

## 57. Awake, arise, and attain the Highest

**B**efore death takes its toll, one must realise in this body itself the eternal truth and the relationship between a person and that truth. The *Kathopanishad* exhorts,

Arise, awake!

(*Uththishtatha! Jagratha! Praapya Varaan Nibodhitha!*)

Those who are agitated by doubts about what to accept and what to reject, those who are blinded by illusion, and those who cannot distinguish between darkness and light, death and immortality—all these should approach great people who can show the path to understand the eternal truth, the self-illuminated basis of all creation. Then, both this world and heaven will be merged in the same effulgence! For the sake of this realisation, one should have deep yearning and hard, disciplined practice.

This human birth is the consequence of countless good deeds, and it should not be cast aside; the chance must be fully exploited. As the *Kenopanishad* says,

This present precious life should not be thrown away

(*Na Chath Iha Avedheen Mahathee Vinashtih*).

When there are many chances of saving oneself, isn't it a big loss if no thought is spent on ways of escape? For all those who are really animals in human form, slaves of pride and animal traits, this awareness in time is most important. Delay is fruitless; it is as silly as starting to dig a well when the house catches fire. Therefore, the discriminating individual will endeavour by all means at their disposal to understand the underlying principles, to master the teachings of the great people who practised the spiritual path, and to bring all this, as much as possible, into the ken of their own experience.

## 58. Dedicate yourself to the discovery of truth and contemplate the Everlasting

**D**iscarding the path and wasting one's life is an insult to the very name of the species! Instead of getting enslaved to the evanescent and the false and wasting precious time in their pursuit, dedicate every minute to discovering truth and contemplating the everlasting, ever-true Lord. Such dedication is the real function of the soul. On the other hand, spending time in illusory appetites is the drag of the world. One shouldn't fall victim to the poisonous attractions of worldly luxuries or the wiles of seductive beauty. One day, all these fascinating scenes will vanish as a story unfolded in dream!

Education and other things that make one grow and become big are of no use for spiritual progress; they bring about only spiritual downfall. That is why this is the illusory universe (*maya-prapancha*). Truth, in whatever illusion it is immersed, will only shine more effulgently, for such is the nature of truth. How can we say that the objective world, which undergoes modifications every minute, waning and waxing with the waywardness of appearing and disappearing, is eternal truth?

The characteristic of a spiritual aspirant is the attainment of truth, not the search of the unreal in this evanescent world. In this false world, there can be no true living (*sathya-achara*). There can be only false living (*mithya-achara*). True living consists in the realisation of the Lord. This must be borne in mind by everyone every moment of their life.