the Hindu culture unto the last, the foremost was Guru Govind Singh. Undeterred by tortures that forced him to shed his own blood and the blood of his own beloved, deserted by those for whom he had undergone such torture, he did not utter a word of blame against his compatriots, but entered the Deccan and gave up his life, as the king of beasts does when his heart is hurt. May that great one's fame persist forever on earth. Such eminent leaders render the whole of mankind indebted to them, for they serve the best interests of all people everywhere.

Just as each individual is a unique entity, so each nation has a unique individuality. Each person is different from others in certain matters and is endowed with some special characteristics that are their own. So too, each nation has certain special features that are not found in others. Each individual has to play a role as part of the system, and their own previous activity (*karma*) has determined a special line or path for that individual. The history of nations is the same. Each nation has a role to play that is already laid down by its destiny. Each nation has to deliver a special message of its own to the world community.

Therefore, it is important that Indians (*Bharathiyas*) recognize, before everything else, the role this nation has to play, the tune it must sing in the world orchestra of peace and bliss. You must have heard, while listening to childhood tales, that there are gemstones in the hoods of some serpents and that as long as those gems embellish the hoods, killing the serpents is impossible. Keep this story in your memory; then, you can understand the most miraculous event in human history: the survival of Indian spiritual culture.