

11. The inner motivator

*O foolish mind! Whither do you wander
In search of the blessed Vision of Brahman.
It is within Your own self; find It there.
This is the word of Sai revealing the Truth.*

*Love cannot be grown on a farm as a crop;
Nor will it be for sale in a shop.
Whether they be kings or commoners,
They can know love only through selflessness.*

EMBODIMENTS of Divine Atma! For every living being engaged in its pilgrimage in the *Karma Kshetra* (field of action), the mind, the tongue, ears, eyes, nose, hands, feet etc., are the *Karanamulu* (instruments) provided for its daily use. To achieve success in this physical world it is essential to have these three: *Karanamulu* (instruments), *Kaaranam* (cause or purpose) and *Kartha* (doer or agent). The one who wields the instruments is the *Kartha* or doer. The desire which propels him to act is the *Kaaranam* or cause. Man's primary aim should be to recognise the unity underlying these three factors.

The invisible Divine power in the body

In common parlance, we say that the eyes see, the ears hear, and the mouth speaks. But if this were to be true, why is it that after a man's death, these very instruments, though found intact, cannot discharge their functions? Obviously, there is an invisible divine power in the body which imparts life and energy to all these organs, and when that power leaves the body, they cannot function.

In ordinary terminology, this power is called *Prana* (Life-principle). But wherefrom does this *Prana* come, where does it go and at whose bidding? These are the questions raised by the *Kenopanishad*, which undertook to investigate whether this divine energy, which animates the several instruments in the body, is inherent in *Prana* (the Life-principle) or whether it belongs to a power superior to *Prana*.

In this connection, let us consider an illustration. We see that the earth is illumined by moonlight. The moon itself shines because of the sun's light reflected on it. But wherefrom does the sun get its light? It is the divine power that lends its lustre to the sun. The hydrogen and helium contained in the sun have originated from that divine power which the *Upanishads* designate as the *Brahma-tatwa* (the principle of the Supreme Absolute Reality).

The Upanishads further declare that it is due to the effulgence of *Brahman* that the world shines and that there is no effulgence in the universe which can illuminate *Brahman*. It is the light of *Brahman* that enables the eyes to see all things except *Brahman*. The mind is able to function because of the light of *Brahman*, but it cannot grasp or describe *Brahman*. This is why *the Upanishads* proclaimed about *Brahman*: "*Yatho Vaacho nivarthanthe apraapya manasaa saha*"

meaning that "*Brahman* is beyond the reach of the mind and speech." Although such a unique divine power resides in himself, man is unable to recognise it. Why? Because in his daily life man is developing only *Baahya drishti* (outward vision) and is not putting forth any effort whatsoever to cultivate and experience the *Anthar-drishti* (the Inner Vision).

How is one to experience the divine power?

It is quite possible for man to recognise this truth (of the *Brahmic* principle in him) if he resorts to proper enquiry and acquires the needed purity of mind and heart. It is a pity that every man considers himself a powerless weakling, despite the enormous power latent in him, waiting to be revealed and released in all its glory. How is man to examine and experience such a divine power? The *Kenopanishad* deals with this question and points out that this divine power is the life of our life, the mind of our mind, the eye of our eye, the ear of our ear, the speech of our speech, because it is the motivating, coordinating and illuminating principle underlying all such organs of the human personality. We can easily grasp this truth by understanding that just as the headlights and other lights, the horn, the engine, the wheels, etc., of an automobile depend on the battery current for their respective functions like giving light, sound and propulsion, all the organs of our body are animated or motivated by the divine *Atmic* power inside, thereby enabling them to discharge their respective functions.

Mind is the Lord of the senses

All the flowers in a tree do not turn into fruit; likewise, all the fruits do not ripen on the tree. But all the ripe fruits cannot but fall down from the tree. This indicates the important secret underlying human life. As soon as the purpose, time and task for which a man is born are over, his body loses its power and vitality and drops down in a lifeless condition. But what is the basis for this *Jiva Tatwa* (Life Principle)? It is only the *Atma Tatwa* (*Atmic* Principle). However, man is prone to consider only the body and senses as all-important. There is the mind, which is superior to the sense organs. It is this very mind that is spoken of as "Indra" by the Upanishads, because the mind is the Lord or controller of the senses. The *Kenopanishad* urges man to merge the senses in the mind, and the mind in the *Atma*, in order to experience the divine power inherent in the *Atma-mind* complex.

But to-day's man, instead of merging the senses in the mind, and the mind in the *Atma*, is devoting his senses and mind to worldly pursuits, under the wrong notion that mind and *Atma* are quite separate. There is an all-pervading power that permeates the body, senses, *Antahkarana* or the inner instruments, and the individual soul or spirit. This omnipresent power is called *Chit Sakti* (Constant Integrated Awareness or consciousness) or *Brahma-Tatwas* (the principle of the Supreme Absolute Reality). This all-powerful *Atmic* principle resides in every human being in subtle form. Man is not able to recognise this divine power because he is preoccupied with utilizing his physical and mental faculties for the acquisition of wealth and worldly goods.

Atma is always the 'Seer' and never the 'Seen'

Let us now consider the *karana* (tools) and *Atma* from the standpoint of *drisya* (seen) and *drashta* (seer). All objects seen by the eyes are the 'seen' and the eyes are the 'seer.' When the eyes are open but do not see the objects present before them due to the mind wandering somewhere, the eyes become the 'seen' and the mind becomes the 'seer.' When the *Buddhi* (intellect) observes the wanderings of the mind, the *Buddhi* becomes the 'seer' and the mind, the

'seen'. In the state of *Samadhi*, *Atma* is the 'seer' and intellect, 'the seen.' There is nothing that can see the *Atma*. Hence it is always the 'Seer' and never the 'Seen.'

Thus we notice that the mind and other senses are *drisya* (the seen) and therefore are termed *karana* (tools) which are put to work by the *drashta* (the seer, viz, *Atma*). In the absence of the *drashta* (*Atma*), all the tools will be useless, however valuable they might be. For example, a machine worth crores (billions) of rupees is installed; but if there is no current which operates it, it will turn out to be a useless mass of steel. Likewise, in the absence of the *Atmic* power which enables all the organs or tools to function, the body becomes a worthless mass of flesh and bones. Therefore it is the foremost duty of man to realise the *Atma* (Self) which imparts value to the otherwise valueless body and the *karana* (tools) therein, and also to regulate the activities of all these tools in the right manner, so as to achieve the fulfilment of the purpose of human life.

Understand the *Chinmaya tathwa*

However, it is not that easy to change human nature. For instance, suppose you grow a crop of garlic by using the powder of *Patchakarpooram* (an aromatic variety of camphor) as the soil, *kamma kasturi* (a fragrant variety of musk) as the manure, and scented rose water for irrigation, will the produce of garlic you get as a result of all your effort give up its natural, pungent odour? So also, despite all his *sadhana* (spiritual practices) and holy company, the worldly *Vasanas* (the impressions, tendencies or latent desires) accumulated in the course of his several past lives will not leave man so easily. Therefore it is necessary for man to understand first of all, the true nature of his own body.

What is this body? It is a repository of filth, urine, flesh, blood and such other things. However, in this very body there shines the gem of purest ray serene, namely, the *Atma*. Gems do not grow like fruits on trees, but are to be found in dirt. Similarly the body which is of the nature of *Mrinmaya* (full of dirt) harbours in itself the *Atma* which is of the nature of *Chinmaya* (full of pure consciousness). The secret of man's success lies in the thorough understanding and unravelling of this *Chinmaya tathwa* (principle of pure consciousness).

The body is transient and ephemeral, but it enshrines the immortal and eternal *Atma* and hence the body should not be neglected but properly looked after, till we realise the Self.

Brahma's lesson for the demigods

Once upon a time in a war between the *Devas* (demigods) and the *Asuras* (demons), the former came out victorious; and puffed up with pride, they assembled together to celebrate their victory. Brahma wanted to prick the bubble of their ego and pride, and to open their eyes to the fact that their victory was due to divine grace and not to their own strength and valour. So Brahma appeared before them in the guise of a *Yaksha* (celestial being). On seeing him, *Agni* (Fire-God) came to him. When the *Yaksha* asked *Agni* as to who he was, the latter proudly answered, "Don't you know me? I am *Agni Deva* (Fire-God), the great hero who can reduce to ashes the entire world in a trice." Thereupon the *Yaksha* placed before him a blade of grass and said, "O Fire-God! please burn this blade of grass." Despite all his efforts, the Fire-God could not burn the blade of grass and he went back humbled.

Next came the Wind-God *Vayu* and bragged before the *Yaksha* about his unequalled might in devastating entire villages, trees, forests etc., in the form of cyclones, tornadoes and tidal waves,

etc. The *Yaksha* smiled and asked *Vayu* to blow away the blade of grass. With all his might and herculean effort, the Wind-God could not even shake the blade of grass and had to beat a retreat.

On witnessing the failure, frustration and humiliation of his two mightiest lieutenants, Indra, the king of the demi-gods, himself came forward to see the *Yaksha* at close quarters but when he reached the spot he saw a woman standing in the place of the *Yaksha*. He addressed her, "O Mother! kindly tell me who you are and who is the one who has just vanished from sight." Then she answered, "I am Uma. The one who was here earlier in the guise of a *Yaksha* was Brahma, who came to destroy the highly inflated ego in all of you assembled here. So long as you have the ego, you cannot have Self-realisation. That is why none of you could recognise Brahma although he appeared right in front of you. As Indra, you personify the mind which is the leader of the senses, and which is a bundle of desires. That is why I have given you a vision of myself as a woman, who is the embodiment of desires."

Demigods' prayer to Brahma

On hearing these words of Uma, the ego of every demi-god became deflated and in all humility they prayed to Brahma as follows.

"O Lord! Not even a blade of grass will move without your command, what to speak of the microcosm and the macrocosm. Without understanding this, some people like us become puffed up with pride. Bhagavan! What is the use of various kinds of possessions and powers like wealth, physical strength, intellectual acumen, etc., if one does not have the ability to know you? And none can know and experience you except through the strength of *Bhakti* (devotion or love)."

The lesson this episode teaches us is that we are mere tools in the hands of the Almighty and we should not become egoistic and proud thinking that any success or achievement is due to our own innate strength. We cannot win God's grace except through *Bhakti*. And what is *Bhakti*? It is but loving God with a pure and selfless heart devoid of ego and pride.

We should use the God-given and God-motivated tools called senses in the right manner. These tools often become affected by diseases. For instance, when the eyes are jaundiced, everything appears yellow. When one is suffering from malaria, even sweet things taste bitter to his tongue. In this manner our sense organs become the victims of *Roga* (disease) instead of helping us to attain *Yoga* (union with God). What is *Yoga*? According to Patanjali, it is controlling the vagaries of the mind and the tendencies of the senses. First of all, we should keep our sense organs under control.

Students! At this youthful age of yours, it is but natural that your senses should be strong, active, impulsive, impetuous and turbulent. But you should exercise control over them, lest they drag you into wrong paths. Practise the following maxims:

See no evil, see only what is good;

Hear no evil, hear only what is good;

Think no evil, think only what is good;

Talk no evil, talk only what is good;

Do no evil, do only what is good;

This is the way to God.

The law of *Karma* will always follow you

Bear in mind what the *Kenopanishad* taught to the celestial beings, the sages and other human beings. It taught them about the inexorable, immutable and inescapable law of *Karma*, duly stressing the fact that the results of good or bad actions are not like the milk that you get immediately as you draw it from the udder of a milch cow, but they are like the fruits that you get from a tree long after the seed is planted. Therefore, don't feel elated just because your bad actions have not given you the bad results immediately; you are sure to experience them in due course. You can never escape them. Therefore take to the virtuous path of life even from this young age.

You should also understand the importance of the faculty of speech and the great role of the tongue. Addressing the tongue, saint Jayadeva praised its immense power and called upon it to chant the name of the Lord and not indulge in unholy talk.

The tongue displays a sense of discrimination in the choice of food. It has also a remarkable ability to observe restraint by not getting bitten by the teeth. It never goes beyond its bounds. Such a highly valuable organ should be used for the sacred purposes for which it is intended. This is the exhortation of the Upanishads to all mankind.

Do not ignore the Upanishadic teachings

In sweet and simple words, the *Upanishads*, which constitute the quintessence of all *Vedas*, proclaim profound truths which will dispel man's ignorance and fill him with the *Prajnana Jyothi* (the divine light of constant integrated awareness). Unfortunately such a priceless treasure is being ignored at present. It is up to you, students, to retrieve the situation by moulding your lives even from now on in the light of the Upanishadic teachings. Acquire humility along with your education. Respect your parents, teachers and elders. Love those who are younger than you. Students today are given to excessive talking, bragging and ostentation. You should not give room for such shortcomings.

The world outside is filled with strife and "fear." The students should go to the rescue of those who are the victims of fear, and serve them with love and devotion. This is the spirit behind the well-known *Upanishadic* verse which is a peace invocation:

OM! Sahanaa vavathu,

Saha nau bhunaktu,

Saha veeryam karavaavahai.

Tejasvinaavadheetamastu.

Maa vidvishaavahai.

Om Shantih Shantih Shantih!

("Om! May God protect us both (students and teachers)! May He nourish us both! May we both acquire energy (as a result of this study)! May we both become illumined (by this study)! May we not hate each other! OM, Peace! Peace! Peace!")

You should appreciate the fact that the Upanishadic *Rishis* (*sages*) undertook more intelligent, more intensive, and selfless research into life's most fundamental problems, in shining contrast to the researches of the scientists of to-day. Do not underrate these ancient Rishis whose invaluable

findings have been enshrined in the Upanishads which serve as guideposts that lead mankind to the fulfilment of the purpose of human life. Imbibe and follow in your day-to-day life the simple yet profound teachings of the Upanishads and make your lives blessed.

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