

11. This and that

THE *Vedhas* prescribe forms of worship through rites and formulae for different Names and Forms of the single Godhead, so that people of different stages of growth and different standard of intellectual attainment can draw inspiration therefrom. The Unity of all the names and forms was, however, emphasised throughout. Each name and form when it was adored was described as All-powerful, All-knowing, All-pervasive, etc, so that worshippers may be led through every door to the self-same entity that subsumes all. But, the shortsightedness of man won over this largehearted view; the Names and Forms were taken as essentially distinct and each became the centre of a sect, creed, with all its divisive consequences. Thus, we have a multitude of warring factions, each swearing by its own favourite Form and Name, to the exclusion of all the rest---like Gaanaapathyas, Souras, Shaivas, Vaishnavas, Veerashaivas and Veeravaishnavas. The real harvest of *Aanandha* for which the spiritual operations of rites and *manthras* (sacred formulae) were gone through has been neglected, while the weeds of calumny, cynicism and conflict have grown wild over the fields.

Prescription of the Geetha to lasting happiness

The evil influence of *kaama* (lust) is at the bottom of this tragedy. The Geetha laid down that even the *Vedhas* have to be transcended, whenever they seek to foster desires and cater to transient urges. It speaks in the same *shloka* that man must seek to become *Aathmavaan* (the possessor of soul) and the *Aathmic* (spiritual) strength. Note the word! *Aathmavaan*! The Geetha asks you to be, not *Balavaan* (possessor of physical prowess), not *Dhanavaan* (possessor of a comfortable bank balance) but, *Aathmavaan* (having the prowess arising out of the awareness that you are the *Aathman*, which can remain unaffected by fame or shame, grief or joy and all the buffetings of the dualities of the world).

Another word in the same *shloka* is *Nir-yogak-shema*. Dwell for a while upon its meaning, too. It points the way to lasting happiness---never being concerned with the earning of happiness and the maintenance of happiness, but, just being oneself! Being established in the *Aathman*, never worried about how to be happy (for the *Aathman* is ever Blissful), this is the prescription of the Geetha. *Nir-dhwandho* (without paying attention to the dual throng of grief-joy, pain-pleasure, etc.), *nithya-sathwastho* (ever fixed in the quality of equity), *nir-yogakshema* (unaffected by considerations of security and welfare), *Aathmavaan* (established in *Aathmic* consciousness) that is how the Geetha lays down the path of liberation.

In chapter 5, *shloka* 28, the Geetha says that the *Muni* (ascetic) who is eager to attain liberation must be the master of his senses, mind and intellect and he has also to give up *raaga* (likes and dislikes and preferences), *bhaya* (fear, at something unpleasant or undesirable happening) and *krodha* (resentment, anger, at those who cause disappointment or grief or loss). *Vigatha* (free from) *raaga*, *bhaya*, *krodha*, is the expression used. The *shloka* goes on to say that such a person is already liberated; he has nothing else to do!

Regulation of the senses purify the intellect

The prescription to scrutinise always the purity of the means, and not worry about the acquisition of the fruit of the activity; and the description of *yoga* as the stoppage of all modifications of consciousness---both emphasise the same advice of the Lord. The regulation and restriction of the senses purify the intellect, which then can boldly and quickly investigate into the real nature

of the subject-object relationship, the I-other relationship, and discovering that all is I (the One), attains peace, *prashanthi* (unruffled peace).

A single seed of *kaama* (desire) if it gets stuck in the soil of the heart, is very difficult to dislodge. The thinnest shower of rain, a slight change in circumstance which promises to be favourable, will suddenly make it sprout and spread its tentacles. *Kaama* can be suppressed and mastered only by *Raama* (attachment to God) and *prema* (love for all beings, prompting sacrifice of joys and comfort for others). Without a hold on *Raama* and *prema*, *kaama* will upset your faith in standards of morality and righteousness. It will place before you all sorts of specious arguments to overcome the pangs of conscience and enslave reason and sense of duty.

I am arranging every year during Dhashara a *yajna* (sacrifice), so that you may learn thereby the importance of *Vedhic* studies as well as the need to renounce what we falsely evaluate as precious, and be for some days in the atmosphere of the ancient discipline, so that your emotions may be calmed and impulses domesticated. I am untouched by elation or sadness, or any of the consequences of activity. The ball of butter, floating on buttermilk, though it is in it, is not of it. My nature is unaffected by My movements and activities. I talk and walk among you, I arrange and direct, I advise and admonish, but I am away from any attachment. The Divine is so distinct and distinguished from the mortal and the bound. Train your minds to follow not the devious, but, the Divine path, of which I am revealing to you the trail.

The evil mind infects those who contact it

A clean uncontaminated mind is like a fully blossomed fragrant rose! It refreshes and pleases, whether it is on the wall or on the table, in the left hand or the right. It can rise and reach the Footstool of God in Heaven. But the evil mind stinks, and is avoided by kith and kin; it infects those who contact it. Waves move out from the mind in ever-widening circles and affect all those who draw near. Let your mind have no waves; let it be silent, level, calm, so that the *Hamsa* (the bird of purity with perfectly white plumes, the bird that can distinguish between right and wrong, accepting right and rejecting wrong, the bird that is the symbol of *Soham*. *Sa* (He)aham (I), *Soham*: the principle of the One, embracing He and I, I and the others, I and He becoming We, or even I) can sport thereon! Every gesture, word and activity of mine, however casual it may appear, is motivated to move you towards the fulfilment of your lives, and endow you with the *Aanandha* (bliss) that your *Aathman* (Self Reality) is.

Dive into the depth of silence to hear the Cosmic Om

You read the Raamaayana or listen to expositions of the text by learned *Pandiths*; but, you spend no time trying to circulate through your activities the lessons the Raamaayana teaches. '*Baagavuthaam*' is how the illiterate pronounce the word, *Bhaagavatham!* *Baagavuthaam* means, "Let us become good." Yes! that must be the spirit in which you must take up the *Bhaagavatham* for study. Enter into the spirit of the narration and imbibe the courage that restores the equilibrium of the mind. Then you can easily pace the path of *Maadhava* (God) instead of the path of *maanava* (human). *Maadhava* means, the Master over *maayaa* (delusion due to ignorance)---*Maa* (*maayaa*, delusion); *dhaya*, master. Follow God and nothing can delude you, putting on the apparel of the real.

Sound is of three kinds: *Saamaanya*, *Varna* and *Mooka*; *Saamaanya* (the common): the sound produced by things falling, or breaking apart or fusing, all the sounds of the objective world, of rain and thunder, of rivers gurgling, of volcanoes and earthquakes and the like, even the dropping

of dew on a tender petal of rose, the sailing of a feather from a bird's wing through the air! The second kind is the sound of *Varna* (the spoken word): this carries a specific meaning and is armed with intention, to inform, or instruct or inspire. This is the flow of the heart-beat of one into the heart of another. The third kind is *mooka* (the sound of silence): when one dives into the depth of that silence, one hears oneself, the primeval Cosmic *Om*, the *Pranava* that emanates from the *praana* (the vital vibration) that fills the Universe. To hear that sound, one has to approach, as near as possible, the core of one's being. That is why the *Upanishath* calls itself so; it urges you to go near, delve deep, dive to the very floor of the lake. *Upa* means Near; *Nishath* means Sitting.

Go and sit near, so that you can hear the whisper of the Super Soul to-the soul. *Om* summarises the *Vedhas* and their teachings. *Om thath sath*, says the Geetha. *Thath* (that) which *Sath* (is) is *Om*, the One. All this is *Brahman*, the One without a second. *Thath* is used to indicate that the objective world is taken by senses to be separate and afar; it means 'that', and 'that' is always far, and separate. *Sath* means 'is,' 'the is,' 'this!' When you recognise the *Thath* as 'is' or *Sath*, it becomes 'this, it is no longer object, it is subject, and the merging of object with subject manifests as the *Om*.

God is one for all, like Sun and Moon

Seeing difference is the bane of the undeveloped intellect. The One Sun is seen, adored, and acknowledged all over the world; you do not boast of an American Sun, an Ananthapur Sun or the Sun of Puttaparthi. He is for all. So too children all over the world play in the moonlight and welcome the Moon, the Moon which follows each of them wherever they roam! Since the Sun and Moon are so far away in outer space, they receive the homage of all. God is so high, so far away that He is One for all. When you argue and quarrel over your God and mine and say He is many, you are only bringing Him down and insulting His Majesty.

When you pay undue attention to differences, spasms of hatred, anger, malice and envy overwhelm you. Anger rushes blood to the brain; the temperature rises; the composition of the blood changes; toxins enter into it in such quantities that it injures the nerves, and make you old before your time. There was a mother who was feeding at her breast her tender baby. Suddenly she plunged into a violent quarrel with her neighbours, and forgot to keep her baby down, in the heat of vulgar oratory. The poor child drank the toxin-mixed milk of the mother and when the flames of anger subsided, the mother found that she had a corpse on her breast! Desire to which you are too fondly attached breeds anger and its nefarious brood. Discard it and you can have perpetual youth! The *Aanandha* that the *Aathman* can manifest will keep age and aging away!

Raama learnt from Vasishtha (it is part of the game of the *Avathaar* to bestow on the preceptor Vasishtha the merit of having taught the way of liberation) the method of conquering desire and he demonstrated by his equanimity that he could go into long exile, with as much exaltation as he could go towards the throne for his Coronation. 'Raama' means the Joy that comes of Love. He loved bird and beast, demon and sage, to prove to the world that God saves those who love His children.

Prashaanthi Nilayam, 22-2-1971