

Realization of the Self.

What is 'Truth' ?

कालत्रयेऽपि तिष्ठतीति सत् ।

"Truth is that which exists at all times in the same condition."

This description—the nearest approach to a definition of Truth—lays down two conditions:—(1) permanent existence in all the three divisions of time—the past, the present and the future; and (2) changelessness in all times.

Now, having got this description as our guide, let us try to find out Truth. While thus trying, we shall have to take into consideration things that exist in the Universe (existence being the very essence of Truth), and also our search must refer to things that are perceptible to our senses or mind or understanding. The human body is the best and nearest of all perceptible things. Let us apply our description to that. "*Is this Human body Truth ?*" No, it is not; because before its birth it existed not, and, though it does exist now, it will cease to do so after a few years. Thus, the first condition is not satisfied. The second is also not fulfilled; because, just after its birth the body was very very small. Gradually it grows up, and after a certain period it begins to dwindle and wastes away till it is not. Thus, the Body is not Truth.

Let us go a little farther and ask, "*Is the Mind Truth ?*" No, it is not; because, as is well known, it is changing every moment. Moreover, it apparently

has its births and deaths with the body. Let us again ask, "*Is the Understanding Truth ?*" No, it is not; because what applies to the mind applies to that also. Take whatever thing we may, limited existence and changeability can be readily predicated of it.

Now, the conclusion cannot be denied that *none of these three—Body, Mind, or Understanding—is the Truth, but that Truth is above and beyond these three.* (These three things are considered only for the sake of simplicity. The above can be said of anything whatsoever in the Universe that is perceptible.) Having come thus far, let us now characterise Truth. It is above and beyond the Body, which has a form; hence Truth is *formless* (निराकार). It is above and beyond the Senses and Mind and hence it is *stainless* (निराज). The mind is always of a doubting or hesitating nature, *i. e.*, always oscillating between one or more alternatives; hence Truth, being above it, admits of no *alternative* (विकल्प). The Body, Mind and Understanding all undergo changes. But Truth being above them remains *changeless* (निर्विकार).

It is *everlasting* or सदा. And hence it must be *Knowledge Absolute* or चिदा. It is above the mind, which has happiness and misery, and so it is *Bliss Absolute* (आनन्द). Body and mind have fear; so Truth, which is above them, must be *fearless* (निर्भय). Body, Mind and Understanding have birth and death. But Truth being above them is *birthless and deathless* (जन्म and मरण). We may go on

characterising Truth thus *negatively* (नेति नेति, as the Vedas say.) Thus, Truth is *Formless* (विराकार), *Unstained* (निवृज्ज), *Admitting of no alternative* (निर्विकल्प), *Unchangeable* (निर्विकार), *Ever-Existent* (सर्व), *Knowledge Absolute* (विद्य), *Bliss Absolute* (आनन्द), *Fearless* (विशेष), *Birthless and Deathless* (जन्म and मरण) and so on.

Now, who am "I"? Am I this Body, Mind, or Understanding? When we are in a wakeful state, we consider the Body to be I. When one says—"I am sitting or standing or eating or doing anything", he means, by I, the Body. But when one dreams in his sleep, he says, after his sleep, "I saw a garden or a friend", etc. He cannot mean the Body by this "I". Who was it, then, that saw the garden, etc.? It was the *Mind*. While dreaming, one forgets his Body-consciousness; but the Mind is active, and that it is which calls itself "I" in dreams. So the "I" of the wakeful state and the "I" of the dream are two different things—in the former it being the Body, in the latter the Mind. Is the Mind *the Real I*? Let us see.

When one is in the deep-sleep state, he forgets his Body-consciousness as well as his Mind-consciousness. Neither the "I" of the wakeful state nor the "I" of the dream is there. And yet, when he wakes up from that deep-sleep state, he says: "I slept so happily that I knew nothing whatever". In this sentence the "I" means the Body or the Mind. But both the Body and the Mind were absent in that state; how, then, could he know that he (I) could not know anything? There must be somebody to know this, some witness who must be present there to corroborate this statement, and that witness must be conscious that this "I" did not know anything, meaning

thereby that the mind did not know anything. Now, this witness is *the Real I*, whose presence is proved in the deep-sleep state. The sleeper's being unaware of its existence is due to his ignorance of sleep. ("I did not know anything" shows the state of ignorance.)

Thus, we can see that the *REAL I* is beyond Body, Mind and Understanding, and that it is from this *REAL I* that the Mind-consciousness and the Body-consciousness are developed. (After a deep-sleep first the mind becomes active and then the body.) Thus *The REAL I* must always precede the mind, *i. e.*, before the mind can take any impression the *REAL I* must be there behind it. We have thus seen that both truth and the *REAL I* are beyond body, Mind and Understanding. Hence the *REAL I IS THE TRUTH AND VICE VERSA*. They are one and the same, and the characteristics of Truth are the characteristics of the *REAL I*. So "I am Formless, Unstained, Admitting of No Alternative, Unchangeable, Ever-Existing, Knowledge, Bliss, Fearless, Birthless, Deathless, etc., etc." Now can be very easily understood the significance of 'अहं ब्रह्मास्मि' (I am *Brahma*) and त्वमसि (Thou art That). One may call सत्य (Truth) by any name—*Brahma*, Allah, God, etc.

This may be proved from the daily language used by people. When one says "This is my book or my table," he means that the "I" is the owner of and quite distinct from the book or table. Similarly, one says: "My body, my mind my understanding," meaning thereby that these are quite different from the "I". The *Real I* is above and beyond them. During the time that a man thinks in the above way he is in a

trance or समाधि; and this is ज्ञान-समाधि, because he becomes one with Truth and thus attains विवेक or Discrimination between the Real and the Unreal, and वैराग्य or indifference for all wordly things. Because, for the time he is thinking of this the world is absent from his mind, and this is the best kind of वैराग्य. The world is मिथ्या (illusory). Had it been otherwise, he would have been conscious of it. Thirdly, he attains the तुरीयावस्था (Super-consciousness). Because, while thus thinking, he is neither in the wakeful state nor in dream nor in the deep-sleep state, because he forgets the Body and the Mind and is not enveloped by ignorance. But he is above all these three states; he is in a super-conscious state. And finally he attains oneness, because when he is in समाधि he is one with the *Supreme Truth, the Real I*, the witness of all this, and he is तुरीयावस्था, in a state which is above super-consciousness.

What man is there who will not be really happy, constantly thinking thus? Being above desires and above fears, he has nothing to desire and nothing to fear. He need not hanker after freedom (मोक्ष), there being no real bondage. If all were to live this, the earth—this sad, old earth—would become paradise. No misery, no sorrow, no freedom, no bondage. All in One and One in all! "All Existence, Knowledge, Bliss! Wake up, Bharata! This is the heritage bequeathed thee by thy glorious past! This is the heritage which thou in thy darkness cast away! Here it is that lies thy emancipation!"

Whenever oppressed by grief, anger, lust, avarice, etc., isolate yourself from your surroundings and meditate on the above, and peace will come to ye. When a

man concentrates his mind on his work, he becomes one or in trance with his work. It is only after he is out of his work that the joys and miseries of this world assail him. Let him, then, think of the above and keep on repeating ॐ or नमोऽस्तु. This repetition of ॐ or नमोऽस्तु is very helpful in the beginning, as it serves the purpose of a reminder of his *Real I*. Gradually, as he assimilates the above in his daily life, this reminder will not be necessary. He will, in fact, be the ॐ, the One, himself.

We can now prove that this Absolute Principle, this Truth, this I is *Omnipresent, Omnipotent, Omniscient*. It is the mind that perceives anything. But we know that the mind cannot exist without the *Real I* and hence wherever the mind goes, the *Real I* must be there before it. Hence it is *Omnipresent*. Similarly, Force is a product of thought which is a function of the mind. Hence Force ultimately emanates from the I which is thus *Omnipotent*. So also perception or knowledge is the function of the mind and the understanding whose existence is impossible without the *Real I*. Moreover, the knowability of anything depends upon this I, to which it is indebted for its very existence. Hence it is *Omniscient*.

So I am in all forms and all forms are in Me, and all forms that are to go perceived are so many manifestations of myself, produced by Myself, Myself remaining the same in all forms—a witness. Hence divest anything of its name and form and there am I in full splendour.

To him who has put this in practice it is needless to go to a forest and leave the world. Be in the world but not of the world.

And this it was that was proclaimed centuries ago from the depths of the Himalayas in a thundering voice piercing the lengths and breadths of ancient Bhārata:—*Hark, ye heirs of the Immortal who lived in celestial abodes, I have seen that great being, shining like the sun, beyond the reach of darkness. Knowing Him alone one can go beyond death. There is no other exit.*

शृण्वन्तु सर्वे अमृतस्य पुत्राः
आ ये दिव्ये घामनि तस्युः ।
दृष्टाहमेतं पुरुषं महान्त-
मादित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात् ॥
तमेव ज्ञात्वा अतिमृत्युमेति
नान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय ॥

“Chandra”

