

Experiencing the Bliss Divine

In His discourse to the students in Brindavan, on May 31, 1991, Bhagavan spoke about the importance of the Shastras (specific scriptures) and the Upanishads (end of Vedas) and said that they should acquaint themselves with the cultural heritage of the country as enshrined in our Upanishads, Puranas (ancient Indian literature), and the epics.

Students! Embodiments of Divine Love! It is only when the process of creation is understood in terms of the close relationship between the *Brahmam* (Omni-Self) and man can *Brahma-Vidya* (the Divine knowledge of the Supreme) be attained. *Brahman* (same as Brahman) represents the Infinite. From this Infinite, *Akasa* (ether or sound) emerged. From *Akasa* came *Vayu* (air), from *Vayu*, *Tejas* (fire), from *Tejas*, *Jal* (water), and from water, the earth (*Prithvi*). From the earth came the *Oshadhayah* (herbal plants), from the plants, food, from food, *Purusha* (man).

When the advent of man through this process is understood, it will be clear that man came from the Infinite. The term *Brahmananda* is a compound word composed of *Brahma* and *Ananda*. When this compound word is examined in its two parts, it will be seen that *Brahma* is different from *Ananda*. When this *Ananda* (bliss) is united with *Brahmam*, it becomes *Brahmananda*. Hence, it is evident that there is an inextricable association between man and *Brahmam* (the Omni-Self).

Steps to be taken to experience Brahmananda

Brahma-Vidya (the knowledge of the Absolute) can be got only through *Brahmam*. But man, because he is bound to worldly attachments, forgets the truth about the Absolute and is lost in mundane concerns. The common man, who is a prey to desire, fear, and hatred, is far from experiencing *Brahmananda* (the Supreme Bliss). If desire, fear, and hatred are given up, men will be able to understand to some extent the nature of this Supreme Bliss. But renunciation of these three alone is not enough. Love of the Lord should be fostered. Even that is not enough. You must qualify yourself to be proximate to God's love. But even nearness is not enough. You must rely entirely on the *paratattwa* (the Supreme truth). Only then the human can become the divine.

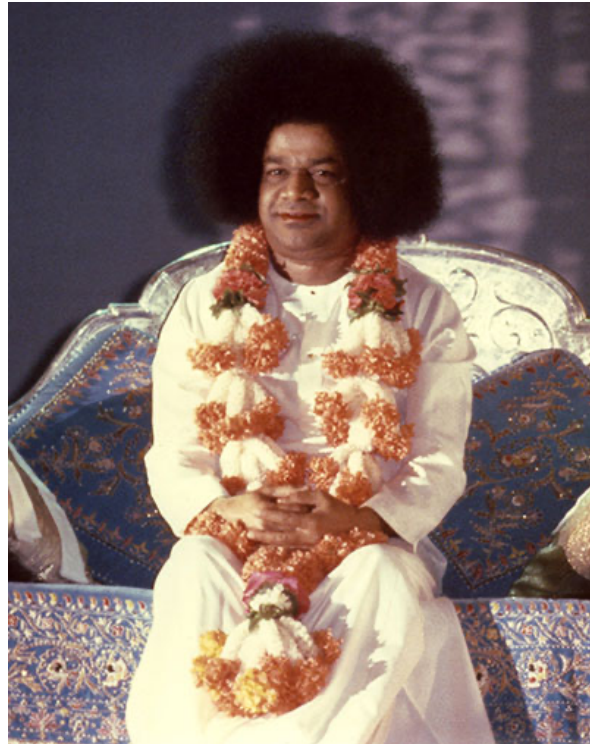
The *Sikshaavalli* section of the *Taittiriya Upanishad* sought to teach the disciples how to realize this *Brahmananda*. *Brahma-Vidya* is not something beyond human

attainment. It relates to spiritual practices concerning daily life. These practices must be observed regularly every day.

The *Upanishad* has revealed three forms in which the transcendental *Brahma-tattwa* (Formless Reality) manifests Itself. The three forms are: *Viraat*, *Hiranyagarbha*, and *Avyaakrita*. These three forms are related to the gross, the subtle, and the causal (forms of the human body). They are related to the three states of consciousness: waking, dream, and deep sleep.

Three different forms of the *Viraat-swaroopa*

The *Viraat* form is the gross physical form assumed by the *atma* in the waking state for leading a long life in the world. He manifests himself in many forms under many names. The entire cosmos, consisting of animate and inanimate objects, is the form of *Viraat*, permeating the five basic elements. The *Viraat Purusha* (the Cosmic Person) is manifest in every creature from an ant to the Absolute, demonstrating thereby that the cosmos is a manifestation of the Divine. He is called "*Viraat*" because of His cosmic manifestation and His immanence in everything in creation that is perceivable.



Thus, everything that is seen is a manifestation of *Viraat*. The *Viraat Swaroopa* (the Cosmic Form) is related to the external physical universe. Assuming the gross physical form, the *Viraat* (Cosmic Person) stands forth as an ideal. He has other names. One is *Vaiswaanara*. This is the Divine in every being, who identifies himself as "I." From a king to a peasant, from a millionaire to a pauper, from a child to an old man, a woman or a man, every person identifies himself or herself by using the term "I" ("I am so and so"). The concept of "I" is thus present in every being. *Vaiswaanara* is the entity that makes every being use the term "I" to distinguish oneself.

The other name is *Vairaja-sutha*. It means one who has assumed a mysterious form. While being present in every being, He appears to be absent; while carrying on all activities, He appears to be inactive; while experiencing everything, He appears to be not the experiencer. It is for these reasons He is called *Vairaja-sutha*. This is the inner meaning of these three different forms of the *Viraat Swaroopa* (Cosmic Person).

Hiranyagarbha is the source of all beings

The second name is *Hiranyagarbha*. He is the source of all kinds of knowledge—ethical, spiritual, physical, scientific, and social. He may be described as *Jnana bhaskara* (The Sun of Knowledge). When the Sun rises, he assumes a golden hue. By his golden rays, he turns the whole of nature golden. The entire creation emerged from *Hiranyagarbha* at the beginning. *Hiranyagarbha* is in the form of an oval-shaped golden egg. From *Hiranyagarbha*, the first to emerge was the mouth. Sound started from the mouth. Then came the nose, from which arose air. Then came the eyes, from which emanated fire. The ears came thereafter. The directions arose from the ears.

Hiranyagarbha is the primary source of the origin of man. *Hiranyagarbha* is the prime source of all living beings. It is *Hiranyagarbha* who endowed all these beings with the power of discriminating between the eternal and the ephemeral, between what should be sought and what should be renounced, between what ought to be and what ought not to be done.

What is the Supreme Knowledge that man needs to make his life sacred and meaningful, and what is the path he should pursue to lead a purposeful life? *Hiranyagarbha* offered to man the knowledge he needed for this purpose. This is the primary activity of *Hiranyagarbha*.

Hiranyagarbha has two other names: *Suthratmaka*—means the one who functions like a string through all *Atmas*, even as a string runs through a necklace of gems. This means that He is present in all beings like the string that keeps together the gems in a necklace. This string is called *Brahma-Sutra* (the string of *Brahmam*). The principle of *Hiranyagarbha* indicates how the Divine unites all human beings equally like the string of a necklace. *Hiranyagarbha* thus demonstrates a division-less universe.

Hiranyagarbha creates the figures in dreams

The other name for *Hiranyagarbha* is *Prana*. *Hiranyagarbha* assumes a subtle form in the dream state of a human being. He is the entity who is awake in the dream and sleeping states. In the waking state, the *Viraataswaroopa* creates the visible cosmos. In the dream state, *Hiranyagarbha* creates the figures in the dreams. All objects in this state have no physical basis. All that perceived in dreams are the creations of *Hiranyagarbha*. *Hiranyagarbha* in His subtle form creates everything in the dream state.

The third one is *Avyaakrita*. He is one who has no form of any kind. He is present in the *Kaarana Sarira* (causal body) without any form, and enjoys the *Sushupti* state of man (the deep sleep state). Though He has no form, He has control over everything. Without limbs or organs, He performs all actions. He travels long distances. Without eyes, He sees everything. Without ears, He hears everything. He is thus engaged in all activities relating to creation but has no form. This *Avyaakrita* has two other

names: *Antaratma* and *Iswaratwam*. Thus, *Viraat*, *Hiranyagarbha*, and *Avyakrita* have three names each. What is the inner meaning of these names?

Antaratma means one who impels from within all activities (*Antaravaani* or inner voice). Every impulse arises from *Antaratma*. All the sounds uttered by man come from the *Antaratma*. The *Antaratma* is the basic source of all sounds. Iswara is the third name for *Avyakrita*; though He is the possessor of all forms of wealth, He is the entity who judges good and bad actions and metes out punishment or reward according to deserts. In common parlance, He is called "*Layakaara*." He presides over actions. Hence, He decides on good and bad actions and metes out justice. He is known as the giver of *Aiswarya* (wealth). But good and bad deeds are comprised in *Aiswarya*. As *Iswara* is the Lord of all wealth, He gives to each man what he deserves according to his good and bad actions.

***Upanishads* have relevance to all human beings**

The *Upanishads* should not be regarded as of no relevance to ordinary human beings and as valid only for sages and ascetics. Why are students today ignoring these sacred *Upanishads*? It is because there are no expositors of the *Upanishads* who will teach the students the relevance of their teachings for daily life. The notable advances in science and technology we witness today represent the essence of the *Upanishads*. The *Upanishads* are the final phase of the *Vedas*. Hence, they are known as *Vedanta*.

The *Upanishads* are the quintessence of knowledge. They are the very embodiment of the highest knowledge. They are illuminating. Man should acquire this knowledge. Physical and mundane knowledge is concerned with the world. But to achieve peace of mind and joy of the Spirit, knowledge of the *Upanishads* is vital.

Viraat, *Hiranyagarbha*, and *Avyakrita* are not entities existing in some separate place. When you examine carefully, you will find that every human being is an incarnation of *Viraat*, of *Hiranyagarbha*, and *Avyakrita*. This profound truth is not realized by men because of their narrow outlook. The *Viraat*-form (Cosmic Person) is the human body multiplied by infinity. $\text{Mind} \times \text{Infinity} = \text{Hiranyagarbha}$. $\text{Life} \times \text{Infinity} = \text{Avyakrita}$. These three forms are related to the gross, the subtle, and the causal bodies of man. All the three bodies are in the human being.

Hiranyagarbha is not in some distant place. He is installed in the mind. The *Viraat-purusha* is in the human form. The five basic elements (representing the faculties of sound, sight, smell, taste, and touch) are in the human body, as well as in the cosmos.

All powers are present in man

The body is *Prakriti* (matter or earth). The inhaling and exhaling process is based on air. When man is engaged in motion and action, heat is generated. This is the fire element in man. When one performs an exercise or rubs his palms, heat is generated. That heat is in man. The entire body is composed of water (the fourth

basic element). In this manner, all the five elements are within the human body and hence it is regarded as a manifestation of the *Viraat-Swaroopa* (the Cosmic Person).

All powers are found in man. The powers not found in man cannot be found elsewhere in the universe. Because of his external vision man is unable to recognize that all he sees externally is within himself.

Difference between waking and dream states

Because of attachment, fear, and hatred, man forgets his true nature. This fact can be witnessed in the dream state. You have a dream in which you are travelling by train. You pass a number of stations in the dream. You see many passengers and you spend your time in talking and joking. Wherefrom did the train come in the dream state? It is a creation of your mind. Likewise, the stations you passed by and the passengers you moved with are all creations of the mind. All that was experienced in the dream are products of the mind. Not only that, you created even yourself in the dream. This is the activity of *Hiranyagarbha*.

In the waking state, one perceives everything outside him. His perceptions are governed by the conditions of time, place, and circumstance. But in the dream state, these triple conditions are totally absent. You may enquire into the difference between the waking and dream states. For instance, you learn that there will be a meeting at 4 p.m. here. You start from the city at 3.30 p.m. by car. You arrive here at 4 p.m. You came to attend the meeting and listen to Swami's discourse. The time 3.30 p.m., the action of leaving by car, the consummation reaching here at 4 p.m. In this sequence, you will notice that time, aim, action, and achievement are all present in the waking state. In a dream, you have travelled to Delhi. When did you start on the journey? The time is not present in the dream. By what conveyance did you go? There is nothing in the dream about it. For what purpose you went to Delhi is not evident in the dream. The absence of time, purpose, and circumstance is characteristic of the dream experience. The waking state testifies to the presence of these three elements. The *Viraat-Swaroopa* is related to time, purpose, and action. The absence of these three factors indicates the nature of *Hiranyagarbha* (the dream state). Men experience both these states (the waking and the dream states).

The experiencer is same in all three states

Who is the experiencer? It is not someone in the waking state, a different one in the dream state, and a third one in the *Sushupti* state (of deep sleep). The states of consciousness vary, but the experiencer is one and the same in all the three states. Because of the differences in the states, the experiencers appear to be different.

All the variations in experience are related to differences in time, place, and circumstance. The body is made up of time, actions, and obligations. Therefore, if the body is to be sanctified, time must be utilized in performing right actions. "*Karmaanubandheeni manushaya loke* (The human world is bound by actions). No one can be free from action even for a moment. Everything a man does, whether voluntarily or otherwise, constitutes *Karma*. For instance, a question is asked about

someone: "What is he doing?" "Nothing," comes the reply. "If he is doing nothing, what is he doing?" is the next question. The answer comes: "He is sleeping." "Sleeping" is also an action.

Likewise, "sitting" is also an action. Respiration is also an action. All that happens within our body, like the circulation of blood or the beats of the heart, is also an action. Actions may be performed voluntarily or involuntarily. The breathing process goes on irrespective of what you do or feel, without any deliberate effort on one's part. This goes on in different states of consciousness. Such an automatic action is called *Aadhi bhautikam*. It relates to actions of the body. *Aadhi atmakam* relates to actions of the mind. *Aadhi daivikam* relates to actions prompted by the Divine. These three categories of actions are governed by *Viraat-Swaroopa*, *Hiranyagarbha*, and *Avyaakrita* respectively, in the different states of consciousness.

The awareness of the ancient sages

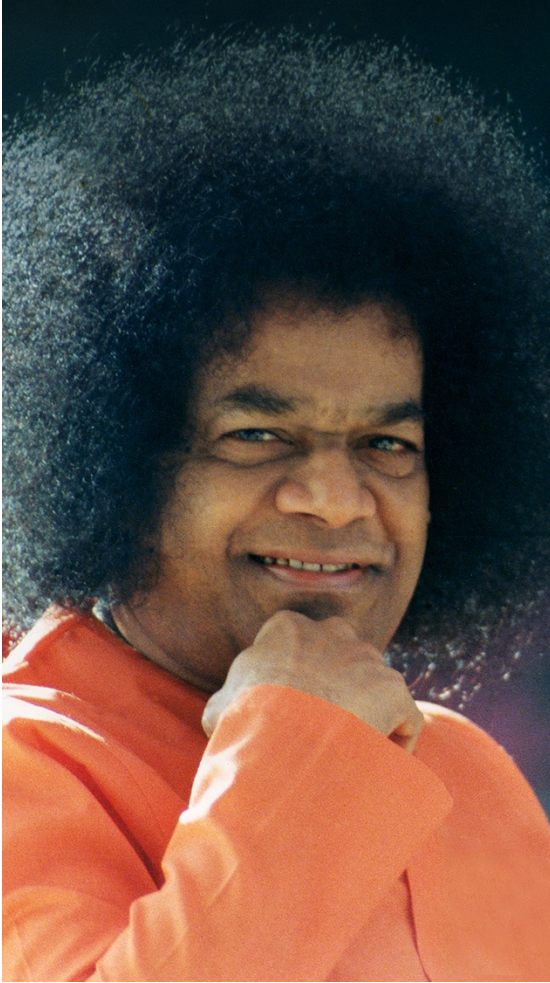
As the ancient sages knew the inner secret of these three divine manifestations that governed the three states of consciousness, they renounced all the worldly attachments and strove for realizing permanent *Ananda* (spiritual bliss). People today, being ignorant of these truths, are treating this knowledge with derision.

For instance, in one *Veda* it is declared: "*Chandramaa manaso jaatah, Suryo chaksho rajaayata*" (The moon emerged from the mind of the Cosmic Being; the Sun came from his eyes). The moon referred to in this *mantra* is not the planet moon, a fragment of the earth on which man had landed, as considered by scientists. They jestingly comment that no God was found on the moon by the cosmonauts. The *Vedic* reference to *Chandra* is not the planet moon visible from the earth. It refers to the mind-principle acting in every human heart. The significance of the *Vedic* reference to the Sun and the Cosmic *Purusha's* eye is that the human eye has the effulgence of the Sun, on account of which it is able to see the Divine in everything.

Relationship between the sun and the eye

No one can determine the power of the eye. The eye that is barely half an inch in size is able to see stars that are billions of miles away. Wherefrom did the eye get this power? What is the relationship between the Sun and the eye? It is like the coming together of the negative and the positive, which enables the eye to see this phenomenal universe. If the one is present and the other absent, nothing can be seen. For instance, if you go into a dark room, your eyes cannot see anything because there is no light. But when there is light, if you close your eyes, you cannot see anything. There has to be a coming together of light and eyesight. Only then you can see the forms of objects.

The effulgence of the Sun and the power of eyesight together make the world perceivable. Thus, the entire *srishti* (creation) is perceived through *drishti* (sight). Without perception there is no creation. Perception is thus fundamental. There is no blemish in creation. The fault lies with the *drishti* (sight). Hence, one's vision should be totally pure. This is the lesson of the *Upanishads*. Your eyes are your *Shastras*



(scriptures). Therefore, develop the proper relationship between creation and perception.

Thus, there are many things that cannot be learnt through the physical sciences, which can be understood from the *Upanishads*. What science has discovered so far is very little. Scientists feel proud about their miniscule knowledge. Spirituality affirms that even in the microcosm there is the macrocosm. "*Anoraneeyaan mahathomaeeyaan*," proclaims the *Veda* (The Divine is minuter than the atom and vaster than the vast cosmos).

A small seed planted in the ground grows into a vast banyan tree. The power of growing into a huge tree, with branches, leaves, flowers, and fruit is immanent in the small seed. How does this growth take place? It takes place when the seed has sacrificed its original form. After it is planted in the ground it renounces its individuality as a seed (*ahamkara*). When it sacrifices its original form, it acquires a

new form. If it retains its original form, it will not be able to manifest its potentialities. Moreover, in the vast banyan tree there are innumerable small seeds.

Minutest atom and Infinite Cosmos are one

From the microcosm the macrocosm emerges. In the macrocosm the microcosm exists. When this process is investigated, it will be seen that the minutest atom and the Infinite Cosmos are basically one. Only the forms differ, but the substance is one. This is one of the profound mysteries revealed by the *Upanishads*.

Each *Upanishad* has sought to disclose the secret of creation. In attempting to understand the *Upanishads*, different persons, according to their intellectual abilities interpreted them variously. These differences are related to their different natures.

For instance: A hunter looking at a bird on a tree fancies what a fine meal the bird will furnish for his family. He is thinking only of the meat in the bird's body. But when a poet looks at the bird, he is in rapture over the colors of its plumage and the softness of its feathers. Although the object is one, it appears differently to different persons according to their outlook.

How do these differences in perception arise? They arise from the worldly habits of the people concerned. Hence, good habits are essential to develop right attitudes. Nothing can be learnt well except by constant practice. This applies equally to the *Upanishadic* teachings.

***Brahma-ananda* is Self-realization**

Brahma-ananda is not a commodity obtained from somewhere. It is Self-realization, which confers supreme bliss. Man imagines that there is something uniquely precious by securing which he can experience bliss. This delusion is the cause of attachment, which arouses fear as to whether he would be able to get what he seeks and whether he would be able to retain it. Out of this fear is generated hatred. If there is no attachment, there will be no fear or hatred.

The first requisite is for men to realize their humanness and have respect for human values. All the violence and discord in the world today are due to the eclipse of human values. In the pursuit of desire, all values are sacrificed. Of what use are acquisitions if humanness is absent?

Students! Lead ideal lives. Ideals alone survive long after men are dead. Earn a good name by your exemplary conduct. Make your conscience your mentor. Control your senses and make the mind the master of the senses. This is the supreme message of the *Upanishads*. The term *Upanishad* means "Sitting near." (It signifies the proximity of the disciple to the preceptor). Nearness to God enables you to get rid of your bad qualities and to acquire good qualities.

Study the sacred scriptures of all faiths

The *Upanishads* lead you near to God. Instead of wasting your time on trashy novels, devote as much time as possible to the study of the sacred *Upanishads*, which will make your lives sublime. Study as well the sacred scriptures of other faiths. All of them contain sacred ideas.

It is highly important for women to study sacred books and avoid seeing sensuous films and TV shows, especially during pregnancy. The child in the womb is likely to be influenced in the mind of things they [mothers] read or see. (Swami gave the examples of Subhadra and Lilavati to point out how Abhimanyu learnt about *Padmavyuham* in embryo, while Prahlada learnt the *Narayana mantra* from Narada from the womb of his mother). Mothers should be filled with pure thoughts and maintain a pure environment. Mothers should see that their children grow up as ideal persons in society. For this purpose, they should acquaint themselves with the cultural heritage of the country as enshrined in our *Upanishads*, *Puranas*, and epics.

Source: *Sathya Sai Speaks*, Vol.24

Love is My Form, Truth is My Breath, Bliss is My Food

"Love is My form...Truth is My breath...Bliss is My food..." I have heard these momentous words flowing mellifluously from the Divine lips on a number of occasions. And even while I have diligently given chorus to the song many times, it was only recently that I had started pondering over it. The first few words of the Divine song itself are filled with infinite meaning and unfathomable depth. Let me take this opportunity to pen down some of my thoughts as I reflect on this song Divine.

Love is My Form

An elder devotee once asked Swami, "Swami, how is that You love us all so much? You know our shortcomings. In fact, most of us do not even deserve Your love for all the mistakes and sins we commit." Swami simply answered, *"Love is my nature. I*



don't have to separately will it to flow. It is not distinct from me. In fact, I don't know what it is to be without Love."

Over the years, I as His student have seen Swami's unending, ceaseless, and incessant love pour torrentially. And many times I have wondered, *"Why? What are we capable of giving back to Him for which He is showering so much?"* It was in 1995, Swami called my mother and myself for an interview. The water project was in full swing, and Swami was giving His undivided attention to it. In the interview room, Swami began to explain to us the details of the mega water project that been undertaken. In great detail, He explained the intricacies and difficulties

in pumping water over the hills, digging the pipes, and constructing the summer storage tanks and then even began explaining the cost involved in the whole project.

He said, *"I have already hypothecated Brindavan (Swami's ashram in Bangalore) to get the amount to complete the water project."* Our hearts skipped a beat, *"My God! Swami, why?"* we questioned in the heart. He said, *"I am ready to sell everything to complete this project!"* and then He said something that has been etched in my Heart forever. He said, *"I am ready to sell even Myself!"* It stunned us all! We were flabbergasted! Our hands covered our mouth... we could not believe what we were hearing. Swami then asked us, *"Do you know what is My price?"* as He said this, a twinkle had appeared in His eyes and a little smile on His lips. We had no clue what was coming next? *"What is price of Bhagavan?"* In the most enchanting manner, He

went on to give us His price. He said, *"I will sell Myself for tiny bit of pure Love, for that is only thing that can buy Me."*

The Lord had disclosed His MRP! (Maximum Realizable Price!) A tiny bit of pure, unsullied, unconditional love. That is all He needs. Love is my Form!

Truth is My Breath

It was *Guru Pournima* many years ago, and toward the end of His Divine Discourse, Swami started singing, *"Hari Bhajana Bina Sukha Shanti Nahi..."* One of our student *bhajan* singers was sitting in the first row and following the *bhajan*. All of a sudden, He noticed Swami looking at him and asking for something. On careful examination, He found that Swami was in fact asking him for the next line of the *bhajan*. At first surprised, He quickly regrouped and went on to prompt Swami the next line. Swami picked up the cue and went on to deliver the *bhajan*. A beautiful smile, almost saying, *"Thank you"* was the price that this particular boy received as a gift. He, too, was proud of the fact that He had rescued the Lord from a precarious position.

During the course of the next festival, Swami began singing the same *bhajan*, *"Hari Bhajana Bina..."* and Surprise! Surprise! The same thing happened! Swami 'forgot' a line and beckoned to the same boy to 'bail' Him out, which he promptly did! Swami once again showered the boy with a beatific smile. The very same thing happened in the next festival, too, and now this boy began to feel that *"He was saving the Lord!"* The Lord has incarnated to rescue the whole world and here he was 'rescuing' the Lord!! And as usual Swami had done it... He had managed to inflate the boy's ego and now it was time to reveal His message.

One evening, as the *bhajan* boys prepared for the *bhajan* session in the *Mandir*, Swami walked in and started interacting with them. Swami asked this particular boy what *bhajan* He was going to sing that evening. He replied, *"Sesha Saila Vasa Narayana..."* As if not recollecting, Swami asked him, *"Which one? Sing it... Sing it softly"* A few moments passed and this boy kept staring at Swami's visage. Swami once again asked, *"Boy, sing this bhajan now..."* The boy understood what Swami was saying but what he did not understand was why he was just not able to recall the *bhajan*! He had absolutely forgotten the *bhajan* altogether!

Swami went to ask, *"Do you know the bhajan?"* He stood clueless. By now a mischievous smile adorned Swami's countenance. Swami then asked, *"Ok, forget today's bhajan, what bhajan did you sing yesterday?"* This boy put all his might in recalling what *bhajan* he had sung the previous day. With great anxiety he had to confess to Bhagavan that he was not able to recollect the *bhajan* that he had sung on the previous day. In such an embarrassing situation, the pride had been stung, ego deflated, Swami chose to give His message. Swami just tapped the boy's head and in that moment he recalled everything. Memory had been granted back. Swami said, *"Boy, did you think that I had forgotten the lines of the bhajan during the discourses? And you thought that you were helping me in recollecting the lines. If I forget, the universe will come to a standstill!"* Let us not mistake the form for the spirit. The

spirit inside is the supreme consciousness who has taken a form to help us elevate. That is the truth! Truth is My breath.

Bliss is My Food

It was the year of 1991. The construction of the Sri Sathya Sai Super Specialty Hospital was in full swing and Bhagavan used to visit the construction very frequently. He used to tell the students about how the construction was going on and the cost involved. He also lovingly explained to us the difficulty in procuring the resources. He explained how hundreds and thousands of rupees were being spent on various aspects of the hospital construction.

A little boy in His 8th class suddenly felt an urge, *“Everybody is doing so much for Swami and here we are simply sitting in the Mandir and doing nothing.”* He pondered over what way He could contribute to Swami’s mega hospital project. He thought he could not give anything, considering his petty pocket money! Now, in the hostel where we live, in those days we used to pay Rs. 25 as laundry charges per month. This boy decided that he would save these Rs. 25 by washing his own clothes, gather a sizeable amount and offer this to Swami.

For the next months, the boy toiled and washed his own clothes, gathered a sum of Rs. 100, put it in an envelope, and wrote a letter to Bhagavan to accept this amount for the hospital building. At an opportune moment, he handed over the sealed envelope to Bhagavan in the *darshan* lines. Swami also lovingly accepted the envelope and moved on in the *darshan* lines. He had not told anyone about this venture capital offering of his, but how could Swami not acknowledge this offering. After completing the Darshan rounds, as Swami stood in front of students, He pulled out that envelope and holding it out in front of everyone declared, *“This is the biggest contribution I have received!”* He asked the boy to come forward and in front of everyone one opened the envelope to show everyone seated there the Rs. 100 note.

He narrated the entire sequence of events and then just said, *“This Rs. 100 is worth millions to Me! I don’t need anything else; this joy has satiated Me!”* For the one who is served by *‘Aishwarya’* (prosperity) and whose servant is Kubera (god of wealth) himself, what are the millions offered by anybody? Who are we really to give Him anything, for isn’t everything already His? The Lord is *‘Bhavapriya’* [true emotions] and not *‘Bahyapriya’* [dislikes showing off]. It is not the quantity but the quality of our offering that pleases Him. In fact, each one of these mega service projects have been undertaken to teach us only this—the attitude of service—the attitude in making an offering. It reminds me of the story of Sri Krishna Tulabharam, where Rani Rukmini offers just a *Tulsi* leaf in order to win the Lord. For Him the purity of offering satiates Him, because that gives Him joy unlimited. Bliss is His food!

In conclusion

Contemplating on the song, I have realized that this one song really is the crux of all the scriptures. More contemplation has revealed newer dimensions to the depth of

my understanding. In fact, the further lines reveal more meaning and significance. *"My life is My message... Expansion is my life...."* Expansion is life—This one statement is the panacea to all the problems in the world—physical, mental, emotional and spiritual.

I am reminded of a beautiful incident that happened in Brindavan when I was on duty. The morning *darshan* had just got over and Bhagavan had called a group of devotees for an interview. Even as He was walking toward the interview room He noticed that a large group of ants had formed a long line and were in the process of picking up the remains of a dead moth. What Swami did after that was absolutely stunning! He lifted His robe and jumped over the long line of ants! Then beckoning the devotees to come, He stood near the line of ants and was requesting all the devotees to jump over, too! Once the devotees had gone in, He beckoned to us and said, *"Papam, let these ants finish their work, don't disturb them!"* For the Creator of the universe, the entire universe is His own.

He taught me that day that one should expand to encompass each and every sentient and insentient thing into one's ambit. Others' pain becomes my own. Others' joy becomes my own. Therefore, how can I hurt anyone? ... Expansion is My life!

Contemplation on each and every word of Swami's teachings bestows on us meaning of the highest *Upanishadic* truths. We don't need to learn anything else at all. All we need is '*Shravanam*' (listening/reading) '*Mananam*' (contemplation), and '*Nidhidhyasanam*' (assimilation) of Swami and His teachings into our life. Then our life will become His Message!

~Amey Deshpande

Source: *From His Loving Students* (85th Birthday Issue)



Enviro-Care

Tidbit:

Don't forget to take your reusable shopping bag when you go grocery shopping.

Swami's quote on nature and the environment:

"Nature is more progressive than man, and to protect Nature man has to make use of it within limits. When man tampers with Nature recklessly, it reacts adversely and trouble arises. In order to protect Nature, man has to practice Ceiling on Desires."

~Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 26, 21 January 1993

Hope

POETRY



The turmoil of my soul calmed down
and a great cleansing took place—
that what distorted my sight
and showed me a world full of pain and despair
has been taken out of my thoughts.
Wherever I look now
I see God's beauty and joy
and hope comes into my heart
that not all is lost
but was only covered
by the dust of man's ignorance.

Peace will come back to this earth
once man awakens to his soul
and turns his attention to God—
for there—in God—is eternal wisdom
and a perfect plan for each life.

Let's stand up in the light
children of God;
the dark night of the soul is over.
We are the messengers of God,
as we have been cleansed
in the fire of God's grace
from that which darkened the sun
for many centuries
since ever man lost faith in God's love
and tried to play life's game on his own.

How could he ever expect to succeed
as he can never see the whole—
all he could gain was fear and pain—
How could he dare
to be separate from his source?

This world now is covered with fear
the result of man's doubts,
and the scream for love
awakened those
who had not forgotten yet
the source of all life.

The light is growing stronger

and with it comes
a stream of new hope.

—*Ingrid Oiler*

Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, March 1985

The Thought and the Hope

Sir Arthur Eddington writes, "The world seems to be more a thought than a machine." The word "seems" is, in fact, a daring understatement. God said, "Let there be light" and "there was light" declared the Old Testament over 25 centuries ago. Until the 'Word' became 'flesh', until the thought emerged, the *Upanishad* declared over 27 centuries ago, "there was no time or space, past or future, in or out, thrill or throb', no word, no flesh. "There was no one to understand me," Swami reminisces! There was no consciousness that could be aware of even Being. The pervasive 'I am' had not arisen at all, "*Asaa vaa, idam agra aaseet*", announces the *Taitiriyā Upanishad*. "Unawareness alone was, at first." Imagination is powerless to peer into that serene silence, for imagination needs images for manipulation and images are produced only by objects.



"To understand Me?" "No one to understand Me?" That was the primal idea, the inaugural sensation, the first faint ripple on the vast horizonless Is-ness! "*Me!!! No one else! Ekoham*. I am *al-one*. I shall become *many*, so that I can understand myself, so that understanding might lead to love." "I separated myself, so that I can love myself," declares Swami, for when the I (*Aham*) feeling sprouted, He was the only One and there was no second. So the wish, the *Maya*, the sense of want that is represented by the second half of the statement, *Ekoham*, namely, *bahushyaam* (I'll become many) could be realized only by repeating himself under many names and in many forms. A 'thousand' means - one repeated a 1000

times. This meant: "*thath aetmaanāṁ swayam eve akrtha*" (He himself became all this). When Swami says, 'I am God; you are also God', He is reminding us that *each of us is a repetition of "Himself"*. He asks us to assert *Soham, Shivoham* (I am He, I am God).

As soon as the Thought to become many, arose, "Time started ticking. Space started stretching. Effects emanated from causes." Swami says, "Immediately mountains rose up. Immediately rivers started running. Earth below; sky overhead! Oceans, seas, moon, desert sands sprang from nowhere *to prove my existence.*"

Since He is aware of Himself as the personalized Impersonal, "I am all that is, all that can be known, all that seeks fulfillment", He announces, as the human embodiment of the integer that lends validity and value to the zeros parading after it. What exactly are the zeros in, say, 100,000,000? They represent so many ones, not nothings. And He is the One.

He can delve under the tantalizing tangle of the *bahu* (many). He has designed and revels in ecstasy as one with the ONE. Swami assures us, "*I and You are not we; I and You are I only.*" There is no attempt at appropriation. It is the affirmation of the One in the many, the wave in the sea. When it loses its form, it loses its I-ness and is the One it always was.

The Divine advent

When the wave loses awareness of the sea, that is to say, when man devalues, dismisses or distorts 'My knowledge' gifted to him as a life-belt, God assumes human form, undergoes the human career, and establishes Himself as guide, guardian, and goal. The aged monk, Swami Abhedananda, wrote to me from the ashram of Bhagavan Ramana Maharishi, (after intimate interviews he had with Swami at Venkatagiri, Arunachalam, and Prasanthi Nilayam): "Swami is the Brahman (the Cosmic Consciousness) Itself come in human form. It would be gross understatement if He is designated as an Avatar engaged in an adventure undertaken to fulfil some particular project."

In a Message to students, Swami announced: "See in Me yourselves; for I see Myself in you." Even as He stepped out of teenage [years], Swami announced to the world through a letter to His elder brother, "I am resolved to confer on *all mankind* the supreme ecstasy of self-awareness. I am determined to hold the wayward and the vagrant who stray into wrong and lead them along the righteous path. I shall remove the pain of the lonely and the penury of the weak and fill the void in the heart of the unfortunate with what they lack. I shall shield with My blessings those who adore Me with loving thoughts, soft speech, and selfless service." "Came all forms of beasts; birds flying. All kinds of beings. Mankind speaking, learning. And all powers were bestowed upon them, under my orders." He mentioned in the same message (written by Him in English) His most precious gift to you and me. "The first place was given to man, and *My knowledge was placed in his mind.*" So, this is the reason why man has an inborn urge to journey back to his source. He has in him the agony of the exile, the suffocation of the cage, the scar of the manacle, the wounds of crucifixion, and the hope of Resurrection.

~N. Kasturi

Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, Nov. 1986

Thought of the MONTH

Seek Refuge in Him

It has become common to recognize each body and its form separately, and the common divine content is not seen by anyone. We are only looking at those different bodies and forms in an external way, but the real connection and comparison between one and another

is through the *Atma*.

There is one other small example here. There was a father who had an only son. His only son was looking after the father very dearly and was serving him with great affection. In his 61st year, the father passed away. This son was sitting by the side of the dead body of his father and was crying, "Oh father, you have left me and gone. Who else will look after me in this world?" We should examine this carefully. When he says, "Father, you have left me and gone," for 60 years he has been calling that body his father. The body, which has been described as his father, is still there. What is it that has gone away? Truly, if that body was his father, the body is still there, and he can retain that body as his father. No, it is not right.

What has left and what he was regarding as his father is the life-force that was in the body, and this life-force has left the body and gone away. What has left the body is his father and the dead body that is remaining there is not his father. It is the life-force or the *chaitanya* that entered the body that gives him the illusory feeling that the body was his father.

We see here that so long as there is life in a body, we promote the connections and the relationships with that body are experienced, but the moment that life goes away from that body, we will hesitate to keep that body in our home. We will have no attachment or affection to that body once the life-force has gone away. This body has taken a form that is made up of all five elements. This is only a casual and artificial appearance. There is a distinct difference between this body, which is composed of the five elements, and the *Atma* that is in the body. We should get the knowledge by which we can recognize the distinctive difference between the body and the *Atma*.

Summer Course 1977

As long as one is alive, all seem to love the body. This is also for purely selfish reasons. God alone is utterly selfless. Loving that God, you can lead your lives in the normal way. There is nothing wrong. Whatever you do, treat it as an offering to God. See God in everyone. Don't have ill will toward anyone. Do not have excessive attachment for anyone. Direct all attachments toward God. Love all. But do not rely on anyone except God. Realize the impermanence of the body and place your trust solely in God. Seek refuge in Him.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 29 (1996)

The father is one's treasure; the mother is his god. Instead of valuing such precious wealth and divinity, men engage themselves in all kinds of activities to acquire riches and positions. The father and the mother are inseparable like the word and its meaning. Everyone should cherish one's parents as embodiments of the Divine. The mother and father may be physically separate, but spiritually they are one. Even the distinction between man and women relates only to the physical body. The Indwelling Spirit in both of them is the same Divine. In fact, every human being can be divided into two constituents. One is the body. The other is the *Atma* (Divine Self).

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 16 (1983)



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