

## 19. The spark and the source

*Like oil in the til-seed, like ghee present in subtle form in milk, like fragrance in a flower, like the sweet juice in a fruit, like fire latent in fire-wood, the divine is immanent as a witness in the entire cosmos of living and inanimate objects. This Divinity is beyond description in any way. (Sanskrit verse)*

THE Lord of the Universe remains unseen like the thread that holds the gems in a necklace. He is the Cosmic Consciousness, the Supreme Spirit *Aathman*, that pervades the entire universe.

*Embodiments of Love!* What is the meaning of human life? What is its goal? What is its purpose? Wherein lies its uniqueness? Very few human beings strive earnestly to seek answers to these questions. Imagining that food and sleep and sensual pleasures are the only important things in life, man is forgetting his inherent divinity. This is totally wrong. To recognise his divinity and to convey this experience to others in society constitute man's duty in life.

For everything in life, the inner feeling is most important. The inner feeling is at the root of all action. Even when one wishes to write a simple letter, one thinks in advance about the person to whom it is to be written, the message one wants to convey and only then one embarks on writing. The idea comes first and action follows.

### **"Knower of Brahman becomes Brahman himself"**

Hence, at the very outset one should try to understand what is humanness. One has to ponder over the idea of divinity. The *Vedhaantha* proclaims that the knower of *Brahman* becomes *Brahman* himself.

This is illustrated by the example of Rathnakara, who was a highwayman who became the sage Vaalmeeki by reciting the name of Raama on the advice of the sages. While chanting the name of Raama he was also meditating on the form of Raama. Rathnakara experienced and acquired the effulgence of Raama.

Likewise, the child Prahlada, because he was constantly chanting the name of Naaraayana, reflected in his rice the effulgence of Naaraayana.

The great scientist, Darwin, similarly acquired as a student the traits of his teacher, Henslow, because he was constantly admiring his teacher and wished to be great like him.

These examples show that whatever the object on which we set our hearts and go on thinking about it, it becomes part of us. Hence, it is only when you concentrate your thoughts on what is good, engage yourself in good deeds and be good always, you will manifest your true humanness. This truth is expressed in profound terms by *Vedhaantha* when it declares that every being is a fragment of God on earth. "*Mamaivaamso Jeevaloke Jeevabhuthas- Sanaathanab*" (Every living being is a fragment of my eternal Self). The Divine has clearly declared: "Oh man! You are not a mere creature of the five elements. You are a spark of Myself. You are divinity itself." The Divine therefore calls upon every human being to conduct himself in a godly way because he is a spark of the Divine.

Many good persons who recognise this truth nevertheless suffer from various troubles and ailments and lament over their experiences. To entertain such feelings is a repudiation of their divine essence. The divine knows no trouble or sorrow. He is free from all worries. When a

man grieves over troubles and difficulties he is denying his godly quality: What is the nature of such people? They are victims of either animal or demonic tendencies or are subject to vacillations and hence are immersed in difficulties.

### **Every one is a spark of the Divine**

How many recognise their inherent divinity? Very few indeed. It is the bounden duty of every human being to recognise his divine origin and act accordingly.

Only those who recognise their divine essence are true human beings. The question may be asked- "What about the others who are also leading their lives?" It is true they are living, but what kind of life are they leading? Those who do not think of God are living like animals. They think like animals and lead an animal existence.

The one who leads a godly life experiences divine bliss. He is ever blissful. He enjoys real happiness. Hence every man should realise the truth that he is a spark of the Divine.

This means that everyone should seek to experience God as the indweller in the heart. Once Arjuna was troubled in mind over the state of things around him and asked Krishna why this should happen to him when he had such faith in Krishna. Krishna then explained to him that it was not enough to remember God occasionally when one felt the need to remember him. This kind of remembrance is a matter of convenience and expediency. What is required is *Anusmarana*, constant remembrance. Only that will relieve the devotee of his troubles and worries. *Anusmarana* calls for remembrance at all times, in all situations. Krishna told Arjuna that he is thinking of God only on some occasions and for some specific purposes. This is not the proper way. "If you remember Me at all times, I am always with you," said Krishna. Krishna's injunction to Arjuna was- "Remember Me at all times and carry on the fight. That alone will help you. It will confer success on you.

### **All possessions are gifts of God**

In human life, there are two attitudes to the objects with which one has to deal. There are things for which one is only a temporary guardian by virtue of one's position in relation to them. There are things which belong to one and which one can take along with him and use as he pleases. The latter type of relationship is called *maarakam*. The former type is called *tharakam*. Men should cultivate the attitude of *Tharakam*, namely, that nothing belongs to them and that everything comes from God.

All are gifts of God. You must treat all possessions in that spirit. You must take good care of them as long as you have the responsibility for their proper use and maintenance. That is your duty.

As long as you live in the world, you have the responsibility to take care of your wife, children and possessions. But you must regard this as an obligation imposed by God. You must not get attached to them as your possessions. Most people in the world, however, are deeply attached to kinsfolk and properties. How lasting are these possessions? You can never know when you may have to leave all of them behind. Hence, the proper attitude for men is to recognise one's duty towards others and consider everything as a gift from God.

### **Krishna's Miracles**

Arjuna was made to realise the divinity of Krishna by recalling the boyhood miracles performed by Krishna in lifting the *Govardhana giri* to protect the people of Gokulam from a terrible

downpour, and how he revealed to His mother Yashodha the entire Cosmos in His little mouth to assure her that he had not eaten dust as complained by His older brother, Balarama. What Balarama did was only to make his mother realise the divinity of Krishna. When Yashodha saw all the worlds in the mouth of Krishna she wondered whether it was all a dream or the *maaya* of the Lord or some inexplicable phenomenon. It was because of her maternal attachment to Krishna that she could not readily recognise His divinity:

Men stiffer from doubts about divinity as long as they have attachment to the physical body. The body should be recognised as a temple of God. Based on this feeling, men should worship the Divine.

Not all can experience this kind of feeling. Only the Gopikas of Brindhaavan could experience the Divine in every being and in every object. When Krishna sent Uddhava to the Gopikas with a message, they bluntly told. Him that their hearts were already filled with love for Krishna and that there was no room in them for any message. Their minds, their eyes and everything else were concentrated on Krishna. Krishna had totally captured the hearts of the Gopikas. When they missed Krishna for a time, they appealed to every plant and flower to disclose the whereabouts of Krishna. (Svaami sang a poem in which the Gopikas described Krishna's beauty and asked the jasmine flowers to reveal his hiding place to them). The hearts of the Gopikas were soft, sweet and blissful like butter. Hence, Krishna relished their pure love even more than the delicacies his mother offered out of maternal affection. (Svaami recited poems to describe the purity and intensity of the Gopikas devotion to Krishna).

It is because men lack this kind of total love for the Divine that they are a prey to all kinds of troubles. When they recognise their inherent divinity as fragments of the Divine, there will be no room for bodily attachments and the troubles arising from them.

God is the embodiment of wholeness and perfection. Whatever is offered to him should be total and perfect. This was demonstrated by the Italian Violinmaker Anthony (Stradivarius) who took one year to make one violin, but made it to perfection as an offering to God.

Whatever is said, done or given, it should be perfect. To please God, who is perfect, whatever is offered should be perfect. Anthony declared that he was making perfect violins only to please God.

### **Pray for Peace and Bliss**

When people pray to God they should not seek any favours. You should not even pray for the curing of any illness, because the world is full of disease. You must feel that what is ailing numerous others is also ailing you. The world is full of wealth, houses and many other things. You must seek from God what is not readily available in the world. You do not have peace. You must pray for peace. Only the divine has peace. The Divine has been described as the very embodiment of peace in the prayer addressed to the Lord beginning with the word "*Shaanthaakaaram*." Nobody else except God can give you real peace.

The second thing for which you must pray is *Sukham* (happiness). Real happiness cannot be had from others. They may give momentary worldly pleasure. But only God has enduring happiness and permanent bliss. You must pray for that bliss. God alone can give it. He is the Lord of Bliss. You must pray to God for enduring peace and bliss and not for any earthly gifts.

Thyagaraja once passed through a period of doubt in Rama's capacity to relieve him of his distress. But on further reflection he realised that if there was any deficiency, it should be in

himself rather than in Raama's powers. He sang a song praising the great prowess of Raama, which could attract the adoration of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, Lakshmana the mighty warrior, Bharatha who was endowed with supreme intelligence, and which endowed Hanumaan with the capacity to leap over the ocean. (Bhagavaan sang the song with all sweetness).

### **Have firm faith in God**

Devotees are subject occasionally to doubts. Many declare their resolve to act according to the Divine will. But sometime or other they go back on their resolves. Those who are steadfast in their devotion to God at all times are very few indeed. You should, strive to develop steadfast faith in God. Only then, can the nature of the Divine be properly understood.

Krishna demonstrated in His life not only many miraculous powers but also many profound truths. Krishna's divinity is omnipresent, but it is experienced by devotees according to their spiritual condition. Persons who go to the Ganges for bringing the holy water can take with them only as much as their containers can hold.

Hence, it is essential to broaden the spiritual container in you, namely, your heart. Divinity cannot be realised by various forms of worship. They are good acts in themselves and give their appropriate rewards. But they do not promote spirituality, which consists in establishing association with it only by concentrating on the realisation of that oneness. The Divine has no birth or death and pervades every being as the witness.

What is required is a transformation of the heart. All bad thoughts and feelings should be expelled from the heart. Even in the performance of *bhajans* there should be whole-hearted participation in them. It should not be a mechanical ritual. Once your heart is filled with sacred thoughts and feelings, they will be reflected in your *bhajan-singing*. Through your singing you should give joy to all the participants.

### **Power of Love alone can bind God**

Devotees should, realise that what matters most is the intensity of feelings. Kabeerdaas declared that he could not attain God by spiritual exercises of any kind. But he said that there was one most powerful weapon with him to realise God. That was his love for God. With that love he said he could bind. God. God submits only to the power of the devotee's love. Without love all forms of worship are of no use. That was why the Gopikas appealed to Krishna to fill their parched hearts with the love flowing from His flute so that saplings of love could sprout in their hearts.

Devotees entertain sacred thoughts on festival days like *Krishnaashtami* (birthday of Krishna). But these are forgotten soon after. They should make every, moment holy. Only by this means can the Divine be realised.

God is omnipresent, but you are tunable to see Him. You see a person. God is the indweller in him. You see his external form and not the Divine in him. But without the power of the Divine how can he exist? You cannot deny the existence of the air all around you, though you cannot see it or grasp it. Likewise God is everywhere but is subtle and invisible. You will experience Him in your heart, when you make it absolutely pure.

You must see the Divine in everyone. This is the true trait of a *saadha* (ascetic). The wearing of the ochre robe does not make a man a *Saadhu*. He must possess the qualities of a *saadhu*. He

must be pure-hearted. Transformation of the heart is what is called for. All that you do should lead you nearer to God. When you act in this way nothing bad will touch you.

### **Triple attributes of Krishna**

Krishna is omnipresent. The word has three meanings. "*Karshayathi-ithi Krishna*" (The man who ploughs is Krishna). The heart is the symbol of a field. The heart should be filled with love. The seeds of the Lord's name should be sown in it. Krishna encourages the devotee to do all this.

"*Aakarshathi-ithi Krishna*" (because he attracts, he is Krishna). Krishna has the supreme power of all attraction. By his words, his sport, his music and all his actions he attracts all people. This power of attraction is present in everyone. Hence everyone is potentially Krishna.

"*Khushyathi-ithi Krishna*" (because he imparts bliss, he is called Krishna). Everyone seeks happiness. The Divine, who is the embodiment of happiness, is in you. God wants you to be happy, but you do not realise it. Try to recognise the source of bliss within you. It is not the true nature of man to be unhappy. When anyone is otherwise, persons around him are concerned about him. You should always be happy because you are the embodiment of the *Aathma*. Never give way to worry.

As a spark of the divine, you have to behave like the Divine. Do not give room for grief. What use is there in turning over the beads of the rosary while your mind is thinking of mundane matters? First of all, purify your mind. Dedicate all actions to God. Free yourself from all attachments. Treat all things as gifts from God for which you are the custodian and not-the owner.

### ***Avathaars* appear to redeem hummanity**

*Embodiments of Love!* God's love is pure and simple. His greatest gift is His love. The Gopikas realised this truth and declared: "Oh Lord! we are offering to you the love, which you gave us. What else can we offer at your feet?"

Do not calculate what you have offered to God in terms of money or otherwise. Whatever you offer, consider only the feeling with which you offered it. Even a small *thulasi* leaf offered with love becomes a great offering to the Lord. Offer anything with a full and loving heart. By offering with love, you become the embodiment of love. That was the case with Prahlada, Naarada and others. Identify yourself with the name and form of the Divine of your choice. You may carry on all your normal daily duties, but keep in mind always the name of the Lord. That is the injunction of Krishna'

Do not allow any evil thoughts to enter your mind. Then the good thoughts in you will find expression in good deeds.

Develop firm faith in God. In daily life you base all your actions on faith in your dhoby, your barber and many others. Why then don't you place your faith in God.? God is the indweller. Lack of faith in God really means you have no faith in your own self. Faith in yourself leads to faith in God. This is the secret of greatness. Faith in God alone will help you. All others are time-servers. The lives of all great believers in God show how they were protected by their faith in God through all their difficulties.

Raamadhaas, who was imprisoned by Thaneesha for diverting government revenues to build a temple for Raama and to make jewels for the idols, felt at one time bitter about his sufferings and even blamed Raama for his plight. Later he repented and sought Raama's forgiveness.

devotees should not grieve over their troubles, which are only "passing clouds." Some devotees, like Laya and Vijaya, were born as opponents of God as a result of a curse, but they were so anxious to return to God that they preferred the role of enemies of God so that they could meet with their death at the hands of God. *Avathaars* appear for various reasons to save devotees

*Avathaars* teach mankind lessons about how to realise God. Humanity needs divine teachers to redeem it from its troubles. This is the purpose of *Avathaars*, who come down to show mankind the ways of realising the Divine. You must recognise this truth. The Divine does not make the descent as an *Avathaar* without a purpose. The purpose is to enable Nature to fulfil its role. To be born as human beings is a rare blessing. The *Avathaar* instructs humanity how to redeem human existence.

Festivals like *Raama Navami* and *Krishna Janmaashtami* are designed to remind people about the purpose of human life. Devotees who participate in such festivals should learn a lesson from the cows. Absorb as much of the teachings as you can during your stay. Ruminating over them when you go back, like the cows chewing the cud they have caught. Do not forget what has been taught here. After ruminating over what you have heard, try to put into practice what has been taught. Always contemplating on God, make your lives meaningful.

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