

35. Mine and thine

MAN has demarcated two distinct goals before himself---material and spiritual. But such distinction is wrong and ruinous. It may be congenial and convenient on the surface; but if it is acted upon great harm will be caused to the blossoming of the soul. For they are both the same, one continuous pilgrimage towards the Divinisation of man. One of the incorrect assertions propounded today is "The physical frame is composed of the five elements. Its components finally merge with those five. Casting away this frame, the soul puts on another frame composed of the same five and, undergoing some more terms of schooling, slides out of that venture also. The soul is ever in search of new experiences; It is a highly peripatetic entity."

The body is the instrument needed to realise the *Aathman*. The *Aathman* resides in the body and has to be discovered in and through it Here is a silver cup; can we separate the silver from the cup or the cup from the silver? The silver is the basic truth; the cup is the form which has been given to it. We can make out of this silver a plate, an urn or a box. Through all these transformations, the silver will persist as silver. Similarly the Divinity, the *Aathman*, persists, though the five elements form themselves into body after body.

The ego free mind is the altar in the *yajna*

Is the *Aathman* with or without form? Has It certain attributes, or is It attributeless? Is It unfeeling or feeling bound? These doubts are certain to trouble the thinker. The forms are merely artificial and temporary, not inherent. The formless *Aathman* is Immanent in the body-form. How, then, can man separate them and deal with them differently? It can only lead to disaster. You are performing a *yajna* (sacrifice) here for seven days. It does not consist of the erected altar, the sacrificial pit or any other material means. These are but external symbols of the inner purpose. The ego-free mind is the altar; offer your activities (with all trace of desire removed) to the fire of renunciation. To celebrate this genuine *yajna* one need not collect money, gather provisions or assemble priests.

Acts done between dawn and dusk are offerings into the sacred fire of wisdom. Of such acts those that are prompted by instinct and impulse are material; they do not arise from a mind moulded by the intellect. When the mind is crossed and the outer shore reached, all acts become pure and holy. When deep sleep overpowers the senses, the mind, the intellect and even the sense of ego disappear. The entire Cosmos disappears from awareness. That is the time when the *Aathman* is alone with Itself, and bondage is naught.

Man flounders in hatred and greed

The *Aathman* keeps warning each individual of its existence with its 'I.' The same 'I' insists on being recognised in our childhood, youth, middle age and old age. Through all these changes of the *panchabhootha-constituted* body, the 'I' remains as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss, as the unaffected Witness. Ignoring this reminder of the Unity of all life, man flounders in hatred and greed. When there is only the One *Aathman* in all, how can hatred arise? Who is to hide from whom? *Ekam sath: All that exists is One.*

Man, in his ignorance, finds contentment in separating himself from the rest for the search of his own happiness, forgetting that he cannot be happy unless all are happy. He pollutes himself through the cultivation of pride. He uses time for degrading himself to the bestial level. Time is an invaluable gift which has to be reverentially treated. People usually measure time as from

sunrise to sunset and sunset to sunrise. But that is only similar to the illusion which makes us infer that the moon is moving when we see passing clouds.

God or the Supreme Self or *Paramaathman*, is praised by man when his desires are fulfilled. When they are not realised, God is blamed. But God has no prejudice or partiality. If He has Love, He must also have anger. Any manifestation of these feelings is only superficial, and does not rise from the core. God is a witness of the act-consequence chain. You can avoid the consequence by dedicating the act to God and abstaining from attachment. Only you have to be sincere in your surrender and in your detachment. For this you have to cleanse your heart and feelings through *japa*, *smarana* and *dhyaana* (recitation of God's Names, remembering God, and meditation on God). Without a pure heart and virtuous life, even though you may recite the *Vedhas* during the *yajna* you will benefit little from that.

One's actions decide one's destiny

The *Rishis* (sages) were sincerely selfless and earnest and so the *yajnas* purified the atmosphere, pleased the elements and propitiated God. One's actions, therefore, decide one's destiny. There is no use blaming others for our misfortune and misery. Nor is it right to blame God as being partial or cruelly unconcerned. When you plant a bitter seed, how can the fruit be sweet? It has become the fashion to claim all good as being one's own achievement and to ascribe all the despair and disappointment to an irresponsive attitude of Divinity.

Some professors of Benaras University once ridiculed another of the same seat of learning for wasting ten minutes in the morning and ten in the evening in meditating on a non-existent God. He replied "Brothers, if God is, as you say, non-existent, I agree I am wasting twenty minutes every day. But if God exists, as many believe, I am sorry you are wasting your entire lives!"

As a matter of fact, God alone Is; the changing world is what we have superimposed on the Divine Entity. Turn your vision away from the superimposition onto the base upon which it has happened through your ignorance. *Pashu* is the Samskrith word for *beast*, and has *pashyathi* as its root. *Pashyathi* means, "that which sees only the outer world." When man is content to use his senses merely to enjoy the outer world, to what little extent he can, he is not living up to his real destiny. Even spiritual efforts, *saadhanas* have been reduced to external rituals by man in all lands. Morning and evening, and on days set aside as holy, they do *puuja* (ritualistic worship) with special pomp, heaps of flowers, rows of lamps and strings of loud *sthothras* (hymns). The impact of these rites is mostly thin and superficial.

Rituals are needed only in the early stages

There are many who spend all their time in preparation for the ritualistic acts or in their actual practice. But what do they gain? They are still afflicted by envy, pride and greed and have no loyalty to truth. They have succeeded only in polluting their years and casting away the ideals laid down in the *Vedhas*. Most people who proclaim themselves as *saadhakas* (spiritual aspirants) do not dare turn their attention inwards to the *Aathmic* Reality.

Of course rituals and prayer are necessary in the early stages. They are the kindergarten of spiritual education. One has to march on from this childhood into the adult journey towards the *Aathman*. This *yajna* and these rules and regulations regarding rites, have to be transcended and sublimated into thought, word and deed which promote universal reverence, egolessness and equanimity.

I am telling you in every discourse that. Divinity resides in every being. But you must have noticed that I am inflicting rather hard punishment on those who have done some wrong or strayed into wrong paths. The Divinity has to shine in every activity and we should see that it is not befogged by human failing or 'animalities.' For this purpose, such correctives and remedial measures are imperative. Copper, as an alloy, lessens the value of gold, so it has to be removed by melting the alloy in a crucible. So, too, when the pure, holy and progressive human being is associated with certain impure, unholy and degrading tendencies, Swaami has to intervene to correct them and restore their value of original gold. Or else why should I indulge in correction and punishment? Understanding My actions in their true light is the surest means of earning My Grace.

Practise the *saadhana* of Unity

The world today is suffering as a result of the reign of 'I'-ness and 'my'-ness in the human heart. Fear, anxiety, sorrow, pride, greed---each of these is fed in dangerous proportions by such 'I' and 'my' feelings. When calamity affects someone within the circle of 'my', undue grief overwhelms you; when it happens to someone outside the circle, you are untouched and dismiss it with gross indifference. So long as these antics of the ego are considered valid and proper, man cannot grasp the Universal *Aathman* that is in him as the core of his personality. In order to recognise the *Aathman* and earn strength therefrom, man must practise the *saadhana* (spiritual discipline) of Unity. He must give up the distinction of those within and without the 'circle.'

There is no difference between 'my' and 'thy.' When others are punished for their wrongs, you rejoice; when you are punished for the same fault, you protest and bewail your lot. Through *saadhana*, *samachiththa* (mental equanimity) has to be attained---that is to say, egoless, equal mindedness which ensures a pure mind.

The criterion of purity is love. The tree may fill your heart today with joy by its grandeur and beauty. It may have a lovely crown of green and attractive gifts of sweetness, fragrance and colour. But the very next day it might shed everything, become dry and die! What is the reason? The roots are damaged by pests which were working underground. They ruin the tree and cause it to fall.

You can observe the pitiful fate of many devoted and dedicated persons nowadays, who are besieged by various types of calamities. For what reason? People ask cynically why such good persons should suffer so much. The reason is that they have not attained purity of heart, not realised the Unity of the *Aathman* and are still possessed by feelings of 'I' and 'my.' The *saadhaka* must take the calamity as a warning and tell himself, "I am beaten by this incident. It grieves me and deprives me of balance because I still have some defects in me."

When *saambaar* (lentil soup) is cooked in a copper vessel, however fresh and fine the ingredients, the result is a highly poisonous stuff. Similarly, though *saadhana* may be done with the most meticulous attention and care, if the intentions and attitudes are impure, no progress can be achieved. I wish to emphasise that purity of the heart, the mind and the consciousness is more important for progress than even meditation and prayer. Purity alone can convince you of the Divine within you, of the *Kshethrajna* (indweller) immanent in this *kshethra* (body). Love all, adore all, serve all. That is the *saadhana* of worship to win purity and earn Grace.

Dhashara, 27-9-1979