

## 23. Follow the intellect: not the mind

*O foolish man, why do you seek God outside*

*like the ignorant musk deer?*

*Like the fragrance in a flower,*

*God is right inside you,*

*if you look with insight.*

*God is in many; nay, man himself is God.*

*But strangely and foolishly man searches*

*for God in the outside world.*

*However just like the ash that*

*covers the fire on the charcoal,*

*Desire and hatred envelop this divinity in man.*

*Even as the fire is revealed*

*when the ash is blown off,*

*The Aathma will reveal itself to man*

*when he gets rid of desire and hatred.*

*EMBODIMENTS of love!* One and the same man plays different roles in his family and society as the husband of his wife, the father of his children, the child of his parents, the boss of his employee or vice versa, depending on physical relationship, mental attitudes and inclinations, or other circumstances. Love is showered on the daughter but not on the daughter-in-law. The son-in-law does not enjoy the same affection as the son. One does not have the same attachment for one's mother as for one's wife. What is the reason for such differences based on temporary bodily relationships, giving rise to all kinds of attractions and aversions, likes and dislikes, joys and sorrows? It is because man's mind is subject to five types of *Kleshas* (distortions or complexes)

### **The five types of mental complexes**

*Avidhya klesha* (Ignorance Complex): Man becomes a prey to several afflictions due to narrow, deluded feelings such as, "I am the body," "I am a *Jeeva*," and "I am separate and different from God." This is called *Avidhya Klesham* (Ignorance Complex), which demeans the status of man and results in many kinds of sorrows.

*Abhinivesa klesha* (Attachment complex): The mind is the abode of all desires, sorrows, likes, dislikes, attachment and aversions. In spite of knowing that the mind is the culprit, which causes attachment to *Samsaara* (transmigratory existence and attendant miseries), man is unable to detach himself from his mind or otherwise control its vagaries and thereby to escape from sorrows and suffering. This is termed as Attachment Complex.

*Asthitha Klesha* (Vacillation Complex): The world is full of various *vishayas* (sense objects) which entice the weak-minded persons who go on flirting from one sense object to another, not realising that these *Vishayas* (sense objects) will ultimately turn out to be *Visham* (poison) which

deprives them of all sense of discrimination and dispassion. As a result of this men are plunged in endless suffering throughout their lives. This is termed as *Asthitha Klesha* (the Complex caused by mental unsteadiness).

*Lobha Klesha* (Greed Complex): Labouring under the delusion that the goal of life is to acquire gold, wealth, vehicles, mansions and the like, man toils ceaselessly from dawn to dusk, to acquire and hoard such possessions beyond his needs. In the process he foregoes even food and sleep, thereby endangering his health. In spite of knowing that all such possessions are temporary, he pollutes his mind by excessive greed and falls a victim to untold suffering and sorrow. This is known as the *Lobha Klesha* (Greed Complex).

*Dhvesha Klesha* (Hate Complex): For his own selfish ends, man gets trapped in a maze of unending desires of various kinds. And when his desires are not fulfilled, he unreasonably blames it all on other men as well as on God Himself and thus he develops hatred against both man and God. Hence this is designated as *Dhvesha Klesha* (Hate Complex).

All these complexes are nothing but mental aberrations which are injurious to man himself. Having become a victim of such aberrations, man forgets his *real Aathmik* nature and falls a prey to all kinds of sorrow and misery. In this world we find very few people who are always blissful. A large majority of people are found to be swinging between joy and sorrow. There are some others who are always sad and depressed and have never tasted bliss even once. There again, are some others, who are not bothered about anything and who lead a sort of mechanical life like animals. What is the reason for such a state of affairs? It is not due to *Prakrithi* but due to the different ways in which man is influenced by his own mind.

#### **Four categories of human beings**

Based on their mental predisposition, human beings may be classified under four categories as follows:

*Dheva-maanava* (Godly man): "*Brahma Nishttha Ratho Dhevah*," it is said. This means: He is a godly person, who rejoices in communication with *Brahman*, and is ever established in *Brahman*, dedicating all actions to God, looking upon all things as His manifestations and joyfully experiencing all forms as reflections of the Divine. The Godly man finds self-fulfillment in his life.

*Maanava-maanava* (The human man): "*Sathya Dharma Ratho Marthyah*"--He alone is a man who takes delight in truth and righteousness having faith in the scriptural injunction, "*Sathyam Vadha, Dharmam Chara*" (Speak the truth and practise righteousness). He conducts his life according to the twin principles of truth and right conduct. He considers duty or responsibility as more important than rights or privileges. He is endowed with virtues such as kindness, compassion, generosity, charity and forbearance. Thus, the human-man leads the peaceful life of a he, use-holder.

*Maanava-dhaanava* (Demonic man): "*Madhyapaana ratho Dhaanavah*" (A demon is one who takes pleasure in drinking intoxicating liquors). The demonic man spends his time in such *Thaamasik* activities as eating, drinking, sleeping, etc. He is concerned solely with his own selfish interests and enjoyments, and never with the happiness of others. Kindness and compassion are alien to him. Not even a trace of discrimination and dispassion could be found in him. It is his nature to deride, abuse and hurt others. What is worse, the very sight of great and

holy men will arouse in him feelings of jealousy and hatred. A person whose mind is filled with such evil thoughts and feelings is called a "demonic man."

*Maanava-pashu* (The animal man): This type of man wastes his life in seeking only sensual pleasures from birth to death. In this respect he is worse than beasts, because the latter are at least governed by instinct while there is no consideration of reason and season for the human brute who has no control over his ever-growing evil qualities.

### **Discipline the mind to achieve the goal**

The mind is at the root of all such perversities. If the mind is properly understood and disciplined and is applied to get rid of wicked qualities based on selfishness, it will lead to a purposeful and fruitful life. It is basically owing to selfish thoughts that one fails to achieve the goal of human life.

We should first, of all have firm faith in the inherent divinity of man. On the one hand, there is the manifested world, which attracts the attention of our body and senses and also entices our mind, and on the other hand there is the unmanifested divinity, which is the substratum of the manifested universe. The two are only aspects of one and the same divine principle of *Sath-Chith-Aanandha* (Being-Awareness-Bliss). Since all is *Sath-Chith-Aanandha*, the *Upanishaths* have declared: "*Puurnamadhah, Puurnamidham* etc.," meaning that both the unmanifest and the manifest aspects are fully divine. Although man's essential and true nature is *Sath-Chith-Aanandha* (Being-Awareness-Bliss), he is perpetually haunted by all sorts of problems, difficulties and sorrows. What is the reason? It is because he follows the mind and not the *Buddhi* (intellect).

### **Follow the guidance of the intellect**

To live as *maanava-maanava* (human man) is only a mediocre life. Man's aim should be to live as a *Maanava-Dheva* (Godly-man). But man today is leading the life of an animal because of desires and hatred only. Non-fulfilment of one's desire results in hatred. The true nature of man is neither joy nor sorrow, but it is *Sath-Chith-Aanandha* (Being-Awareness-Bliss) that transcends both joy and sorrow, which are transient. Hence man should endeavour to experience this *Sath-Chith-Aanandha*. Living in this vast universe, you should try to cultivate correspondingly broad feelings. But, misguided by the mind, people are harbouring narrow feelings and thus making their lives miserable. The solution to this is to follow the guidance of the intellect, eschewing the vagaries of the mind.

*The foolish man who relies on his mind*

*will degrade himself,*

*By becoming worse than a brute.*

*While the wise person who follows the*

*guidance of his Buddhi*

*Will become Pashupathi.*

Why is there this importance for the intellect? Because the sense organs are superior to the body, the mind is superior to the sense organs and the intellect is superior to the mind. The *Aathma* (the Self) is superior to the intellect. Thus it can be seen that the intellect is the nearest of all to the Self and hence it has the advantage of receiving the maximum potency and effulgence from the

Self. Therefore, man should utilise his intellect to understand and experience the Self and lead a blissful life.

### **Man owes to God all his achievements**

From birth to death, man is spending his time and energy for the sake of food and sleep. Is this an achievement befitting the status of man? Some may boast about their scholarship or their pilgrimages or about the worship and rituals performed by them and about the high offices held by them. To think high of themselves based on such achievements is a sin.

Only when people recognise whole-heartedly that they owe all such achievements to God's grace, they would be true to their salt. Man is degrading himself into the state of a demon by thinking one thing, saying another thing and doing quite a different thing, violating the much-needed harmony among these three activities.

Once Aadhi Shankaraachaarya reached the holy city of Kaasi (Benaras) after the successful completion of his *Digvijaya Yaathra* (country-wide campaign) of philosophical debates. There, while having *dharshan* of the presiding deity of the place, Vishvanaath, he offered the following prayer: "O Lord! I have come to you for the expiation of my sins." How strange?

### **Aadhi Shankara explains his three "sins"**

Aadhi Shankaraachaarya had sanctified his short span of life by studying all the scriptures of the land as well as writing many volumes of brilliant expositions and profound commentaries on the *Vedha*, the *Upanishaths* and other texts. Also he had conducted his life on the lines laid down in the scriptures. Because of his glorious achievements, he is acclaimed, as the very incarnation of Lord Shiva. It may, therefore, seem strange and even paradoxical that a great person of his standing should have prayed like that. What, then, were the sins committed by him? He himself gave the answer as follows:

"O Lord Shankara! My first sin is that in spite of my knowing (and also teaching others) that God is beyond mind and speech, I have tried to describe you through the several *sthothras* (hymns) composed by me. This betrays lack of conformity between my thought and my word."

"Next, having been convinced of the scriptural savings that God pervades and permeates everything in the manifested universe, I have been preaching this truth to one and all. Nevertheless, I have come to Benaras to have your *dharshan*. This shows that my thoughts, words and deeds are at variance with one another. This is my second offence."

"Thirdly, I have firm belief in the teachings of the scripture that one and the same *Aathma* (Self) is immanent in all beings and there is no difference between the so-called *Jeevaathma* (Individual Soul) and the *Paramaathma* (Over-Soul). While I have been proclaiming this truth in all my discourses, I have now come here to stand before you as if we two are separate and different from each other. This is my third lapse. Hence I pray that I may be absolved of all these three sins, of which I am guilty."

### **The true meaning of "sin"**

From the above episode in the illustrious life of Shankaraachaarya, we have to learn an important lesson. The popular notion is that indulging in activities like accusing, abusing or physically hurting others alone are to be considered as sin. But contrary to this notion, thinking one thing, saying another thing, and doing quite a different thing, constitute a sin which is committed by most people. Only when man gives up this kind of sin and ensures harmony and unity in his

thought, word and deed, can he be considered *Puurna Maanava* (a perfect man). This is why the *Upanishaths* have declared that a *Mahaathma* (great-souled person) is one who practises purity and unity of thought, word and deed, whereas he whose thoughts, words and deeds are at variance with one another, is a *Dhuraathma* (wicked one). In this connection, the mind plays a crucial role, and it can either elevate a man to the greatest heights or degrade him to the lowest depth. We should be master and not slaves of our mind. Proper mastery over the mind is the challenging task confronting mankind today.

Man should develop high and noble ideals and feelings in all spheres of life--physical, moral, religious and spiritual. He must not be content with sensual pleasures which are temporary and leave a trail of misery. It is the mind that is responsible either for one's upliftment or downfall. One should not hastily rush into action, based on the whimsical dictates of the mind. It is only after considering whether the action is good or bad, right or wrong, that a person with a disciplined mind acts. Such a man will ultimately reach the goal of self-realisation.

*Discourse to the Summer School at Brindhaavan on 25-5-1993.*

*A cleansed heart is the most appropriate altar. In that fragrant bower the Lord will establish Himself. At that instant another incident too will happen: the group of six vices that had infested the place will quit without so much as a farewell. When these vices quit, the wicked retinue of evil tendencies and vulgar attitudes which thrive on them will also break camp and disappear, without even leaving their addresses! Then man will shine in his pristine splendour of Truth and Love, and finally succeed in merging with the Supreme.*

*BABA*