

22. Everyone Must Work Without Seeking The Fruit Thereof

You look at things with your eyes. You feel very happy that what you thus see is the truth. But if you want to understand what reality is, know that it is hidden behind the curtain. Do not take rest. Come with me and then we shall see the same.

Pavitratma Swarupas, students!

How can you find the one who is all-pervasive and ever-effulgent? He is present in you, around you, and in all places. If you close your eyes and search for Him, how can you find Him? Two lids in the shape of “I” and “Mine” are covering your eyes of wisdom. If only you can open those lids, you can see the real truth of the world. Ignorance is false

identification of Self with body or mind. Spiritual endeavour helps to outweigh the worldly desires. Thus the mind is quietened and one reaches the state of egolessness wherein the self-effulgence shines of its own accord. The experience in the egoless state awakens you from the dream of relativity and bondage.

Nature is composed of three basic *gunas* or qualities, *Sathwic*, *Rajasic* and *Thamasic*, and their interplay determines the nature and moods of human beings at different intervals of times due to the predominance of one or the other.

There are three types of human beings. Those who exert to satiate their sensory desires. Exulting when they are joyous and grieving when they are in the midst of troubles can be compared to a piece of iron. If you put a piece of iron in fire, it becomes soft and red; and in the process it loses its intrinsic characteristics. When you take it out of fire, it becomes hard and black and gets back its original form. Such people like iron exhibit good qualities so long as they are in good company, but the moment they move away from *sathsanga* or good company they return to their old habits and incorrigible style of life.

On the other hand, there are others who, in the midst of sorrow, feel happy. Such people can be compared to gold. If you take a piece of gold and put it in fire with a view to melt it, the piece of gold gets rid of

its impurities. In the same manner, even when man is in the midst of sorrow, if he can get rid of the sorrow and feel happy, he is like a piece of gold.

People who remain unruffled in the midst of joy or grief can be compared to a piece of diamond. This means that they will always remain in a state of equipoise. In the case of a diamond, you may try to cut it in many ways; but with each cut, its value only increases. By such treatment, the value of a diamond is not going to diminish. Persons of this type always reside in the realm of *Brahmananda*.

Desire and fear drive man away from his duty and bring him down in others' estimation. Desire exiles us from the happiness that is within us, and its momentary cessation allows us to taste a little of that happiness for the time being. When one seeks to know anything other than himself, without caring to know the truth of himself, the knowledge he obtains can not be right knowledge. One who cannot understand himself will never understand anything about divinity either. In the sacred field of the heart, you will find a *Kalpavriksha*, the tree which gives you all that you want. Around this tree will grow an enormous number of weeds. If you can remove these weeds, you will get the vision of this boon-giving tree in the field of your heart. This is called *Atma*.

In order that we may experience this *Atma Thathwa*, we only have to undertake certain types of

actions which are related to the *Dharmic* way of life. Some people say that all the *karmas* that we do are different aspects of *dharma*. But it is not possible that all *karmas* are aspects of *dharma*. Yet others say that only that kind of work which is *Sathwic* or that which relates to *Nivritthi*, can be called *dharma karma*.

Since we are told that the *karma*, either *Sathwic* or not, related to worldly matters can alone be described as *dharma*, we should here make some enquiry. At times we are kind to individuals and at other times we even kill our enemies in a battle. These are also *karmas*. In order to protect this body, which is ultimately responsible for the performance of *karma*, we do many kinds of work. Work to fulfil our sensuous desires cannot be treated as related to *dharma*. It is only when you remove selfishness and various kinds of desires from your mind, while working, can that work be described as an aspect of *dharma*. We can regard such *karma* as fulfilling the dictates of divine *dharma*. Such actions will also help the individual to advance spiritually.

Although *dharma* reveals the notion of oneness to one and all, yet in practice it varies in different countries, with different individuals, and in different epochs. If mind concerns itself with worldliness, then it is separated from the light of the *Atma* and this separation causes mental perturbation. In order to have a vision of God you have to purify the inner instruments and conduct a virtuous life. We should keep our intelligence

disengaged from the worldly issues. Intelligence should not be made a tool to satiate physical and mental obsessions. On the other hand, it should be used for the revelation of *Atma*. It should only be a witness and remain unaffected by the surroundings. Then it is in a state of *Nivritthi*.

In this context, sacrifice of work cannot be something which relates to *Nivritthi*. Sacrifice of one's desires alone can be associated with *Nivritthi*. People sometimes refer to the *Karma Phala Thyaga* (renunciation of the fruits of action) and say that one has to sacrifice the result of whatever work one does. If this is so, they argue that no work need be done at all and they assert that this is what *Bhagavad Gita* teaches us. Nothing can be farther from truth. No one can sacrifice all work and yet live. The body has been created for doing work. Therefore everyone must perform work. But in doing such work, if your thoughts are sacred, you will do good work without seeking the fruit thereof.

Some weak-minded people desire to sacrifice the body in their devotion. This is a poor sacrifice and this cannot lead them towards the goal. Your attempt should be to remain unaffected by the surroundings. On the other hand, if you sacrifice your body, you may again be reborn to do the same *karma*.

Man encounters three kinds of knowledge called the *Jiva pragna*, *Easwara pragna* and *Atma pragna*. The *Jiva pragna* tries to bind the individual. The *Easwara*

pragna tries to bind others. The *Atma pragna* gives you liberation from all bondage. We must therefore try to acquire *Atma pragna*. If we acquire *Jiva pragna* or *Easwara pragna*, it will result in bondage either for us or for others. It cannot be the means for your liberation.

We should also understand the difference between *Easwara pragna* and *Atma pragna*. It is customary to make a distinction between "I" the individual and the "wisdom" that he possesses. The feeling that "I" and the "wisdom" are separate implies that there must be something which establishes the connection between these two. If there is nothing between the individual and his *Jnana*, then it is not possible for us to distinguish between these two. This indiscernible power or the connection between the individual and his *Jnana*, has been referred to as *Jneya*. Because this indiscernible *Jneya* is between these two, we distinguish between them. The moment this *Jneya* is removed, you get a feeling of oneness. Therefore, that which is to be known, the process of knowing it and the one who desires to know must all become one. If they are separable from each other, there is a duality. This process of merging *Jneya* makes man forget his individuality and makes him one with the object of knowing.

There is a small example for this. There is one who loves and one who is loved, but in between these two, unless there is the act of love, no connection is

possible. Just as this act of love brings together the individuals who are in love with each other, so also the process of *Jneya* brings together the objective that is being known and the one that wants to know. If we, therefore, make an intensive study of this process *Jneya* we will understand the unity of the one who wants to know and the one that has to be known.

The various processes and attempts for realising this oneness can be regarded as important aspects of *dharma*. This *dharma* is called by three names, the inner *dharma*, the gross *dharma* and the subtle *dharma*. *Dharma* also takes the three attributes *sathwa*, *rajas* and *thamas* and moves in the three parts of *Bhakthi*, *Jnana* and *Karma* or worship, wisdom and work. This fact of *dharma* taking these three aspects is implied in the full and complete meaning of the word *Sanathana Dharma*.

For us, to be able to recognise the divine principle in all the three *gunas*, namely *sathwa*, *rajas* and *thamas*, and also to recognise the presence of divinity in the past, present and future and to be able to associate divinity with the three aspects of the body—the gross, the subtle and the causal—are the essential features of *dharma*.

Because it is difficult for an ordinary individual to comprehend *dharma* in its entirety in the three different periods of time—past, present and future, in the three aspects of the body—gross, subtle and causal, and in the three *gunas*—*sathwa*, *rajas* and *thamas*—we generally take an easier path and we talk of specialised

types of *dharma*, *dharma* relating to the body, to the caste, to the individual, to the society, and so on. These specialised forms only help in propagating the original *Sanathana Dharma*. If we do not follow these specialised forms of *dharma*, it will not be possible for us to recognise and practise *Sanathana Dharma*.

There is again a small example for this. Our body consists of many organs. We can conclude that the body is in a good and prosperous condition only when all these organs are in good shape. If one or more of these organs is not functioning well, we cannot say that the body in its entirety is healthy. In the same manner, these individual and specialised *dharmas* relating to the caste, body, religion, society, and so on enable the total *Sanathana Dharma* to shine and be healthy.

For instance, if six blind people go near an elephant, and one of them touches its stomach, the elephant appears to him like a big wall. Another blind person touches the ears of the elephant. To him the elephant looks like a big fan. Another touches the leg of the elephant, and he would describe the elephant as if it was like a pillar. Yet another blind person described the elephant as a big rope after touching the tail of the elephant. The elephant is actually the totality of all these parts, each part felt and described by a different individual.

In the same manner, many blind people are

touching this vast *Sanathana Dharma*, and describing it as consisting of only that which they are able to comprehend. Those who follow *Vaidika Dharma*, those who follow Jainism, those who follow Christianity, those who follow Islam, and so on, all of them describe that part of *Sanathana Dharma* which is appropriate to their respective religions. *Sanathana Dharma* in its totality is not being seen and described by any one of them. Each one of them is describing only a fragment. We need not discuss whether what each one of them is saying is true or untrue. There is no doubt that they are describing accurately what they have experienced and what they have chosen to describe. But each one is describing only a part of *dharma*. No one is describing the totality of it.

Therefore, if you want to understand and establish the total picture of *dharma*, what you have to do is to make a synthesis of the essence of all religions. When we are able to bring and put together the ideas of everyone, the moral laws supported by all religions, and the truth that is in all religions, we will have a picture of *Sanathana Dharma*.

No one has the right to hate or criticise another's religion. You have the right to describe your *dharma* or the particular aspect which you have chosen to understand. But you have no right to discuss and criticise other aspects. You have direct experience of only one aspect which you have chosen, but you have no expertise in other aspects. When someone comes and tells you

his views, you will feel that he is right because he is describing that particular component which he has chosen and understood. You will feel that each one is right in his own way. You will have no reason to think that he is wrong. Before we start an argument, we should try and assess our own capacity and our own strength.

I will now tell you something which is known to most of you in your daily experience. In big cities, they have large traffic circles, where four roads meet. There are signposts telling you which way to go. If you are coming from the east, you must look for other vehicles coming from north, south and west. If you do not do so, you may meet with an accident. As in this analogy, this big circle of Nature or *Prakruthi* has four roads meeting it. These roads are *Veda*, *Sastra*, *Ithihasa* and *Purana*. If you are going along one path, say of *Purana*, without recognising what the other three paths contain, how are you going to conduct an argument? Many people know *Puranas* but they know nothing of *Vedas*. Some people know *Vedas* but they know very little of *Puranas*. In the same manner, some may know *Ithihasas* but not the others. It is through the recognition of the oneness of all the four—that we will get God's grace.

If we only take God as an ideal and the charioteer of our life, we will not be subjected to any harm. Like the policeman who stands on duty at the circle and tells you how to safely go through the traffic, God tells you which way to go safely in this wide world. The

policemen today create some confusion and cause accidents without looking in all directions, but the Divine policeman in God will never let such accidents take place. If only we surrender to God, there is no doubt whatsoever that our life will be very happy and God will look after us.

Students!

Today you may not understand the full meaning of *dharma*, but in the next few days I wish to expand on that by giving you easily understandable examples. Some people are very confused about the nature of *dharma*. This need not be so, *Dharma* deals with your happiness, security and peace.