

2. THE QUEST FOR DIVINITY

Embodiments of Divine Love,

We need not carry a lamp to see a burning lamp, for the burning lamp can be seen by its own light. When the Self shines in all its splendour by its own light in everyone, we do not need any other light of knowledge to see the self. It is not possible to see the light of Atma even by the light of intellect (buddhi), since buddhi derives its light only from the self. Intellect is like the bulb and the self is the electricity. It is the light of the Atma that shines through the senses and the organs of the body.

The mind manifests its influence in the state of 'Jagrata' (waking) and 'Swapna' (Dream). The mind comes to a standstill in the state of deep-sleep. Here the mind shines as Superintellectual Consciousness. Though consciousness is present everywhere, it shines with special illumination in the realm of the intellect, just as the fire associated with the iron emits more heat than ordinary fire. In this state of super-intellectual consciousness, mind comes to a standstill and ushers in the state of Supermind. The Supermind enjoys a state of steady serenity without delusion. It is when we attain this state of steady and unruffled serenity that we can reach the lofty heights of the overmind. There is no room for worldly thoughts to enter in this ecstatic state, in the same way as snakes and scorpions can never enter into well-illuminated rooms.

Man remains as man as long as the mind lasts. Man functions as man as long as the mind functions. It is only when man transcends the limited state of mind, he becomes broadminded. For example, we have decided to build a spacious building on a

sprawling plot of land. At this stage, the ground seems to be broad and spacious. When we build walls and make apartments, the apartments look small and are not as spacious as the sprawling plot of land. Similarly, as long as we build the walls of name and form, everything appears to be narrow and limited. Once we dismantle the walls of name and form, we have the vision of Universal Consciousness.

THE PART AND THE WHOLE:

Everything is interconnected and interdependent in the world. One is the part of the other. The five senses are limbs of the body. The bodies are limbs of the society, the society a limb of Humanity, Humanity a limb of 'Prakruthi' and 'Prakruthi' a limb of 'Paramatma.' The entire world is marked by the principle 'Anga angī bhava' (One is the part of the other). It is only when the feelings of separateness are destroyed, we have the vision of the Whole and the experience of Ananda (Bliss).

We are accustomed to perceive the deficiencies and ignore the merits. For example, while eating rice, if one or two stones get mixed up with the rice, we complain bitterly that the whole food is full of stones, utterly ignorant of the fact that there are only one or two stones amidst thousands of rice particles. This clearly shows that we shut our eyes to what is good and are alert only to what is evil. Similarly, swayed by the unnatural evil, we ignore the natural Divinity. In fact, every human is an embodiment of Divinity. We build walls of Bhrama (illusion) between humanity and Divinity. These walls create differences and delude us into thinking that we are the doers. We have come to the world to reap the consequences of our own actions. The subtle body, which is made of Pranamaya, Manomaya, Vijnanmaya koshas (sheaths), is the enjoyer. The Vedas state: "Ritam, Sathyam and Bruhatvam." Bruhatvam is described in the Upanishads as 'Mahatathva.' This is also termed as

‘Bhooma’ which means ‘Brahmatathva’ (the principle of Brahma), The Brahman is one who is all pervading at all times.

THE SUBLIME HUMAN QUALITY:

The man who allows himself to be enslaved by his five senses falls into abysmal depths, though he has mastered the five elemental forces. The one who is the slave of senses is the slave of everything else. As long as man is bound by his senses, he develops only divisive tendencies. Human qualities are good, noble, lofty and sublime. In the world there is none more sublime and greater than man. Though we are endowed with sublime human quality, we utterly disregard the Atmic principle, as we are deluded by ‘Dehabhranthi’ (identifying the body as the self). All the discoveries we make and machines we invented are in the realm of the world. But these mechanical inventions can only make man’s life mechanical and artificial. There is no room for heart in artificial life. The heart is the abode of God. We should not allow either animal or demoniac qualities to enter into that sacred abode of Divinity. The limbs and senses of man are meant to capture the Divine Illumination and shine with the Divine Light.

When you build a house you build doors as well. These doors are meant to facilitate easy entry and departure of friends and relatives. Only those who are authorised to enter are allowed through these doors. The door is not meant for dogs and donkeys to come into the house. Similarly through the doors of senses, we should usher in only sacred thoughts, feelings and ideas. The Lord cannot be enthroned in the heart fouled by evil thoughts, ideas and feelings. In the world of today, man has polluted the five senses, five sensations and even the five elements. How can we ensure peace in a world where the five elements are befouled? The sacred texts exhort us to attain the state that goes beyond the ken of senses. This state, envisioned by the sacred scriptures, is known as

the state of realisation of Inner Consciousness. All that we teach should go inward and not outward. Such an effort enables us to attain the realisation of Cosmic Energy.

THE REALISATION OF COSMIC ENERGY:

Where is the Cosmic Energy? The Cosmic Energy is all pervasive. It is in you, above you, below you and around you. You yourself are the Cosmic Energy; but you are not able to realise it. Once, Sage Vashista asked Lord Sri Rama why he had to go into exile when he was the Lord Himself. But the Lord pretended as though He was not aware of His Divinity. It appeared as though Lord Sri Rama identified Himself with the body and was therefore not aware of His Divinity.

It is this body delusion which causes ignorance in man. We must regard the body as a Divine instrument and keep it in a sound condition. We eat for the upkeep of the body. That is why it is said in the Veda, 'Bikashnam Deha Rakshanardham.' We dress for the protection of the body. The body of man is subject to many diseases. For the disease of thirst, water is the medicine; and for the disease of hunger, food is the medicine. Man suffers from the disease of desire, attachment and greed; but man seeks recourse to questionable methods to cure these diseases. The disease of greed is of two kinds: 'Perasha' (Unlimited desire) and 'Dhrusah' (evil desires). There is nothing wrong in entertaining desire to have food, clothing and shelter. But the desire which exceeds all limits turns into 'Raga' (Attachment). While seeking fulfilment of one's desire, one should not cultivate the desire of selfishness, laziness and devilishness. Man loses his very humanity by harbouring narrow feelings.

It is natural even for a strong block of iron to acquire rust while it is buried in dust. The block of iron when rusted loses its

shine and strength. The same block of iron shines with splendour when it is cast into fire. After undergoing severe treatment in fire, a piece of iron becomes bright, soft and strong. Similarly man's duty lies in self-transformation. By such sincere self-transformation, man can transform even black into white.

For example, a piece of dark charcoal cannot be whitened by either rubbing it with soap or rinsing it in milk. But both soap and milk turn black due to the company of the black charcoal. So men have to conduct an investigation to find out how charcoal becomes white. Charcoal, which was once a piece of wood, turned black due to its unfinished purification in the fire. It neither enjoys its natural state nor its finished state. Since it is in the middle state, it is marked by impurities. It is only by throwing charcoal into fire, and exposing it to the full heat of burning flames, that it can be whitened. It is only by exposing it to the ordeal of fire that the charcoal becomes white and bright. The white ash which ultimately remains is worthy of worship and is applied as Vibhuthi (sacred ash) on the forehead.

ATMA, THE UNDERCURRENT:

Sacred ash imparts a great lesson and wisdom to all of us. "Oh man! All objects of the world are destined to end up as ash after going through the purification process in fire." It also teaches that everything is temporary and nothing is permanent. It is the voice of the Atma which is everlasting. This Atmic principle is the very embodiment of Divinity and Sanctity. This is the unique excellence of human beings. Though we are endowed with Supreme Divinity, we are not able to realise its presence within us. Such a man is like the one who goes for treasure hunting elsewhere, when the very treasure is hidden under his feet in the bowels of earth. We will not search for pearls outside when we realise that there are precious pearls in us.

When there is a lamp in our house, why should you go begging
for the fire elsewhere?

Why should you go in search of God when the Lord
of Lords is housed in you?

You need not go elsewhere when you realise that
the Lord is enthroned in your heart.

When you are established in the truth that the Divinity in you is all pervasive, you feel greatly energised. The realisation of this truth erases the difference between you and God, mine and thine. The same self runs as an undercurrent in all the elements of the world. You have not come newly for the first time into this world. You have changed many bodies, but the Atmic principle in you is the unchanging Reality. You are infinite. For example, if you go to the ocean and start counting the number of waves in the ocean, you will realise that you can never trace the beginning of a wave nor can you find an end to the waves in the ocean. There are waves as long as there is the ocean. There is Chaithyna (consciousness) as long as there is the universe.

The very meaning of the word 'Manava' highlights the fact that man is an eternal entity and not a newcomer on earth. In the word Manava 'Ma' means 'no' and 'Nava' means 'new.' Hence the meaning of the word 'Manava' points to the fact that man has not come new to this world.

The knowledge that we acquire from the study of Physics, Botany, Chemistry etc., is only artificial knowledge, but not wisdom born of inner vision. The knowledge born of inner enquiry and inner vision is true knowledge, and the rest is only ignorance.

WHAT IS MAYA?

Man is caught in the coils of Maya (illusion). Death, pain and pleasure are all manifestations of this illusion. In fact, maya has no form of its own; it makes you think the existent as non-existent and non-existent as existent. When we see a rope in darkness, we mistake it for a snake. The rope reveals itself as a rope when light is focused on it. It is the darkness which is the cause of ignorance. Neither the snake nor the rope have come and gone. It is only your Bhrama that has come and gone. The principle of Brahma neither comes nor goes. It is not possible to realise the Brahman as long as you are steeped in Bhrama. One has to become Amanaska to be free from Bhrama.

How can one become an 'Amanaska'? It is only when you merge the mind in the Divine that you become an Amanaska. When you cast silver in a mould of Krishna, the silver flows into the eyes, the ears, the legs and the hands of Krishna. Similarly, when the mind is cast on Divinity, it becomes one with the Divine. But unfortunately today we cast our mind in the mould of 'Prakruthi' instead of casting it in the mould of 'Paramatma.' Since you think always of the world, your mind too is enveloped by the world. The entire world is nothing but the manifestation of the mind.

The universe is the embodiment of the Lord, and not of the world. The Lord is the cause and universe is the effect. The universe springs as a consequence of action and its effect. Though man is radiant with sublimity of himself, humans downgrade the importance of human life. A beggar comes to our house and pleads. "Oh mother! I am 'Anadi' (helpless one). Please give me alms." The true meaning of the word anadi is one who has neither beginning nor end. The word points out to the sanctity and purity of human life.

On one occasion, Thyagaraja spurned away the treasure that the king had sent to him saying that he would prefer the proximity of the Lord to the enjoyment of wealth. He declared that he desired 'Hari' (Lord), not 'Siri' (wealth). Since he yearned for 'Hari' he found fulfilment in life by acquiring all that he yearned for.

Kabir was a poor weaver who eked out his livelihood by weaving clothes. Though he was poor, he was always blissful. Mistaking him to be an anatha, the king of the land sent him wealth, through his servants. Kabir, who had just returned from a bath in the river, noticed the wealth in front of his house. He asked the servants, "Who has sent this wealth?" "The king has sent this wealth," the servants replied. "To whom has he sent this wealth and why?" queried Kabir. "The king has sent this wealth because Kabir is anatha," said the servants. "Who is anatha? I am not anatha since my 'Natha' (master) is Sri Ramachandra. Since I have a master I am not anatha. As Lord Rama has no master He is anatha and all this wealth should be truly offered to Him."

Many of us do not know the true meaning of words and wrongly use them. It is by realising the meaning of words of this kind that we can understand the supreme value of human life.

Embodiments of Divine Self, be firm in the faith that you are the Eternal Self and not the Transitory body. In short, body, mind, intellect and consciousness are the vestures of man. Man has to give up these dresses one day or the other. That is why Jesus said, "Death is the dress of life." Hence, death is a mere change of dress. Hence it is not proper on our part to cry when the person changes his dress. There is no room for sorrow if we firmly believe that all relationships are temporary and transient.

We are ridden with sorrow as long as we have attachments. We must develop attachment towards God and not the world. The

four Mahavakyas proclaim the truth that man is verily Divine. Man should be rooted in the belief that he is Brahman but not Ramayya and Krishnayya. But people delude themselves into the thinking that they are the body. Parents name your body, but nobody is born with a name. Bodies come and go, but the Atma is eternal.

THE TRIPLE TRUTH:

The Upanishads have made three statements in this respect. The first statement is: “When it comes, it never goes.” This is Wisdom or ‘Jnana,’ which when it comes, will never go. The second statement is: “When it goes, it never comes.” This is Ajnana or ignorance, which will never return once it goes. The third one is: “It neither comes nor goes.” This is the Atma. Many people ask ridiculous questions like, “What happens to the self when the body dies? Where does it go? When does the self enter the body again?”

Just as a current never comes and goes but only illumines the bulb which is connected to it, the Self never comes and goes. Since the Self pervades everywhere, the question of it entering into a certain place or form does not arise at all. Once Radha sang:

When I am about to close the door there is a call asking me not to close the door, but open it. When the entire universe is the mansion of the Lord, it is ridiculous to think of a door through which the Lord can enter. All that you can do is to attune yourself to the Lord and offer the tears of bliss at His feet.

It is these tears of bliss which constitute the corridors of the mansion of your life. There is nothing like Kailasa and Vaikuntha. Once, Narada said, “O Lord! Where are your headquarters?” The Lord replied: “Madbhaktha Yatra Gayante Tatra Tishthami.” (I install myself wherever my devotees heartily sing my glory).

THE LORD'S ADDRESS:

The Lord has only one Head Office. That is the heart. All other places like 'Kailasa,' 'Vaikuntha' etc., are only branch offices. Krishna did not present Himself immediately in front of Draupadi when she prayed to Him in her hour of plight. She called the Lord 'Dwaraka vasa' (dweller of Dwaraka), 'Madhurapura vasa' (dweller of the city of Mathura) etc. But Krishna did not appear. Totally tired, she at last said 'Hridaya vasi' (dweller of the heart) and Krishna appeared immediately and came to her rescue. Many days later Draupadi asked Krishna, "O brother! why did You not come to me in my hour of humiliation, when I called out to You?"

To this Krishna replied, "You addressed Me as Dwaraka vasa. Since I am duty bound to prove the truth of my devotee's words, I had to go to Dwaraka and come back all the way. But I presented Myself in front of you as soon as you called Me Hridaya vasi."

This incident substantiates the fact that the Lord is the resident of the heart. The Lord is nearer to you than your parents, friends, kith and kin. We should not be affected by praise and blame, censure and appreciation, gain and loss. Chaitanya was abused wildly by people. But Chaitanya danced in ecstasy even then. When someone questioned him why he danced in joy in spite of the foul abuses, he said, "The foul abuse of the people does not reach me at all. It melts into the thin air. That is why I dance in joy."

Once Uddhava said to the gopikas, "O damsels. People criticise you. They say that you are infatuated with Krishna and run after him disregarding the commands of husbands, mothers-in-law and fathers-in-law." To this the gopikas replied, "Does the cuckoo stop singing simply because the crows are cawing? We are

not afraid of anybody in the world, since we sing the name of the Lord heartily like the cuckoos. What do the swans lose, when the cranes make fun of them? When dogs bark at the sight of the elephant, the elephant loses nothing. Why should we fear when we yearn for the Lord? We should be afraid when we crave for the world.”

Hence we should not be afraid of the blame and the censure hurled by people.

Why should we be afraid of singing the Lord’s name who would come to our rescue at the hour of death, when the messenger of death drags us from the house?

Embodiments of the Divine Atma, do not be afraid of sorrows, for sorrows are like passing clouds. Nothing is permanent except Divinity. We must attain Him by our love.