

15. The quest for Aathma Jnaana

THE universe is full of energy or power. The Divine power is all pervasive. Just as sugar is present in sweets, the divine is present in everything. That is why God is called the *Rasa* (essence) of everything in the Universe. Though the Divine is in everything and everywhere it is not easily cognisable. The seed sprouts and grows into a tree. The child grows into an adult. This is evidence of Divinity, which is the life force stimulating the growth.

You enjoy the sight of the mighty mountains, the big rivers, the vast ocean and the dense forests. Who is the creator of all these beautiful manifestations in Nature? God is the basis for all these. Though it is not possible for most people to realise the existence of God as the eternal truth, yet a few have acquired this highest wisdom, the wisdom of the *Aathma*. Having experienced the Divine they have given to the world the bliss that they have enjoyed.

Physical knowledge does not help you to march towards the goal of realisation, though it may make you a scholar. The *Rishis* did penance by way of spiritual *saadhana* to realise the Divinity within.

There are certain qualities which are necessary to acquire *Aathmik* knowledge. One should adhere to truth, right conduct and have a spirit of selfless service. He should have the attitude of caring only for the welfare of humanity and strive to make them happy by serving them. The purpose of education is only to breed such good qualities.

Education should foster human values

Students should acquire spiritual knowledge along with secular knowledge. They should delight in the well-being of all *creatures*--"*Sarvabhootha hithe rathah*." They should also cultivate total awareness. *Paripuurna Jnaanam* (total knowledge) is essential to acquire the qualities of good conduct, unity and purity which leads to Divinity. Education should foster human values such as Truth and right conduct.

Buddha taught that truth, right conduct and non-violence constituted the most sacred qualities. You consider *Ahimsa* as merely not hurting others. This is not the whole truth. Speaking too much, working too much, harping on the mistakes of others are all acts of *himsa* (violence) and should be avoided. These result in the wasting of energy, which causes harm to oneself. You must observe restraints in eating, talking, sleeping, working, and all actions in daily life. Human beings make attempts to know God. They are confused about the meaning of the words used in spiritual parlance, like *Jeeva and Dheva, Aathma and Paramaathma* (Divine Self and Supreme Self). *Vedhaantha* has explained these terms, but still they are not fully clear to many people. Unless you have the right attitude you cannot understand the Divine. God has been described as smaller than the smallest atom and bigger than the biggest thing in the Universe. *Anu* is Atom and signifies the *Aathma*. *Anu* is also *Brahman* (the Supreme Absolute). This *Aathma* is in every being, however tiny it might be.

Divinity is the same in all

For example, one may take water from the river Godhaavari in a small tumbler or a big vessel. Whatever the size of the container, the water is the same in taste and quality. If you understand this principle you can easily understand the truth that the minute atom and the mighty Universe contain the same *Brahman*. The divinity is the same in all. God is everywhere.

Once a disciple asked a sage about this. The sage asked him to get a cup of water and some sugar. He asked the disciple to mix the sugar with the water. Then he could not see the sugar, which was dissolved in the water, nor could he feel the sugar with his hand. But he was sure he had himself put it in the water. In order to know the truth of its existence in water, he was asked to taste a little of that water when he could experience the sweetness of sugar. It was pervading in the entire quantity of water.

In the cosmic context, the *Aathma* is the sugar which is present in every being. Just as sugar cannot be seen or felt while in water, you are not able to see or feel *the Aathma*. Sugar has no form in the water. So also the *Aathma* or *Paramaathma* cannot be seen, but has to be experienced. This is cosmic consciousness and is infinite. It is in the form of consciousness in human beings.

In the Geetha, Krishna says "*Beejam maam Sarvaboothaa-naam*" (I am the seed in all beings). The seed is *Anu* and the tree is *Mahath*. *The Anu* is contained in the tree and the tree is in the seed too. Divinity as the seed is there invisible under the earth and is also pervading externally in the tree, branches, leaves, flowers, etc.

When you are asked: "Who are *you*?", you may first give your name. then your profession and address, etc. All these descriptions pertain only to the body and physical features. They are subject to change. You may change your name, profession and nationality. But the *Aathmik* principle in everyone is changeless and eternal. Things pertaining to the world are like rivers while the Divine is like the ocean. The moment rivers merge in the ocean they lose the names and forms.

If you worship the mother you worship God

You have to acquire *Aathma Jnaana* (knowledge of the Spirit) along with worldly knowledge. People refer to Brahma, Vishnu, Maheshvara. No one has seen their real forms. Brahma is the creator. The essence of creation is in everyone. The physical bodies of your parents have this essence and they are both the cause of your birth. They bring you up and protect you. This is their aspect of protection. If you worship the mother, you worship God. The child has to be given education and brought up properly. This is done by your father and so he is 'Vishnu' the sustainer. Maheshvara is a giver of boons. He grants boons easily as He did to Bhasmaasura, who immediately sought to use his power against Maheshvara himself. Power has to be used with discrimination. By respecting the teacher who imparts this discriminatory knowledge you respect Maheshvara. That is why the *Vedhas* declare "Treat the mother as God, the father as God and the Preceptor as God." This is the basis of Bhaaratheeya culture.

A true son should seek the truth. He should not leave this pursuit for selfish reasons. That is why "*Sathyam vadha; Dharmam chara*" (Speak the Truth; follow Righteousness) has been the sheet-anchor of Indian culture You should not sacrifice the truth for the sake of name and fame. You should have unshakable faith in the Divine.

One should know the basis for whole creation

Scientific knowledge is subject to continual change, while spiritual knowledge is changeless and will help you to realise the Eternal Truth. Today man does everything out of selfish motive to satisfy self-interest. The scriptures declare. "*Dharma muulam Idham Jagath*" (The whole cosmos is rooted in righteousness). This is the Truth. The planets, the sun, the moon and the stars are all moving in a set pattern according to their *Dharma*. You must understand this harmony and unity.

In the world today there are more than 550 crores of people. Not one is identical with another. Who is the author of all this complex but orderly creation? It is difficult to comprehend the Creator. Scientists have explored a small part of creation. But they have made no attempt to understand the Creator. One should know the *Muulaadhaara* (the basis) for the whole of creation.

Students should not waste time or energy in wrong pursuits. They should cultivate *Sath sanga* not in the worldly sense. *Sath* is a part of *Sath-Chith-Aanandha*, the attribute of the Divine. You must always internally be in the company of God, who is the embodiment of Bliss. *Sath* is Truth. *Chith* is Awareness and *Aanandha* is Bliss. The significance of this can be understood by a small example. Sweetness is the essence of God. We sing in the *bhajan* "*Madhuraadhipathe Madhuram Madhuram*" (Oh Lord of Mathura You are Sweet). Sugar is sweet. God is like Sugar. *Sath* may be compared to sugar. *Chith* can be compared to water, because it is everywhere. It is necessary for the sustenance of life whether one is a prince or a pauper. If you mix sugar and water you get syrup. Likewise the syrup of *Aanandha* comes out of the combination of *Sath* and *Chith*.

Students! Always think of the Lord. Don't give room for selfishness. Engage yourself in service to humanity with a sense of sacrifice. This is the lesson you should learn from the ten-day course that you have attended now.

You must understand that matter combined with energy is God. Make use of the things in the world with the awareness that it is all God's creation and you should be grateful to the Divine for everything. Have everything within limits, including your desire for comforts. Even the five elements should be used within limits. Otherwise they will spell danger.

Students! Work for the peace and prosperity of society without selfish motives. You have to put these things into practice and shine as ideal students.

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