

YOU ARE YOU (ATMAN)

By Swami Akhandanand Saraswatiji

1. Do you enquire, search, pursue or hanker after Truth? Very well! May you succeed in your laudable pursuit! I desire to inform you that before anything, please love Truth and understand its characteristics. Supposing one tries to find out a cow in a jungle without loving her or knowing its marks, what will the result be? He will return frustrated and fatigued or even on obtaining the cow, he will fail to recognize that 'it is the same cow'. In the first place he will not relish long continued enquiry, neither would he be able to bear the necessary trouble and even on obtaining the cow, it will remain as if unobtained. Therefore, it is essential to have love for Truth and know its characteristics.

2. How much do you love truth? Do you care for truth in enjoying things, in using and in accumulating them? Do you side with truth while doing work or in ordinary conversation? In case you do not love truth or are not partial to it in enjoyment, accumulation, action, and speech, how can you be attached and love truth devotedly and wholeheartedly? Meaning is that one who loves truth in relative practical life can alone be a seeker of absolute truth. Without a reproachful attitude for untruth, there can not be any progress towards truth.

3. If you do not recognize truth, how can you be satisfied and feel fulfilled even after obtaining it? In order

to recognise truth you will have to draw a dividing line. Self-truth and Non-self truth. When you recognise the characteristics of truth, then you will perceive that, in respect of which a determination of falsity is not possible in any state is called truth. Imaginary invisible truth and sensory visible truth in some place or other, in some state or in sometime can be determined as false. Only one self-truth is there which can not be falsified under any circumstance, In specific technical language it is called 'uninvalidable or irrefutable' (अबाधित) To search this truth, it is not necessary to have a special state of mind—active or quiet, no special place—inside or outside, no special substance-resultant effect or causal state. This is self-truth. In it there is no going, nor coming; no contracting nor expanding, no becoming nor disintegrating, no birth nor death. This self-truth, you are yourself.

4. The climax of love is Self alone. This is proved by revelation (श्रुति), reason and experience. Self is dearer than wealth, son, wife etc. Everyone is loved for the sake of self, not self for every one. Atman does not form a part of love for some one. It is itself dear. This is disinterested (निरुपाधिक) love. Though it is unremote yet it is unknown. We see one individual or one object every day, but do not recognize it. Even a diamond before it is recognized is merely a piece of glass. Its value is manifest only on recognition. Our supreme object of love is self alone and it is essential to recognize it. The result of this recognition or knowledge is dispassion in respect of others or objects. By this dispassion also Self-enquiry becomes fortified and then later on without Self-realization one does not feel fulfilled in any other object. This dispassion is the key to steady stable knowledge otherwise there is possibility of retracing

after progressing four steps forward; even fall from the path, or obstruction in progress. Therefore it is essential to recognize the supreme love of the self.

5. There is one changeful stream of life flowing. Birth and death are its two aspects. The witness Self (Atman) is immortal. It is not merely a witness but Brahman (Non-dual, impartite, eternal universal consciousness). Birth and death are inconstant. Mundane life is changefully constant. Atman (Self) is invariably constant. This Atman together with its invariable character is also undivided or impartite. Its undividedness is different from pervasion present in all forms combined together as also from material causal pervasion. That is not merely unattached but also non-dual (suggesting apparent transformation (विवर्त) as in case of a serpent seen on rope). For this reason, after Self-realization, the problem of birth and rebirth or other attachments are all resolved, not only this but the other (separate entity) is for ever invalidated. Renunciation and activity are two or dual but Atman is one or non-dual.

6. Do you recognize truth as your own self or do you desire to recognize it as the other ? That Truth which you will recognize as separate from yourself will be like an earthen pot visible and also necessarily destructible. If it is like nature (प्रकृती) three gunes (substances), invisible resultant (अर्च) unseen result (अदृष्ट), tiny atom etc., remote and invisibled, it will definately be imaginary. If it is perceived directly such as dream, deep sleep, love and hate, then it will be a form of streaming mentations, sometimes present, sometimes absent. Its production and destruction will be within our control. Self-truth, therefore, is neither visible (un-remote) nor invisible or remote. It is not like love etc. perce-

ptible or unremote. It is not a specific form of mentation. It is not included in production department. It is not to be gained or obtained. It is self-fulfilled or perfect in itself. Therefore, for its realization, there is no need for any specific ideation or specific form or specific ins'trument. Dispel the delusion by discrimination and you are that truth itself. If you feel the necessity for constancy of state as even after the delusion has been destroyed, the old habit of wrong understanding is firm and persistent, then relinquish thinking and stay without thinking. What is essential is the consummate perfection that I am non-dual Brahman (Eternal universal consciousness), there being no rule of thinking or not thinking.

7. Really, even listening, contemplating and meditating do not function in Self-truth. This also is a method of traditional scientific mode of gifting knowledge. It has to be used as a medicine to remove intellectual misconception. It is a means in the removal of disease, not in the state of health. Health or perfection is the natural state. Therefore utilise all the three according to the need in annihilating ignorance, doubt and misunderstanding. Compulsion of medicine is also a symptom of disease. For the incredulous there is use of a mixture of different views but to remain for the whole life time in the laboratory does no credit to wisdom. The result of the fulfilment of Self-truth is Self-fulfilment itself. Its fruit is not trance, celestial journey, ecstasy or particular state. In all states non-difference, fearlessness, so much so, that even in duality and fear utter fearlessness is the natural condition of fulfilment not a result or fruit. अमयं ह वै जनः प्राप्तोऽसि । Janaka, you have certainly obtained fearlessness ?

8. So, well ! do you again seek knowledge ? Whose knowledge is it ? Other's or your own ? Is your nature ignorant in

character ? You are yourself Awareness ! Everything is enlightened by you alone. In your own nature of self-enlightenment, there is no thing like "all", then whose knowledge do you seek ? Is knowledge itself seeking knowledge ? How can there be knowledge of knowledge or Awareness of awareness ? Then is knowledge unaware or unknown ? Certainly if it is something other. If it was not unknown, then why should knowledge have been sought at all ? If that knowledge is not other, but yourself, then how can there be the seeking of it ? It is excellently known; because it is your own self. Come along ! you are Existence Self, knowledge self, Bliss self and recognize the characteristic of Impartite self. That characteristic is extraordinary. Wise people recognize it in every moment, in every particle as self-illuminating, all enlightener Atman as the ground or substratum.

9. Materialists (Charvakas) have accepted knowledge as a transformation of material substance. The beginning and end of knowledge is material substance. Birth and death of knowledge ! Does this sound at all rational ? Without knowledge, material substance, transformation, beginning and end, nothing can be proved. They went seeking knowledge and returned with ignorance.

The Nudists (Jains) accepted knowledge as expanding and contracting, as basis of activity of journey to and fro and even in accomplished state they have placed it on the summit of a special space (called Alokakash) in lone united form of personality. This space-bound knowledge, accompanied by decay and growth and therefore is pertaining to a particular mind only, not the knowledge in its true perspective.

Buddhists (followers of Sugata or Buddha) have percei-

ved knowledge rising and setting every moment in the formidable flux of time. The desire stream of every particle flows uninterrupted, but knowledge is being blunted and robbed. Believing in the annihilation of knowledge they have dubbed themselves as Nihilists (Vainashik) and obtained nothingness and utter void.

Followers of Akshapad (the sage Gautama, founder of the Nyaya System and Kanad of the Vaisheshik system) have made knowledge as only an attribute. Blessed poor knowledge sometimes becomes conscious and sometimes in swoon. Wise becomes ignorant and ignorance dilly-dallies as brilliant knowledge.

Followers of Kapila (founder of Sankhya System), Patanjali (founder of Yoga system) have discerned knowledge of Atman as apart from knowledge associated with mentations but they have thrown the former as if in a cave and whenever it presents itself in the relative field then it is besmeared with the mire of mentations. Founder leaving the period of Samadhi (mentation free state of mind) it is ever coalesced with mentations. Awareness, pure knowledge, free from the differences of knowener and object of knowledge is totally unknown in relative life.

Some have made knowledge an attribute of God (Ishwara) and some have made it subservient to Ishwara. Important is that the characteristics of pure knowledge went on being more and more covered. The knowledge which you have been seeking, what is it truly ? If you eradicate the subject (ego) and object (world) parts, then where is the room for space, time, substance, state, attribute, or dependance in knowledge ?

10. Is knowledge of your own self or of the other? If knowledge is of the other then it is inescapable that you will have to engage yourself for its accomplishment if it is superior and in relinquishment if it is inferior. If the knowledge is of your own self then you have to discard the other and stabilize in your self. Meaning is that if the other is to be accomplished then moral and religious activities will be useful, if it is your own self, then concentration and samadhi etc. will be necessary. But this activity and renunciation is the result of knowledge of difference between self and other. Difference itself is an enlightened object and not the enlightener. Hence it is not self-effulgent. Pure enlightenment is that awareness wherein there is no difference of self and the other. This is reason why knowledge or awareness is not the originator of activity or renunciation. After the imaginary cover of ignorance is shattered by the great sentences (from Upanishada) such as "Thou Art That" and others, then that awareness is itself impartite or undivided and non-dual (no other or second). On shattering of the cover, perception of difference does not resolve but only the delusion of difference (sense of reality of difference) is annihilated. Perception is of the nature of awareness only. Therefore, even though the difference is being manifested or enlightened. It is itself non-different (as in dream or show). For this reason alone, for the wise philosopher there is no duty of activity or renunciation whatever. This knowledge is neither the result of action-devotion-control of mind efforts nor the cause of any duty. Causality (cause and effect relation) is in ignorance only. For this reason, even though appearing as cause and effect in our own self-effulgent ground, they are just invalidated.

11. It is not necessary for shattering the cover of igno-

rance to make knowledge the object of awareness because there is no method of proving such as direct perception or inference etc. which is capable of making awareness the object of knowledge. That which is the effulgent light of the enlightener of evidence or proof, which is also the witness and enlightner of intellect etc., which evidence is capable of making it the object of proof? The means of arriving at correct knowledge, the object to be proved, and the connected proof or authority, all these three are enlightened by the effulgence of awareness only. This is the triad of the relative state in ignorance. In this the absolute state of the prover alone is true, the triad is resolved or invalidated. Therefore, the rise of the awareness of oneness (of individual and consciousness per se) as a result of hearing the great (upanishadic) sentences such as 'That Thou Art' and others is a proof in refuting ignorance only, not that it is capable of making awareness an object of knowledge. The mode of proof of mentation is also relative transaction in ignorance; because it is seen in common life that a constant indivisible object like heaven etc. is known only through a sentence and not by direct perception or inference. Similarly, if any substance be constant and unremote as well as unknown and unrecognised then its ignorance and non-recognition could be resolved by a sentence as proof or evidence only if you are directly perceiving through eyes an individual or an object, but you are unfamiliar whether this is Jack or Jill or this is a diamond or a specific precious stone-this want of recognition, if it be present can be removed through a sentence of authority or proof. This is a mentation produced by sentence of proof. Mentation means a relative transaction. Atman (self) is constantly unremote. It is your own self, but its indistructibility, absoluteness, undividedness, non-duality is as if

unknown and unfamiliar. To remove this non-cognition, there is no other alternative, than the knowledge provided by the sentence. The sentence also must be such that it should liberate from activity, enjoyment, journey to and fro, destruction of dualities of dear and undear and dividedness. Let that sentence be uttered in any language but it should necessarily be capable of getting rid of the delusion of duality. If our identity with Supreme Self be emotional then that emotion will one day or other perish. If that is produced by samadhi (mentation-free state of the mind) and it remains only on stabilising in our own state (unmodified), then on leaving that state it will vanish. Truth or Philosophy does not join you with somebody nor does it separate you from others and stabilise you in your self. It is not insistant on either in taking you somewhere nor even in stabilising you in yourself. It is merely an awareness of true state. Even in ignorance Atman (self) is Brahman (Impartite, non-dual, eternal universal consciousness) and in knowledge it is so surpassingly. The cover of this truth is dispelled by mentation produced from hearing great sentences (Upanishadic). Neither is the mentation true nor the cover. Truth is Atman of the nature of Awareness alone and it is non-dual Brahman (Consciousness per se) and it is your Self. You are you (self).

