

## The ephemeral and the transcendental

Life without love is like  
An electric wire without power supply,  
A field without water,  
A temple without deity,  
A school without teacher. [Telugu Poem]

Speech is the cause of prosperity,  
Speech is the cause of friendship,  
Speech is the cause of bondage, and  
Speech may even cause death. [Sanskrit Verse]

In this world, speech carries also more value than the currency note. In ancient times, people used to give immense value to speech. With the help of speech they were able to become rich and prosperous; they could even win kingdoms. Man becomes virtuous only when his speech is good; he be-

comes evil when his speech is bad. Speech promotes friendship. It also brings about differences between friends. Speech promotes affinity among relatives. It also creates discord. Effects of speech are not confined to ephemeral and worldly matters only; speech affects our spiritual progress also. Speech may even cause death. Speech can save one's life, too. Sweet speech brings you name and fame. Since man today has lost his pleasant speech and sweet temper, he is subjected to innumerable ordeals and sufferings. That is why I tell the students now and then, you cannot always oblige but you can speak always obligingly. When the speech is good, man becomes a hero. But man will become a zero if the speech is not good.

### **Root cause of restlessness in the world**

Who is hero? God is hero and the world is zero. So, you should make friendship with that hero. The eternal nature of Divine Love, which is blemishless, selfless, and pure, alone stands the test of true friendship. When you enjoy the proximity of such a friend, you will be free from fear even in the face of insurmountable difficulties. Lack of faith is the cause of fear in man. So, cultivating faith in the Divine is the foremost task of man. Endowed with such faith, one can achieve success in every kind of task. What is the root cause of disturbance and restlessness in the world?

*Due to their ignorance, people have lost  
Fear of sin and love for God,  
Resulting in the depravity of human nature.  
What a blow to the cause of peace in the world*

[Telugu Poem]

Man today has made giant strides in all fields. But the progress he has registered can be compared to an electric wire without current, since he does not possess human values. Love of God has infinite power. Here is an example. People are coming here from far off places in India and from different countries, spending a lot of money and time. Why do they gather here? What is the reason? They find something here that they do not find in their family members, in friends, in relatives, in the society they live in, and also in their countries. If they were able to find it in themselves or in their societies or in their countries, they would never come here.

What do they find here? You find love here. For the sake of experiencing Divine Love, you all embark on long and arduous journeys. But, if you make a thorough observation and investigation into the matter, you will be able to know that love is present within you only. In the *Gita*, Lord Krishna declared: *Mamaivamso Jeevaloke Jeevabhutha Sanathana* (the eternal *Atma* in every human being is a part of My Being). Hence, Divine Love is present in every individual.

But the human being, unable to realize the truth that love is present within himself, thinks that it is something separate or different from him and undertakes long journeys searching for love. Know that the Divine is not different from you. *Sarvata panipadam Tat sarvathokshi siromukham* (That omnipresent *Brahman* has His hands, feet, eyes, and mouth everywhere).

### **Our foremost task is to cultivate sadgunas**

To have a vision of God, who is omnipresent, you have to make certain enquiries. The *Vedas* proclaim that *Brahman* is all-pervasive. *Easwara sarva bhutanam* (the Divine is immanent in every being). Man should cultivate good qualities if he

wants to realize the truth of these statements. Without such qualities, man cannot realize even a fraction of the truth of the statement *saryam khalvidam Brahma* (verily all this is *Brahman*). Only by means of good qualities can one recognize the Divine, who is omnipresent. Cultivating good qualities is the basic tenet of devotion. Cultivation of virtues, right attitude, adherence to truth, discipline, and sense of duty are the signs of devotion. Only those who develop these qualities can be called devotees.

Our foremost task is to cultivate *sadgunas* (good qualities). The Sanskrit word *sath* stands for eternity, which is called *Being*. We should acquire the qualities of *Being*. What are these qualities? They are attributelessness, purity, steadfastness and enlightenment. It is not an easy task to acquire all these qualities. However, there is one way out. Since all the virtues are embedded in pure, selfless, and divine love, if you develop love, all the virtues will manifest in you. The true nature of love should be cultivated to experience the Divinity latent in you.

### **Who am I?**

Several ways were enunciated in *Vedanta* to clarify one question: “Who am I?” What is its inner significance? The “I” is all-pervasive. Question yourself, “Who am I?” A doubt may also arise as to why you should try to know “Who am I” when there are so many other things of interest in this age of information. If you find an answer to this question, you will be able to realize not only your true nature, your true identity, but also the true identity of the millions of people in the world. You will be able to recognize the true nature of every individual.

Whenever you come across a stranger you ask him, “Who are you?” and waste your time. Instead, question yourself, “Who am I?” By finding out the answer to this question you will be able to very easily find out who he is, since the true nature of every human being is one and the same. Every human being refers to himself as “I”. The word “I” is applicable to every individual. If you understand this one word “I”, you can understand the real nature of every being in the world.

### **There is only One without a second**

Here is an example. Look at these bulbs and tube lights. Their colors, wattage, and shapes are different. You know that the electric current that flows through these different bulbs is one and the same. *Ekam sath viprah bahudha vadanti* (Truth is one, but scholars refer to it by many names). Likewise, forms are different, names are different, but the divine vibration is one and the same. So, there is only One without a second. That is Divinity. If you recognize Divinity, you will be able to understand the nature of the Self immanent in all individual beings. Everything has emanated from the Divine.

Here is an example. First you were alone. Later you got married. Before marriage you had only two legs and you enjoyed greater freedom. You could go wherever you wanted to go. After marriage, you acquired two more legs and your movements were restricted, since you did not feel like leaving your wife alone at home. This is bondage. Your wish to have a son might be fulfilled after two years. With the arrival of the son, you added two more legs. Your movements were further impeded. With the passage of time, you might feel bad for not having a baby girl, though you had a son who could uplift your family and bring name and fame. Two more legs were added

with the birth of a daughter. The greater the number of legs, the lesser the freedom would be. You would give away your daughter in marriage. Members of the bridegroom's family would become your relatives. With the arrival of the daughter-in-law, the members of her family too would become your relatives. In this manner one becomes many. Here oneness is the cause of multitudinous.

If you realize this truth, the *Vedantic* axiom *Ekoham Bahusyam* (one *Brahman* multiplies itself into many) can be understood easily. To realize this oneness as the unifying force of the multitudinous is the *summum bonum* of the Indian culture. But, man today is not thinking on these lines. He is dividing oneness into many. He is carried away by attachments at the physical level and is fully immersed in worldly relations like son-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandson, and the like. This attachment leads to bondage, if he realizes the truth that the nature of the Self is one and the same in every being, there will be no suffering.

### **Cultivate purity and divinity**

The world is like a cinema, and the *Atma* is the screen. The different projections that appear on the screen are transient, whereas the screen remains as it is. That is why *Vedanta* proclaims *Brahma sathyam jaganmithya* (*Brahman* is truth, the world is an illusion). The pictures in the form of projections on the screen come and go, but the screen does not change.

Let us analyze this from the standpoint of the *Vedantic* statement *sarvain khalvidam Brahma* (the entire universe is *Brahman*). When the pictures appear on the screen, it become invisible. Where does it go? It is there within the picture, but it is invisible. But without the screen you cannot see the pictures.

Observation reveals the fact that the screen is not at all affected either by the innumerable visuals or by the sound effects. The fire that appears on the screen does not burn it. A tempest appears, it may even uproot the trees. The screen depicts the scenes, but it is not affected by them. Sometimes, we see floods on the screen. Rivers like the Ganga, Yamuna, and Godavari may overflow, but the screen is not drenched. What is the reason? Floods, earthquakes, and tempest that appear on the screen are not real, so the screen is not affected by them. It remains as a witness. Your heart is a big screen, which is changeless. On the screen of the heart, you see sufferings, happiness and ordeals. All these are transient scenes, like passing clouds. None of the scenes is permanent. Only the screen of your heart is permanent. That is Divine. It is also called conscience which is the eternal truth.

### **Where do you find consciousness?**

The conscious perception of what is going around and the people we come across through bodily senses and mental powers is transient. Conscience is within. It vibrates throughout the body, whereas conscious perception is associated with the senses. Where do these two, conscience and conscious perception, come from? Both have their origin in the all-pervading universal consciousness. Where do you find consciousness? It is not confined to one place. It is infinite, immutable, invisible, and all-pervasive. First, you should understand this consciousness. You can then attempt to merge it with Divine Consciousness. This merger leads to bliss and liberation.

What should we do to attain this? Air is everywhere. It is invisible and we cannot catch it. But nobody has got any right

to deny its existence. It is our life force. So, it does exist and it is all-pervasive. In your body, this air is in a limited quantity.

If you inflate a balloon, the air, which is all-pervasive, enters the balloon. But its quantity is limited. If you tie the balloon securely with a string, the air in it cannot merge with the air outside. What is the reason? It has a limitation, since it is encased in a balloon. What should be done to overcome the limitation? The encasement should be destroyed. How? Pump more and more air into the balloon till it bursts. Then the limited air in the balloon will get merged with the infinite air outside. Likewise, the body, which is only a vesture of the divine, is the cause of bondage. In the body too there is the air of divinity. But it is limited and bound. If you cultivate purity and divinity more and more, attachment to the body gets destroyed, which will lead to liberation.

*The body is composed of the five elements.  
It is subject to change and death.  
It is stated that life span of man is hundred years  
but do not trust these words.  
It may drop away in childhood or in youth  
or in the middle age or in old age.  
It may fall away, Oh man, in a village or  
in a forest or in the midst of waters.  
The body is full of filth and is subject to  
all sorts of afflictions and diseases.  
It is bound by the cycle of birth and death.  
It cannot cross the ocean of life.  
Oh mind! Believe not that it will exist forever.  
Take refuge at the feet of the Lord.*

[Telugu Poem]



For the sake of physical gratification, you undergo many ordeals from dawn to dusk. What do you gain out of it? You are able to experience only ephemeral pleasures. But you should realize the truth that eternal bliss is within you. You should strive to experience that bliss.

God is not different from you. He is not confined to places like temples, mosques, and churches. He is omnipresent. He is the resident of your heart. The body is the temple of God. So, you should strengthen the feelings of love within you. You do develop love, but it is based on bodily relations. You love your son, father, and mother. You identify yourself with the body, so you direct your love toward those with whom you have got a relationship at physical level. You are not able to manifest the kind of love that is beyond name and form. Love has no form. It does not differentiate between young and old or man and woman. Love is love. It cannot be compared to anything else. Love is the very form of the Divine. Love is God. Live in love. How to do that?

*Start the day with Love  
Spend the day with Love  
Fill the day with Love  
End the day with Love  
This is the way to God.*

You can cultivate love in several ways. But, do not limit it to the bodily needs and relations. However, as long as you live in the world, you do need the warmth of relationship. You can wish for the welfare and progress of someone else. You can also share his happiness. But all these feelings are limited to the physical relationship, which is transient.

The human being has both a head and a heart. Whatever comes from the head is related to worldly affairs only. Read-

ing, writing, walking, and feelings of pain and pleasure belong to the head. These are all ephemeral.

Eternal values like truth, love, patience, and compassion emanate from the heart. What comes from the head is worldly and ephemeral. What comes from the heart is transcendental and eternal. That which comes from the heart leads to *nivritti* (inward path). But, all that comes from the head lead to *pravriddhi* (outward path). The head carries responsibility, whereas the heart is bestowed with right. Whatever is done by the head is temporary. You feel hungry. You go to canteen and eat two *chapatis* to satiate your hunger. But, after two hours. you feel hungry again. It is cyclic in nature. You feel hungry, you eat something, the food gets digested, and again you feel hungry. This can be compared to the cycle of birth and death.

*Sankaracharya said:*

*The cycle of birth and death is repetitive.*

*World is an ocean of woes;*

*win the grace of God and transcend it.*

*Oh fool! Chant the Lords name instead of*

*memorizing the rudiments of grammar.*

*Grammar would not come to your help*

*at the time of death*

[Sanskrit Verse]

### **The three states of consciousness**

As long as you are awake, you aspire for many things and indulge in many activities. You are also subject to manifold experiences. But you forget everything while sleeping.

The state of sleep can be compared to a short death, and death can be compared to a long sleep. It is not easy to understand the true meaning of birth and death. You forget in sleep

state what you experienced during the day. So, sleep state can be considered as a short death. Similarly, waking state can be considered as long life. However, the waking state and the sleep state are temporary. But in both the states witness-consciousness exists, which experiences everything.

Here is an example. During the waking state, you move around with the help of the body, listen to many things, and experience happiness. When questioned, you claim that it is you who is experiencing all this. But, in the dream state, who is experiencing the dream? It is you only. In the deep sleep state, you forget everything and enjoy bliss. Here, who is experiencing bliss? Again, it is you only. So, in all these three states —waking, dream, and deep sleep— you do exist, and it is you who experience everything.

*Trikal badhyam sathyam* (Truth is changeless in all three periods of time). You remain the same in all the three states. So, you are the very form of Truth.

### **Live in the present**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Time undergoes change. Waking, dream, and deep sleep states are subject to change. Matter, worldly things and bodies composed of the five elements also undergo change. Mind, intellect, feelings, and senses also undergo change. Senses are afflicted with various diseases. So, they are all transient.

But you are permanent and experience everything. Do not brood over the past. Past is past; forget it. Future is not certain. It is beyond your perception. So, live in the present, since it is permanent. It is not ordinary present; it is omnipresent. How? Past is in the present, since the present is the result of past ac-

tions. Future is also in the present, since it depends on the present actions. So, you should pay attention only to the present.

Instead of giving importance to ephemeral pleasures, you should follow the right path. That is all you are supposed to do now. But you are not doing what you are supposed to do. You simply brood over the past and worry about the future. In this way, you ignore the present. As a result, you are subjected to suffering. Why should you not derive happiness from the present state of affairs?

Brooding over the past and worrying about the future are the main cause of man's suffering. Why do you think about the past? You treaded that path consciously. Then why do you look back? Be happy in the present. That is all you should aspire for. You may face many ordeals. But do not pay too much attention to them. Lead your life happily till the end.

### **Experience divine bliss, which is within you**

Man yearns for happiness in every act, in every kind of experience. He pines for happiness. All his actions are aimed at deriving happiness. Whether he does business or work in an office, his aim is to derive happiness. But does he find it? No. It is a temporary phase only as it is worldly happiness. He may be happy for a while, but permanent happiness is attained only by contemplation on God. So, contemplate on the Divine.

You must understand that the final product depends upon the original material. From clay you can make a doll of clay. Is it possible to make a doll of gold from clay? Your bodies are composed of the five elements. They survive on food. You may prepare a several course meal. But, you should eat it before it gets stale. If you waste time, the food may decay and become unfit for consumption. Likewise, you should experi-

ence the eternal divine bliss at the right time before the body decays and becomes decrepit. This is the task of the human beings today.

You try to experience many things. Instead, experience the divine bliss, which is within you. That is the supreme bliss.

It is the very form of supreme wisdom.

It is one without a second.

It is expansive and pervasive like the sky.

It is eternal, pure and changeless.

It stands as a witness of everything.

[Sanskrit Verse]

### **Cultivate Divine Love**

Look at those glowing lights. In this assembly, some persons are listening to My discourse, some are moving away. and some are sleeping. Different people are doing different types of work. The light stands as a witness. It is not affected by your sleep. It is not affected by your movements. It is not affected even though you do not listen to My discourse. It simply remains as a witness.

Divinity, like light, is the witness of everything. Its effulgence illuminates everything else. Where does it exist? We find *santhi* (peace) within *asanthi* (unrest). In the depth of the *santhi* (peace), there exists *prakanthi* (supreme splendor). In this *prakanthi*, one can experience *Param Jyothi* (Divine Effulgence). *Param Jyothi*, in the form of *Atma Jyothi*, (the light of the *Atma*) is within you. That is the light of nonduality and eternity. That is the light of immortality. That is the light of the Self.

Since you possess that light within yourselves, why should you be afraid of anything else? Why should you worry? Be

happy. Where is happiness? How to experience it? Union with God is happiness.

You should realize that love is the form of God. As long as Divinity, in the form of love, exists within you, unrest cannot reach you. But, these days, people are subjecting themselves to unrest and unhappiness by misinterpreting the nature of love and by attributing to it certain impure feelings. It is a blunder. Know that Divine Love is unsullied, selfless, and pure. Without any hesitation you should try to acquire that love. Strive to possess it.

The world today is full of misery. There is no place without fear and grief. People are afraid to travel by air, by trains or by cars, because they are wary of evil elements. Even walking has become unsafe.

People are not happy at home also, since they are haunted by numerous fears. They are terribly fear-stricken. What is the reason? They are unable to bear difficulties and ordeals. But, think who is facing ordeals? Who is undergoing suffering? It is the body only, which is the composition of the five elements. Reduce attachment to the body. Then you will experience eternal bliss. Reducing body attachment and increasing attachment to the Self is the true meaning of devotion. Attachment to body leads to *pravritti* (outward path), while attachment to the Self leads to *nivritti* (inward path). The combination of these is human life.

*Embodiments of Love!* Strengthen love, saturate your lives with love and live in that Divine Love.

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