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# Vidya Vahini

## Stream of Illuminating Knowledge



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## Preface for this Edition

The edition of the *Vidya Vahini* improves on the previous edition in several ways. Some grammatical errors and typos have been corrected, and many sentences have been rewritten to smooth and clarify the presentation.

The original version of *Vidya Vahini* had no chapter or section titles. We have inserted chapter titles and subtitles in appropriate places in order to make the contents of *Vidya Vahini* more accessible to the reader.

Sanskrit words have been replaced by English equivalents, to make the text more accessible to readers who do not know Sanskrit. Some Sanskrit compounds have been hyphenated between their constituent words to aid those who like to analyze the meanings of the individual words.

Besides definitions of Sanskrit words used in the *Vidya Vahini*, the glossary contains descriptions of the people and places mentioned.

This edition is being brought out in ebook form, for tablets such as the Kindle, Ipad, and Nook. Clicking on most Sanskrit words, people, and places will take you right to the glossary, where you can find the meaning. A back-button will be available in your reader to take you back to where you were reading.

And on these tablets, you generally get to choose a font and font size that suits you.

With these changes, we hope that the revised *Vidya Vahini* will be of great benefit to earnest seekers in the spiritual realm.

Convener

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# This Book

Baba has clarified that the word *vidya* used for this *vahini* (stream), means “that which (*ya*) illumines (*vidh*)”. It is this sense that is highlighted in expressions like *Atma-vidya*, *Brahma-vidya*, and even the name *Vidya-giri* (*giri* means hill or mountain) given to the campus of the Institute of Higher Learning at Prasanthi Nilayam.

Baba makes us aware of the comparatively less beneficial lower learning, which deals with theories, inferences, concepts, conjectures, and constructions. The higher learning hastens and expands the universal urge to know and become truth, goodness, and beauty (*sathyam*, *sivam*, *sundaram*). Baba has come as Man among men on a self-imposed mission to correct the wrongs inflicted on mankind through the fanatically blind pursuit of lower learning. The human race has to voyage on an even keel; it is leaning too alarmingly toward the briny grave; the lower learning is lowering it into the bottomless pit. Only spiritual knowledge—that which illumines (*vidya*)—is the remedy.

From His childhood days, Baba has stood forth as an educator, a *guru*, as the villagers loved to address Him. Without hesitation, He warned elders at Puttaparthi, teachers in the schools, and headmen of castes against cruelty to animals, exploitation of labour, usury, gambling, pedantry and illiteracy, hypocrisy, and pomp. Through quips and jests, parody and satire, songs and plays, the young teenaged teacher ridiculed and reformed society, which honoured or tolerated such evils. Through devotional songs (*bhajans*) sung in chorus by groups of men and women, He reminded them of the universal human values of truth, morality, peace, love, and nonviolence as early as 1943, when he was barely seventeen. These were the basic acquisitions that the Higher Learning (*vidya*) can confer on votaries.

As Lord Krishna, He said to Arjuna,

*Among all the kinds of knowledge, I am the Atmic knowledge.  
Adhyaathma Vidhyaa, Vidhyaanaam.*

The world can be saved from suicide only through this *Atmic* knowledge. The search for truth and totality, for unity and purity, is the means; the awareness of the One is the consummation of the process. This message is the sum and substance of every discourse of His during the last five decades.

This precious book provides us the chance to peruse nineteen essays that He wrote in answer to appeals for the elucidation of the principles that must guide us while rehabilitating education as an effective instrument for establishing peace and freedom in us and on Earth.

N. Kasturi

Editor, Sanathana Sarathi

Prasanthi Nilayam

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