12. The Three Forms of God – Viraat, Hiranyagarbha and Avyaakruta

Having studied *Brahma Vidya*¹,
There are many who preach at length.
But we cannot find even a single hero who practises.
Sai's words are the Truth.

Students! Embodiments of Love!

We become eligible for Knowledge of Atma (Brahma Vidya) only when we understand the relation between Brahma and humanity in the cosmic cycle of creation and destruction. "Brahma" means the vast, infinite principle. The element of sound (akasa) emanated from this infinite expanse of Brahma. From sound emerged air (vayu), fire (tejas) from air, wind from fire, earth (prithvi) from wind, oceans from earth, food from oceans, and finally, humans from food. Ponder this sequential cycle and you will arrive at the truth that humanity has emerged from the infinite Brahma.

Divine Bliss, *Brahmanandam*, is composed of two words: Brahma + *anandam* (bliss). Brahma and bliss are separate. Man journeys from food (*annam*) to bliss (*anandam*). Man's aim is bliss alone. When this bliss joins with Brahma, it acquires the form of *Brahmanandam*. So, it is possible for us to understand the close association between Brahma and humanity. Such Knowledge of Brahma (*Brahma Vidya*) is available through Brahman alone. People, however, disregard the divine principle and trust only the world. Thus, people blind themselves to the universal Brahman.

Afflicted with attachment, fear, and anger, the ordinary person is far from Divine Bliss. Bliss can dawn with the conquest of attachment, fear, and anger, but only to a certain extent. Why? Renouncing attachment, fear ,and anger is not sufficient. Love for God must be cultivated as well. But even that is not enough! You must become close to God's love for you. Finally, even proximity to God's Love is inadequate. You must place total reliance on the all-encompassing Transcendental Principle (parathathwa). Then it is possible for you to become Divine.

The Siksha-valli² imparted by gurus to their students in the Taittireya Upanishad sheds light on the path leading to Brahmanandam. Do not consider Brahma Vidya to be beyond human understanding. Brahma Vidya consists of simple spiritual practices like the practice of

truth in daily life and the blossoming of character. One must accumulate the wealth of spiritual pracices with patience.

The *Upanishads* elaborate on the principle of Brahman through three names: *Viraat*, *Hiranyagarbha*, and *Avyaakruta*. These three forms relate to gross (*sthulam*), subtle (*sukshmam*), and cause (*karanam*) and to the three states of waking, dream, and deep sleep.

Viraat

The *Atma* principle that personifies the waking state is *Viraat*. Viraat is that form of the *Atma* that dons a physical body, lives a long life, and embodies the waking state. He assumes various forms and is known by various names. That is, He demonstrates that the movable and immovable world is really His manifestation, as also the five elements. From the ant to Brahma, everything is His form.

He is called Viraat because He has reached the state of asserting, All is My Form (*Sarvam Visva Swarupam*). The entire visible universe is a form of Viraat, without exception, without any distinction of "this" or "that". Therefore, Viraat is the principle that manifests as the external, gross, visible world and demonstrates ideals to the world.

Viraat has two other names: Vaiswanara and Vairaajasuta. Vaiswanara is He who appears as the "I" consciousness in each individual. From the king to a farmer, from a beggar to a millionaire, from a child to an old person, male or female —everyone uses the word "I" to identify oneself. Individuality is present in everyone. The one who asserts "I" in every being in Vaiswanara.

The third name is *Vairaajasuta*. Viraat, Vaiswanara and Vairaajasuta are three names of the same Being. Vairaajasuta is one who exists in a mysterious form. He exists in everyone but is undetected. He performs all actions but behaves as if He does not. He experiences everything but does not reveal it.

Hiranyagarbha

The second form of Brahman is *Hiranyagarbha*: the basis, the source of all wisdom. All knowledge —worldly, ethical, *dharmic*, spiritual, scientific— has emanated from Hiranyagarbha. Therefore, He is also called the Sun of Knowledge (*Jnana Bhaskara*). When the Sun rises, He appears golden (*Hiranya*) and colours the world with a golden hue.

¹ Knowledge of the *Atma* (Self)

² Valli means chapter. Siksha means learning or instruction, but it is also the science of proper articulation and pronunciation of Vedic texts.

Creation emerged from Hiranyagarbha, which is oval in shape, a golden egg, like the one I materialised a few days ago. The mouth was the first to emerge from this shape. From the mouth, sound. Then, the nose, through which air began flowing. Eyes came next, with fire emanating through them. Ears arrived next. Therefore, Hiranyagarbha is the origin of the human form.

All beings evolved from Hiranyagarbha, who also bestowed insightful wisdom, the ability to distinguish right from wrong, and intuitive wisdom (vijnana, sujnana and prajnana) to them to facilitate discrimination between the temporary and the permanent. What should be attained, what is not worth pursuing? What deeds should be done, what should not? What is the chief form of wisdom achievable by man? What path makes human life well spent? What is the purpose of life? Hiranyagarbha granted wisdom to man to clarify such issues.

Hiranyagarbha, like Viraat, has two other names: Sutraatmaka and Praana. Just as a thread (*sutra*) passes through a necklace of gems, Sutraatmaka is the principle that underlies all beings and brings bliss to them. This unifying thread-like principle is also called *Brahma Sutra*.

The thread called God is present in equal measure in all humans without distinction, promoting unity of mankind —this is the principle of Hiranyagarbha. Hiranyagarbha assumes a subtle (*sukshmam*) form during the dream state —the form of the *Atma*. This means that Hiranyagarbha is one who is awake during the dream state.

Viraat creates everything in the waking state. Hiranyagarbha creates everything in the dream state by mere willing. Every object is created by will alone. Whatever is seen in dreams is created by Hiranyagarbha.

Avyaakruta

The third form of Brahman is *Avyaakruta*. He is absolutely formless. He exists in the causal body and enjoys the state of deep sleep. He has no limbs but does all actions. He travels to distant places. He has no eyes but sees everything. He has no ears but listens to everything. He performs every act in Creation, but possesses no form.

Avyaakruta also has two more names: Antaraatma and Iswara. (Notice that the three forms of Brahman — Viraat, Hiranyagarbha, and Avyaakruta— have, in turn, three names each.) What is the significance of these names?

Antaraatma motivates and influences everything from Himself. Every motive, urge, inspiration comes from the Antaraatma. This is "inner voice" (antar-

vaani). All sounds that man produces also emerge from Antaraatma.

Next, Iswara. Who is Iswara? Yes, He is the embodiment of all forms of prosperity (*sakala aisvarya swarupa*). In addition, He bestows results of actions. He has the power of action with which He assesses good and bad actions and grants corresponding results. He is also called the the Destroyer (*Laya Kaaraka*).

Iswara bestows prosperity (aisvarya). What is prosperity? Both good and bad are prosperity! Since Iswara represents all forms of prosperity, He judges people's actions and grants the corresponding wealth.

Reflection of the Inner Being

The *Upanishads* are not meaningless texts. They are not restricted to *yogis* or *rishis*. No, don't entertain such misconceptions.

Why are students utterly incapable of grasping the sacred *Upanishads*? When proper interpretations are not provided, when their methods of application in daily life are not enumerated, students naturally lose interest. Science, which progresses day to day, is nothing but a part of the *Upanishads*. The *Upanishads* are the end of the *Vedas*. For this reason they are also called *Vedanta*³. They are full of spiritual wisdom *(jnana)*, which you must acquire.

The worldly and physical branches of knowledge are limited in scope. Mental peace, happiness, and bliss of the *Atma* are available only through contemplation on the *Upanishads*. Viraat, Hiranyagarbha, and Avyaakruta do not exist in a special place somewhere. Every person is the form of these three forms. Our narrow intellects are unable to grasp such infinite concepts.

The body multiplied by infinity is Viraat. The mind multiplied by infinity is Hiranyagarbha. Life multiplied by infinity is Avyaakruta.

These three also correspond to the gross (*sthula*), subtle (*sukshmam*) and causal (*karana*) bodies. All three forms are conjoined within man. Hiranyagarbha is in our mind. Viraat is in our very form. The five elements are present not just in creation, but in our bodies alone —as sound, touch, taste, sight and smell.

The reflection of the body (*deham*) is the external world (*desam*). "Outside is a reflection of the Inner Being." The body is the world, creation (*prakriti*). Inhalation and exhalation are the form of air (*vayu*), one of the five elements.

When we move about and enter into action, fire (agni) emerges. Consider a small example. When we

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 $^{^{3}}$ Veda + Anta (end) = the conclusions of the Vedas.

exercise, the body generates heat. Or why go that far? Rub your palms and heat is produced.

Next, water. Our entire body is water. For example, running produces sweat.

The body is the embodiment of the five elements. Hence, it is the form of Viraat. All powers are present in the human body. What is not found inside a person cannot be found outside. However, a person's focus is extroverted, so they believe that external powers do not reside within. Whatever one sees outside is also present within.

Time, task, cause, duty

With attachment, hatred, and fear, we forget our true nature. Take an example. You fall asleep. You are your own witness during sleep. In the dream, you board a train, journey through stations, meet other passengers. From where did this train emerge? Your mind alone. The stations and passengers? Also creations of your mind. You created everything, even yourself, in the dream state. This is the nature of Hiranyagarbha.

We see everything in the waking state. We are influenced by place, time, and situation. But in the dream state, we are beyond these conditions. Enquire into the difference between the waking and dream states. You heard that Swami will give a discourse here at 4pm. You started your journey from the city at 3:30. How did you start? In a car. You reached at 4pm. Why did you come here? To participate in the programme. Why? To listen to Swami. Time (kala) is 3:30pm. The task (karma) is your journey by car. The cause (karana) is to hear Swami's words. The duty (kartavyam) is also listening to Swami. The four conditions of time, task, cause, and duty are present in the waking state.

In the dream state, you travelled from here to Delhi. When did you start? "No time". How did you travel? "No karma". Why did you travel? "No cause". What is your duty there? Again, nothing. The dream state is characterised by the absence of time, task, cause, and duty.

Viraat is composed of time, task, cause, and duty (kala, karma, karana, and kartavyam). Hiranyagarbha transcends these limitations. Who experiences the waking and dream states? The entity experiencing the waking state is not different from the one in the dream state. The states are three —waking, dream, and deep sleep—but the individual is one. We are led astray by the four conditions because we differentiate between these states.

Everything is composed of time, cause, and duty. The body itself is also bound by time and duty. To sanctify the body, perform pure actions and use time mean-

ingfully. The world of people is bound by actions (*Karmaanubandheeni Manushya Loke*.) No one can survive even for a moment without performing action.

What is action (*karma*)? Is it only through hands and feet? No, no. Everything is *karma*. One example. When you ask, "What is he doing?", you might get the reply, "He's not doing anything". So, what is he doing without doing anything? Sleeping! Sleeping is also action! Or, he is just sitting without doing anything. Sitting down is also action. With subtler enquiry, inhalation and exhalation are seen as action. Blood circulates in the body and the heart pulsates —without effort on our part. All this is action (*karma*). Some action is voluntary while other action takes place involuntary.

Adi-bhauthikam, adi-atmikam, adi-daivikam4

You sleep, quarrel, grieve, smile —whatever you do, inhalation and exhalation do not wait for you. They do their job ceaselessly. Does one make a conscious effort to breathe? Does one make the heart beat by will? No. Whatever your mental state, the heart does its job. This is called divine Power (adi-daivikam).

Adi-bhauthikam is related to the body. Adi-atmikam is related to the mind. Finally, Adi-daivikam is divine Power. This trinity of Adi-bhauthikam, Adi-atmikam, and Adi-daivikam correspond to Viraat, Hiranyagarbha and Avyaakruta. Experiencing different states in different times, these three perform different actions and are known by distinct names.

Significance of the Sun Principle

The sages recognised the inner significance and secrets of these principles by renouncing everything and striving to obtain the Bliss of the *Atma*. Unfortunately, we do not understand the meaning of *Vedic* names, so we make fun of them.

The *Vedas* say, "From His mind came the moon and from His eyes the sun (*Chandramaa Manaso Jaatah*, *Chakshoh Sooryo Ajaayata*⁵). What is meant by the moon? Today we think, we have traveled to the moon and found no God there! We deride the *Vedas*. When the *Vedas* say *moon*, it is not the planetary body orbiting the earth. The mind principle existing in our heart is the moon.

What is the sun? The brightness and fire (*tejas*) of the sun exists in our eyes. This *tejas* enables us to discern the one God in diversity. No one can demarcate

⁴ These words are difficult to translate into English. *Adibhauthika* pertains to the physical or material world; the fine spiritual aspect of material objects. *Adi-atmika* pertains to the individual soul; *Adi-daivika*, to Divinity.

⁵ From the *Purusha Suktam* – Prayer to Lord Narayana

the power or influence of this *tejas*. The eye, half an inch in size, is able to see stars millions of miles away! If the power of the eye was from the physical sun of the solar system, then how could the eye perceive anything beyond the sun?

What is the relation between the sun and the eyes? Sight is made possible by these 'negative' and 'positive' principles coming together. Either one on its own is useless. Both are necessary.

For example, can you see anything in a dark house? If you close your eyes in daylight, again, nothing is seen. Light is necessary, and your eyes are necessary. The glow of the sun and the fire of your eyes join together to create the world. Meaning, Creation (*srishti*) has emerged from your sight (*drishti*). Without vision, there is no Creation. Truly, there are no defects in creation but only in your sight. So, purify your vision.

The *Upanishads* taught this point beautifully by asserting that your eyes (*netras*) are true scriptures (*sastras*). Your sight itself is Creation. You must recognise the unity of these dualities. Concepts beyond the ken of science are easily understood through the *Upanishads*. Man's scientific knowledge is the size of an atom, but he thinks it is infinite —and develops ego. Spirituality, however, asserts that the infinite Cosmos is contained within the atom! Divinity exists within the atom and it engulfs the entire Cosmos (*Anoraneeyaan mahato maheeyaan*).

Atom and cosmos

A seed becomes a tree. Where did this gigantic tree emerge from? From the minute seed. The humble seed hides branches, leaves, fruits, and flowers within itself. When do they manifest from the seed? When the seed loses its shape and form, its grander qualities come into existence. In other words, the seed destroys its own form, or, renounces its ego. Only then it does it acquire a new form —of the tree. If it stuck to its old form, how could it comprehend the magnificence of its new identity? More seeds are brought forth by the tree.

The infinite exists in the atom and, the atom in the infinite (*Anoraneeyaan mahato maheeyaan*). Enquire into the infinite and the atom —they are the same! The shapes and sizes vary but the material is one. This is the main significance of the *Upanishads*.

Practice

Every *Upanishad* reveals and clarifies a secret of Creation. People understand and interpret them as per their level of intellect. This is based on their physical efforts (*abhyasa*). This leads to colouring of pure and complete concepts as per their narrow outlooks. When a meat eater goes to a forest and spies a bird on a tree, he

tells himself, "If I could catch it, what a tasty meal it would make!" His vision sees only its flesh. When a poet sees the same bird, he appreciates its colours and soft feathers, describing them in beautiful words. The bird is the same, but the sights of people are different.

So, how did our sight and outlook become distorted? Through practice (*abhyasa*) with worldly intentions. The good in us must be strengthened with practice as well. Hence,

Wisdom is better than practice, Meditation is better than wisdom, Renouncing fruits of actions is the best, For it bestows infinite peace.⁶

Sreyo hi jnanam abhayaasaat Jnaanaat dhyaanam vishishyate Dhyaanaat karma phala tyaagam Tyaagaat shantir anantaram

For everything, practice is essential. An infant must practise walking, eating, and talking. Walking, talking, reading, writing —all require practice. Nothing can be accomplished without practice. Likewise, teachings of the *Upanishads* reveal their Truth when practised.

Attachment, fear, and anger

The Bliss of the *Atma (Brahmaanandam)* cannot be bought from outside. Contemplation on your true nature is bliss. Man thinks, "There is an object separate from me. When I acquire it, I will be happy, blissful." This delusion is the root cause of attachment (*raga*).

From attachment comes fear. How? "Will I get what I want or not? Even if I obtain it, will I be able to retain it forever? will I be able to safeguard it?" This is fear. Fear eventually turns into its contorted form, anger. Hence, attachment, fear, and anger follow in sequence. Without attachment, the other two cannot exist.

What is attachment? Desire. Today, desires are beyond limits. People lose their bearings with excessive desire. "Who am I? How should I live?" —all questions are forgotten. People even forget human qualities and become demons. They have no gratitude. Worse, they harms others.

Human values

First, recognise your human nature. The world abounds in cruel and frightening acts. Today one is ready to harm one's own mother if she stands in the way of one's desires! No, no. All desires can be attained by a person who is established in human values. Even if your desires are satisfied at the expense of human values, how can you possibly be happy?

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⁶ Bhagavad Gita (XII: 12)

People alternate, between joy and grief by following endless desires. But if a person themself did not exist, what are happiness and sorrow worth? Huge mansions, overflowing bank balances, and a family —to what end are these? Without human values, all are tasteless.

Students! First and foremost, strive to live like a human being. Acquire honour and reputation in society. You may die, but your ideals and fame remain immortal. Become exemplary students.

How can you acquire a good name? Character is the root cause of repute or disrepute. Purify your behaviour. The praise of others is not necessary. Please your own heart, your conscience. Without such introverted balance, you betray yourself. Do not be a thief to yourself! Rather, become the "master" who arrests the thieves within.

Importance of Upanishads

Students, be "masters" and "slaves". Control your senses and bear troubles and adversities with fortitude. The mind must be fed on a diet of courage and valour. The "glucose injection" and "calcium injection" of courage and valour are available only through the *Upanishads*!

The essence of the *Upanishads* is contained in that very word: upa (near) + ni (down) + shad (sit). When you are near something, its benefits become accessible to you.

A small example. When you sit near an air conditioner, its cool air caresses your body. In cold places, you install heaters. You experience comfortable warmth in proximity to the heater. "Upanishad" means to go near and sit down. Meaning, when you are near God, your vices disappear and God's immaculate purity enters you.

We disregard the *Upanishads* as abstract poems, stories and couplets written by sages. Students! You read mindless novels with so much faith and devotion! Shouldn't you spend at least some time on the *Upanishads* and try to grasp their significance? I know that most of you, when returning to your homes in trains, become so absorbed in cheap novels that you are oblivious to the different stations along the way, to your fellow-passengers, to time itself!

The harmful effect of the Kali Era (the age we are in) has brought upon us television and videos. During holidays, our students eat in front of the video. They cannot stop movies even during meals! As you watch movies, vulgar thoughts enter your food. Food has an influence on your intellect, which decides how close you are to God.

Yes, you may watch pure and inspiring films —that is no mistake. But why disregard the sublimely pure and enlightening *Upanishads*? Reading scriptures is a headache, you say! But you lose track of time while reading impure stories. This is the impact of the Kali Age.

Students! Do not be like ordinary students. From time to time, seek good company and delve into the *Upanishads*, *Gita*, *Itihasas*⁷, *Bible*, *Quran*, and other texts. Pure feelings are scarce in you because you do not read such texts. This is especially important for women.

Responsibility of mothers

Women should read scriptures and contemplate on pure, inspiring scenes in their minds. Today's women watch 3-4 movies a day during pregnancy. Not surprisingly, the children born to them are "cinema children" [laughter]. Indian history has glaring examples to illustrate this point.

When Subhadra⁸ was carrying Abhimanyu, Arjuna talked to her at length about the *Padma Vyuha*. Subhadra was hardly interested, but the unborn Abhimanyu absorbed his father's words.

Take another example. When Queen Leelavati was pregnant, Sage Narada instructed her about Lord Narayana. Her child, Prahlada⁹, absorbed Narada's words.

The child in the womb is very susceptible to thoughts and impressions prevailing in the atmosphere outside, especially in the mother. The mother and the child are inextricably bound —one body, one stream of blood, one source of food. Thus, women must strive to their utmost to see only pure sights, think pure thoughts, and hear pure words.

Swami wants to emphasise to girls another reason why children are spoilt. With progress in technology, machines have replaced people in many tasks. Women today can perform household duties without much exertion. An automatic cooker produces everything —rice, vegetables, *sambar*— simultaneously, with minimum effort. Becoming lazy as a result, mothers neglect even their children.

After the child is born, they return to their career or other work. The child is entrusted to a servant-girl. The child develops a bond of love with the servant-girl! He

⁷ Epics of ancient India — *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, *Bhagavatam*.

⁸ In the epic *Mahabharata*. Arjuna was married to Subhadra, the sister of Lord Krishna. Their son was Abhimanyu. *Padma Vyuha* (Lotus Formation) is an impregnable army formation.

⁹ A great devotee who was saved by the *Narasimha* (Man-Lion) *Avatar*

follows her directions and grows up lacking in a heart-to-heart relation with the mother.

The touch of the mother, her smiles, her words—these are absolutely essential for the child! In ancient India, the mother herself fed the child, bathed it, clothed it, put it to sleep, and always kept it near her. The constant sight (darshanam), touch (sparshanam), and words (sambhaashanam) of the mother formed an armour within which the child grew up, strong and confident.

Modern women believe that their responsibility ends at bearing the child. Up-bringing is the duty of the servant-girl or the nurse, they say. The nanny takes the child to a beach or a public park. They travel in the car—the driver, the servant-girl, and the child. The child is compelled to listen to the uncouth words exchanged by the driver and the servant-girl. Naturally, the child develops such language and traits and behaves like an uncivil servant.

Ultimately, the child cries when the nanny dies but not when the child's own mother passes away! [laughter] Devoid of a bond with the mother, how could the child feel grief? The harmful effect of the Kali Era separates even mother and child!

The practices of Indian Culture are pure and consequential. Do not look down upon our traditions as awkward. The girls in this assembly, who are future mothers, should pay careful attention to Swami's words and rear their children to be exemplary.

In ancient India, there was a woman called Madaalasa. She imparted the divine nature of human birth to her child even when he was an infant. As she rocked his cradle, she sang,

In the cradle of Om, Spreading the mattress of 'Thath Thwam Asi', Laying the child called Awareness carefully, May those in the seven worlds¹⁰ bless you.

This song means: "O son, don't be afraid of the world. Cultivate divine feelings. Attain Divinity". She blessed her son with such inspiring lullabies. Mothers today are quite different. "My son must obtain a good job, high position, go overseas, and earn a fortune."

There is a Telugu folk song in this context.

[Mother to child]

Your uncle has harvested crop from his field.

Go ask him for your share, my son.

[The uncle to the child]

You weren't present when the crop was planted or harvested.

How can you be eligible for a share? [The child to his uncle]
Aren't you my mother's brother?
That gives me a right!
Let us go to the court for a judgement.

Imagine, such a young boy had already begun a war!

[The court makes judgement – to the uncle]

Yes, give the lad his share.

In addition, give him your daughter's hand in marriage!

This is modern up-bringing! Soon after birth, they talk of marriage! "We'll get our child married into a rich family or to such-and-such person, for a comfortable life." Such are the aspirations of mothers today. This is very wrong. Children are exposed to calculating mentalities.

Our ancient Indian tradition is to begin teaching the alphabet at the age of five. We begin with the letters o, na, ma, si, va, ya, ha. As the child repeats these sounds over and over again, the syllables coalesce to form: Om Namah Sivaya. See, education began with the divine Name on one's lips! How sacred are these practices!

Today children are made to repeat "Baa Baa Black Sheep". Meaningless words! [laughter] When kids go astray, it is only the parents' fault.

The tree grows upright only when the sapling is planted straight. Even one bend in the sapling is enough to skew the tree. Therefore, parents —especially mothers— must make the necessary effort and dedication to ensure sterling characters in their children. For all such ideals, we must ponder over the *Upanishads* to the extent possible. The *Upanishads* do not elaborate on anything secret, anything external to us. It is all within us! All purity, powers, and virtues reside in the human, not outside. Strive for divine purity in your hearts.

[Swami concluded with "Hari Bhajana Bina Sukha Shanti Nahin".]

31 May 1991

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¹⁰ According to Vedic cosmology, there are a total of 14 worlds, 7 "heavenly", one Earth, and 6 "hellish". The "7 worlds" above us are characterised by the path of the Sun, or Awareness of the *Atma*.