

The Sunday Talk Given by Prof. Anil Kumar

*“Self-Inquiry”
(Part 1)*

February 21, 2010

OM...OM...OM...

Sai Ram

With Pranams at the Lotus Feet of our most beloved Bhagavan,

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

NUGGETS OF WISDOM

Welcome back to this morning's session. This morning I would like to share with you certain essential principles of *Vedanta*, or spirituality, certain 'nuggets of wisdom'. Nuggets are pieces of gold. 'Nuggets of wisdom' are like pieces of golden wisdom. I would like to share with you the basic definitions of the quintessence of *Vedanta*, spirituality, and *Sanathana Dharma*, one of the most ancient schools of spiritual thought. I will define certain important, technical terms, which are very essential for the understanding of *Vedanta*, or spiritual knowledge.

ATMA

One technical term we use is *Atma*. What is *Atma*? That is the question. I would say the equivalent word in English is 'consciousness'. Consciousness is *Atma*, the universal soul. This universal soul, consciousness, or *Atma*, is the basic substratum or foundation of the whole universe.

Out of universal consciousness, *Atma* has come as the individual soul. This individual soul is what we call 'I', or 'I'-ness. Ask anyone, "Who are you?" He will reply, "I am so-and-so." If you hear a knock on the door, you ask, "Who is there?" "I," is the reply. "I" is the common answer from everyone of any nation, any age group, any sect, any religion, or any gender.

'I'-ness is born out of *Atma*, or consciousness. This 'I'-ness, the individual soul, is a thought. The individual soul or thought will produce a series of thoughts. Many, many thoughts constitute the mind.

UNIVERSAL SOUL, INDIVIDUAL SOUL, AND MIND

My friends, there are three steps to understand. One: consciousness, or universal soul, is *Atma*. Two: out of the universal soul is born the individual soul. The soul or spirit is formed from the universal soul. The individual soul is a thought, and it produces many, many thoughts. Three: the mind is formed from this bundle of thoughts. The mind is a bundle of thoughts. These are the three steps: universal soul, individual soul, and the mind, comprising series of thoughts.

Now let us examine what is Truth. What is reality? The reality is *Atma*, or consciousness, or the universal soul. This is the reality, something like the ocean. Out of the ocean emerge many waves. Foam collects on the surface of the waves. The ocean can be compared to the universal consciousness, the universal soul, or *Atma*, while waves are the individual souls, or *jivas*. On the crest of the wave, foam collects. Foam is comprised of water bubbles. The water bubbles are all the thoughts collected in the mind. This is the basic principle explained by Ramana Maharshi, and so well supported by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba in His talks.

The example of an ocean, its waves, and its foam, representing *Atma* consciousness, the individual soul, and the mind respectively, is one of the nuggets of wisdom I wish to share with you. The universal soul is equal to the ocean. The individual soul is equal to the wave. The mind is equal to the foaming water bubbles, or thoughts.

This information is given by Baba Himself. Please excuse me if I am being repetitive. As a teacher, I sometimes doubt whether I can reach you or not. Therefore, I repeat myself. But I know that each one of you is smarter than me. You are greater intellectuals, I know that! It is only my classroom habit which makes me repetitive, that's all.

EGO AND SELF-INQUIRY

A second concept I would like to discuss is ego. What is ego? Where is it? In Sanskrit, ego is called *ahamkara*. *Ahamkara* is ego. What is it? Where is it? *Ahamkara*, or ego, is 'I'-ness, and is also called the mind, or the individual soul. Having been separated from the universal consciousness or *Atma*, the separate entity of a wave, the individual soul, is ego or *ahamkara*. If I say, 'I', that is ego. 'I'-ness is ego. That is what we call *ahamkara*.

Third point: we often use another phrase, self-inquiry. What is self-inquiry? *Atma vichara*. What does that mean? Baba always refers to *Atma vichara* in His discourses. Self-inquiry, *Atma vichara*, is the main principle of Ramana Maharshi. What does Baba say? Ask yourself this question: "Who am I?" Ask yourself this question and you will get the answer.

The second point Baba makes is the fact that you breathe in and breathe out 21,600 times a day. So...*ham*... So...*ham*... inhalation ...exhalation. *Soham* is a *mantra* which means, "I am God." I am God. This is the *Soham mantra japa*. The sound of inhalation—exhalation, *Soham*, is a *mantra*. Ask the question, "*Koham*, who am I?" The answer is "*Soham*. I am You. I am You, I am God."

Ramana Maharshi says, "Ask yourself, 'Who am I?' You will get the answer." Asking the question "Who am I?" is self-inquiry. Self-inquiry is very necessary for all of us, for all humanity. You may belong to any religion or any faith. You may belong to any country. All religions, all

paths, all faiths, all seekers, all teachers, all aspirants, and all *gurus* say one thing: self-inquiry is the most important thing.

Sai devotees should take this point seriously. Self-inquiry should be our main quest, the most important part of the spiritual journey. What happens in *Atma Vichara*, or self-inquiry? When I question myself, “Who am I? Who am I?”... my thoughts stop. When thoughts stop, the very question “Who am I?” also stops automatically. Then what happens? The individual self, the ‘I’, becomes merged into the universal ‘I’. The wave will return to the ocean. The wave has come out of the ocean and the wave will go back to the ocean. The ocean is *Atma*. The wave is ‘I’-ness, ego, or the individual soul. By putting this question to oneself—“Who am I?”—all thoughts will stop. The individual soul, the ‘I’-ness, will merge into the universal soul, the *Atma*, the consciousness. Then you enjoy the state of bliss, the non-dual bliss, the supreme bliss, which is the aim of the spiritual journey. This is the purpose of all spiritual paths.

ATMA NISHTA—THE STATE OF UNIVERSAL CONSCIOUSNESS

My friends, we are under the impression that when we repeat a *mantra* we can concentrate, and we can meditate on the Self. But the real answer is simple. Turn your mind inward, that’s all. Once the mind is turned inward, thoughts stop. Do not entertain any more thoughts. Whenever a thought comes, brush it aside. Don’t allow the flow of thoughts into your mind.

Each of us knows his own thoughts. You could have one thought right now. ‘Why can’t I go somewhere this weekend?’ ‘Why can’t I have an ice cream?’ ‘Why can’t I ride to the beach with my family?’ You know your own thoughts. But what you have to do is withdraw those thoughts. Don’t allow any more thoughts to flow. Once thoughts are stopped or withdrawn, you reach the thoughtless state. Thoughtlessness is what we call *samadhi*, the ultimate state of meditation.

I draw your attention to one point. Repetition of a *mantra* or the *Gayatri mantra* is also a thought. Stop that. Do not use a *mantra* of any kind when in a state of thoughtlessness. If you think of a *mantra* while in the state of thoughtlessness, it again becomes a thought. In the spiritual journey, we should attain the state of thoughtlessness. We should practice withdrawal of thoughts. Enjoy this state of equanimity, *samadhi*, the state of bliss.

To remain in a thoughtless state is called *Atma nishta*. *Atma nishta* means ‘establishing one’s own individual self in the universal Self’. *Atma nishta* means you are no longer an individual; you are universal. It is only thought that makes you separate. It is only thought that makes you an entity. It is only thought that gives you identity. When thought is gone, you are no longer an individual; you are universal. *Atma nishta* means ‘remaining in the state of universal consciousnesses’.

What do you get out of it? My friends, the ocean is vast, the ocean is infinite, and the ocean is of fathomless depth. Our universal soul, the *Atma* consciousness, being vast like an ocean, gives us limitless bliss, endless bliss, and non-dual bliss. *Nityananda* is eternal bliss; *Brahmananda* is supreme bliss; *Advaitananda* is non-dual bliss. That is the way our spiritual journey should be.

My friends, the aim this morning is to bring your attention these Sanskrit words. We often use these words. We should learn their true spiritual meaning and how to apply them to our onward spiritual journey.

MOKSHA IS LIBERATION

The next word is *moksha*. What is *moksha*? *Moksha* is translated as liberation. According to Buddhism, *moksha* is *nirvana*. *Moksha* is the kingdom of heaven, according to Christianity. These are all synonyms which convey the same meaning.

What is *moksha*? Some people tell Swami that they want *moksha*, without knowing what it means. They think that *moksha* is a separate land. They think that *moksha* is a separate place, like Miami Beach or Washington, D.C. in the United States. Is *moksha* a place? Is *moksha* like Rome or Greece, a city or a country? No! Is *moksha* an object? No! Where is *moksha*? Why do you want *moksha*? What do you mean by *moksha*? What is liberation? What is the kingdom of heaven? What is *nirvana*? We ask for it, we want it. Why? We do not know. That is a pity. We do not know what it is, yet we crave it, we have a craze for it, we desire it. We want *moksha*, though we do not know what it is. This only means that the individual soul is craving for liberation. The soul is praying, contemplating, and planning for *moksha*, or liberation.

I will give you the definition of *moksha*. To know your true Self is liberation, or *moksha*. The experience of the Self is *moksha*, or liberation. Is it that simple? Yes. *Moksha* is to know your true Self. I know this much, my friends. We do not know our true Self. Each one of us here thinks, "I am the body." You are not. Everyone thinks, "I am the mind." You are not. Everyone thinks, "I am the intellect." You are not. Then who are you? The Self! The Self!

THE MEANING OF SELF

Body identification, identification with the mind, identification with the intellect, when these things are taken away, you remain as *Atma*, the supreme Self, the consciousness. The supreme Self, with consciousness of body, mind and intellect, is what we are today as individual selves. I am an individual self with body, mind and intellect. This individual self is covering the consciousness inside, the supreme, vast, infinite, and universal. My friends, the supreme Self, the universal Self, is covered by the three layers of intellect, mind, and body. These layers make the soul, the Self, a separate entity. These layers give the soul an identity. We call this identity the individual soul, or *jiva*.

Now you may ask what is the use of the individual soul, this 'I'-ness? Why have it at all? When you are the universal soul, *Atma*, why have this individual soul, this 'I'-ness, why? Why can't I be *Atma*, remaining as an ocean of consciousness? Why should I be a wave? Why this separateness? The answer is simple, my friends. Whatever you think, you think from the point of 'I': I think, I hope, I presume, I believe. All of your thoughts are based on 'I'-ness. You also say, "I did that, I will do that, I am doing this." All actions are also based on 'I'-ness. So this 'I'-ness, or individual soul, is the foundation for different thoughts and actions. That is its purpose.

Then what happens? This individual soul, 'I'-ness, in association with the body, starts functioning. The individual soul associated with this body named Anil Kumar functions as a professor. The individual soul in another body functions as a doctor, functions as an engineer, as a politician, or householder. In other words, the body is an instrument. The body is an instrument for the expression of thought into action. Thought is put into action through the instrument of the body. It is the body that does the actions. It is the body which is the centre of attractions and actions prompted by the mind, or the individual soul. The individual soul is the mind, 'I'-ness, or ego. Thought coming from the ego makes the body act. Thus the body is an instrument.

THREE LEVELS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

My friends, I will bring to your attention three other important levels of consciousness, or levels of awareness. The first level is that my mind is active now. Yes, I think, I share, I plan, and I feel. This state of the mind, which can think and feel, which can express itself through the senses, is the active state of mind. The active state of mind makes the body see, and makes the body hear. An active mind plus a body is called the waking state, or *jagrath*. The waking state, or *jagrath*, is the active mind functioning through the body. This is the first level of awareness or consciousness.

Then we come to the second state. The body is inactive, because the body is lying on a bed during the night. The body is tired and wants to rest. The body is inactive, but the mind is still active. It starts dreaming. Who is dreaming now? The mind! Why? The mind is active. The body is inactive during the night. An active mind creates something different in dreamland. In a dream, my mind makes me rich or poor, a VIP, or a nobody. It makes me experience pain or pleasure. The active mind creates a separate world called the dream state, or *swapna*. Therefore, my friends, in *jagrath*, the waking state, there is an active mind and an active body. In *swapna*, the dream state, there is an active mind and an inactive body, because the body is asleep, lying on a bed.

Then we have the third state of awareness called deep sleep, or *sushupthi*. What happens in *sushupthi*, deep sleep? The body is inactive. It is lying on a bed. The mind is also inactive. The mind is withdrawn, passive, and functionless; the mind is silent. In deep sleep, you enjoy the state of bliss. That is the thoughtless state, so you experience bliss, my friends. *Sushupthi* is deep sleep. You may be of any religion, any country, or any age group. All of you experience these three states only. First, *jagrath*, the waking state, is an active mind and an active body. Second, *swapna*, the dream state, is an active mind and an inactive body. In the third state, *sushupthi* or deep sleep, the body is inactive, and the mind is inactive. You are thoughtless. You are just bliss, that's all. You are the son or daughter of eternity. You are a blissful form. That is what *sushupthi*, or deep sleep, is.

My friends, when I awaken and rise from bed in the morning, after a very good, deep sleep, I look fresh. If anyone asks me how I slept the previous night, I say, "Oh, wonderful! I had a good sleep. I am energetic." Why? The thoughtless state makes you energetic. The thoughtless state makes you blissful. The thoughtless state makes you look fresh and active. That's why the next morning we all look fresh and energetic.

THE MIND IS THE FALSE SELF

The next question is why I don't experience the Self, the *Atma*, the supreme consciousness within me. I always function with the false 'I', the pseudo 'I', the unreal 'I'. I am a wave, that's all, ignoring the ocean. I always function at the level of the individual soul, the false 'I', the unreal 'I'. I forget my real 'I', which is consciousness. Why is this happening? Why do I not experience the real 'I', the consciousness, the *Atma*?

Simple answer: your mind is responsible. The mind is an obstacle. The mind is interference. Therefore, I am not able to experience my true Self. Why? The false self is nothing but the mind, like a wave. The false self, like a wave, retreats and goes back. Only the ocean, the true Self, remains. This is the reason we cannot experience the true Self.

I will give you one example which Baba has repeatedly said. As you all know from the knowledge of astronomy, the sun is many, many times bigger than the earth; it is so big! But when a cloud appears, it covers the huge sun. Then you do not see the sun. The sun and the cloud are comparable to the ocean and the wave. The sun is the consciousness; the sun is the real 'I', while the cloud is the wave, the false 'I'. The cloud is the mind, which interferes with your vision of the sun. The mind prevents you from experiencing the true Self.

AHAM BRAHMASMI

Another Vedic teaching or saying is *Aham Brahmasmi*. This is what Baba says. *Aham Brahmasmi*: I am Brahman. *Aham* - I, *Brahman* – supreme Divinity, *Asmi* - I am. I am God. I am Brahman. That's what *Aham Brahmasmi* means. I would like to clarify it for you, so that you have a better understanding of *Aham Brahmasmi*.

Aham Brahmasmi, I am Brahman. What does that mean? *Brahman* means 'vastness'. Brahman means 'infinite, unlimited'. Brahman is 'expansiveness, vast, universal'. So 'I am Brahman' means, 'I am not limited, I am not finite, I am not an individual soul, I am not the mind, I am not this false 'I'; I am Brahman. I am the real 'I', the Brahman, the infinite consciousness, the universal soul. I am not an individual soul.' When identification with the false 'I' is dropped, it is like the wave going back into the ocean; only the ocean remains. In a similar way, the consciousness remains as an eternal witness. That is the meaning of *Aham Brahmasmi*.

TRUE SADHANA

I should also tell you what *sadhana* is. Many people use the word *sadhana*. What is this spiritual practice? What is true *sadhana*? Many people think that going on a pilgrimage is *sadhana*. Many people think writing the holy name is *sadhana*. Many people think repeating God's name is *sadhana*.

Concentration is *sadhana*, worship is *sadhana*. There may be different *sadhanas*, different spiritual paths. But the highest *sadhana*, the surest and best spiritual path, is self-inquiry. That's what Ramana Maharshi says. The highest *sadhana* is to know your Self. Who are you? Who am I? To put a question unto one's own Self is the true *sadhana*. That is true spiritual inquiry, the noblest and highest of all.

MAYA IS ILLUSION

We come across another word in *Vedanta*: *maya*. *Maya*! This morning, I want to draw your attention to certain often-repeated terms. Many people come to me and say, "Anil Kumar! This *maya...maya... maya...!*" (*Laughter*) What is *maya*? The English translation is 'illusion'. Illusion is *maya*. What does Baba say? There is one English word: M-Y, my, and if you repeat that word—my, my, my, my, my, my, my, my—that is *maya*. To say that word, to repeat the word 'my' or 'mine' equals *maya*. "This car is mine. This house is mine, and it is my body." This 'my, my, my' is *maya*. That is the definition of *maya*, as Baba explains it.

Baba also says that *maya*, or illusion, is not true. It is non-existent. Many people ask, "What can I do, sir? I am trapped by *maya*." Many people ask me, "Sir, what can I do? All life is *maya*. This whole thing is *maya*. I am trapped, imprisoned, and encased within *maya*. What can I do?" This is incorrect thinking. There is no prison of *maya*. There is no encasement of *maya*. There is no sheath of *maya*. There is no cover of *maya*. No! *Maya* is only your imagination. *Maya* is your

own mind creating these notions. There is no *maya* at all. Searching for *maya* is something like searching for a black cat in a closed room on a dark night. How do you find the cat? Impossible! So *maya* is non-existent. It is only one's own creation, one's own imagination.

What does Ramana Maharshi say about *maya*? You think that it is present, but actually it is not there. You only think it is there. Take the notion of a devil. "Sir, there is a devil!" There is no devil at all. You only think there is a devil. To imagine something being present, when it is actually non-existent, is *maya*. That is Ramana Maharshi's definition. When that which is infinite and limitless is thought to be limited, it is *maya*. Divinity is unlimited, but you think you can limit Him. That is *maya*. Divinity is everywhere, but you think you can limit Him to a space. That is *maya*. Restriction, or narrowing down, is *maya*, and it is all the work of your own mind. That's what we have to understand.

THE GOAL OF SPIRITUALITY

What is our obligation and main duty as spiritual seekers? Some say, "Sir, I am a devotee of Sathya Sai Baba." Good! Some say, "Sir, I attend church every Sunday." Very good! Some say, "Sir, I am a Muslim. We fast." Fine! Many people say, "We meditate." Very good!

What is the chief *dharma*, or the main duty, of every spiritual man of any religion? The main *dharma*, the main duty, of every spiritual person is to know the reality, the supreme Self, within. My main duty is to discover my true Self, to know that I am not the individual self, but that I am, truly speaking, the universal Self. The individual self, the false 'I', is for utility, while the real Self is the reality. The universal Self is the reality, while the individual self is for utility. That's what we have to understand. To know this is one's own duty.

What is your goal in life? What is your aim on the spiritual path? Suppose we ask this question of a worldly person. We ask a politician, "What is your aim in life?" He would likely reply, "I want to become the country's president." If I ask a businessman what is his goal in life, he will probably answer, "I want to become the richest man." Goals differ in the world. But on the spiritual path, there is only one goal for all of us. What is that goal? To remind ourselves of our true Self; this has been forgotten. We have forgotten our Self. To remind yourself of the true goal, to know it, to feel it, to be it, and have that goal as your chief objective, is the supreme purpose of a spiritual life.

THREE STEPS TO YOUR TRUE SELF

How can you achieve that goal? I bring to your attention three steps, as explained by Ramana Maharshi. Some people ask, "Is it possible to realise the true Self in this lifetime? Is it possible now?" My friends, it is possible, right now, right here. The fulfillment of life's ambition is possible right now. That is the first thing that you have to establish within yourself.

Second step: once you do that, once you are determined, decided, and committed to know the true Self, what will happen? All false thoughts, all imaginary ideas, all illusions are dispelled, and given up. They disappear. That is the second thing that will happen.

Third step: when you have embarked on this journey of truth to know your true Self, ask: "Who am I?" Simple explanation: this journey is the "Who am I" journey. We are on board the "Who Am I" Airline flight. When we are on this journey, on the "Who Am I" aircraft, what should we do?

Forget all previously established notions. We have some prejudices; we have some false ideas; we have certain notions; we have certain ideologies. We have spiritual identification in relation to a religion. Forget your religion, forget your dogma, and forget your fundamentalism. Forget everything. Be fresh and proceed with the powerful question, "Who am I? Who am I?" Forget the past; put behind you all your prejudices, notions, and ideologies. You are traveling inward, and, in the process, all illusions are gone. Then you will experience your reality, your own reality, the true Self, or consciousness. Those are the three steps to know your true Self.

THE FALSE 'I' DOES NOT CREATE HAPPINESS

We all crave to be happy. We want to be happy, and we make every attempt to be happy. Even a patient wants to be happy. Why? The patient wants the doctor to give him sweet tablets, sweet capsules, and painless injections, because every patient wants to be happy, even when in the hospital bed. All our attainments, study, education, profession, family life, business life, political life, and social life, are for one thing only—to be happy! But, my friends, it is not true happiness.

Simple example: I play the role of a king in a drama. I command everyone. But can I become a real king? No! I am acting the role of a king. I am now a king, sitting on a throne, on a dais. But I am not really a king. Can that dais be the reality? No! Is the drama true? No! Is my action true? No! Am I really a king? No!

In the same way, the happiness you get from the false 'I', your ego, or your mind, is also false. The false 'I' will get false happiness. 'I'-ness itself is false. Ego is false. The mind is false. How can you expect real happiness from it? It is not possible. Can you write on running water? When the water is flowing, can you write any sentence at all? No! Can you write in the air? No! Similarly, the false 'I' is like running water, ever-changing.

THE REAL 'I' IS UNCHANGING

As a boy, I was different. As a young man, I suppose I must have been handsome. As an old man, I have arthritis. The body goes on changing, but this is the false 'I'. My mind also goes on changing. As a boy, I wanted to play. As a young man, I was quite active, and quite romantic. In my old age, I am rheumatic!

I am not the mind. My mind goes on changing. At a young age, an immature mind will have amateurish thoughts. My mind has matured now. But with a mature mind, my thoughts are different. So my mind is changing. That is also the false 'I'. The body is changing: that is the false 'I'. My mind is also changing, again the false 'I'. The real 'I' is changeless.

As a boy, I was Anil Kumar. As a young man, I was Anil Kumar. At this mature age, I am Anil Kumar. The 'I'-ness which is continuous and unchanging is the real 'I'. The changing 'I', that identifies with the body and the mind, goes on changing. How do you expect real happiness from this false 'I'? The utility 'I' is false, and the happiness it gets is also false. How can you achieve true happiness? You will get true happiness only when you know the real 'I'. What is the real 'I'? Consciousness! *Atma*! Awareness! That being true, the happiness you get is also equally true.

FATE DOES NOT DETERMINE THE SELF

I bring to your attention another question. Some people say, “The times are not favorable to me.” Some people say, “It is my destiny.” Some people say, “It is my fate.” Some say, “Everything is decided by God. Everything is preordained by God. What can I do?” These are the conclusions we hear from so-called religious people. It is all nonsense. You may say, “He has succeeded in life because of his destiny.” You may say, “It is my fate that I could not advance in life.” Whether you advance in life or not, whether you gain or lose, whether you experience pain or pleasure, it is all in the mind only.

A wave may be big, or a wave may be small. On a full moon day, the waves are very big and rush forward. On other days, the waves may be very small. Waves differ in their size and in their force. But the ocean at its depths is calm, quiet, and serene. Similarly, fate may be in your favor for all the positive upswings in life. Or your fate may be negative, and you may have bumps, shocks, and have to face negative things in life. But, up and down, up and down is the mind, that’s all.

Never say that it is my fate, it is my destiny. No! Destiny and fate are only states of the mind. But the reality is beyond the mind. No fate or destiny can shape or determine You, no! Understanding the reality of the Self is far, far greater than so-called destiny, or so-called fate. These center around the mind only; these center only around the false ‘I’.

DIFFERING SCHOOLS OF SPIRITUAL THOUGHT

I draw your attention to another point. In spirituality we have different schools of thought. Some say God has form. Some say God has no form. The form or formless: is God *sakara* or *nirakara*? Some say God has attributes, *saguna*. Some say God has no attributes, *nirguna*. Some say God is reality, *Sathyam*, while the whole world, *jagath*, is *mithya*, or illusion. Some say God is awareness, *chaitanya*, while the whole world is *jada*, or inert.

Many such things are discussed, but many theories are contradictory. People involve themselves in heated, useless arguments. Which is correct—*sakara*, the form, or *nirakara*, formless? *Saguna* or *nirguna*? What do you get from these contradictory arguments? They only divide us. It is not the ultimate aim. Let us not entertain these various ideologies. Let us not get into arguments at all.

Our aim is towards the Self. Our aim is towards reality. Ramana Maharshi always said to ask the question, “Who am I?” That’s all. That should be our path. That question is beyond religion, beyond sects, and beyond ideology. Our aim should be the supreme Self, traveling always towards the true Self, the reality. Let us not get into any arguments about ideological theories, which are usually contradictory.

ALL SCRIPTURES DECLARE SUPREME CONSCIOUSNESS

Some say, “I prefer to read the Holy Scripture, the *Bhagavad Gita*.” Some say, “No, no, no, I like *Yoga Vasishtha*.” Some say, “I believe that the *Upanishads* are of a higher standard.” Some say, “No, no! *Narada Bhakti Sutras* will make me more devoted.” Some will say, “Stop that. The *Bible* is the only true book, the only true word of God.” Which is correct?

My friends, all scriptures, holy books, text books, epics, and mythologies declare only one truth: that there is eternal, permanent and supreme consciousness. All declare the reality of that universal Self, the existence of the supreme Self. All scriptures and sacred texts agree on that.

All texts and scriptures show us the path towards the state of experiencing the Self. They all tell you how to experience the Self. How does Baba address us all at every gathering? Baba will never say, "Ladies and gentlemen." No! Baba addresses us as "Embodiments of Divine Love!" "Embodiments of *Atma*!" It means that we are all embodiments of the real and true Self. That's what all the scriptures say.

Therefore, the scriptures and the texts should not confuse us. Let us understand the underlying unity of them all. All scriptures and holy books affirm that there is a true reality. They all show the path towards that reality. Finally, they say that you are the embodiment of Divinity, and you are the embodiment of Truth, that supreme reality.

OM...OM...OM...

Asato Maa Sad Gamaya

Tamaso Maa Jyotir Gamaya

Mrt'yormaa Amrtam Gamaya

Om Samastha Lokā Sukhino Bhavantu

Samastha Lokā Sukhino Bhavantu

Samastha Lokā Sukhino Bhavantu

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti

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