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Sheaths Of The Self

Embodiments of Love!

ONE who has recognised the truth that the same *atma* exists in all, experiences unity with God and enjoys divine bliss, whether he is a renunciant or a householder, or whether he follows the path of action or not. The principle of *atma* cannot be understood by merely studying the Vedas and sacred texts or listening to discourses. Just as a gigantic tree originates from a tiny seed, so also the entire universe has its origin in the principle of *atma*.

Embodiments of Love!

You are verily the embodiments of bliss and

happiness. Is it not sheer ignorance to search for bliss and happiness in the external world when they are very much present in you? True spiritual transformation lies in understanding one's own real nature.

Both the present and the former Vice Chancellors of our Institute have prayed to Me (in their speeches earlier) that I should explain in detail the concept of *Pancha Koshas* (five sheaths of the Self). The pure *Atma* is enveloped by five sheaths; and due to its association with these sheaths, it acquires their traits. The physical body is referred to as the *Annamaya Kosha* (food sheath). The *atma* associated with gross body in its waking state is called '*Viswa*' as it is endowed with *jnanendriyas* and *karmendriyas* (organs of perception and action). As this body is involved in various external activities, it is also known as *Vyavaharika*. Thus, the Vedas have given various names to this sheath which comprises the *sthula sareera* (gross body). The *Pranamaya Kosha* (life sheath), *Manomaya Kosha* (mind sheath) and *Vijnanamaya Kosha* (wisdom sheath) form the *sukshma sareera* (subtle body) as they are not visible to the naked eye. Mind in its subtle form is all-pervasive. That is why it is said, *Manomoolam Idam Jagat* (mind is the basis for the entire world). *Anandamaya Kosha* (bliss sheath) refers to the *karana sareera* (causal body). One should go beyond all the five sheaths in order to experience bliss. This state is known as *turiya*, which is beyond *sushupti* (deep sleep

state). This refers to the *Mahakarana Swarupa* (supreme casual aspect). This is *Paramarthika* (the ultimate spiritual principle). The bliss experienced in this state is true bliss. This bliss cannot be obtained through the senses, mind or intellect.

There are five types of *kleshas* (obstacles), which come in the way of experiencing this bliss. They are: *Avidya Klesha*, *Abhinava Klesha*, *Asthitha Klesha*, *Raga Klesha* and *Dweshha Klesha*. Man is unable to have the vision of the *Atma* and experience *atmic* bliss due to these five *kleshas*. One who has excessive attachment to the body suffers from *avidya klesha*, which leads to various desires and diseases and makes one's life miserable. The *abhinava klesha* arises when one does not exercise control over one's mind. Man gives undue importance to the body and gets carried away by the vagaries of the mind and as a result is put to suffering. The *asthitha klesha* arises out of interest in worldly pleasures. The *raga klesha* results from attachment towards wealth and material objects. The *dweshha klesha* arises when one's expectations are frustrated and desires are not fulfilled.

Give Up Body Attachment

Some devotees worship God expecting something in return. They are happy if their desires are fulfilled or else they will start hating even God. They

do not enjoy the fortune on hand. On the contrary, they desire for something more which they do not deserve. As a result, they are subjected to distress. Today even the relationship between mother and child, husband and wife and between one brother and another are marred by *dwesha*.

The sheaths other than *Anandamaya Kosha* put man in bondage and subject him to *kleshas*. In order to understand the principle of *Paramarthika*, one should get rid of the mind or at least have control over it and gradually give up body attachment.

*The body is made up of five elements
and is bound to perish some time or the other.
But the Indweller has neither birth nor
death.
He does not have attachment or bondage.
Truly speaking, the indweller is God
Himself.*

(Telugu Poem)

One cannot realize the indwelling divinity until and unless one gives up body attachment. Body attachment is an obstacle on the path of spirituality. Just as a gigantic tree is contained in a tiny seed, likewise the five *kleshas* are ingrained in body attachment in the subtlest manner. Attachment to the body is the main cause for man's unhappiness, anxiety,

misery and lack of peace. One should consider the body as an instrument and lead a life of truth keeping in view the indwelling divinity.

First of all man should travel from the food sheath to the life sheath. Life sheath is referred to as vibration as it is responsible for the movement of the body. What is mind sheath? Mind is all-pervasive. Mind can travel any distance in a trice. Man has death but not the mind. Mind will follow man life after life. What is wisdom sheath? It is not connected with material world. The material world is associated with reaction, resound and reflection. For example, you hit the table with your hand. Then the table also hits you in turn. As is the action, so is the reaction. This is the principle of *Pratibhasika*. That which is related to *Pratibhasika* is only worldly and secular knowledge. It cannot be termed as wisdom. True wisdom lies in understanding the constant integrated awareness. It leads to the changeless eternal bliss. This can be experienced only after transcending the five sheaths, namely, *Annamaya* (gross form), *Pranamaya*, *Manomaya*, *Vijnanamaya* (subtle form) and *Anandamaya* (causal form). Then you reach the state of *turiya* (supreme causal state). That which is beyond the causal state is supreme causal state. In order to attain this state one should understand very clearly the nature of five sheaths.

Primordial Basis Of The Universe

The entire world has a primordial basis. Here is a silver plate and a silver tumbler. Silver is the basis for these. The name and form of the object can be changed, but silver remains the same. Likewise, all names and forms are bound to change, but the primordial basis remains changeless.

The principle of Atma is ancient and eternal.

It has neither birth nor death, neither beginning nor end.

(Telugu Poem)

It is the primordial basis for the body, the mind and the life principle. Divinity is the foundation of everything.

The water of the ocean becomes vapour due to sun's rays. The vapour in turn become clouds. The clouds come down in the form of rain, flowing down as rivers and streams, which ultimately merge into the ocean, (*Nadinam Sagaro Gathi*). Just as the rivers, which originate from the ocean, ultimately become one with it, so also all the living beings and objects, which originate from Divinity, will ultimately merge into it. This in Vedantic parlance is called *mukti* (liberation). The *Bhagavata* also says, it is but natural for all the living beings to go back to their place of origin. The

individual soul has originated from divinity and is bound to merge into it.

The Principle Of Atma Is One And The Same

Embodiments of Love!

Spirituality does not mean a life of solitude. True spirituality lies in understanding the unity of the entire humanity, and giving up the sense of attachment and hatred. The principle of *atma* is the same in everyone.

What is the form of the *Atma*? Sugar has a form, but can anyone describe the form of sweetness? Sweetness can only be experienced, it cannot be explained. Similar is the case with the *atmic* principle too. It is ancient, eternal, attributeless, formless, pure, unsullied and immortal. The sweets such as mysore pak, gulab jamoon, burfi, etc., may vary in name and form, but sugar is the same in all. Likewise, names and forms are different, but the principle of *atma* is one and the same.

One Should Have Purity Of Mind

Today, man undertakes various spiritual practices such as *sravanam* (listening), *kirthanam* (singing), *vishnusmaranam* (chanting), *padasevanam* (serv-

ing the Lotus Feet), *vandanam* (salutation), *archanam* (worship), *Dasyam* (servitude), *sneham* (friendship) and *atmanivedanam* (self-surrender). But they provide only external and temporary satisfaction. It is futile to argue which spiritual practice is more beneficial. As long as one gets sleep, it hardly matters where one sleeps, be it in a *choultry* or a palace. Similarly, one should have purity of mind whatever may be the spiritual practice one undertakes. Once the mind is pure, one can achieve anything in life. In order to purify the mind, one should develop the principle of love. The light of love can never be extinguished. Once you develop the principle of love, you will transcend the three states of *Viswa*, *Taijasa* and *Prajna* and attain the ultimate bliss. The individual soul in the waking state is known as *Viswa*, as it is associated with *karmendriyas* and *jnanendriyas*. In the dream state, it is called *Taijasa* (the effulgent one), as it is associated with the effulgent principle of *antahkarana* (inner instrument). In deep sleep state, it is known as *Prajna*. It is associated with the bliss sheath.

Amarasimha, an ancient scholar par excellence, composed many verses describing the principle of divinity. But some people unable to understand his sacred nature put him through hardships. They branded Amarasimha as an atheist. He was put to a lot of suffering and all his books were set on fire. When his

works were burning, Sankara intervened and retrieved *Amarakosha*. *Amarkosha* is like another Veda. It is an enchanting and thrilling book. It is utter foolishness to destroy such a sacred book. In fact, people do not try to understand the teachings of the Vedas and sacred texts. That is why they have forgotten their true Self.

Chanting Divine Name On Sivarathri

The nights you experience on other days are ordinary nights. But Sivarathri is an auspicious night. How is it auspicious? It is auspicious when you spend your time in an auspicious way singing the glories of the Lord. The mind has sixteen aspects. The moon is the presiding deity of the mind. Of the sixteen aspects of the moon, fifteen are absent today. If you sing His glory throughout the night wholeheartedly, even the remaining one aspect can also be merged with the Divine. On this day, it is possible to get full control over the mind by contemplating on God. Hence it is considered as an auspicious night. Unfortunately, in this *Kali* Age, people observe the vigil of Sivarathri by seeing cinema shows or playing cards all through the night. This cannot be called Sivarathri. Every moment of the night should be devoted to the thoughts of God and chanting of His name wholeheartedly. The chanting should come from within. This is what is called the reflection of the inner being.

God has thousands of names. Of all those names, '*Satchitananda*' is the most important and significant. '*Sath*' stands for the changeless eternal principle and '*Chith*' denotes total awareness. The former can be compared to sugar and the latter to water. When sugar and water are mixed, what results is syrup. Likewise, the combination of '*Sath*' and '*Chith*' results in *Ananda*. Fill your heart with love and chant the Divine name. Only then can you attain divinity. Perform all your activities with love. Love should originate from the source, i.e., the heart and not by force. Today people chant the divine name, not from source, but out of force. No benefit accrues from chanting the divine name unless it is done wholeheartedly. Chant His name wholeheartedly at least for half a minute, that is enough. One tea spoonful of cow's milk is better than barrels of donkey's milk. God is interested in quality, not in Quantity.

Secret Of Remaining Ever Young

Students!

You should understand that body is but an instrument and the *Atma* is the doer and enjoyer. Give up body attachment. What are you studying for? You want to earn money and lead a happy life. But, are you getting happiness from your studies? No. After your studies, you want a lucrative job, then a promotion and

so on and so forth. There is no end to your desires. Then how can you expect to be happy? True and permanent happiness cannot be attained in the physical world. It can be experienced only in the state of *turiya*. Bliss is not present in physical worldly objects.

One day, Adi Sankara, along with his thirteen disciples was going to the river Ganga for a holy dip. He came across a Brahmin sitting under a tree and repeating *Dukrunkarane, Dukrunkarane...* Sankara asked him what he would gain by repeating the rudiments of grammar? The Brahmin replied that he would become a great scholar, join the royal court and earn money. Then Sankara questioned him as to how long the wealth would ensure him happiness. The Brahmin said, he could lead a happy life till his death. Then Sankara asked him, what would happen after death. The Brahmin replied that he did not know. Then Sankara sang the following verse.

*Bhaja Govindam Bhaja Govindam
Govindam Bhaja Moodhamathe
Samprapthe Sannihithe Kale
Nahi Nahi Rakshati Dukrunkarane.*

(Oh! Foolish one, when the hour of death approaches rudiments of grammar will not come to your rescue. So, chant the name of God). Only God's name will protect you in all periods of time and under

all circumstances. Everything in this world is like a passing cloud. Only bliss and love are permanent. Love is God God is love. So, live in love.

Students!

Youth is very sacred. Do not misuse it by indulging in limitless desires and building castles in the air. Pursue your education keeping God uppermost in your mind. Do not get entangled in unnecessary activities and bondages, which will cause restlessness. Today people are in search of peace. But peace cannot be found in the external world. You find only pieces! Peace is in you. You are the embodiment of peace, you are the embodiment of truth and you are the embodiment of love. So, first of all know thyself. Only then you can be blissful always. Modern students are acquiring various degrees. But, what is the use?

*In spite of his education and intelligence,
A foolish man will not know his true self
And a mean-minded person will not give up
his wicked qualities.*

*Modern education leads only to argumentation,
not to total wisdom.*

*What is the use of acquiring worldly
education*

If it cannot lead you to immortality?

*Acquire the knowledge that will make you
immortal.*

(Telugu Poem)

Only God Is Permanent

Embodiments of love!

Love all, do not hate anybody. This is the teaching of our ancient culture. Sage Vyasa gave the the essence of 18 Puranas in a few words: *Paropakara-ya punyaya papaya parapeedanam*. So “Help ever, Hurt never.” It is enough if you put this into practice. Along with worldly education, spiritual education is also essential. It is said, “*Adhyatma Vidya Vidyanam*” (spiritual education is true education). That alone can confer the knowledge of Brahman, which transcends dualities and the three attributes, namely, *satwa*, *rajas* and *tamas*. Only God is permanent. Everything else is temporary. Today people have faith in world, but not in God. Do not take pride in your youth and physical beauty.

*What will happen to you
When you become a decrepit old man,
When your body becomes weak,
Legs stagger and vision fails
And you are no better than a leather
puppet.*

*And the children laugh at you
Calling you an old monkey?*

(Telugu Poem)

How long will your youth last? Just as a flash of lightning is followed by pitch darkness, likewise, youth is followed by old age. The flower that blossoms in the morning fades in the evening. Such is the nature of human body. Have control over your body and mind. Do not depend on others. Will your hunger be satiated if someone else partakes of food? No. Self-effort is very essential in order to progress on the path of spirituality.

If you want to remain young always, you should have control over your senses. Swami is the direct proof of this. My body is full of energy. There is absolutely no weakness whatsoever in Me. Even now I can run fast. Can anyone imagine that Swami is 75 years old? What is the secret behind this? Purity, patience and perseverance are mainly responsible for this. Swami's feelings are always pure and steady. Try to emulate Swami in this regard.

Happiness Lies In Union With God

You claim yourself to be Swami's devotees. Then is it not your duty to cultivate at least a fraction of Swami's purity? You do not have the patience to

give a proper answer, if someone were to ask you for some information. But, I talk to thousands and yet remain peaceful and blissful always. I am engaged in multifarious activities. None can describe the job I do. I do the work of all departments. All departments belong to Me. But, I am never restless. I am always full of bliss. During the birthday celebrations, some devotees wish Me Happy Birthday. I tell them, "You do not need to wish Me Happy Birthday, because I am always happy. Give happiness to those who are not happy." Happiness lies in union with God. If you have the firm conviction that God is in you, with you and around you, you will never face any hardship or misery in your life. People talk of worries and misery. But, I do not know what they are. They do not come near Me because of My purity. Only those with bad thoughts and bad character are affected by misery and worry. So,

*See no evil, see what is good
Hear no evil, hear what is good
Talk no evil, talk what is good
Think no evil, think what is good
Do no evil, do what is good
This is the way to God.*

When faced with difficulties, do not get disheartened. Consider that they are for your own good.

A Devotee's Firm Faith Earns Bhagawan's Grace

You would have noticed Swami talking to a devotee on this platform a few minutes ago. His name is Narayana. He is from Chennai. Last week he had a heart problem. His son, who is a student of our college, telephoned his father asking him to come to Puttaparthi immediately. He came here and doctors who examined him told me that the four valves of his heart were blocked and it was difficult to perform operation on him. Three doctors who had come from America examined him. In fact, they were surprised to find him to be alive with such a serious heart problem.

Narayana told them that he had no pain and that he was very happy as Swami was with him always. But the doctors were not satisfied. They performed open heart surgery on him for five hours. Four bypasses were done. This operation was performed day before yesterday and today he has come to the *mandir*. In the normal course, after a bypass surgery, a patient has to be on the bed for at least ten days. But Narayana walked three hundred steps yesterday itself. Isn't this incredible? Today he has come here wearing pant and shirt looking like a college boy. I told him that his faith was responsible for this. Right from the beginning he has been saying that Swami was with him and that He would take care of him. He feels that his heart problem did good for him in the sense that it brought him to the abode of Swami.

He said, our hospital was not just a hospital, but a temple of healing. His operation was performed day before yesterday. Yesterday the doctors served him idlis and today he has come to the *mandir* for Swami's *darshan*. Is it possible in any other hospital? Ask any doctor, he will give an emphatic 'No' as answer. Such is the nature of human body, but God can change even the nature of the body and grant a bright future. God can transform earth into sky and sky into earth, but you should have firm faith in Him. Today man has become blind, losing the eyes of faith. He does not have faith in God. How can he, who does not know himself, know Divinity?

Develop Love For God

First know yourself, then you can easily understand divinity. Have faith in God. There is nothing that God cannot do. One with proper eyesight can see even the small glow-worm. But a blind man cannot see even the brightly shining sun. Likewise, one without the spiritual eye will find only darkness all around him. A spark of spiritual light is enough to see the entire cosmos.

The Age of Kali has become the Age of *kalaha* (quarrels). There are quarrels and conflicts everywhere. Students should resolve to eradicate hatred and restlessness. On this holy day of Sivarathri, develop the principle of love more and more. I love everybody.

Everybody loves Me. But sometimes students feel that Swami is not talking to them because He is angry with them. I am never angry with anybody. But in order to correct you, sometimes I may pretend to be angry. When one falls sick, one needs to be given medicine. Also one has to follow dietary regulations. Only then your sickness will be cured. Similarly, to cure your 'diseases', Swami gives you 'medicine' in His own inimitable way. In order to bring about transformation in you, sometimes I remain quiet and do not talk to you.

Do not breed hatred, greed and jealousy. You know what happened to Hiranyakasipu, Ravana and Duryodhana who developed hatred towards God. The Pandavas led a happy life as they had immense love for God. They were subjected to innumerable difficulties, yet their love for God did not diminish. So, develop love for God. The more you develop love, the more you experience happiness and the closer you go to ultimate bliss.

Sivarathri, 4-3-2000, Prasanthi Nilaya