

## 7. Ascent To The Divine

*More effulgent than the Sun,  
Whiter and purer than snow  
Subtler than ether in space,  
The Paramatma dwells in all,  
Permeating the entire Cosmos,  
Shining in every atom.  
You are in that Brahman  
That Brahman is in you.  
You are that Brahman  
And that Brahman is you  
What greater truth  
Can I convey to you ?*

Man is not a mere combination of the physical, the mental and the intellectual. He is enveloped in five sheaths: the *Annamaya Kosa* (gross body), the *Pranamaya Kosa* (the vital sheath), the *Manomaya Kosa* (Mental sheath), *Vijnanamaya Kosa* (Intelligence) and *Anandamaya Kosa* (the sheath of Bliss). The *Upanishads* have pointed out the importance, the sacred and the divine characteristics of these *Kosas* (sheaths).

The physical form that is sustained by the food that we consume is the gross body. Thereafter we have the *Pranamaya*, *Manomaya* and *Vijnanamaya Kosas* (subtle bodies) which together form the *Lingaswarupa*--the "Within Body" or the "Sense Body." The third form is the *Anandamaya Kosa*, the subtle body which has the "knowledge of the Real Self."

There is an entity which keeps under control the three subtle *bodies*---*Pranamaya*, *Manomaya* and *Vijnanamaya Kosas*. This is the *Antharaatma* (the Indwelling Spirit). This *Antharaatma* is also known as the *Chaitanya Purusha*. The seat of the *Chaitanya Purusha* is *Hridaya Guhyam* (a cave in the heart). The "heart" referred to here is not the physical heart in the human body but is the spiritual heart--which is all-pervasive, all-knowing and boundless.

### Levels of consciousness

The *Atma* (Spirit) when it is associated with the physical body is called *Annamaya Purusha*. This is the state of ordinary consciousness. When the spiritual consciousness is associated with *Pranamaya Kosa* (the Vital Consciousness), the *Atma* is known as *Pranaswarupa* (Life Consciousness). When the *Atma* is associated with the mental consciousness, it is known as *Manopurusha*. The fourth consciousness transcends the human senses. It is called *Atheetha Maanasatvam* (Transcendental Consciousness). The *Vedas* and *Upanishads* have described this state as *Brihat* and *Rita* (Transcendental Consciousness). It transcends human limitations and comes close to Divinity. It is called Super Mind. The *Atma* in this state is called *Vijnana Purusha*. Above this state is the *Anandamaya Purusha* (the enjoyer of Bliss). It is a state of Super-consciousness which expands in due course to merge with the Universal Consciousness.

This all-pervading Universal Consciousness has been called *Chith-Tapas*. It is the highest consciousness which encompasses all other levels of consciousness and is the basis for all of them. That is the *Suddha Satwa* (the all-effective Will), the Super Divine life. This is the *Sai-tatwa* (the Sai Principle).

The *Suddha-Satwa*, which constitutes the Sai Principle, is omnipotent. There is nothing that is beyond its power. It is the embodiment of all powers. It should be everyone's aim to strive to recognise this Supreme Principle.

### **Awareness of Divinity**

There are some clearly defined methods for achieving this aim. Man's vision, which is now turned outward towards the phenomenal universe, should be turned inwards towards the Indwelling Spirit. One should manifest the Divine consciousness inherent in him. He should submit himself to that consciousness as a spiritual discipline. This is called "Conscious Realisation of the Inner Divine."

The first task is to develop awareness of the Divinity within. The next stage is the realisation of the truth that the divinity that is within one's self is equally present in all others. One must recognise that the veil or barrier that appears to separate him from others is born of delusion and every effort should be made to remove it. Only then will it be possible to experience the oneness of all living things. "*Aham eva idam Sarvam*," says the *Sruti* (I am indeed all this). The realisation dawns: "All this is contained in me." And then there is the consciousness, "I am Divine. The Divine is me. I am Brahman. Brahman is myself. There is no distinction between Brahman and me."

### **Six mental states**

After attaining this stage there is a third stage, which has been characterised as the *Aarohana-Avarohana* (the Ascent-and-the Descent) stage. Man has six different kinds of mind. They are: (1) The Ordinary Mind; (2) The Super-mind; (3) The Higher Mind; (4) The Illuminated Mind; (5) The Intuitive Mind; (6) The Over-mind or Beyond the Mind.

The starting base for the six levels of minds is the ordinary mind. At the summit level is the Over-mind. In the mental processes what goes on is an ascent from the ordinary mind to the Over-mind as well as a descent from the Over-mind to the lowest level. It is when the ascending process and the descending process meet that there is fullness in the human being.

There is no difference between one kind of consciousness and the other. All consciousness is alike because it is a manifestation of Brahman (the Absolute). It is Brahman that has manifested Itself as the Cosmos. The doctrine of evolution is being discussed widely and widely accepted. But one should try to understand how evolution takes place in Nature. Evolution in Nature is really the gradual unfoldment of the inherent powers of Nature.

### **The evolutionary process**

For instance, life has evolved from matter and mind has evolved from life. What is meant by matter? Matter is that which is encased in life. Consider the example of paddy. As long as the rice grain is covered by husk it is called paddy. When the husk is removed it becomes rice. Paddy has the power to germinate as long as the husk remains. Likewise, the vital principle is contained in matter. It may thus be seen that life came from matter. Likewise, the mind evolved

from life. Today men are prepared to recognise that mind evolved from life and life from matter. But they are not ready to go beyond this stage in human evolution. Human evolution cannot be complete unless it goes beyond the mind.

The next step in the human evolution is the Super-mind. But man has to go forward even from supramental to the ultimate stage of *Sath-chith-ananda* (Being-Awareness-Bliss) to realise his final destiny. The day when man is able to experience the Divine state of *Sath-chith-ananda* is really the holy day of Shivarathri.

When a person is attached to the body and considers the physical alone as real, he is bound to remain ignorant. The gross body is sustained by food and is limited by its material basis. But there is a subtle body which transcends the physical. This is called *Lingadeha*. After understanding the nature of the subtle body, men should try to proceed further to know the nature of the *Karana Deha* (Causal body, which is subtler than the *Lingadeha*), which is the experience of *Ananda* (Divine Bliss). Everything has its origin in Bliss and is dependent on Bliss. Bliss is present in a subtle form in every object in creation.

### **Have the urge to change to a higher state**

Of what avail is the study of the *Upanishads and the Gita*, if there is no transformation in our thoughts or way of life? There must be the urge to change and progress towards a higher state of consciousness. It is only when we reach the supramental stages that we can grasp, to some extent, the relationship between the phenomenal Universe and the Divine. In reality we are all embodiments of *Sath-chith-ananda*. Your real "I" exists in all the stages of waking, dream and deep sleep. But in the dream and deep sleep states you are not conscious of your body. The entity that exists in all three states undergoes no change. You must try to understand the nature of this "I."

You must examine where all your *sadhanas* are leading you. You have to proceed from the purely mental stage to the highest stage of the Over-mind and experience oneness with the Universal Consciousness. You may regard this as extremely difficult. But if you have dedication and perseverance, it will be quite easy. There is nothing in the world easier than the spiritual path. But when there is no earnestness, it appears difficult. That is why the *Gita* has declared: "*Sradhaavaan labhathe Jnanam*" (The earnest aspirant acquires the Supreme Wisdom). If you are deeply interested in anything, you will accomplish it.

### **The Cosmic Consciousness**

Hence you should constantly remind yourself: "I am the embodiment of the Divine consciousness. *Sath-chith-ananda* constitutes my form." Man today has forgotten his true nature and looks upon the world entirely through the senses, the mind and the intellect. But behind all these organs there is the *Sath-chith-ananda* which is fundamental. It is because of this *Atmic* Bliss principle in him, that man is ever seeking bliss. The whole cosmos has emanated from the *Parabrahman* (the Supreme Omni-Will). It appears as a material object. But from the material, we should proceed to the spiritual--the Universal Consciousness.

There is the "Higher Mind" in man. It is present to enable man to transcend the physical and the mental and to reach the Divine. Ordinary life consists of Matter + Mind. But Matter + Being is beyond the mind. It leads to the Super-mind.

The mind attracts many objects that it sees. It promotes a variety of qualities, attitudes and attachments. Above all, it encourages the inflation of the *Ahamkara* (ego). Puffed up by his ego, man loses all his powers of discrimination and forgets what is evanescent and what is permanent. He makes himself an object of derision. It is only when the ego is deflated and eliminated that man can gradually realise his spiritual essence. Spirituality cannot be understood as long as the ego is dominant. And of what use are spiritual studies and discourses to one who has no understanding?

Embodiments of Divine love! You are engaged in various spiritual exercises. Some call it worldly, illusory and ephemeral. It is described as *Maya* or *Mithya*. This is entirely wrong. I am *Sathyam* (Real). You are Real. The whole universe is Real. Consciousness is immanent in everything.

Everything is a manifestation of Brahman. When we recognise this unity which underlies everything we shall be able to know the nature of Divinity.

### **The world is Real**

To go about describing the world as unreal, illusory, impermanent will amount to practising a deception on people and not proclaiming the truth. If the world is unreal, even the teaching that it is unreal, is equally unreal and has no meaning. No. That is not so. This Cosmos is Real. It is not a question of seeing truth within the unreal or the unreal in the truth. It is *Sathyamuloni Sathyamu* (the recognition of the Truth in the Real). It is only when this basic truth is recognised that we shall be competent to grasp the nature of our inherent Reality.

The Cosmos is Real. The forms in it may change. Bodies may change. Change is the characteristic of the evolutionary process. But what should be recognised is that at the core of all things is a fundamental Reality. This is the triple principle: *Asthi, Bhaathi, Priyam* (Existing, Shining or manifesting and Pleasing or loving) or *Sath-chith-ananda* or *Sathyam, Shivam, Sundaram* (Truth, Goodness and Beauty).

When we recognise that the body, which is the basis of life, is subject to change, how can the phenomenal world be described as a delusion just because it is also subject to change? The universe has come from the Brahman, the Universal Consciousness. The multiplicity of forms are like the different kinds of figures made from sugar to attract children. The forms are different, but the basic consciousness is one. Just as a doll made from sugar is dissolved in the mouth, the external form of the body should dissolve in the experience of *Atmic* bliss. The source of life is Brahman. Change and evolution are natural to it. But the presence of the unchanging Divinity should be experienced within the changing body.

In the evolutionary process, the *Brahmic* principle, existing in the matter, evolved to life. The mind evolved by a leap from consciousness in life. The mind should not stop there. It should evolve towards consciousness of the Divine and ultimately merge in the Universal Consciousness---the *Sath-chith-*

### ***Sathyam-Jnanam-Anantham***

Every human being should strive to progress towards the ultimate state of "Over-mind" consciousness---the state which has been described by the seers as *Vijnanamaya Kosa* (the Super-intellectual Mind). *Vijnana* (modern science) is concerned with analysing physical objects. But *Vijnanamaya Kosa* (the Super-intellectual Mind) is concerned with exploring the Supreme Reality---the Omnipresent Consciousness. This alone is true scientific enquiry. It is from the

*Vijnanamaya Kosa* that one proceeds to the *Anandamaya Kosa--the* state of Super consciousness, of Total Bliss.

It may appear difficult to attain this state. But without making the necessary effort, it should not be treated as beyond one's capacity. Listen to My words. I shall show you the way. If you merely listen but do not practice what I say, you will not reach the goal.

### **Train your minds towards the Divine**

It is a natural process. In a bud there is very little fragrance. When it grows and blossoms, it acquires fine fragrance. Likewise, when the human consciousness expands, it finds fullness in the state of *Sath-chith-ananda*. Starting with the ordinary mind the consciousness rises to the Super-mind level. Then it moves up to the state of the Higher Mind.

The next higher stage is that of the Illuminated Mind. Through all these stages, the continuing entity remains the same, as in the bodily changes from infancy to old age. That is the Universal Consciousness which is present in everyone—the One in the Many. The Universal Consciousness is the *Sathyam* (Truth). It is *Jnanam* (the Supreme Wisdom). It is *Anantham* (Infinite).

Turn your minds towards the Divine. Repetition of the Name of the Lord has been prescribed as a spiritual discipline to turn your mind away from the things of the world. If you devote the whole of this night to thoughts about the Lord, your minds will be transformed, even if you are not able to reach the highest state of "Over-mind." Ever beating in mind the triple characteristics of the *Divine--Sathyam, Jnanam, Anantham*, Brahma--strive to achieve the supreme goal of Man.

*Discourse in the Poornachandra Auditorium on Maha Shivarathri Day, 16 Feb 1988*

*If in this worm you want to promote friendship, you can do so by using sweet words, by talking in a very sweet manner and by speaking about sacred things.*

*Sathya Sai Baba*