

*The Sunday Talk Given by Prof. Anil Kumar*

*“Self-Inquiry”  
(Part 2)*

*February 21, 2010*

*OM...OM...OM...*

*Sai Ram*

*With Pranams at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan,*

*Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

***KNOW THE REALITY—NOT THE COVERINGS OR SENSES***

We have been learning together and we have been sharing certain ideas and concepts on the topic of self-inquiry. In this direction, let us try to investigate and explore some other dimensions of the topic.

In any spiritual discourse, you often come across certain popular words used by scholars, *pundits* or spiritualists. What words do they use? *Pancha karmendriyas*: five senses of action; *pancha jnanendriyas*: five senses of cognition; *pancha pranas*: five life breaths—these are the senses; *pancha koshas*: five life sheaths.

Apart from these words, scholars also use certain other words like *jagrat*: waking state, *swapna*: dreaming state, *sushupthi*: deep sleep state, *visvudu*: waking state, *thaijasa*: dreaming state, and *pragna*: deep sleep state.

What is Ramana Maharshi’s opinion? What does Baba say about it? It is simple. This jugglery of words, and all these definitions or spiritual jargon or spiritual nomenclature will not help you. When we go on reading them, learning them by heart, and repeating them on every platform, it may help one get the title of scholar; it may help one look like a saint or a knowledgeable man, but that is all! Here is a simple example.

If you know about the five senses, what do you get? If you know about the five life sheaths, what do you get? They are already in existence. An example: when I mop the floor and remove all the dust, then the whole floor is clean. Come on, clean it up, then you will have a cleaned floor.

Similarly, when you come out of the five senses of action, out of the five senses of cognition, remove the five sheaths, you know the Self is there, the underlying reality. So, what is the fun of knowing this dust?

All the dirt you clean need not be analysed because you throw away the dirt! Similarly, the reality, which is beyond the body, beyond the mind, beyond the senses, beyond the five life sheaths, that reality is to be known and experienced, not these coverings or senses. It is like dirt. Analysis of the dirt will not help you.

### *THE ONE WHO EXPERIENCES HIS TRUE SELF IS A MAN OF WISDOM*

Similarly, analysis of these words, a thorough understanding of Sanskrit jargon, the *mantras* and all that will make you a scholar, a respectable man, a knowledgeable man, but not a realised man, not an enlightened man.

So who is an enlightened man, a realised man, or a spiritual man? Not a scholar, not a man of knowledge. The one who experiences the reality, the one who is in the reality, the one who has known and experienced his true Self, the cosmic Self, the universal Self, the Divinity, *Atma*, only he is the real man of wisdom, the real spiritual man, not necessarily the scholar. That is what is said.

### *ATMA IS THE OTHER NAME FOR LIBERATION*

Then, some people will come to Swami and say, “Swami, I want liberation.” Then, Swami smiles and says, “You want liberation! I see! Where is it? We will buy it in the market outside. Liberation is sold there. In which shop is it available? You go and buy it.” My friends, we are foolish for putting that question: “I want liberation!”

Where is liberation? Do you want liberation for the body? It has to be discarded some day or the other. The body will leave you, though you don’t want to leave the body. You want to live in the body; you don’t want to leave the body. But you cannot! The body will leave you. It has to be left because birth and death, growth and decay are common features of the body. So how do you expect liberation for the body, which has to be left or dropped?

Then you want liberation for the mind. No! The mind is a bundle of thoughts. In spite of your repeated efforts, thoughts keep coming and going, like at the Hong Kong or New York airports—so busy! The mind is a marketplace! You want liberation for the mind, which is always unsteady, which is not real, which disappears in deep sleep. Why? The body is gross, but you want liberation for the body which is sure to die. The mind is subtle, and you want liberation for the mind. No! Because both are non-existent in deep sleep! Then, who wants liberation in you? Is it your body? Is it your mind? Who wants liberation?

You may say, “Swami, my Self wants liberation.”

“What Self?”

“True Self, Swami.”

“What is true Self?”

“My *Atma*, Swami!”

It is liberated already! *Atma* is the other name for liberation. It need not be liberated. You think that it is in bondage. Why? Because of the false ‘I’, because of the outer ‘I’, because of the temporary ‘I’, because of the mind, you think you are in bondage! No!

The real Self is already liberated! You do not need to ask for liberation because you are already liberated. What you need to do is to be aware of this. You are supposed to know that. That’s what Bhagavan has said in this context.

### *THE SELF DOES NOT MANIFEST—IT IS EVER PRESENT*

Some people use this word *sakshathkara*. *Sakshathkara* means ‘manifestation’. Some people say, “The Self has manifested. I have seen the manifestation of the Self.” This is wrong! Why? It is only the Self that is present.

A simple example: I am Anil Kumar. If I say that Anil Kumar manifested in front of me, well, you would think I am a crazy man or a mad fellow. I cannot manifest to myself. I am that. I am Anil Kumar. How can Anil Kumar manifest here? I am only one here. How can I manifest?

Similarly, Self or *Atma* is the only reality. All the rest is your imagination. All the rest is false, all the rest is illusion. It is delusion. It is not real, it is false. The Self is truth, the *Atma* is truth. It is eternal. So words like ‘manifestation of the Self’ are ridiculous. They have no meaning at all.

Another question then is: what is *Atma*? Some say, “Sir, knowledge is Self, wisdom is Self. *Jnanam* (knowledge) is *Brahman*, the Self.” That is what they say. This is also wrong.

### *THE SELF IS BEYOND KNOWLEDGE AND IGNORANCE*

Another simple example: I know this is paper and this is a file. I know that this item is not paper, but that it is a file. So I know what it is and I also know what it is not. This is not a chair, this is not a table. This is only a piece of paper. So what do I know? I know what it is. I also know what it is not. Therefore, to know what it is, that is *jnana* or knowledge; if you do not know, it is ignorance.

An example: If you ask me, “Mr. Anil Kumar, do you know about physics?” I do not know. I know that I do not know about physics. I know that I do not know much about computers. This is my ignorance. But I know about botany as I am a botanist, I am a professor of botany. This is knowledge. So what am I now? I am a combination of both. I am a combination of knowledge and ignorance. I know that I do not know all. The parts I don’t know about is ignorance; I know these things, so that part is knowledge. Who am I now? A combination of knowledge and ignorance. That is the normal self.

But the true Self is *beyond* knowledge and ignorance. It knows what is. That is awareness; it is transcendental. That is what the supreme Self or *Atma* is.

### *RITUALS ARE RELIGIOUS, NOT SPIRITUAL*

Then some people ask me how they should meditate. For instance, if you take a talisman like a *japamala*, they ask, how should I rotate the beads? Upwards or downwards? And they ask other things like: how many times should I write 'Sai Ram, Sai Ram' and so on.

My friends, when you put this question about how should I meditate, this asking 'I' is false; it is an illusionary 'I'. In other words, whatever you do, you do with your mind. The false 'I' is the mind or ego. These questions come from the false 'I' or mind. How should I worship? With jasmine flowers or rose flowers? So this again is the false 'I' mind.

Therefore, my friends, all that we want to do, all the rituals done in the name of religion are all done with our mind. So this means that it is the false 'I' doing this. These rituals do not at all constitute a spiritual practice in the correct sense. In the correct sense, they are religious, but not spiritual.

### *SELF-INQUIRY IS THE TRUE SPIRITUAL PRACTICE*

What is real spiritual practice? Self-inquiry! Inquiry into the Self is the true spiritual practice. All the rest are religious rituals. That is what I want to inform you of here.

Actually speaking, what is it that sees? What is it that hears? What is it that senses touch? In other words, how do you receive impulses? How do you receive external stimuli like sound, smell, touch, or vision? How do you know of these stimuli?

We say that we draw them through our senses. No, no, certainly not! It is the mind that sees through the eye, it is the mind that listens through the ear, it is the mind that feels touch through the skin, and it is the mind that smells through the nostrils. So all these senses are effective and respond to external stimuli because of constant monitoring and spearheading by the mind. So, we have to understand that the mind monitors and masters all the senses.

### *THE CONSCIOUSNESS IS ONLY A WITNESS*

Then the question comes: what about the consciousness, the *Atma* inside, about which we have been speaking a lot? The answer is quite simple. The consciousness is only a witness. It is neither active nor passive; it neither listens nor remains silent. It is just a witness to what has been going on outside. We have to understand this. Therefore, my friends, all this activity is just the outcome of the mind and its mental potential manifesting all these blossoms in the form of different human activities.

I would also like to draw your attention to another point. I talked to you a while ago of the three states of awareness: the waking state, the dreaming state and the deep sleep state. I also remember that I told you that in deep sleep, the body is totally inactive, unconscious, lying on the bed. The mind is passive, silent, and inactive. It is only the consciousness that remains as an eternal witness. Therefore, when we get up the next morning after deep sleep, we say that we feel refreshed and active. That is an expression of the blissful state.

Now my point is that this deep sleep is a natural experience with everybody. You may belong to any country; you may be a scholar, a scientist, a businessman or an illiterate, employed or unemployed, man or woman, young or old. But we all experience this state of deep sleep naturally, without any effort. So this is not anything to do with the spiritual experience.

When you are tired because of a long day's work, physical exertion and mental strain will naturally take you to bed, and you get into that deep sleep state. This is a natural process, a natural sequence of events. It does not constitute any attainment; it is not anything spiritual, much less a state of realisation.

### *TURIYA – THE BLISSFUL STATE OF EXPERIENCE*

So what I want to mention to you is if that deep sleep experience is obtained here and now, in the waking state—in other words, if that blissful state is experienced now while you are awake—it is called *samadhi* or oneness with the Divine. That is realisation or *thuriya*, which means the ultimate, blissful state of experience while you are awake. That is the point.

That which is natural in deep sleep is experienced in the waking state itself by withdrawing your mind. By going to that state of thoughtlessness, you experience the ultimate—that which is called *thuriya*, which is another name for *Atma* or consciousness. This is a point that all of us should try and aspire for.

### *WITHDRAW YOUR MIND AND REMAIN A WITNESS*

How to be blissful in this waking state? How to attain that deep sleep experience in this waking state? It is only by being thoughtless, by withdrawing the mind, by remaining a witness to your own thoughts. When you are a witness to your own thoughts, they will disappear, vanish. The mind then becomes empty, and that is the blissful state.

Therefore, what is the ultimate goal of life? What is my reality? After all, I may feel that my reality lies in my personality—my height, my weight, my complexion, mental state, intellect or understanding. Is this what I am? But it is not so, my friends.

### *THE PURPOSE OF LIFE IS TO KNOW YOUR TRUE SELF*

The reality lies in knowing your true Self. That is the purpose of life. No animal can know what it is. No tree can know what it is. No other creature in this creation can ever know its true identity or reality. It is only the human being who can know the true Self, the reality. If it is not known, the whole life is misspent and the golden opportunity of being a human being is misused. The great blessing of human life, conferred upon us, is just wasted, like throwing pearls in front of a swine.

### *THE DUTY OF HUMANS IS TO EXPERIENCE TRANSCENDENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS*

Let us not waste this opportunity of a human life. This is an appeal to tell you what self-inquiry is meant for—to know your Self, your reality. You are the consciousness, you are the witness; you are not the body and the mind by any standard. In fact, it is our obligation and it is our responsibility to work in this direction in order to experience that transcendental consciousness or *Atma*. That is our duty as human beings.

### *LIFE IS MEANT FOR LAUGHING, NOT CRYING*

All other duties are for 'living' while this main duty is for 'life'. Or else we have failed in our duty! In fact, let us know one important point. You talk to anybody: no one seems to be satisfied. No one seems to be totally happy. Everyone has some complaint, regret or repentance. Something or the other is bugging everyone's mind. So, their life is not happy. We are not enjoying our life. We are not spending our life blissfully as it is meant to be. Life is meant for laughing, not for crying. Life is given to us so that we can dance and celebrate. It is not so that we can be in a state of sadness or misery.

### *UNAWARENESS IS THE CAUSE FOR OUR UNHAPPINESS*

Why? Why misery at all? Why is there sadness? Why are people worried? Why too much anxiety? Why? There is so much stress and strain. Why? If we examine this, you will certainly understand. It is due to unawareness! I am not aware of what I am! I do not know who I am. Therefore, my ignorance or *maya* or illusion, my false identification or unawareness is the cause for my sadness or misery in life.

If I am aware of my reality, that I am the consciousness, the eternal witness which is immortal, blemishless, unpolluted, without a beginning and an end, I can't but be blissful, I can't but be happy. No scope for sadness, no chance for any misery at all! Then, we should also know the secret of bliss.

### *THE SECRET OF BLISS IS AWARENESS*

Then, what is the secret to bliss? Awareness! Awareness takes you to happiness; unawareness pulls you down to misery. You might ask, "Awareness or unawareness of what?" Of your reality, of your true Self or consciousness.

Then, in fact, even with all my achievements, all my belongings, paraphernalia, extravaganza, all my relationships, all my contacts . . . yet still there is something wrong here. We still feel misery and so we ask, "Why are you like this?" Some people say, "It is my fate, it is my destiny."

### *DEHAABHIMANA – BODY IDENTIFICATION*

"The destiny which is pre-ordained, the fate which is inescapable, this is the cause for my suffering," they say.

My friends, you are mistaken. Don't blame fate. Don't escape in the name of destiny. No, no! Everything lies in your awareness; everything is in focussing on the Self. If you focus on the Self, the reality, everything else disappears. Then there is no question of destiny and no question of fate, because destiny and fate are related to the mind; but the reality is beyond the mind. So self-inquiry is a must for everybody—more so for every spiritual seeker and aspirant.

In life, we have some friends and we have some enemies too. I may say that he is my enemy, or he is my friend. So you are accepted by a few, rejected by many. You like a few, and dislike many. This disparity, this differentiation, this distinction, this demarcation is the cause for mental unrest.

When I meet my friend, I am joyful. When I meet a person whom I do not like, an enemy, I am very unhappy and disturbed. What is the cause for friendship? What is the cause for enmity? Have you ever analysed this?

“I think the cause for my friendship is having similar ideas, similar notions as the other person, being in the same age group and same profession.” Nonsense! Do you mean to say that people of your age group are all your friends? No! All people of your profession are your friends? No! So the so-called friends are not friends because of the same age group, the same profession, or because of like-mindedness. No! It is something else.

You say so-and-so is an enemy. Why? “Our ideas are not compatible. We are of different generations, we are of different nations, and we have different ideologies.” No! This is equally wrong.

So, a friend or an enemy is so because of your body identification. You identify with your body. When you think that you are the body, you will certainly have likes and dislikes, friendships and animosities. Therefore, these kind of dual relationships that I have—positive or negative groups of people—are of my own making. It is my body identification or *dehabhimana*. *Deha* means ‘body’, while *abhimana* means ‘identification’. That is the cause for this. We cannot blame anybody outside.

### *EKOHAM BAHUSHYAM – ONE INTO MANY*

In fact, question yourself as to whether there is anybody to like, and anybody else to hate. Only God is one. The same God is in everyone. How can you say, I like him, or I dislike him, when the same God is in everyone? God is One-without-a-second. So there is no other to like or dislike. You are the many. You have manifested into many. The single Self manifested, blossomed into many, just as you find your own reflection in several mirrors around you. You see the same Self in all. There is no second. When there is no second, only one, this is *Ekoham Bahushyam* – the One becomes many. When one experiences this, there is no enemy or friend. That is the secret.

### *WHAT IS TRUE KNOWLEDGE?*

My friends, I want to tell you of another misnomer or misconception. We say that so-and-so is a man of letters, a man of knowledge, a respectable man, a well-read man. My question is: what is true knowledge? What is correct knowledge? Is it the accumulation of information? No! Is it memory? No! Is it recapitulation? No! Is it the ability to communicate? No! Then what is true knowledge?

None of these! True knowledge is that which will help you get rid of or dispense with body identification. If your knowledge helps you to come out of body identification, you can say it is true knowledge. Otherwise, bookish knowledge, secular knowledge, accumulated knowledge, information technology—none of these has got anything to do with spiritual knowledge.

### *THE PURPOSE OF TRUE KNOWLEDGE*

The first purpose of true knowledge is to give up body identification.

The second purpose of true knowledge is to know the reality, to know the true Self, consciousness. That is the second objective of true knowledge.

And third, when you know you are the true Self, your relationship with the whole world, your interrelationship with the whole world should be from that angle, from that standpoint of the supreme Self.

When you know that you are the Self in everyone you see—the same Self and nothing other than that—this knowledge should help you towards this experience; or else, this knowledge is only a collection of books read for vanity, for boosting the self-esteem, not used towards the spiritual experience.

Now I have come to know what the true Self is. I have understood that it is my duty. I have understood that it is the sole purpose of human life, and I have also understood that it is the true spiritual practice or *sadhana* to know and experience the Self.

### *FOR HOW LONG SHOULD I DO MY SADHANA OR SPIRITUAL PRACTICE?*

Now comes my next question: for how long I should continue my *sadhana* or my spiritual practice? Can anybody specify for how long? Can anybody say this? How long would that be? For how long should I continue my *sadhana*?

The first point is that I should continue my *sadhana* or spiritual practice until such time that I become aware that I am different from my body and that my body is different from me. I am the owner of the body, but not the body. I am the owner of my car, I am the owner of my home, or I am the owner of my farm. In the same way, I am the owner of the body, but I am not the body. That is the first step towards realisation.

The second point is continue until there is an awareness that I will continue to exist even after my death. I may leave the body, but I still exist. I exist as consciousness. It is my body that drops off. Until this is drummed into our minds, until we are established in this fact, we should continue our *sadhana*.

### *ATTACHMENT TO THE BODY WILL MAKE YOU MISERABLE*

The third point is that it is not enough to know that I am different from my body. It is more important to let go of that identification or attachment. Why? Because there are some people who are very worried about their body.

If they have slight rise in blood pressure, they make it an international issue! If there is a little rise in their blood sugar, it becomes a global issue! What is all this? After all, the blood pressure may be high or low, the blood sugar may be high or low. You then take appropriate steps to bring it to the normal level. You do not need to get agitated or make a big fuss about it, or create a kind of melancholic tragic scene in the vicinity. No! The body is healthy; the same body will be unhealthy. The same body is active, whereas later it will be inactive. So accept it. Don't make an issue of it. Be prepared to accept it and act so that you can be normal. That is all. But don't get attached to the body.

### *GOD IS TIMELESS*

If you want to progress spiritually, you also need to watch out for another point. “For how long should I continue my *sadhana*?” That is your question. What do you mean by that? Do you mean time? One hour, two hours, a month, a year? You are referring to the duration?

In fact, my friends, for your information, there is no such thing as time for this. Mind is time. Time is the mind. Therefore, do not bother about your watch or the time. For how long should I conduct this self-inquiry? For how long should I meditate? No!

Time is just the mind. When you are beyond the mind, you have stepped into the dimension of timelessness. God is timeless. You have gone into that arena; you have gone into that sphere of Divinity, which is beyond time and space. That you have got to understand.

### *MERIT AND SIN ARE REFLECTIONS OF THE MIND*

I think I also said that some condemn themselves. “I am a sinner. Well, am I eligible for liberation? Am I competent enough to acquire awareness?” No, my friends, there is no sinner here; nor is there a man of merit. Merit or sin: both are equal, because a merit at one point in time is a sin later. A sin at one point in time is a merit later. So what is a merit, what is a sin? They are reflections of the mind.

Reality is beyond the mind, so why do you think, ‘I am a sinner, so I am unfit?’ No! Self-condemnation is as bad as self-praise. Self-praise is as bad as self-condemnation. No! You do not have to deny yourself. You don’t have to judge yourself. Don’t feel that you are a sinner. No! This is only because of dualism—a dual mind makes you feel self-condemned. Come on, get up! Be non-dual!

### *JEEVA, JAGAT AND JAGADEESHWARA*

If you go to any spiritual master, he will say there are three components: first, *jeeva*, the individual; second, *jagat* or the universe; and third, Jagadeeshwara or God Almighty.

*Jeeva, jagat, Jagadeeshwara*: the individual, the universe, and God. These three elements or components are taught, but then there is some worry or confusion. Because, though there may be three, upon inquiry you will understand that all the three are based on the one. *Jeeva* or the individual, *jagat* or the universe or *prapancha*, and Jagadeeshwara or God—all the three are one only. It is just your mind that brings about these differences.

The Creator is God, and His creation is the universe. The Creator is God, Jagadeeshwara, while creation is world or *jagat*. So the reflection of Jagadeeshwara is *jagat*. The reflection of God is Nature. Then, who are you? You are the witness. Therefore, only when *aham* or mind comes in, these three exist: *jeeva, jagat* and Jagadeeshwara.

### *INDIVIDUAL, UNIVERSE AND GOD MERGE WHEN MIND DISAPPEARS*

When the mind disappears, when you are thoughtless, all the three are one. This is an important point in self-inquiry. Only there are three when the mind is active and dominant. When the mind is recessive, when the mind is inactive, there are not three—only one.

In fact, when God is within you, why do you go out in search of Him? Is that not foolishness? Let us ask that question. Therefore, the *Holy Bible* clearly said, “I am that I am.” It means, “I am the consciousness.” That is one point. Therefore, my friends, what is true eligibility? Who is eligible to have this awareness? Who is right?

*ELIGIBILITY: HOW KEEN ARE YOU TO KNOW YOUR REALITY?*

Some people say, “I have not reached that stage.” What is reaching? What is that stage? No, no, no, my friends. Do self-inquiry. Come on, inquire about your Self, know your Self, question yourself. Slowly, you will know that you are not the body, that you are not the mind, that you are consciousness.

Therefore, eligibility does not rest on age, qualification or family background. No! Eligibility depends on the spirit of inquiry—how keen you are to know your own reality. That is important, nothing else!

Baba often says, “You are willing to know who he is and who she is. But who are you? You do not know! You do not know! See, you know everybody, but you don’t know yourself!”

Then, who is a learned man? Who is a man of wisdom? Therefore, the *jnani* and the man of wisdom is the one who knows his true Self.

Thus we conclude this part of self-inquiry and will meet again the next time.

Sai Ram.

*Om . . . Om . . . Om*  
*Asato Maa Sadgamaya*  
*Tamaso Maa Jyotirgamaya*  
*Mrityormaa Amrithamgamaya*

*Om Shanti Shanti Shanti*

*Jai Bolo Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Babaji ki Jai!*  
*Jai Bolo Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Babaji ki Jai!*  
*Jai Bolo Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Babaji ki Jai!*

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