

32. Worship the great souls who have won wisdom

Liberated people (*jnānis*) will also acquire some special powers through their beneficent resolutions, their beneficent promptings and purposes. Through these, they can attain whatever they wish. The greatness of the status of liberated people is indeed indescribable, beyond your imagination. It is of the same nature as the splendour and magnificence of the Lord Himself. Why, they become the Brahman that they have always been. That is why it is declared,

The one who has known Brahman becomes Brahman;
that one attains Brahman-hood.

*Brahmavid Brahmaiva Bhavathi,
Brahmavid aapnothi param.*

The fact that this world is unreal and that Brahman alone is real must become patent; then, all impulses are destroyed and ignorance is demolished. The gem of spiritual wisdom (*jnana*) has been stolen by the mind, so regain the gem by catching the mind. The gem entitles you to the status and dignity of Brahman, which you assume immediately.

The great souls who have won this knowledge of self-realisation (*Atma-jnana*) deserve worship. They are holy, for they have attained Brahman—which is the right of everyone in the world, however great or whatever the spiritual discipline (*tapas*). That is the kingdom they seek, the honour for which they aspire. This is the great mystery, the mystery elucidated in the *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, and spiritual texts (*sastras*). The solving of this mystery makes life worthwhile; it is the key to liberation.

Truth and untruth must be cut apart by means of the sharp sword of spiritual wisdom (*jnana*). It keeps the world afar and brings the residence of the Lord within reach. That residence is eternal bliss (*nithya-ananda*), the highest bliss (*param-ananda*), the bliss of Brahman Itself (*Brahma-ananda*).

33. Illusion makes Brahman appear as soul, God, and world

Worldly illusion (*maya*), by means of its power of (1) hiding the real nature and (2) imposing the unreal over the real, makes the one-and-only Brahman appear as the soul (*jiva*), God (*Iswara*), and the world (*jagath*)—three entities where there is only one! The faculty of illusion is latent, but when it becomes patent, it takes the form of the mind. It is then that the seedling of the huge tree (that is, this world) starts sprouting, putting forth the leaves of mental impulses (*vasanas*) and mental conclusions (*sankalpas*). So, all this objective world is but the play of the mind.

The individual soul and the Supreme Being are caught up in this proliferation, and they are inseparably intertwined in the world, so they are also creations of mental processes, like the things appearing in the dream-world.

Imagine the individual soul, the Supreme Being, and the world as having been painted; the pictorial world has both the soul and the Supreme Being incorporated in it, and all three appear as different entities, although they are created by the same paint. So also, the same mental process creates the appearance of the soul and the Supreme Being as pervading and immanent, in the background of the world.

It is illusion (*maya*) that produces the illusion of soul, Supreme Being, and world; this is declared by the oral texts (*sruthis*). Didn't the *Vasishtha-smrithi* make clear that mental processes are responsible for the magic dance of He and I, this and That, and mine and His? The expression "I am God-This (*Soham-idam*)" found in that text indicates the soul (*jiva*), the Supreme Being (*Iswara*), and the world (*jagath*). "*Sah*" means He, the Unmanifested, the Super-soul, the Power beyond and above, the Supreme Being (*Iswara*). "*Aham*" means "I", the entity enveloped by the consciousness of doer, etc. "*Idam*" means this objective world, the perceivable sense-world. So, it is clear that these three are only the products of mental processes and have no absolute value; their value is only relative.

In the waking stage and during dreaming, these three appear as real, but during deep sleep or while unconscious (as during a fainting fit), the mind is not working, so the three don't exist! This fact is within the experience of all. Therefore, it is easy now for you to realise that all three will disappear for good when, through spiritual wisdom (*jnana*), the mental processes are destroyed. Then one gets release from bondage to all these three, and one knows the one and only entity. In fact, one gets established in knowledge of nondualism (*a-dwaita jnana*).

Only spiritual knowledge won by the analysis of the mental processes can end illusion. Illusion flourishes on ignorance and absence of discrimination. So, spiritual education (*vidya*) spells the doom of illusion.