33. Let The Conscience Rule

More effulgent than the Sun,
Whiter than the purest snow,
Subtler than the subtlest ether,
Immanent in all living beings,
There's nothing in the Cosmos sans Brahman.
The Paramatma is present in the minutest particle.
Being in everything, THAT remains unaffected.
That Universal Consciousness
Illumines and sustains the three worlds,
Pervading everything in Creation,
That Brahman you are, and Brahman is in you,
You and the Brahman are not different.
What greater truth can I tell you
Good people who are gathered here ?
I am in the Light; I am the Light
The Light is in me; The Light is me
He who is aware of this
Is Brahman himself
And Brahman is he.

Embodiments of the Divine Atma! Only a human being can understand God in the human form, not others. Hence the human form itself should be respected. *"Daivam maanusha Rupena,"* it is said (God reveals Himself in the human form). God assumes the human form to make His advent in the world, teach humanity the path to Divinity and shower His grace on them.

Man and the Divine in human form

The whole of Nature is a ball of burning fire (energy). This fire is present inside and outside. Likewise the Divine *Atma* principle is present everywhere. The Divine dwells in the entire Universe, from the minute atom to the vastest star. This Divine power is present in everything in creation. Only man has the capacity to recognise this power. But in trying to recognise it, he may create some crude form and consider it as the Divine in his delusion.

Today one can give an amazing scientific discourse on the world, society and many other things. One may appear logically convincing. He may even expound in different ways the nature of the Divine in human form. All these are however, only products of the imagination and not the truth. An eloquent *pandit* may attempt to describe the Divine, but no one has known or can know the true nature of the Divine in its fullness. Man alone can know the Divine in human form. No one

else can see it or explain it in any other form. All other expositions of the Divine are speculative and fanciful.

An elephant may wish to worship the Divine. Basing itself on its nature, it can conceive of the Divine only as a huge elephant. It cannot conceive of any other form. Even a mouse when it conceives of the Divine, can only imagine the titanic form of a mouse as the Divine. Likewise man can conceive God only in the human form. As long as he regards himself only in human terms, man cannot conceive of God, who transcends the human except in human form.

Pandits: description of God create only confusion

A learned and eloquent scholar may describe God in many ways. Some scholars describe God as *"Aprameya, Avaangmaanasa-gochara, Atheetha, Nirguna"* (One who is inscrutable, beyond the reach of the speech and mind, transcendent and attributeless). All these terms are high-sounding but in essence they are just froth. Meanings may be given to these terms and elaborate annotations can be made about them. But they are valueless in terms of personal experience and are fraught with danger. They do not represent the Reality.

Whenever you get a convenient opportunity, put this question to a *pandit:* "What is the meaning of *Aprameya?"* He will answer that He is one who is not amenable to any logical proof. Likewise he may explain that the term *"Avaangmaanasa-gochara"* refers to One who is not recognisable by speech or mind. But beyond this, can he demonstrate the form of the Divine?

In my mind the layman's conception of God is better than the descriptions offered by these *Pandits.* Because these terms can be used even by laymen, but they prefer to remain silent. As a result, there is peace in society. The diverse interpretations offered by the *Pandits* give rise to divisions and confusions in society. These disturb the minds of people. Rather than provoke such disturbance and confusion, it would be better for these *Pandits* to observe silence.

From ancient times to the present all kinds of terms have been used to describe the Divine but no one has been able to demonstrate the real truth about the Divine. The Divine is present in all things and all forms are His. How can such an omnipresent Divine be described or demonstrated? Can anyone declare that something is Brahman and something else is not Brahman? Only the deluded may do so out of human weakness.

Appearances and reality are different

Divinity is present in man like fragrance is present in a flower, fire in wood and oil in sesame, not visible but latent. Unaware of this inner truth, men are carried away by external appearances and consider them as the reality. From early times men have been influenced by such ideas and have been steeped in ignorance. They offer milk to anthills (to feed the cobras which are believed to dwell in them), but kill snakes when they see them. They torture the draught cattle that they use in cultivation, but worship the stone image of a bull (the sacred vehicle of Shiva). This is the kind of "philosophy" that people have practised since ancient times. Causing harm to the living and adoring inanimate objects have been weak traits among the Bharathiyas. Men who do not offer even a morsel of food to a starving man will offer all kinds of delicacies as *Naivedya* (sacred offerings) to the image of the deity. One will drop a bundle of coins in the *hundi* (donation collection box) of Sri Venkateswara, but will refuse a small pittance to the beggar. All this is regarded as part of our ancient tradition. But how much sanctified will one be if he offers food to a starving man? It is essential to realise the basic truth that God is present in the form of

human beings. Is one doing his duty if he inflicts pain on the *jiva* (a living being) and offers worship to Deva (the Divine)?

Avatars are based on different aspects of the Divine

In the world, God has descended as human incarnation in five different forms. These forms are based on the different aspects of the Divine. One is *Nityaavatar.* Second is *Viseshaavatar.* Third, *Aveshaavatar.* Fourth, *Leelaavatar,* Fifth, *Poornaavatar. Leelaavatar* is also known as *Amsaavatar. Nityaavatara, Viseshaavatar* and *Aveshaavatar* have only five to nine *kalaas* (aspects) of the Lord. Only in the *Poornaavatar* are all the sixteen aspects of the Divine present. The ancients regarded only the *Poornaavatars* as the full manifestation of God.

In this context, every human being must be deemed as *Avatar* as he has some aspect of the Divine in him. It is because he has descended from the Divine, he is entitled to be called an *Avatar.* Except as *Avatar,* God does not give a separate vision of the Divine to man in any other form. Honour every human being. Show love towards every person. Love is not a crop that can be grown on land or a commodity that can be purchased in a shop. Whether one is a potentate or a commoner, only when he gives up egoistic pride and is ready to make sacrifice will love blossom within him.

Embark on the journey towards God-realisation

Do not be weighed down by the feeling that the human estate is weak and subject to delusions and ignorance. It is not easy to be born as a human being. If nevertheless one does not realise his true nature and imagines that God is in the external world, it is the mark of utter ignorance. Hence without wasting time, engage yourselves in your duties and embark on the journey towards God-realisation.

If you want to worship God, worship Him in the human form alone. All other forms are artificial and creations of the imagination. They are products of delusion. While *bhrama* (delusion) remains, Brahman cannot be experienced.

Numerous persons are describing God in manifold ways. The scriptures also describe God in many ways. The expounders are content with reciting the descriptions, but do not seek to experience the Divine. What is the form of the Divine? If you wish to see the Divine, the form you envisage will be only a caricature. Consider your own form as manifestation of the Divine. Esteem yourself as divine. Respect others. Love yourself and love others. This is true worship.

It is because this broad-minded attitude to the Divine was not promoted from early times, man has been a prey to all forms of ignorance. There is no such thing as God "descending" on earth or leaving it.

The body is like a water bubble, which arises, grows and disappears in the water. This is the truth. Man is born from Brahman, grows through Brahman and merges in Brahman. Brahman means freedom from *Bhrama* (delusion). It is because of delusion that Brahman is not experienced. Man is dominated by the delusions of *Ahamkara* and *Mamakara* (Ego and Possessiveness).

In what form can you worship the Divine whose form is cosmic? What is it that you can offer to the One who is everything? The world has worshipped Him under different names

Rama, Krishna, Allah, Zoroaster, Buddha and Sai Baba. But all these names represent the One *Atma.* True worship consists in regarding all the forms as one and worshipping the Divine in the

form of Love and Truth. It is subtler than a sub-atomic particle. That is why it is said: "Truth is more fundamental than the atom."

Let conscience rule your actions

There is no meaning in worshipping God as *Sathyaswa-roopa* (the embodiment of Truth), and not adhering to truth in daily life. *Dharma* (righteousness) is born from truth. This righteousness emanates from the heart.

Righteousness promotes self-satisfaction. It is an expression of self-consciousness. Have faith in the promptings of this divine consciousness. No one should act against the dictates of his conscience. Acting in violation of the conscience is evil. Action according to the conscience is righteous. True worship consists therefore in doing what is right as dictated by your conscience. Divorce between thought and speech is ungodly. There should be complete accord between thought word and deed.

God is only One. Your forms of worship, rituals and beliefs are purely personal and do not relate to the universal. "Divinity" means that which is whole, all-embracing. The One Divine is present in all beings. Every being is filled with truth and love. There is no one without love. The love may find outlets in different ways, but it is essentially one. That Love is God. Do not go against that Love.

Though God may be worshipped in various forms, it is essential to recognise the unity that subsumes all of them. Worship may assume any form, but worship itself is one and the same. Likewise the forms of the Divine may be varied but the Divine principle is only one *Atma.*

Only the unchanging Love is true devotion

Today there is only one important thing that you have to take note of give up the delusion that the Divine is in some remote place. Have the faith: "I am God." When you have the faith that you are Divine, you are unlikely to go astray. You will pursue the right path. Believe that God is in every human being as declared by the *Vedas* and the *Upanishads.* Mere scholarship does not make a man a *Pandit* (a man of knowledge). *"Pandithaasamadarsinah" (Pandits are* those who see everything with an equal eye). *Pandits* should be judged by what they practice and not by their external appendages or what they preach or write.

Regard yourselves as children of God. There is really no difference between the *Avatars* and yourselves except with regard to the number of aspects of the Divine present in each one. These aspects can be enhanced by right conduct and by developing Divine love.

That is not true love which wanes from moment to moment and waxes from time to time. Only the love that is unchanging and shines brightly always in the heart is true love. It is unaffected by joy or sorrow, praise or blame. Such love is true devotion. A love that grows or declines according to varying circumstances is not true love at all.

When one derives some great benefit or his prayers are fulfilled, he installs more pictures for worship. But if his desires are not fulfilled, he removes the pictures. Can this be genuine devotion?

Get rid of selfishness by adoration of God

All the Divine principles--Brahma, Isa and Vishnu--are to be found in man. Brahma represents the creative principle. Isa (Shiva) is represented by the heart. The *Buddhi* (intellect) represents

the all-pervasive Vishnu principle. Similarly the three divine *modes---yantra, mantra* and *tantra* are also found in man. The body is *yantra* (machine). All limbs in a body are parts of a machine. Our breath is a *mantra.* With each breath the *mantra So-ham* (He is I) is pronounced. Our heart is *Tantra* (the directing power).

Have the firm faith that the Divinity is present in the human form. Perform right actions befitting the human form. Eschew selfishness, the attachments and hatred arising from it. The way to get rid of selfishness is adoration of God.

Discourse on Bhagavan's 63rd birthday in the Poornachandra Auditorium, 23 Nov 1988