

# Beyond Religion

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Arya Putra

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## **A word about words. . . .**

There are many subtle truths introduced in this work. The Sanskrit language was the original language used to convey these truths to the first inhabitants of this globe.

It is not necessary to have a thorough understanding of Sanskrit in order to understand the nature of Reality or to experience your Essence. However, I have found it useful to employ certain Sanskrit words in this text to help convey my understanding to others.

I encourage you to read this text with an open mind and consider learning some of these new words which may help you in grasping the underlying concepts introduced (or reintroduced) in this treatise.

## **Statement of My Intentions**

I am not the guardian of any particular religion, creed or philosophy. Simply put: my experience and knowledge behoove me to speak the truth, completely free of any malice or ill-will, with neither 'butter to spread' nor an 'axe to grind.'

My passion for the Truth is not born of fanaticism or adherence to any image or dogma. It is born of my direct experience only, and my good fortune in coming in direct contact with the Wise.

I am not perfect. I am sharing my thoughts and experiences with others so that we can all grow spiritually and become wiser. My wish is that all of us may attain a deeper understanding of Truth.

This monologue and dialog should help everyone to discern between what is true and what is false, what is real and what is unreal, and what is helpful and what is harmful. All desire to discover the pure, undiluted Truth. If the Truth is covered by Ignorance, then the Ignorance must be exposed and removed.

If some of the things I say are blunt and to the point, it is only for the sake of 'cutting to the chase' and not for the purpose of cutting anyone down. My desire is to humanize, not dehumanize. If there are misunderstandings, hopefully these can be removed. In any case, I am here to share wisdom and improve myself in the process.

I hope we can all benefit from this exchange of noble thoughts; and I have no doubt that we will, so long as we do not short change ourselves

by going in our ego. I am saying this to myself  
first; if you are hearing it, you are listening to my  
echo.

Your well-wisher,  
Arya Putra  
July 14<sup>th</sup> 2009

## Who Am I?

I am Arya Putra. What does this mean? It means that I am a good human being who is purifying his mind. That's all. That's all there is to it. That's all there is to me.

I am what I am by virtue of my practices. What practices? I am known by the thoughts I hold, the food I eat, and the company I keep. I am known by my qualities, my behavior, and by my nature (*guna-karam-subhav*).

Life is the process of constant refinement of the mind. The mind that is refined will shine the Light of the Soul. To refine the mind wisdom is absolutely necessary. The wisdom of Consciousness (*Atam Gyaan*) purifies the mind.

The mind cannot be purified so long as ego reigns there. The mind that is ruled by ego deflects the Light of the Soul.

The work of self-improvement (sadhana) never ends. The moment we stop improving that moment we start going down. The greatest musicians, artists, scientists, doctors, engineers, and athletes NEVER become complacent. Similarly, a true devotee of Truth never claims to be perfect.

A person can know a lot and still remain ignorant. 'Knowing' is not enough. If we know better *we have to do better*. If we know what is best, then we must *do our best*.

The best thing we can do is to stay out of our ego. According to Rishi Patanjali: "To the one who renounces the fruit of his action, the power



of perfect discernment comes, and all selfish motives and pain end.” ‘Renouncing the fruit of our actions’ means to stop looking for credit or recognition for the good that we do.

The only way to eliminate ego from our mind is to keep doing good actions without any thought of personal recognition. We should constantly glorify the Supreme Self in one and all, but especially in our loved ones. Why? It is easy to put up a façade to impress others how good we are, but when we treat our family members as souls then we are really worshipping God – we are truly going beyond our small self ego.

The real test of one’s spiritual depth and understanding is how one lives from day to day. It has very little to do with how well we can communicate over the Internet, how many people we can impress with our limited

knowledge, or how many 'important' people we think we have known.

We need to be real human beings and do real spiritual work. We need to stop our mental reactions which are caused by our own ego-infection. We need to be good human beings and keep purifying the mind with Divine Wisdom.

Om

Shanti Shanti Shanti

OM

Peace. Peace. Peace.

## **The Science of Soul**

You are an evolved soul, and your path has brought you to where you are today. Though you have traveled far, where you are is not your final destination. Your understanding of spirituality may be more comprehensive than others, but it is still limited. It is limited by your involvement with your own mind.

This too is natural and temporary. Your discoveries and insights are all part of the drama of existence, and you are the writer of your own script. You are teaching yourself, and as long as you are a good student you will continue to learn and grow (your consciousness will continue to expand).

This expansion of consciousness (otherwise known as 'spiritual growth,' or 'spirituality') is

really just the breaking free from your own mental dimension. A 'mental dimension' is a mental 'box.' If we remain stuck in our mental box we suffer from spiritual dementia. This means that when we get stuck in an image we forget our real nature and the mind becomes stiff and inflexible. When we suffer from spiritual dementia, we become childish; we do not become childlike.

As enlightened adults, we should be childlike and eager to learn, grow, explore, and expand our consciousness. Meditation is an essential part of this process.

Meditation can be thought of as an oasis in the desert of *Samsara* (the 'world'). To get through the desert we need to stop for refreshment and rejuvenation at the oasis. The oasis is not our

destination, but is a necessary part of our journey.

Our destination is to be united with our Real Nature, and this is called *Yoga*. Just as we cannot know the Truth unless we are truthful, likewise, we cannot attain the heights of Yoga without practicing it.

The initiation into the practices of meditation and Yoga is neither formal nor informal, just as the love of a husband for his wife, or a wife for her husband, is neither formal nor informal. It is what it is, and what it is, is real and beautiful. It is real because it is not dependent on any outer initiation, but is fully dependent on one's own initiative.

In other words, just as true love is born out of deliberate unselfish action, in the same way,

meditation and yoga are realized through persistent effort guided by the spirit of selflessness. We realize our Real Nature by going against the tide of the mind and the current of our egotistic tendencies in this drama of Existence. The resulting vibrations are melodious and beautiful.

*Moksha* (Salvation, Liberation) is not something easily attained, because Moksha is the complete absence of selfishness (EGO in all its variations, modifications, and modulations). Moksha is attained by abstinence and renunciation. MOKSHA is total, absolute FREEDOM from Ignorance (of which, Ego is a byproduct).

Advanced meditation leads to *Samadhi*.

Meditation is the process of 'absorbing the mind into the object of concentration.' When the mind

is fully absorbed, this is the state called 'Samadhi.' Depending on the nature of the object, so too the nature of the meditation and the nature of the Samadhi. If the object is the Unmanifest (Primordial *Prakriti*<sup>1</sup>), to that extent only will our perception reach. If the object of meditation is *PURUSH* (the Spirit Self), the mind will become devoid of the material nature.

The final three *sutras* (stanzas) of Patanjali's Yoga Suturas:

**Sutra 32:**

The successive transformations and their respective motivating tendencies have fulfilled their function, which is to take the individual to his highest state.

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<sup>1</sup> Matter

**Sutra 33:**

The sequence of evolution is perceived at the end of evolutionary change, which takes place constantly. Freedom from time is enjoyed by the soul in *KAIVALYA* (isolation from imperfection).

**Sutra 34:**

In the final state of *KAIVALYA*, both Prakriti and Purush return to their primordial states. The soul is no longer assured by the cause and effect qualities of existence. The soul remains eternally in pure awareness.

This Kaivalya culminates in MOKSHA. This MOKSHA is not something attained in a month, a year, a life time, or even many life times.

Pundits have studied meditation, the spiritual



science of Yoga, the Vedas<sup>2</sup>, and theorized on all of these. But unless they have practiced these under the guidance of a true Guru (Teacher), it is not possible to attain Moksha.

Scientists have studied Newtonian physics, Einstein's relativity, Quantum physics, String Theory, theorized on the 11th dimension, the Multiverse, parallel universes, and so on, but they have not come any closer to realizing the Truth (attaining Moksha).

The study of spiritual knowledge and worldly knowledge (*Vidya* and *Avidya*, respectively) must proceed together as stated in the Isha Upanishad, and then we realize the benefits of both---otherwise, we get the benefit of neither.

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<sup>2</sup> Often referred to as the oldest 'books' in the world, the Vedas are not actually 'books' but rather the essential, root Knowledge inherent in the Essence of life. In other words, the Vedas constitute the innate Wisdom present in the human soul and in the very fabric of life itself.

You should continue to study both and investigate the connection of both, and continue to share your understanding with others.

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The Vedas are truly scientific, and true science is truly Vedic. To fully grasp either, we must invalidate our own ego, which means we have to give up all our images (preconceptions and misconceptions).

This is no easy task. It is a daily task. It is a lifelong daily task.

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## The Highest Duty

Our life is 'work in progress.' So long as we remain progressive we will continue to expand our consciousness and will ultimately fully realize our Real Nature. The realization of our Real Nature (our Essence) is our highest duty.

We cannot rest until this work is done.

Everything we do, from washing dishes, cleaning floors, building bridges, programming computers, teaching, researching, inventing, creating, protecting, enterprising, and serving (etc.) is an opportunity to manifest our real nature.

The best we can do is to *be our best*. The best we can be is to *do our best*. We are at our best when we are not thinking about little 'me.' When we are not thinking about 'little me,' we are very

close to the Supreme. When we are very close to the Supreme, our thoughts and actions are always beneficial to everyone.

When we are completely selfless, we are liberated from little 'me.' This is something each of us must do. We can't do it for the other, but others will be inspired and encouraged to transform for the better and to become their best. This is the Gift, or Sacrifice (Yajna), of Life, and each of us must live it.

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The best we can do is to  
*be our best.*

The best we can be is to  
*do our best.*

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## Dharma

The Light of Truth reveals the Truth while exposing the untruth. It reveals *Dharma* (our True Nature) and exposes *adharma* (that which is contrary to our True Nature).

The study of spiritual writings can help to prepare the mind for the work at hand (the work of Self-realization). However, Self-realization is impossible without putting wisdom into practice, which is what all the saints and sages instruct us to do. Putting wisdom into practice is the meaning of 'living by Dharma.'

Dharma (as science) is the knowledge of the nature of Reality (SatChitAnanda). Dharma is a practical science because its tenets can only be grasped through practice. In other words, we realize our True Nature through truthful action,

which means action in concord with Truth.

‘Action in concord with Truth’ is called

*KarmaYoga*.

A true scientist (or, more accurately, a Truth-scientist) is a Karma Yogi. A Karma Yogi is a scientist of Truth. Through his own living example (devoid of all superficiality and artificiality) he (or she) demonstrates the Truth.

The Truth is self-evident, but it is only evident to the one who is selfless. In essence (as *Atman*, pure consciousness), each of us is selfless. Selflessness (egolessness) is our essential nature (as *Atman*). This is why everyone is keen to grasp the Truth. We know the Truth when we hear it because the Truth is very close to our heart.

When the mind is confused, it rejects the truth

and projects untruth. The mind must be reshaped with Wisdom. To reshape the mind with wisdom, the Light of Truth must shine upon the mind. The Light of Truth is manifested through one who is 'shining.' Only the one who practices the Truth can shine the Light of Truth upon others. Theorizing about the Truth will not reveal the truth.

Practicing the Truth means going against the negative tendencies of the mind. The mind tends to be self-seeking, attention-seeking, fame-seeking, pleasure-seeking, excitement-seeking, thrill-seeking, etc. Going against these tendencies requires energy, and this well-directed energy causes the mind to 'glow.' This glow (in the form of wisdom) removes confusion, mental turmoil, emptiness, and all other manifestations of Ignorance.

## **The Way of the Wise**

There is a vacuum in people's lives due to the absence of Wisdom. We should fill the mind with the knowledge of Truth, and along with this we should perform our duties in this world. This will remove all our doubts, because while performing our duties in the spirit of unselfishness, we will come very close to our Real Nature and experience our own Essence.

From the perspective of our Essence, this world is an expression of our Real Nature. From the point of view of that direct experience, there is no emptiness because everything is filled with that Essence.

This world is an allusion. It alludes to something not seen, not heard, not tasted, not smelled, not



touched, --- and not deduced, deducted, or devised.

During the journey of Existence, many theories arise and are tested, and each of these theories may throw some light on the nature of Reality, but ultimately each of us must do our own inner work ('homework') and arrive at our destination through inner-exploration, practical application, and direct experience. This is the way of the Wise.

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The Truth is self-evident,  
but it is only evident to the one  
who is selfless.

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## **Go to the 'Feet of the Wise'**

The Supreme Self (*Paramatman, Parabrahma, GOD*) is NEVER embodied in a human form or any other living form. There is no basis whatsoever in Reality for the Always All-pervading Supreme Self to become a man in the guise of Ram, Krishna, Christ, Buddha or whoever.

Why do people feel the need to superimpose their limited perception on the unlimited Self? It is due to Ignorance (*Avidya*). When we are identified with our limited mind we tend to define everything (even GOD) with our limited frame of reference. Our frame of reference is our name and form. People are inclined to define GOD (Truth) in relationship to everything else they perceive through their mind and senses. Because we desire to see GOD, we give GOD a

physical form. Because we desire to hear GOD, we give GOD a human voice. This desire to physically see and hear GOD is quite natural, and the experience of this desire is part and parcel of the journey of Life (the Drama of Existence).

When we are little children, we might believe our parents to be perfect, super-beings. Similarly, when we fall in love as young adults, we might feel this love is complete and unsurpassable. But when we mature with years of experience and knowledge, we understand everyone is imperfect, fallible, and flawed. Though we love and adore our loved ones, we also realize there is something much more than ourselves and those like ourselves.

In the beginning of our search for Truth, we might envision GOD with a physical form, but

eventually we realize this is only our imagination at play, and does not constitute a vision of GOD.

Our images of GOD are superimpositions. Our images of GOD are our own self-limitations. We think we talk to GOD, but in fact we are only talking to ourselves. We think we see GOD, but in fact we are only giving vision to our own imagination. To really 'see,' we will have to go beyond imagining (creating images) and start realizing (*actualizing*).

Visualization is a useful technique in realization, but only when it is followed by actualization. In other words, if our visualization is an extension of our imagination, then whatever we see will be imaginary only. On the other hand, visualization based on Wisdom of Consciousness (the knowledge of the Vedas passed down from

times immemorial from the teacher to the taught), followed by practical application, leads to realization (true understanding).

All the great seers and devotees of GOD have uniformly proclaimed the true nature of GOD. None of them have stated that GOD embodies Himself as a human being (or other creature). Any such proclamations can only be interpolations, allegories, metaphors, artistic license, or poetic expression.

The expressions of sages and God-intoxicated souls are often mystical in nature, but these expressions are misleading only when misinterpreted. Of course, some of the things we read in the scriptures and so-called scriptures are things changed or added by the ignorant. For this reason, we should go straight to the Vedas and, of course, to the 'feet of the Wise.'

## **The Truth is Beyond Religion**

### **Statement by a seeker of truth:**

“All religions on earth claim to be divine,  
yet most of the religions spread hatred  
against other religions.”

It is true that all religions *claim* to be divine, but  
NO religion *is* divine. Every religion is  
manmade. Religions tend to perpetuate  
ignorance of Truth, and ignorance leads to  
hatred.

### **Statement by a seeker of truth:**

“As a result, there have been deadly blood-  
baths not only on the battlefields, but also  
in our homes.”

Yes, as a result of Ignorance (and religion born

out of Ignorance) there has been much suffering. To put an end to this suffering we need to put an end to our subtle (and not so subtle) arrogance born of ignorance and false religion.

**Statement by a seeker of truth:**

“All the human beings - all the creatures- are temples of soul and abodes of God. As spiritualists, don't you think we should strive for world peace and amity among all the religions in the world?”

*Ideally*, all human beings are temples of soul and abodes of God. But *practically* (in practice) this is not true. If the body is a temple of soul, then why do people treat the body like a cremation ground wherein they bury (eat) and burn (digest) the slaughtered innocent cows and other creatures? Why do people use their minds to scheme and connive to cheat others and rob

them of their innocence? Why do rapists rape, why do child molesters molest, killers kill, and torturers torture? Are they 'abodes of God?' Has God authorized them to do these acts? No, God does not condone these acts of violence.

**Statement by a seeker of truth:**

"All the religions are under purview of God."

This is not true. God is NOT the author of falsehood and half-truth.

**Statement by a seeker of truth:**

"He has sent Saints, prophets and Rishis (sages) to spread his message of spiritualism to different communities, in different regions of the world with different languages and socio-economic problems. He has done justice to all his children.



He has not befooled any community by offering false religion.”

Your last sentence is true: “He has not befooled any community by offering false religion.”

Likewise, we should not befool ourselves by believing or following any false religion, because GOD is not the author of false religion.

All the true saints and rishis (sages) have the same spirit: the spirit of Truth manifested in the form of compassion, wisdom, and justice.

Everyone should manifest this same spirit, because this spirit is our essence.

**Statement by a seeker of truth::**

“So, let us show respect for all religions”

Let us show RESPECT FOR THE TRUTH.

Religions are NOT the custodians of Truth.

Oftentimes they are the distorters of truth, the perpetrators of falsehood, and the perpetrators of ignorance.

(However, this does not mean we should foster violence in the name of Truth. Tolerance is a characteristic of Truth, and intolerance is a characteristic of dogma. Of course, we cannot tolerate injustice, but neither can we create injustice by saying the 'end justifies the means.')

**Statement by a seeker of truth:**

“The core teachings of all the religions are the same.”

Whatever truths are found in any religion, those truths can be traced to the wisdom of the true

*Rishis* (sages). However, it is necessary to sift truth from falsehood, and it is foolish to accept falsehood with truth because then the truth is distorted. Manmade religion distorts the truth – and this distortion of truth is something all religions have in common. The Truth is beyond religion.

The true *Rishis* (Sages) have never claimed to form a new religion, and have never propounded any religion. Vedic Dharma, Sanatan Dharma, the eternal Law of our Being, the nature of Consciousness and the knowledge of Prakriti have nothing to do with religion.

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**All the true saints and sages have the  
same spirit: the spirit of Truth  
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## **Reply to Follower of Religion**

### **Follower:**

“I consider that all the religions are under purview of God and He administers them. He is not indifferent to whatever is going on in this world. He rewards the good and punishes the bad. All religions teach us accordingly.”

The Truth, the whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth is authorized by GOD. God is not the author or administrator of false religion and half-truth. GOD does not ordain, protect, and preserve manmade religion and the violence and injustice perpetrated in the name of religion.

GOD is not a person, place, or thing separate from ourselves. GOD is 100% present

everywhere 100% of the time. GOD does not exist more in one person than another, or more in one place than another, because GOD is indivisible, omnipresent and impartial. GOD is not comprised of parts and is not subject to whims, moods, and fluctuations of the mind, the birth and death of the body, or the expansion and contraction of the Universe.

Since GOD is 100% present in everyone – not partially present – there is absolutely nothing for GOD to add to or subtract from our souls (which are eternally presided over by GOD, Who is the Essence of our souls, i.e., the Soul of our Soul).

However, the mind is another matter. The mind is subtle matter and the body is gross matter. This mind and body are subject to modification. The mind and body are modified by time, place, and circumstance. These three are the purview of

the soul in conjunction with the Oversoul (GOD).

‘In conjunction with’ GOD simply means the soul acts and GOD regulates. The living self uses time and space wisely or not, and creates good or bad (favorable or unfavorable) circumstances. GOD is the Inner Controller, meaning He controls (regulates) the operation of this world much like a referee regulates a game.

GOD created the playing field of Life and ensures the Game is played according to the rules. However, GOD does not ordain cheating or foul play, nor does He control who wins or loses.

**Follower:**

“God sent noble souls to different parts of the world at different times to cater the

spiritual, mental and social needs of different communities at different places and different times.”

GOD does not interfere with the workings of this world, even as a referee does not interfere with the game played on the playing field. Instead, there are wise people who guide others, even as a team captain and coach guide a team of players.

Now of course, this is only an analogy, and no analogy is complete. In reality, GOD is much more than just a referee. GOD is the Essence in everyone. In the Game of Life, some souls have been playing for a long time (in the present cycle, or series of cycles) and have become more knowledgeable and skillful than others. These souls are known as ‘the Wise.’ Through their earnest efforts at self-improvement and the

practice of selflessness (unselfishness), they invoke the power of GOD inherent in themselves (in their souls), and thus *evoke* feelings of love, courage, generosity and humility in others. In other words, by dint of their wisdom and devotion these high souls shower the blessings of the Creator on the world.

The 'blessings of the Creator' are the powers infused in our souls by virtue of our proximity to the Supreme Self. Our souls are very close to GOD. When our minds are purified they reflect (express) that closeness (likeness).

Religion is incapable of enlightening the human mind. The mind is enlightened only by the wisdom of the Wise. The Wise are not the followers of religion. They are the followers of Truth.



All the religions of the world are manmade. They are not made by GOD. They are part of the drama of Existence. They have come into play, and they will one day disappear. They are not very important. In fact, religions are unimportant. Religions are not very helpful. In fact, religions are a hurdle in the Enlightenment of Mankind.

If we must have any religion, we should make Humanity our religion. However, even if we make humanity our religion, we will still need the guidance of the Wise.

The Wisest of the Wise is *Parabrahma*, the Absolute, GOD. The knowledge of the Absolute was absolutely essential in the creation of the Universe. That knowledge is essential in living a meaningful life. That knowledge is essential in attaining the ultimate goal of Liberation

(freedom from all Ignorance). That knowledge is embodied in the VEDAs, and the Vedic way is the way of the Wise.

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## **Importance of Devotion**

Devotion to GOD is essential. Without devotion it is impossible to realize the Truth. But what does 'devotion to God' mean?

Devotion to GOD means commitment to the noble ideals presented in the Vedas and exemplified by the Wise. It has absolutely nothing to do with the adoration or appreciation of manmade images and ideas.

Take the example of a man who keeps a photo of his wife on his desk at work. Perhaps the photo reminds him of his love for his wife, and therefore helps him to stay focused and not get distracted by his female co-workers. For this man, the photo serves a useful purpose, but the man does not worship the picture. Of course, he would not be happy if someone were to spit on

the picture. He keeps the picture clean, and may have a special place for the picture – for example, he probably would not keep the picture next to the trash can. But these actions of the man (pertaining to the picture) do not constitute devotion to his wife; though they may certainly demonstrate his devotion.

All the practical actions we do in this world, and do over and over, again and again, can be called the ‘rituals of life.’ These rituals serve a practical purpose – they help us stay focused on what is important, on getting the job done, on maintaining our living space, with carrying on with our duty. However, none of these rituals, nor the preservation of the elements of these rituals (objects such as our food, shelter, and clothing) constitutes devotion.

**Devotion is the unconditional commitment of**

**the self to that which is beyond the self.**

Devotion first manifests as the love of the child for the parent – the parent is ‘beyond the child’ in respect of both mental and physical capacity. It also manifests as the unconditional commitment of the parent to the child – child is beyond parent in purity--the parent by nature of being an adult is adulterated, but the child is unadulterated.

As we mature, so too does our devotion mature. Eventually, we are drawn to THAT which is beyond THIS. The Self (our own inner Self) is beyond the self we ‘think we are’ – it is beyond the person we make up in our mind. Beyond this Self (Atman) is the Supreme Self (Paramatman). The unconditional commitment of the living self to Self-realization (the actualization of the Self in the mind, and demonstrated in our actions) constitutes the devotion to Truth. The

unconditional commitment of the Self to the Supreme Self (the Ultimate Truth) constitutes the highest devotion.

A noble human being (*Arya*) is one who is devoted to (committed to) truthful thought and action (thoughts and actions in agreement with Truth). Every *Arya* (good human being) is a devotee of Truth – that is, they follow (they make their thoughts and actions conform to) their Real Nature (their Higher Nature as ATMAN, pure Consciousness). As such, devotion is an absolutely integral characteristic of every good human being.

A good human being (*Arya*) becomes an enlightened human being (a Mahatma, and eventually a Jivamukta), only by means of the highest devotion. Again, this highest devotion is

the unconditional commitment of the Self to the  
Supreme Self. OM

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## **GOD, Soul, Man and Matter**

The All-pervading Supreme Self (GOD) is present in all at all times and places. The Supreme Self is unchangeably present in Atman (soul), both when Atman is embodied as Jivatman, or 'man' and when Atman is in its Original State (during the time of Moksha, and during the time of the Cosmic Night which follows Mahapralaya and precedes *Shristi*, Creation). The Supreme Self is also unchangeably present everywhere and nowhere (as in *manifested Prakriti*, and *unmanifested Prakriti*, respectively).

No soul (Atman) can become GOD (Paramatman), nor does GOD ever become a human being. Every being who has ever existed, or who exists now, or who will exist in the



future, *is a soul* (Atman). Krishna, Ram, Buddha and every other so-called avatar were great souls; that is, they were Jivatmans (embodied souls) who exemplified the true nature of the Self.

The scriptures (the Shruti and the Smriti) explain the true nature of the Self (Atman and Jivatman), the Supreme Self (Paramatman, GOD), and Prakriti (Nature). The true nature of the Self can be discovered only through the ACTION of self-discovery, which means through the action of removing the coverings from the mind. It is not a matter of killing the mind; rather, it is a matter of removing the false identification (ego). Ego is the idea that 'I am the doer.' The only way to remove ego is to do actions without the thought that 'I am the doer.'

Many misguided spiritual seekers believe that

giving up ego (becoming a devotee) means giving up action. This is far from the truth, because giving up action is no different than succumbing to ego.

In other words, those who give up action are surrendering to their ego and are defeated. But those who give up attachment remove their ego by the light of Wisdom. The light of Wisdom manifests from the fire of good action. As the fire grows, the glow increases and shines as the Light of Truth which eventually completely removes one's darkness (Ignorance).

Every soul (Atman) must pass through this fire ceremony (Yajna). Ram, Krishna, and others have attained the highest regions by dint of their own actions and the Grace of the Almighty. Their examples are the lights which shine on our path to Self-realization.

All of us must follow the Path of Truth in order to reach to the Supreme Abode – which is none other than our own Real Nature. Our goal is to experience our Essence---the All-pervading Supreme Being.

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But those who give up attachment remove their ego by the light of Wisdom.

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## **The Whole World is a Family (Vasudevakutumbakam)**

Mahatmas (Great Souls) are born in every country of this planet Earth. Many great souls have hailed from Hindustan (the land of the Hindus), and were indeed (culturally speaking) Hindus. However, when we say ‘Vasudevakutumbakam’ – the whole world (universe) is one family, are we talking about a Hindu ‘family?’ No, we are talking about the family of humanity united with divine wisdom.

The world can be united only when we discover our common Vedic roots. In other words, we can unite all the people of this world by returning to our Vedic roots. We ‘make the whole world noble’ by making ourselves noble, and we make ourselves noble by becoming wise. We become truly wise by becoming Vedic. We become Vedic

by putting wisdom into practice.

To become wise, it is not necessary to become a Hindu. Neither is it necessary to stop being a Hindu (or a Jew, Muslim, Christian, etc.). All we need to do is give up those ideas and practices that are rooted in falsehood and ignorance.

There are false practices in all the world's religions and cultures, and those false practices must be shunned in order to grow spiritually.

When one removes all the outer coverings, all that is left is the real self.

The Real Self does not 'become' real, because the Real Self is *always* real. The Real Self is Atman. It is only *the mind* that changes. The Real Self is unchangeable, therefore it is able to see the fluctuations of the mind. Wisdom must be cultivated (in the mind) by planting the seeds of wisdom, watering them, and removing the

weeds (wrong thoughts) from the mind. This is the work of every Arya (good human being), regardless of their cultural, religious, academic, or economic background.

If each of us looks back — all the way back — we will discover our common beginnings. Though each of us is unique, our Original Self is the same. Each of us is Atman, and pervading all of us is the Supreme Self (Paramatman). A study of the Shruti and Smriti (under the guidance of the Wise) leads to an understanding of the nature of the Self.

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The Real Self does not ‘become’ real,  
because the Real Self is *always* real.

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## **Two Birds in a Tree<sup>3</sup>:**

### **An exposition on the nature of the Self, the Supreme Self, and the World**

Prakriti is the tree, and the two birds are Atman and Jivatman.

Atman can mean the individual soul (Atma) or the Supreme Soul (Paramatma). In other words, to fully understand the mantra one must interpret it in the context of both Atman and Paramatman.

Each and every one of us is Atman. Each of us is eternal, and therefore each of us is one without a second: there is no second you, or I, or anyone else. Every Atma<sup>4</sup> is unique.

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<sup>3</sup> A mantra from the Upanishads.

<sup>4</sup> The terms Atman and Atma are used interchangeably and refer to the 'soul' before it is embodied in mind and matter.

Atma is pure consciousness, pure awareness. Each of us (as Atma) is whole, complete, self-contained, immortal, uncreated (unborn), and unchangeable. However, we are NOT the Supreme Self.

The Supreme Self (Paramatma) pervades all of us (each and every Atma) and Prakriti (Nature). Each of us (as Atma) also pervades Prakriti, but we do not pervade one another. However, by virtue of our Essence (the All-pervading Supreme Self) we are all the same and united.

Each of us (as Atman) have the same characteristics, we have the same Essence (GOD), and we share the same physical property (Prakriti).

One of our characteristics (that is, one of Atma's characteristics) is that within this Tree of Life,



which branches downward from the unmanifest state into this physical world, we perform actions and reap the fruits of those actions. In other words, the unborn, uncreated, and unchangeable Atman performs actions by becoming the Jivatman (the embodied soul), that is, we become the Self wearing the costume of ego, intellect, mind, senses, and body.

It is the nature of Atman to periodically 'become' Jivatman, and since the nature of Atman is unchangeable, it means Atman will always from time to time become Jivatman. Even after having attained Moksha (Salvation, Nirvana, the Highest Heaven), the soul will once again (and again. . . ) play the drama of Life and become Jivatman again. [Paramatman, however, never becomes Jivaparamatman.]

As Jivatman, we are born and die, we perform

actions and reap the fruit of those actions. It is somewhat similar to when we play a sport like cricket or soccer on the field. While playing the game, we do not cease to be who we were before playing the game.

For example, if Sunil is the father of Ram and the husband of Uma, he does not cease to be so while playing football on the playing field. The actions he performs on the field are pertinent only to the game and have no bearing on who he really is. If he wins or loses the game, it neither enhances nor diminishes the fact that he is Ram's father and Uma's husband.

In the same way, Atman is unchangeable, and when playing the Game of Life on the field of Prakriti (as Jivatman), even though Atman *appears* to change, it is really Jivatman that changes.

Atman and Jivatman do not have separate existences but are distinct from one another.

For example, if you are having a dream, and in the dream you fall from a cliff, does the one having the dream (you) and the one falling from the cliff exist at the same time or do they exist separately from each other?

Answer: The one having the dream (you) really exists and is really dreaming, but is not really falling from a cliff. In other words, the dream character could not exist without the existence of the dreamer. This means they exist at the same time – they do not exist separately.

On the other hand, the one falling from the cliff does not *really* exist, but only appears to exist, which means the one having the dream and the one falling from the cliff are distinct from each

other.

So, understanding this mantra from the context of the Atman and Jivatman, the Self (soul) and the embodied self (living self) are the two birds on the tree of Prakriti (Nature, life). They exist together (are inseparable) and yet they are distinct from one another. Jivatman enjoys the fruits of the tree (the dream-like experiences in the play, or Lila, of Life) even as the character in the dream enjoys or suffers the events in the dream, but the Self (Atman, always pervaded by and united with the Supreme Self) is untainted and unchanged, even as the dreamer remains fundamentally unchanged by what occurs in the dream.

On the other hand, understanding this mantra from the context of Paramatman and Atman, the Supreme Soul (God) and the individual soul are

the two birds on the tree. They exist together and distinctly as the Ultimate Pervader and the one pervaded. Together they pervade Prakriti (i.e., are perched together on the same tree). One (Atman as Jivatman) performs actions and enjoys (or suffers) the fruits of its actions. The Supreme Self (Paramatman) does not enjoy or reap any fruits.

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The Supreme Self is  
unchangeable  
*SatChitAnanda*  
(Existence-Consciousness-Bliss).

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## **Dialog with a Scientist. . . and an Exposition on the Nature of Reality**

There are many different definitions of 'science,' and one is usually as good as the next. Here are just a few:

(from Dictionary.com)

> "A branch of knowledge or study dealing with a body of facts or truths systematically arranged and showing the operation of general laws: the mathematical sciences."

> "Systematic knowledge of the physical or material world gained through observation and experimentation."

> "knowledge, as of facts or principles; knowledge gained by systematic study of a particular branch of knowledge"

> “Skill, especially reflecting a precise application of facts or principles; proficiency.”

> “Knowledge; knowledge of principles and causes; ascertained truth of facts.”

> “Accumulated and established knowledge, which has been systematized and formulated with reference to the discovery of general truths or the operation of general laws; knowledge classified and made available in work, life, or the search for truth; comprehensive, profound, or philosophical knowledge.”

> “Especially, such knowledge when it relates to the physical world and its phenomena, the nature, constitution, and forces of matter, the qualities and functions of living tissues, etc.; -- called also natural science, and physical science.”

> “Any branch or department of systematized knowledge considered as a distinct field of investigation or object of study; as, the science of astronomy, of chemistry, or of mind.”

In this light of these definitions, we could talk about the 'science of the Vedas,' or the Vedic science, which would mean 'universal knowledge acquired through direct experience.' It might also be useful to define 'knowledge,' both in general and specifically:

In general, knowledge is that which is ascertained through the mind and intellect. When this ascertainment is true (real), it is called *PRAMAAN*. When this ascertainment is false, it is called false knowledge or *VIPRAYA*.

More specifically, knowledge is the 'experience of knowing.' Direct experience results in direct



knowledge, and indirect experience results in indirect knowledge (knowledge based on assumption, inference, clues, etc.).

In reality, indirect knowledge is anything we know through our mind and senses, and direct knowledge is that which is known by the direct contact of consciousness (Atman) with Supreme Consciousness (Paramatman) and Nature (Prakriti). Since Atman is always in direct 'contact' with Supreme Consciousness (GOD) and Prakriti by virtue of the all-pervading nature of Atman and Paramatman, the 'resulting' knowledge is not really a 'result,' but is actually inherent in Atman and Paramatman. This inherent, indestructible, unchangeable, knowledge, collected in the form of the Vedas, is the Vedic Science. One who practices this Vedic Science is a Vedic scientist.

**(Ordinary) Scientist:** “We have started working on the border areas of physical and life sciences. We are trying to explore whether life can exist beyond a biological cell. We have started to probe the existence called consciousness.”

**AP (Arya Putra) reply:** As Vedic scientists, we seek to realize the essence of this world, and the essence of ourselves (as human beings). We want to know what this world is made of, how it came into being, and WHY. Ordinary scientists never ask WHY(?). They never get this far because they are prisoners of their small intellects and personal/professional/cultural/religious bias.

However, this does not mean the work of ordinary scientists is of no value. It is certainly of value. Eventually, an ordinary scientist crosses the line (between the physical and the spiritual) and becomes an extraordinary scientist.

Eventually, he or she may even become a Vedic scientist (Rishi).

The search for the origin of existence (the universe, or Multiverse, and everything in it) may lead one to an inquiry into the nature of Consciousness. This inquiry into the nature of Consciousness (ATMAN) reveals the true limits of Prakriti<sup>5</sup> and one eventually gains the knowledge of all the elements of the physical world. The 'physical' (i.e., prakritic) world includes the mind and subtle energy field associated with it (which is typically called the 'astral body' in the esoteric literature).

Consciousness-Atman-Soul is beyond the world of Mind and Matter.

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<sup>5</sup> The material basis of mind and matter.

**Scientist:** “Theosophists and para-psychologists are experimenting upon astral matter and astral body.”

**AP reply:** Most of these people are groping in the dark. Their pursuit of these subjects is generally driven by their desire for ego-gratification. Therefore, they cannot really understand these things in a practical way. In other words, because they are not inclined to practice the basics (*Yamas* and *Niyamas*), their knowledge remains fanciful and esoteric, or at best, theoretical only.

**Scientist:** “There are phenomena like telepathy, clairvoyance, thought-form, astral-projection etc.”

**AP reply:** Yes, indeed, these are *phenomena* only. To derive any valid benefit from phenomena, one’s research must proceed hand in hand with

the study of *noumena*:

Atman/Paramatman/Prakriti.

**Scientist:** “These phenomena prove that consciousness exists outside the physical matter also.”

**AP reply:** From the perspective of consciousness, there is neither ‘inside’ nor ‘outside.’

Consciousness is not bound (limited) by matter (nor by mind). The limitations are *apparent* only, and are not real. However, the powers of the mind (including phenomena like telepathy, clairvoyance, etc.) are indeed limited. When a person gets caught up in these limitations of the mind, their spiritual growth is stunted.

Some people think a ‘Siddha’ (Perfected One) is one who has acquired *siddhis* (powers). But the true Siddha is the one who has mastered the mind by expelling his/her ego. The process of

removing our false identification (ego) is the process of spiritual growth, and one who has mastered this process is called a Siddha.

**Scientist:** “In my student-life, I experimented upon astral-projection and I am convinced that the entire space is occupied by astral matter which is filled with consciousness.”

**AP reply:** *Akash* (space) is the substratum of the mind. The Cosmic Mind (Mahatattva) permeates the mind-space. Similarly, the individualized mind associated with each living self (Jivatman) permeates the individual mind-space. This space, permeated by mind, exhibits the ethereal nature known as the ‘astral form.’ In other words, the mind shapes the surrounding space and this ‘shaped space’ is called (by some) the ‘astral form.’ Essentially, it is the field of energy associated with the mind.

## **Reply to Person who asserts God is 'Space'**

### **Assertion:**

“Paramatman (GOD) is infinitely infinite and the mantra OM KHAM BRAHM tells us the same thing, that KHAM (Aakash, Space) is infinitely infinite just as BRAHM (GOD) is. When Aakash is infinite its structure is also infinite.”

You equate *Akash* (space) with Brahma (the Absolute) and assert that this Akash is infinitely infinite in both its essence and structure. It would appear you believe God is Space (Void), and since (according to your earlier assertion) there is only one type of space, then even the ordinary space in an empty jar, or the space between planets, and space between atoms is all

GOD. This, however, is not true.

Space is an evolute of Prakriti. The first space evolved from Prakriti is the Mind Space. This is not the same physical space we observe in the created Universe.

Ideas and thoughts exist in the space of the mind. The mind itself is a 'space.' This mind-space is *Mahatattva*, the principle, or knowledge, of consciousness as Purush. From this One Universal Mind, the principle of self-awareness (ego) along with the 5 *Tanmatras* (the subtle states of matter) appear. The first physical element to evolve is actual 'space' (physical space). Nothing physical can exist without a space to exist in. Similarly, nothing mental can exist without a mental space to exist in.

Both the mental space and physical space are



finite because they are effects of the union of Purush and Prakriti. All effects eventually fade away. That which fades away cannot be infinite, because if it were infinite it could never fade away.

When you speak about the 'Void,' you are speaking about a characteristic of Prakriti, and not Brahma or Purush. The zero-state is a state of matter, not of spirit.

Unmanifest Prakriti is ZERO. It is pure 'nothingness.' From 'nothingness' everything is manifested. When everything is annihilated during Mahapralaya (the Final Dissolution), everything becomes zero (nothingness) once again. Now, this 'nothingness' (Void, *Shunya*) is not GOD. Nor is this 'nothingness' NOTHING. This 'nothingness' is Unmanifest Prakriti. It becomes the material with which Purush works

to create the art of Life---or it can be described as the material with which Purush works to create the field of existence upon which the Sport or Game of life is played (unfolds).

Try pursuing your research along these lines and you may discover many new laws of science. However, to fully benefit from these discoveries, one must simultaneously investigate the changeless, formless, nature of the Absolute (Brahma). As long as one asserts that the eternally changeless, formless Absolute is subject to temporariness (change) and transformation (different forms), one's research will be hindered.

## **Materialization**

Space is an evolute of Prakriti (actually, an evolute of the union of Purush and Prakriti). Space is invisible matter. This matter, having been evolved from the union of Purush and Prakriti, exhibits the qualities of both (Purush and Prakriti).

Space is spoken of as a vacuum, meaning it is devoid of any substance, but this is not entirely correct. Space is devoid of visible matter, however, it is filled with Dark Matter.

All forms of expression are inherent in space as potentialities. Due to the influence of Purush (Consciousness) in conjunction with the inherent characteristics of Prakriti (Non-conscious primordial Substance), the potentialities inherent in space are transformed into actualities such as

fire, air, water, earth, and their combinations, including people, places, and things.

A person is an expression of the union of Purush and Prakriti. This does NOT mean that Purush is materialized. For example, an artist paints a self-portrait, but the portrait is not the artist. The portrait is an expression of the artist. Similarly, people, places, and things are expressions of the union of Purush and Prakriti: they do NOT constitute the materialization of Purush.

Now, if by 'materialization' one means the materialization or actualization *of the expression of Purush (Spirit)*, then that is okay. However, if by 'materialization' one means the changing of the eternally changeless and formless SELF into a temporarily formed and changing body/mind/ego complex, **then one is mistaken.**

Matter is materialized, or not. Non-materialized matter is called the Unmanifest. It is also known as unmanifest Prakriti. On the other hand, materialized matter is called *Shristi*, the Creation, and all the things of this creation.

Atman is never materialized, nor is Paramatman ever materialized. They are, however, expressed through the medium of Prakriti.

The individual Atman is expressed as Jivatman, the Self embodied in ego, intellect, mind, senses, and body. The Supreme Self (Paramatman) is expressed in the form of the Universe (or, as we understand now, the Multiverse).

In other words, the Self and the Supreme Self are expressed through the materialization of Prakriti. Prakriti is materialized and then dematerialized (made manifest, and then again

unmanifest), in unending cycles of Creation and Dissolution; the Cosmic Day and Cosmic Night.

The Self and the Supreme Self are **never** materialized, because they are by their very nature non-material. Since their nature is eternal, they (Atman and Paramatman) never cease to be non-material.

The Wise declare the Self (Atman and Paramatman) to be ever manifest. Their expression through the medium of Prakriti constitutes the Drama of Existence, the Sport of Life, the Play of Creation, the Expression of Consciousness.

## Is Space Infinite?

### **Scientist:**

“When we speak about particles, we have a picture of limited volume of space and that too is three dimensional. We forget that there is space beyond our event horizon. Clearly, if space be finite, the particles will be finite; however, most physicists regard the space and time to be infinite.

So, infinite space will have infinite particles and anti-particles (of antimatter).”

Currently, scientists hypnotize eleven dimensions. Even in an 11-dimensional picture of the universe (or multiverse), the number of particles that comprise all matter (whether of

matter, anti-matter, or both) *would still be limited*. Even if there are innumerable dimensions, it would still be a fixed (albeit, uncountable) number of particles that fills these hypothetical uncountable dimensions.

To understand Reality, we need to completely break free from our limited mindset and realize the eternal distinction between Paramatman, Atman, and Prakriti. Both Atman and Prakriti are eternal but finite (limited). Only Paramatman is both eternal and infinite (unlimited).

However, the 'finiteness' of Atman appears infinite when compared to Prakriti. From the perspective of the unenlightened soul (Jivatman), even Prakriti appears as infinite.

The Infinite remains infinitely infinite. The finite remains definitely finite. Atman is finite but is infinite in comparison to Prakriti. However, both



Atman and Prakriti are infinitesimal in comparison to the Incomparable (the Infinite, the Supreme Self, which is One Without a Second).

The assertion, “I am one without a second” only means there is no other me. It does not mean no one else exists.

Each of us is one without a second, and each of us is comparable to one another.

The Supreme Self is One Without a Second and is Incomparable.

## Reply to a Scientist . . .

Infinite means ‘not finite.’ Now, you have stated that the vacuum state contains infinite number of virtual particles and infinite number of anti-material particles. However, this is not so.

Vacuum state is a ‘state’ of Prakriti. Prakriti is eternal but NOT infinite. Prakriti is comprised of an innumerable amount of particles called ‘*paramanus*.’ ‘Innumerable’ means uncountable; it does not mean infinite. In other words, ‘innumerable’ means a finite number that is so large it is uncountable. For example, the number called a *googol* is the number 1 followed by 100 zeros (in other words, the number 10 raised to the power 100)—certainly a very large number. A *googolplex* is the number 10 raised to the power googol (1 with a googol zeros after it). Perhaps the number of particles in the universe

(comprised of both visible and dark matter) is equal to a googol with a googol zeros after it. In any case, it is still NOT an infinite number of particles.

When Prakriti is infused with the Pranic force which emanates from Consciousness (Purush), the equilibrium of Prakriti is disturbed (the *Gunas*, or qualities of Matter are off-balanced). This disturbance in the equilibrium is manifested as ‘polarization’ (such as Day and Night, Light and Darkness, etc.) and is denoted as ‘duality.’

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‘Innumerable’ means uncountable. It does not mean infinite.

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## **What is Real?**

This world is real. Only the neo-vedantists claim the world is unreal and has no basis at all, and they say that in reality 'everything is GOD.' On the other hand, there are other people who say "Atman and Paramatman are real; Prakriti is real; and these three exist as distinct entities, though they share some similarities."

However, upon deeper thought, one realizes that although Atman, Paramatman, and Prakriti are distinct (eternally existent in their respective eternal natures/characteristics/qualities), they are ALSO eternally inseparable by virtue of their mutually eternal existences.

ParamAtman and Atman are eternally Conscious, because they are Consciousness Itself (the former more subtle than the latter, eternally

existing in the relationship of the Pervader and the Pervaded). Prakriti too exists eternally, and is eternally pervaded by ParamAtman and Atman.

Prakriti does not exist 'somewhere only;' it exists 'everywhere,' because 'where-ness' is a Prakritic quality associated with matter (including the subtle matter known as 'mind'). 'Everywhere' becomes 'somewhere' when the element of Time is introduced into the picture.

Now, Prakriti is pervaded by Atman (both the 'individual' Atman and the Supreme Atman). This 'pervasion' of Prakriti by Paramatman and Atman is manifested as the Universe and the living self (Jivatman), respectively.

The living self (Jivatman) really exists. What is the living self? The living self – the Jivatman – is the Self (Atman) manifesting through its

inherent life force (Prana) as Purush. When Purush is 'joined' with Prakriti through Ignorance (Avidya), it brings about the devolution of the Self into the myriad physical forms. Each of us has undergone the journey through countless life forms until we were finally born as a human being. As human beings, we have lived countless lives learning various lessons of life and discovering (uncovering) our Real Nature (Essence).

We are real. We are:

physical/psychological/spiritual beings

This is what we are. We are not *just* the body. We are not *just* the mind. Neither are we *just* the soul. As living souls (embodied souls), we are the body/mind/spirit.

Everything in this Universe exhibits some of the

characteristics of both Purush and Prakriti — just as children will exhibit the qualities of both parents. Each of us possesses both Purushic and Prakritic qualities, and along with these qualities we exhibit various tendencies: physical, mental, and spiritual tendencies.

Through intense *Swadhyaya* (self-study, deep introspection, and clear observation) we can discern our nature and the nature of everything. Ultimately, our aim (purpose of life) is to realize our Supreme Nature — we want to experience directly the Soul of our soul.

**Comment from an Arya:** “In reality there is 'no progress' and 'no growth' is happening to the thing/entity which is inside a 'human being'. . . . . If we are able to digest the truth that all human beings are fundamentally equal, . . . . then

we may be able to get the sense of what the Vedas communicates to us.”

**AP (Arya Putra) reply:** Absolutely true. Atman (or Real Self) undergoes no alteration; it cannot be modified; it cannot be increased or decreased. Atman is bodiless, invulnerable, imageless, ever-pure, without any defect, perfectly whole, indivisible and indestructible. However, to play the Sport or Game of Existence (Life), we (each and every Atman) assume (through the prakritic element of ego) the limitations of the mind and body. As such, playing the roles of human beings and other life forms, we are subjected to Ignorance (the state of ‘not-knowing’).

As embodied souls (Jivatmans), our knowledge is limited. This limitation (in the form of being subjected to the state of non-knowing, i.e., *ignorance*), is a necessary feature or component of every game---whether it be a game of dice, a



game of cards, or the Game of Life. Try to imagine a life in which everyone knows everything---there would be nothing to learn, nothing to discover, nothing to search for or research about, and basically nothing to do.

Ignorance (Avidya) is a necessary component of our existence, and so too is Knowledge (Vidya). As the Isha Upanishad tells us, both of these must be 'known' together.

**Om Andham Tamah Pravishanti Ye'Vidyaam  
Upaasate. Tato Bhuya Iva Te Tamo Ya U  
Vidyaayaam Rataah.**

This mantra clearly tells us that the person who is devoted exclusively to soul-knowledge (Vidya) enters into even greater darkness than the one who is devoted solely to mundane knowledge (Avidya).

A later mantra in the same Upanishad, further explains that to fully benefit from either, one must understand both together:

**Om Sambhuutim ca Vinaasham ca Yastad  
Vedobhyam Saha. Vinaashena Mrityum Tiirtva  
Sambuuty Aamritam Ashnute.**

In other words, to truly benefit from worldly knowledge one must understand it in the context of spiritual knowledge; and to fully grasp spiritual knowledge and reap its benefit (the nectar of immortality), one must also understand the workings of this mundane world (which one ultimately realizes, is anything but 'mundane').

**Ved Mantra:**

**Om Asato Ma Sadgamaya, Tamaso Ma  
Jyotirgamaya, Mrityor Ma Amritamgamaya**

Meaning:

May the Wisdom of Supreme Consciousness  
lead us from untruth and unreality, and may  
we realize the True Reality.

May we be led away from the darkness of  
ignorance, and may we be enlightened with  
divine wisdom.

May we be led away from the decaying and  
dying body, and the fleeting pleasures of this  
world, and experience directly the nectar of  
Immortality (our own Essence).

## **An Exposition on the Nature of Who, What, and Why We Are**

There are two forces in this world: the force of Light and the force of Darkness—the force of Consciousness (Purush) and the force of Nature (Prakriti)<sup>6</sup>.

ATMAN in the form of PURUSH (Atman embodied in its own inherent Pranic force) is the Light force. On the other hand, Prakriti, in the form of Shristi (Creation), begins as darkness. In the darkness, or upon the darkness, the Light shines and reveals the nature of this World. This nature is revealed as three-fold: Sattwic, Rajasic, and Tamasic (such as Protonic/Electronic/Neutronic)

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<sup>6</sup> In Reality, there is one force—the PRANIC force, which is the Force of Consciousness as PURUSH. Prakriti is inert. When Prakriti is influenced by Purush, its inherent qualities (gunas) are activated. Once activated, these qualities are manifested as Cosmic Forces. These Cosmic Forces are collectively referred to as the ‘force of Nature.’

To whom or what is this nature revealed? It is revealed to the embodied Self (Jivatman) – to each and every one of us in the beginning of (relative) time.

In the beginning (as in, just before the ‘Big Bang’), all of us exist as Purush (the innumerable unique, i.e., ‘one without a second’ souls, pervaded by the Supreme Soul as *Mahapurush*, who is also One Without a Second). All of us are immortals. Our Real Self as ATMAN is unborn, uncreated.

When we (each and every Atman) step on to the stage of Life (Cosmic Day)---Shristi, the ever-continuing cyclical Lila or Sport/Play/Drama punctuated with interludes or intermissions of Mahapralaya (which ushers in the Cosmic Night) – we ‘embody’ ourselves in our own inherent energy (prana).

Atman embodied (emanating) its own inherent soul-force (Prana) is termed PURUSH (the Spirit Self). This can be construed as the subtlest state of the Jivatman, though it is more accurate to distinguish Purush from Jivatman and consider Jivatman to be formed after the union of Purush and Prakriti.

At this time (in the Beginning), Prakriti is infused with Purush. This union brings into existence the One Mind (Mahatattwa), from which evolves the subtle states of matter (the five Tanmatras) and the principle of self-consciousness (Ahamkara, 'I'-ness, ego).

During this period, the physical world evolves from space (dark matter), fire, gaseous material, liquid material and solid matter. All matter exhibits the qualities (gunas) of Satwa, Rajas, and

Tamas, which are cosmic forces inherent in Prakriti (unevolved matter), and which are 'activated' by the influence of the Pranic force. In other words, the pranic force causes an imbalance of the three Gunas. This imbalance is manifested as the movement (or change in state) of Prakriti.

It is the 'fire' of Consciousness (in the form of Prana) that heats up the Prakriti, and creates the World. The Universe is the Yajna of the Creator, Parabrahma (Supreme Creator). Our own life is the Yajna of the Self (Brahma, the Creator). Each of us is the creator of our own life. When we live our life according to our Real Nature (soul nature), our life is a Yajna which invokes the power of the Supreme Self and reveals our Essence. This revelation of our Essence is Moksha, or Liberation.

All of this is the interplay of the forces of Light and Darkness. These seemingly contrary forces are actually interdependent. It is the contrast between these two that creates the 'light show,' the drama of Creation. This drama unfolds according to the power of Consciousness (Atman – both the Self and the Supreme Self) and the laws of Nature (Prakriti).

Each of us is duty-bound (according to the Law of our Being, our True Nature, our DHARMA) to rise to the occasion (of this life) and meet every challenge with all our resources. In the sport of Life we must play by the rules of the Game and recognize the boundaries which give definition to the Game. The longer we stay in the Game (that is, the longer we live) and the longer we play (that is, the harder we work), the more skillful we become.



Yoga is skill in action. We realize our Essence by dint of our own efforts and the Grace of the Supreme Being. That Grace is not bestowed at random or in a whimsical way, but is only bestowed when we have proven ourselves worthy of it. We (as Atman) would have it no other way.

We must invoke our own inherent powers, and in doing so we also invoke the power of the Supreme Self (GOD). No one can do this for us. No guru, no prophet, no godman, no messiah, and no avatar can take up the challenge for us. We must take up the challenge ourselves, because, after all, that is why we decided to play the Game of Life to begin with.

Anyone who tells you they can do your soul-work for you is a liar. Anyone who tells you they can cancel out your karmic debt is a liar. Anyone who tells you they can give you Moksha is a liar.

The True Guru will guide you on the Path  
Within so that you can discover for yourself who  
you really are. You are the immortal Atman.  
That is all you are. That is all you will ever be.

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Yoga is skill  
in action.

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## **Law of Karma and Spiritual Practice**

Thought is a powerful force, but thought without action is of little consequence; in other words, it can only bring small results. It is true, however, that a thought can trigger a chain of thoughts which can build force and momentum and ultimately lead to some form of action. But this type of action is usually not very effective because it lacks determination and deliberation.

Deep deliberation and determined thought lead to deliberate action. When good thoughts are followed up with deliberate and determined action (effort), then our mind, body, and environment undergo transformation.

Imagination does not bring about actualization. Imagination must be followed with implementation (good effort – practice); only

then do we really change for the better.

We can envision many good things happening in our life, but unless we revise (change) our course of ACTION, we will remain stuck in the status quo.

We need to understand the Law of Karma. When we understand the Law of Karma we know that Nature is very unforgiving. Consciousness (Purush) is all-merciful and all-forgiving, but Nature (Prakriti) is unconscious and operates according to strict rules of cause and effect.

As conscious human beings, we can mitigate (lessen) or augment (increase) the Prakritic consequences (mental and physical effects), but we cannot change the Law of Karma. In other words, as intelligent beings we can work within the bounds of the Law of Karma to bring about

positive changes.

Violence begets violence. A person who eats animals, drinks intoxicants, and practices promiscuity, is violating (going against) their real nature and will suffer the mental and physical consequences regardless how much they know 'about' right and wrong.

Changing bad habits to good ones will bring about positive mental and physical changes. Just changing our thought and attitude without changing our actions may bring about some temporary peace of mind or worldly success, but this peace and success will be very temporary. Permanent peace of mind and true success lie in selfless action.

Selfless action simply means action done not for 'little me,' but for the common good. The

‘common good’ simply means the ‘goodness’ we all share in common. The goodness we all share in common is ATMAN, our own Pure Consciousness. In other words, the core of our being is our own Atman.

In our Atman (Soul) there is no alteration (instability or modification), and there is no altercation (conflict). A human being who is connected to their Real Self is stable-minded and free from self-conflict.

When we are stable-minded and free from self-conflict we are at peace with ourselves and we are not disturbed by this world. When the mind is trained to think like this it ceases to be a ‘trouble-maker’ and becomes a good ‘trouble-shooter.’ Such a mind becomes your friend and the friend of others too. Such a mind harbors no ill-will; hence, it becomes less prone to illness.

Eventually, we can make our mind immune to all negativity---but this requires much practice.

True spirituality is the practice (implementation) of the ageless wisdom of the Wise. Practice requires effort. Effort requires determination to go against the negative tide of the mind and selfish current of the ego.

We have to go across this ocean of Samsara, and it is no easy task. It is extremely difficult, or impossible, to swim across the ocean alone, even if you have superbly conditioned yourself for the task. One will have to seek the company of the Wise.

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Imagination does not bring about actualization. Imagination must be followed with implementation.

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## Cosmology\*

There is the Manifest and the Unmanifest. The Manifest is Purush and the Unmanifest is Prakriti. Purush is the Spirit Self. This Spirit Self (Purush) is Atman (Pure Consciousness) manifested through its own inherent force (Prana). When Purush is joined with Prakriti – which simply means, when the invisible (yet ever-manifest) Atman shines (as the Pranic force) upon the Unmanifest, this Spiritual Energy causes the dormant Prakriti to begin to heat up and glow. (This is *TAPAS*.) This infusion of Prakriti with the Spiritual Energy (Prana) of Atman causes the movement of the subtle elements of Prakriti called *paramanus*.

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\* Although appearing earlier in this work, the discussion of Vedic Cosmology is reiterated here and elsewhere in this treatise in order to further clarify this matter.



The union of Purush and Prakriti is the beginning of duality (polarization). Prior to this (in the state that follows Mahapralaya)<sup>7</sup> there is no duality; there is only the Manifest (Atman/Paramatman) and the Unmanifest (Prakriti) – the distinction between these is unmanifested and hence there is no duality but only Ultimate Reality.

Avidya (Ignorance) begins with the union of Purush and Prakriti. It is called Ignorance because in essence Purush and Prakriti are ever-united as the Pervader and the Pervaded; hence, there can be no joining or union of that which is eternally inseparable. However, for the sake of the Sport (Lila) of Creation, they are said to be joined.

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<sup>7</sup> That is, the state that ‘exists’ after the Dissolution (Mahapralaya) and prior to the Creation (Existence).

It is much like the way we play other games too; for example, in the game of hide-and-go-seek (which children play), someone has to pretend not to be able to see (they have to cover their eyes) and the other(s) must hide and wait to be found. Every game requires the element of ignorance (the state of 'not-knowing'), otherwise there could be no game. Likewise, Avidya is necessary for the existence of the Creation, and its removal (through Vidya, Knowledge) is necessary for Liberation. This is all a Drama.

As explained earlier, the first evolute resulting from the joining of Purush and Prakriti is Mahatattwa, the *principle* of Knowledge, or Knowing. This is the Universal Mind shared by every Atman. In other words, Atman, being all pervading, pervades this One Mind which is manifested by the Supreme Power of the

Supreme Self (Paramatman) manifested as Mahapurush (the Supreme Spirit).

This Mahatattwa is the shared medium (on the Prakritic level) of both the innumerable souls (Atmans) and the Supreme Self. Beyond this Prakritic level, the Supreme Self, Itself, is the shared medium of all, since the Supreme Self (Paramatman) pervades every Self (Atman).

From the Mahatattwa, the five Tanmatras and Ahamkara (Ego, the principle of self-consciousness) are evolved. The first Tanmatra is Akash (Space). This Akash is not physical space, but rather the Mind Space. Similarly, the other Tanmatras are also not physical entities, but rather they are the essences of the corresponding physical entities. However, the existence of these things is dependent on the principle of self-consciousness (Ego), without which they have

no apparent existence. (They either have apparent existence or no existence, and this too, like all things of this Creation, are expressions of duality.)

Up to this point, there is no physical world. The physical world begins with evolution of physical space (dark matter). Matter, as we know it, comes into existence at the time of the Big Bang. It is generally at this point that we begin to observe the changes in nature, and this 'change-observation' is denoted as relative Time.

The five physical elements appear at this time, and along with this the individual mind and senses are formed. After the terrestrial globes become capable of supporting life, the physical bodies comprised of physical sense organs and their supporting apparatus take shape in their multifarious forms based on the previous lives

karmas of the embodied souls (and also based on the inherent ‘rules and regulations’ of the Game of Life).

The purpose of the Creation is to experience our Eternal Nature. To experience our Eternal Nature we need to break free from our limitations and rise above our small self ego, personality, and individualized mind. This is the process of Liberation. Liberation (Moksha) is the aim of the Game of Life – a game which we have played before, and one which we will play again and again.

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The purpose of Life is to  
experience our Eternal Nature.

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## **Sanatan Dharma**

The true, and original, and only Sanatan Dharma (otherwise known as Eternal 'Religion') is threefold: it consists of [1] your own eternal nature (the nature of Atman), [2] the nature of the Supreme Self (Paramatman), and [3] the nature of this world (which has evolved from the union of Purush and Prakriti; Spirit and Matter).

Understanding all of these things, and acting in accordance with one's Real Nature, constitutes Dharma. Since these three entities (Atman, Paramatman, and Prakriti) are eternal, this Dharma is called Sanatan Dharma (Eternal Dharma). In reality, it has nothing whatsoever to do with any religion.

The VEDAS (Universal Wisdom inherent in the Supreme Self, and by extension also inherent in Atman and expressed in Prakriti) emanate from

the Supreme Being (GOD, Supreme Self, the Absolute---whatever you want to call It). All religions, on the other hand, can trace their roots to Ignorance (Avidya). In other words, religions are not born out of the Vedas; on the contrary, religions are born out of ignorance of the Vedas.

The various 'holy' books associated with the different religions of the world are written by human beings who are both fallible and fallacious; meaning they (human beings) are subject to both error and self-deception.

Many people deceive themselves by making the error of blindly following their religion. This is because most people are prisoners of their past impressions (*samskaras*), tendencies (*vasanas*), and *vruttis* (predispositions and erroneous mental self-talk).

This does not mean the Puranas, the Bible, Koran, and other works are not worthy of study and contemplation. However, people who are caught up in their little egos and minds are likely to get trapped in the imagery of these literary works, and will construct interpretations to suit their own limited mindset.

We should appreciate literary works of art for their beauty and inspiration, but we should also keep working on ourselves to shape our own mind into a masterpiece of spiritual expression.

We need to keep stripping away all our preconceptions, images, false expectations, and misgivings, and become more and more who we really are: the sons and daughters of GOD; the eternal companions of the Eternal Supreme Self.



We need to 'get real.' To do that, we need to empty the pitcher filled with mud and water, so that the fresh water can be poured into the receptacle of our mind. Only then can we realize our own divinity and see that same divinity in everyone.

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**The Truth is not found in religion.**

**The Truth is found in your Self.**

**The Truth is revealed through  
*religious* practice.**

**'Religious practice' means the deliberate and persistent practice of making up our mind (shaping our mind) to become a reflection (expression) of our Real Self.**

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## Reverence for Religion?

Reverence should not be given to the irreverent and honor should not be given to the dishonorable. For example, a Catholic priest who molests young children should not be revered or respected. Similarly, there are false prophets, phony gurus, bogi-yogis and ignorant pundits in this world, and it is unwise to honor any of these bogus persons.<sup>8</sup> To give honor to the dishonorable sets precedence and leads the ignorant and helpless into dense darkness.

We came to this world to remove the darkness and despair by spreading the Light of Wisdom and divine love. That light reveals the good, the bad, and the ugly and helps us distinguish between the true and false, the helpful and the

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<sup>8</sup> This certainly does NOT mean all the keepers of religion are ill-intentioned or unrespectable. Many of them are well-intentioned and do good deeds and are worthy of respect.

harmful, and the useful and the useless. It also helps us realize the difference between Dharma (our Real Nature) and manmade religion.

The Truth is realized only when the mind has been cleansed of all the mental debris of bias, images, expectations, annoyance, arrogance, and all the other byproducts of Ignorance. The darkness of Ignorance can only be removed with the Light of wisdom. It cannot be removed with religion.

**Question:**

“Can a Buddhist, Jain, Sikh, Christian, Muslim, or Jew practicing their own religion, realize God?”

Certainly they can realize God. However, it is impossible to realize God so long as we are superimposing our egotistic views.

People seek security and status in their labels. This is because they are doubtful of their True Self. People are doubtful of their True Self because they are living in Ignorance. Unfortunately, manmade religion does not remove ignorance; it mostly reinforces it.

**Assertion:**

“All the religions on the earth are ultimately given by God to mankind.”

This statement is based on wishful thinking born out of ignorance. The truth is, *all religions are manmade*. God is the author of humanity, but not the author of religion. If one wishes to be close to God, one should make humanity one's religion.

**Assertion:**

“All the prophets, saints, Rishis and

founders of different religions are the messengers of God.”

They are not the messengers of God because God requires no messenger. Each of us is already sitting in the lap of God (the lap of Eternity). We do not require anyone to give us a message when we are being held in God’s arms<sup>9</sup>.

**Assertion:**

“The core principles of all the religions are the same.”

Yes, this is true, and those principles are the core principles of Consciousness. The principles of Consciousness are embodied in the Vedas and Vedic writings. All religions contain some truths and some falsehoods. When all the falsehoods

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<sup>9</sup> ‘Arms’ is a metaphor for ‘power.’ God’s power is the power of Divine Wisdom and Divine Love.

are discarded, all that remains is the truth, and this same truth is already there in the Vedas. So, why not go straight to the source? People have a vested interest, and that is why they cling to their religion. They are followers of religion. They are not the followers of Truth.

**Assertion:**

“The differences in religions appear due to different geographical, regional and social requirements.”

Cultural diversity is a good thing. On the other hand, the divisions created by religion are a curse. The wisdom of Consciousness will unite everyone, but religions will always divide us by confining us to a particular dogma and excluding those who differ with us.

**Assertion:**

“This is the age for RESPECT FOR ALL RELIGIONS.”

No. This is the age for everyone to awaken from the slumber of ignorance and see manmade religion for what it really is: *it is a very poor and inadequate substitute for the undiluted, pure, universal Truth.*

**Comment:**

“On one side, you talk about VASUDHAIV KUTUMBAKAM (“the world is one big family”) and on the other you seem to impose the supremacy of Vedas and propagate division, hatred and strife among different members of this family of mankind.”

The Vedas are not something that can be imposed. The eternal message of the Vedas is something that is realized only after deep study. In other words, it is something that is self-evident based on objective knowledge and direct experience.

All things are not created equal in this world. If we are wise, we will recognize what is authentic and we will value it. We will also discern what is false and discard it.

The ego is an imposter and we are defrauded when we follow it. False religion is an imposition on the mind. People who follow false religion are inclined to impose their religion on others. People who follow the Truth (Dharma) lead others to the Truth by their own example.



The truthful harbor no ill-will to anyone and see all as the light of the soul. They strive to deepen their understanding and share their insights with those who are truth-seekers.

Those who are not truth-seekers have no desire to hear the truth. They may be members of the same family, but they do not share the same familiarity with truth or desire it either.

Those who desire to know the Essence are essentially the same; meaning they share a familiar spirit (energy). Good energy builds more good energy. Goodwill builds goodwill.

Goodness can only blossom if self-will (ego-will, ill-will) is diminished. Ego willfulness is eradicated when we inspect our own mind and make it a likeness of the Real Self.

When we make our mind divine, we reach our goal and fulfill the purpose of our existence. The purpose of our existence is not to preach the truth but to teach it through our life's example. First we teach it to ourselves by learning the lessons of life. Then we become learned and can teach it to others also.

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A truthful person  
harbors no ill-will to  
anyone and sees all as  
the light of the soul.

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## **Images and Idols versus the Worship of GOD**

Our mental images of God are the greatest hindrance to Self-realization. Our images are our own – they are not God’s images, because God is imageless. Most of the time, we worship our image of God only; we do not really worship God.

The true worship of God lies in the practical application of the precepts of the Wise. The true worship of God lies in taking responsibility for our actions and improving our mind, body, and environment.

We should be practical idealists, and not *idol-ists*. Idolatry is an abomination. Ultimately, it makes people hateful. Idolatry is harmful, not helpful. Idolatry keeps people ignorant and makes them

stubborn and insensitive to the pure, undiluted Truth. A person who is caught up in images can never understand the subtle but simple Truth.

The worship of idols has absolutely nothing whatsoever to do with the worship of God.

*From the Vedas. . .*

**Om Ya Atmadaa.** . . our Essence – the All-pervading, imageless Supreme Being is the giver of Self---we become the embodied soul (Jivatman) by the grace (power) of that Supreme Being.

**Baladaa.** . . The Real Self gives us the strength to overcome all our shortcomings; It empowers us to BE REAL and to WISE UP; our Real Father and Mother (GOD) never enable or weaken us by feeding us half-truths or making us complacent.

**Yasya Vishwa Upasate.** . . . everyone in this Universe adores (truly longs for, and feels connected to) that Real Self, and everyone abhors (feels uncomfortable, inadequate, and incomplete with) the non-self, the nonsense, and the false persona.

**Prashisham Yasya Deva.** . . He Whose precepts are practiced by the wise and noble.

**Yasya chayamritam.** . . Whose grace is the Nectar of Immortality---the elixir of Divine Wisdom that awakens the Jivatman to the Truth.

**Yasya Mrityu.** . . .by Whose grace, in the form of Self-realization, the living self (Jivatman) overcomes the death of the body and the forgetfulness of the mind, and experiences directly the union of the Self with the Supreme Self; Atman with Paramatman.

**Havishaa Videma.** . . the grace of that Supreme Imageless Self all should invoke through the practice of Truth. Emulating the Names (qualities) of the Real Self in our daily lives constitutes the true devotion and worship of GOD.

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Those who truly want to come close to God (the Supreme), should study the Vedas and Shastras with an open mind and purified intellect.

Begin with the knowledge that you know nothing. If you know you know nothing, you know a lot. If you think you know a lot, you know very little.

Herein lies the necessity of the Guru-disciple relationship. Few are fit for it. When the disciple is ready, the Guru will appear. We should spend our time making ourselves ready by making ourselves humble.

Humility is practiced by performing our duty in the spirit of selflessness:

**Om Kurvann Eveha Karmani Jijivishhecchatam Samah. Evam Tvayi Nanyatheto' Sti Na Karma Lipyate Nare.** (Isha Upanishad)

Meaning: Desire to live in this world for 100 years, doing your daily duty and performing actions without any thought of appreciation, recognition, or personal accomplishment. Just do your work nicely without losing peace of mind. Practice *nishkam karma* (selfless action). Oh human being, this is the only way you can free your self from the cycle of karma (action and reaction). There is no other way.

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Humility is practiced by performing our duty in the spirit of selflessness.

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## **Rule Over Your Own Mind**

We all live on this beautiful floating garden called planet Earth. We are all earthlings, but we are the darlings (dear ones) of the Supreme Self only when we endear ourselves to the Same.

The problem is this: many of us hold our images dear to our hearts, and hence our minds are unclear. Unless and until we remove all our mental images we cannot perceive Reality as it really is, but only as we imagine it to be.

Neither your vocation, position in society, or lineage has very much bearing on your depth of understanding or proximity (as in 'nearness' or 'dearness') to Supreme Consciousness (Ultimate Reality). What matters most is your humility, earnestness, and willingness to change for the better.



Reading Ramcharitmanas, the Bible, the Dhamapada or other religious books might help one change for the better, but the best change comes only when we make our mind Ram-like or Christ-like, or Buddha-like. In other words, when our mind is ruled by Ram-like qualities, then we establish the rule of Goodness (Ram Raj) within ourselves and we are no longer ruled by the tyrant of EGO (Ahamkara).

The only way to become self-ruled is through the mastery of *Raja Yoga*. Through the practice of Raja Yoga one gains mastery of the mind (which includes the emotions). Until then, one is not free. Until then, one remains under the compulsion of ego, prompted by one's past impressions (samskaras), present tendencies (vasanas), attitudes (vrittis), and future circumstances shaped by the law of Karma.

## **Who is a Learned Person?**

A learned person is one who has learned the lessons of life. Only a person who learns from their past mistakes, and also learns from the mistakes of others, experiences the inner freedom and joy. That person is free from false ego, false pride, and conceit.

A truly learned person is not complacent. He or she does not get trapped in their comfort zones, in their self-image, and in their small-self accomplishments. Instead, they root out all of their shortcomings – they realize their only enemy is their own ego and ignorance.

The Wise love the company of the wise. They take no delight in the company of fools. A fool is one who lies to him- or herself by believing in false ego and chasing after images (false

expectations and superimpositions).

A person becomes a fool by gambling away their resources. In other words, when we risk our life for the sake of satisfying our false feelings and selfish desires, we shortchange ourselves.

A person who trades a diamond for a piece of glass is a fool. Similarly, a person who loses sight of the truth because they are caught up in the glitter of their own mental images, does not know the love of the Supreme. One who does not know the love of the Supreme Self gets caught up in self-love and self-glory, and pays a heavy price: they become spiritually bankrupt and isolate themselves from their true well-wishers (the Wise).

All should emulate the Wise. We emulate the Wise when we learn the lessons they teach us.

When we learn our lessons, we become learned and no longer succumb to shallowness. We become deep souls. Established in the depth of our Being, we become completely free from non-being. The non-self is no more, and we are liberated.

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A learned person is  
one who has  
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of life.

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## **The Practice of Yoga**

The Yoga Shastra begins with the definition of  
Yoga: *Yogash Chitta Vritti Nirodhah*

**Yoga is the restraint (control) of the mind.**

Though this is not the word for word translation,  
it is however the essence of the teaching.

The mind is basically our thoughts (Vrittis). The  
state or condition that exists when all the  
thoughts have subsided, is sometimes called the  
'no mind' state. The 'no-mind' state, or Samadhi,  
is NOT achieved through mindlessness or  
thoughtlessness, but rather, through  
'mindfulness' (attentiveness or one-pointedness)  
and 'thoughtfulness' (unselfishness).

When we are focused and unselfish, when we  
are responsible and responsive, we clarify the

mind. In other words, the mind is purified through unselfish ACTION. It is NOT possible to be selfish and have a positive mind. Selfish actions will ALWAYS make the mind morbid.

To become the master of our mind we have to improve our habits and live a Vedic lifestyle. When the mind is guided by the universal wisdom of the Vedas, the mind will become inclined to initiate good actions. The person who takes the initiative to do what is good, becomes godly. A godly person is one whose thoughts and actions are in agreement with Truth.

It is our responsibility as noble human beings (Aryas) to make up our mind to do what is right – to do what is conducive to the welfare of all living beings. If we don't make up our mind, our mind will be 'made up,' or formed, from the impressions it receives. If the impressions are

ugly, our mind will become deformed and we will become deluded.

Impressions (Samskaras) are formed from actions (Karmas). The 'seeing', 'hearing,' 'speaking,' 'eating,' 'associating,' and so on, all constitute the ACTIONS we do.

ACTIONS (Karmas) lead to IMPRESSIONS (Samskaras), which lead to TENDENCIES (Vasanas), which lead to THOUGHTS/ ATTITUDES/ DISPOSITIONS (Vrittis), which lead back to ACTIONS. This is the KARMIC CYCLE.

We can break the karmic cycle by controlling our thoughts and changing our course of action. In other words, we have to deliberately change the way we think and make up our mind to change our ways. This is the practice of Yoga. This

practice brings balance in our life, and this balance brings peace (Shanti), and this peace leads to Moksha (the complete and total freedom from Ignorance and Selfishness).

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To become the  
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## **Finding the Answers to Your Questions**

You can find the answers to all of your questions, but you will need to drop your images, which means you will need to drop your ego. It is a process.

The answers to your questions are found inside of your Self. But if you don't know who you are, you won't know where to look. You can look in your mind, but you will get a clear picture only if your mind is rid of its images.

You need to scrub your mind with Wisdom in order to purify it. In other words, you need to apply wisdom until your mind becomes habituated to accepting it. When the mind naturally rejects untruth, it will become truthful. The mind that is full of Truth has no room for nonsense.

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Train your mind to  
follow the ways of the  
Wise, or follow your  
ego.

Practice or perish.

You are the sum total of  
the choices you make.

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## **Why Do People Believe in Religion?**

The problem is that people's brains are 'hard-wired.' It is the same thing as saying that they are 'hard-headed,' which is the same thing as saying they are 'hard-hearted.'

Some people think of themselves as open-hearted; but they cannot be open-hearted if they are closed-minded. One who is closed-minded is fixed in their images. Images of truth (or images of anything: love, life, religion, one's self, one's relatives, etc.) are born out of EGO, and ego is born out of IGNORANCE.

Everyone is naturally born ignorant, but it is unnatural to remain that way. People remain ignorant when they ignore the truth, and people ignore the truth when they are in their ego. It is a vicious cycle, and one who remains in this cycle

of ignorance-ego-images eventually becomes very hard-headed (stubborn), hard-hearted (insensitive to the truth), and hard-wired (very difficult to change).

We cannot rewire anyone's brains, but we can rewire our own through deep introspection, self-study, and keeping our ego in check.

People believe in religion because they do not believe in themselves. In other words, they lack Atam-Vishwas (Soul-Confidence). They might have self-confidence, but that self-confidence is unstable because it is based on their small self ego and is rooted in their images. That's why they cling to their images, because these images support (validate) their false ego (false identification and misperception).

The only way to honor great souls like Ram,

Krishna, Buddha, Christ and others, is to take responsibility for our lives and 'put our house in order.' People who practice self-involvement in the form of the emotional worship of their images of God or godly souls (like Krishna, Ram, etc.), are NOT worshipping GOD. Instead, they are doing a disservice to their own souls by failing to realize their own self-worth.

Each and every one of us is a Son or Daughter of God. We are ALL God's children. At one time we were little babies, but now, by dint of divine wisdom and our own practices, we have become mature adults. It is time for us to realize our own potential and manifest the determination required to fulfill our destiny.

Our destiny is to be completely free from the shackles of mind and ego and manifest the glory

of God through the attainment of MOKSHA,  
here and now, in this human incarnation.

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Everyone is  
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remain that way.

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## Religion and False Prophets

### Assertion:

“Now is the end of this Kali Yuga age, and is the time for the Kalki Avatar to appear.”

Now is not the end of this Kali age, but the beginning only. However, the epochs of time in the form of *Kali*, *Satya*, *Treta*, and *Dwapara* yugas have absolutely NO control over whether or not you and I and others realize the TRUTH. The realization of the Truth will set us free, and that realization is not dependent on something or someone outside of ourselves.

There are a number of deluded individuals who assume themselves or someone else to be the so-called Kalki avatar. This is a silly phenomenon similar to the Christian notion of the second

coming of Christ. These individuals are usually of no importance or significance, and are generally not dangerous. The false prophet we need to be most concerned about is our own ego.

We are our own best friend and our own worst enemy. If our mind is purified, we will realize our Real Nature and see God face-to-face (so to speak). The mind cannot be fully purified so long as it is tainted with the infection of ego.

If we don't see our own ego then we are our own worst enemy. People do not see their own ego because their minds are decorated with images.

To find God (to see the Truth) one has to look within their own Atman (soul). This is done by purifying the mind so that it clearly reflects the Light of the Soul (the Wisdom of Consciousness).



Only with the eye of Wisdom can we perceive the Truth. People do not perceive the Truth because they are blinded by ego. They are caught up in this drama of the world, in its mind-games and ego-play.

Dropping our pretenses means letting go of our images, and when we do that, our ego falls to ground (it is merged back into its native 'nothingness' in the form of unmanifested Prakriti). When this happens, we fully awaken from Ignorance and stop 'dreaming' that we are blind.

No one profits or benefits from the false prophets, but instead they are 'taken for a ride,' and that ride is a ride to hell. Those who follow charlatans are simply following their own ego but do not realize it.

It is the duty of those who can see to guide the blind across the street, especially when there is a lot of traffic. Nowadays there are many careless people on the path trying to rush their way to 'enlightenment,' and in their self-centered pursuit they care little for learning and practicing basic living skills. It is to these '*pretya-margis*' (image-gratifying seekers) that the false prophets, self-proclaimed avatars, and image-ridden false teachers direct their message.

The wise seekers shun the advice of con-artists. To find our way back to our original state of Being (ATMAN pervaded by PARAMATMAN) we should listen only to the advice of those who are knowledgeable.

The Supreme Knower is the Supreme Being, by Whose Grace the Vedas have been manifested for the welfare of all. For guidance, let us turn to

the Divine Wisdom. It is absolutely senseless to turn to imaginary 'avatars.'

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The most  
dangerous false  
prophet is our  
own ego.

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## **The Number One Terrorist**

The number one terrorist is our own ego. The clear and present danger is our own ego.

When we are falsely identified with the stories of our mind we become fictional/frictional characters in the drama of this world. The friction or conflict is created when we hold on to our imaginary small self and fail to align our thinking with the macro-drama of the Universe. We have to put everything in perspective by embracing Universality.

Whoever we are (whether wealthy or poor, well-known or unknown, popular or unpopular), we are a very small piece of a much, much bigger puzzle. When we lose ourselves in the abundant life force, we forget our little 'piece' (ego) and find true PEACE.

One who is truly peaceful terrorizes neither himself nor anyone else. We cannot find true peace by appeasing our mind or following the dictates of our ego.

All dogmatism, fanaticism, narrow-mindedness, and sectarian violence are born out of Ignorance. Ignorance of what? --- Ignorance of our higher nature, which is our Real Nature, our True Nature.

Unless we really realize that **we are souls**, and that everyone else is a soul, and that our Essence is the All-pervading Supreme Self, we will never find lasting peace. In other words, as long as we are in conflict with our selves (as long as our mind is not in agreement with the divine), we are going to continue to be terrorized by own ego.

Only by arming ourselves with divine wisdom can we conquer our own ego. Only divine wisdom can reveal our Real Nature and dispel our ignorance.

Most religious traditions are the trappings of ego. Religious followers think they can be 'real' just by decorating their minds with images, memorizing passages from the scriptures, or telling stories. It is all the play of mind and ego.

This doesn't mean we shouldn't build on the strong foundation already laid down by those who came before us. But what is *that* foundation? That foundation is the changeless Truth, without which there is no stability or certainty. People want to be certain, to be secure, and to 'know' without any doubt. For that, all they need to do is remove their images.

Muslims, Hindus, Jews, Christians, and all other religious followers are prisoners of their own graven images which are nothing but the reflection of their own egos.

Again, I repeat: **our own ego is the number one terrorist**. Unless we break free of the stranglehold of ego-mentality, we are going to continue to terrorize ourselves with annoyances, bitterness, anger, anxiety, disgust and despair.

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All dogmatism, fanaticism,  
narrow-mindedness, and  
sectarian violence are born  
out of Ignorance.

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## Mastering the Mind

### Question:

“The only question I face is that, even though what you are saying is totally logical and rational, why I am not able to practice these things fully? Even though the teachings say we are the master of the mind, often we fall prey to our own habit patterns. Why is this so?”

The mind is a creature of habit—it will do whatever it has become habituated to do. Changing the mind is a matter of constant, long term practice. For example, take the case of someone studying how to play the Sitar. After having studied and practiced for some period of time (say 2 or 3 years), they will have acquired ‘some’ skill in playing the instrument. If they have a good teacher, and they have studied well,



they will know while playing whether they are rendering the raga (melody) correctly or incorrectly. They will know how the raga *should* sound but they may lack the ability to skillfully render it. In other words, even though they can perceive their own lack of expertise, they will still possess a clear picture of what the raga 'should' sound like. Perhaps in their own mind they can even hear the raga being played beautifully. However, they have not yet practiced enough to be able to produce the correct sound, and hence, when they try to play the raga they play it with many mistakes.

Similarly, we want to master the 'mind,' and produce absolutely beautiful vibrations in our life, but due to lack of long term practice we falter and repeat our mistakes, sometimes unwittingly and sometimes knowingly and arrogantly.

We have to keep practicing. To master the mind is no easy task, but it is one which we (ATMAN) are certainly capable of. In fact, this challenge and goal (of mastering the mind) is one which we have deliberately set about to accomplish.

We are fully responsible for all our thoughts and actions. Our fate is truly in our own hands. We are the maker of our own destiny. At some inconceivable remote point in Time, we decided, by our own inherent free choice, to play the Game of Life. Through eons of Time we passed through innumerable life forms until eventually, by the grace of God, we became embodied as a human being.

Our mind is filled with innumerable impressions (samskaras) from our innumerable past lives (in many different life forms). These samskaras and

their associated tendencies (vasanas) give rise to various mental dispositions, attitudes, emotions, and thoughts (vrittis).

Our mental and physical being constitute the 'Prakritic' side of our dual nature, while our spirit-self constitutes the 'Purushic' side from which our conscience and spiritual tendencies originate.

Our spiritual nature compels us to go beyond our small self (consisting of our mind-body limitations) and reach for the Highest. Our own True Nature drives us to seek the Supreme Consciousness.

We can NEVER be satisfied or find fulfillment in body-consciousness, personality-consciousness, and ego-consciousness. There is something inside of us (our own Real Self, ATMAN) which

moves us to attain the Supreme State, and we cannot rest until we fully realize that Ultimate Reality, which is One Without a Second.

We will realize our Goal only if we keep our promises. By virtue of being born as a human being, each of us MUST make<sup>10</sup> the promise to be HUMANE. Being humane means to be non-violent; it means to practice AHIMSA (non-violence). As human beings, we must also promise ourselves that we will speak the Truth, not steal, not be cheap or have bad character, and not be greedy and miserly. If we make these promises (called the *Yamas*) and keep them, our life will get better and better, and our mind will come more and more under our control.

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<sup>10</sup> Actually, by virtue of being born as a human being, each of us has *already* made the promise to be humane. Our conscience demands that we are non-violent, truthful, do not steal, and that we behave with self-respect and dignity, and that we are not piggish or greedy. This ‘conscience’ is not superimposed by society. On the contrary, it is integral to who and what we essentially are.

We have to keep refining our mind and make ourselves deep human beings. We become deep by removing the shallowness of our mind and personality.

We remove shallowness (and hollowness) by inundating the mind with Wisdom and putting it into practice in our daily life. Eventually, the mind becomes so subtle and one-pointed that it can penetrate through the veil of Ignorance (Avidya) and have a glimpse of Eternity.

One day, we wake up and realize we are sitting in the lap of Eternity and then we are Enlightened.

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**We have to keep refining our  
mind and make ourselves deep  
human beings.**

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## **What is the Problem, and What is the Solution?**

Basically, the problem is that we are not removing our own ego-infection. To remove the ego-infection from our mind, we have to imbibe the spirit of humility. We have to stop looking for appreciation and recognition from others.

The only recognition we require is the recognition of the Supreme Mother (Mata). The Supreme Mother bestows the recognition of the Self (the True Self-recognition) upon the seeker. But this only happens when the seeker seeks the Truth, the whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth.

Only the one-pointed mind can penetrate through the veil of Ignorance and perceive the

Truth. We have to discipline our mind with Wisdom to make it sharp and focused.

‘Disciplining the mind with Wisdom’ means constantly revolving the mind on the teachings of the Wise. The Most Wise One is the Supreme Self Who is One Without a Second, and the teachings of that Supreme Self are the Vedas.

Our studies must be deeply introspective, and when they are, we will become very deep human beings. Deep human beings do NOT fight for ego-recognition or superiority. Deep human beings share wisdom ungrudgingly and unpretentiously. Deep human beings cooperate in the spirit of egolessness (unselfishness).

The message of the sages is “You are the problem; you are the solution.” In other words, our own ego and selfishness are the problem;

and our own practice of true humility and  
unselfish actions are the solution.

To spread the message of the saints and sages to  
the world, we have to first bring the message  
'home' by implementing the teachings in all our  
daily activities. Then, when we gather together  
in the mandir, church, mosque or other place of  
worship, those vibrations will be magnified and  
will naturally spread in all directions.

It is impossible to reach the hearts of others if we  
are not ourselves established in our own heart.  
Our 'heart' is the core of our being, our ATMAN.  
Only heart-to-heart communication can work.  
Anything else is bound to fail.

Two things make heart-to-heart communication  
IMPOSSIBLE: **ego and ignorance**. Ego is  
removed with *tapas* (austerity) in the form of



humility, which really means '*keeping our ego in check*' until one day it is 'checkmated.' Ignorance is removed with Wisdom.

With these two wings of Consciousness (Humility and Wisdom), we can fly together to Eternity.

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You are the  
problem.

You are the  
solution.

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## **The Path of Religion versus the Path of Dharma**

People belong to various religions due to their upbringing in Ignorance (Avidya). Many people prefer to 'take the easy way out' and follow a religion instead of following their own Real Nature (Dharma).

Due to the preponderance of EGO, IMAGES, and IGNORANCE in this present Age (Kali Yuga), human beings have created false religions. Less than 5,000 years ago there were no religions in existence. However, there was still the Eternal Dharma. ALL religions were fabricated in the last few thousand years by unenlightened followers. Ram never created any religion. Krishna never created any religion. Buddha and Christ (to my knowledge) never created any religion.

It is time for everyone 'to step up to the plate' and 'put themselves on the line,' and take responsibility for their own actions and realize their own inherent potential.

"Our potential is directly proportional to our determination." There is nothing more important than our own human effort. We are not helpless slaves of God, nor are we his meek sheep; we are all His Children and should behave with dignity, nobility, good character, and true humility.

Good examples (in the form of the Wise and the Enlightened) are essential for our all round development. The Wise have been with us from the very beginning. All we need to do is open our minds (purify our hearts) and continue the expansion of our consciousness.

## **Is GOD (the Supreme Self) Embodied as a Human Being?**

### **Truth seeker:**

“The Bhagwad Gita verily makes it clear that Krishna<sup>11</sup> is no common mortal. Rather he *is* the Paramatman (GOD).”

Definitely Krishna was NOT a common mortal. However, neither are you or I common mortals, and neither were Jesus, Budha and Mohammed common mortals. All of us are immortal beings. An immortal being does not ‘become’ immortal, because by their very nature they have always existed (have always been immortal), i.e., they are uncreated and indestructible (never actually

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<sup>11</sup> Krishna is regarded as GOD Himself by many Hindus. Similarly, many Budhists worship Budha as God, Christians worship Jesus Christ as God, and Muslims worship Mohammed as God’s special prophet.

die). This describes Krishna's nature<sup>12</sup>, Budha's real nature, Christ's real nature, Mohammed's real nature, your real nature, my real nature, and the real nature of everyone.

Though all of us are immortal beings (absolutely Pure Consciousness), we are embodied as living souls (that is, souls embodied in ego, intellect, mind, senses, and the gross physical body). Thus, we are all *Jivatmans* (living souls, i.e., embodied souls).

All enlightened human beings (including Krishna, Ram, Budha, Christ and others) are Jivatmans – they are embodied souls – they are *not* GOD. A fully enlightened human being is totally free, meaning he or she is the Pure Self, ATMAN, and thus completely in touch with the

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<sup>12</sup> Krishna's distinction is that he fully realized this, and thus spoke and acted from that highest state of Consciousness (what some people call Supreme Consciousness).

Supreme Self by which everyone and everything is pervaded. The State of Being that is manifested by the Enlightened Ones is the same as our own State of Being: in other words, it is the state of being our Original Self, which is ATMAN. Atman is the essence of Jivatman, and the essence of Atman is the Supreme Self (Paramatman).

Krishna was NOT Paramatman. Budha was not God. Jesus Christ was not God. They were pure souls (Atman), that's all. As Atman (the Pure Soul), they are capable of revealing (manifesting) the Supreme Self (that is to say, *they are able to manifest the union of Atman and Paramatman*).

**Truth seeker:**

“And whoever said the supreme consciousness cannot be embodied in a human vessel? The existence of Budhhas, or

yogis who are firmly established in Brahman (meaning those who have attained God), and who still remained in human bodies for many years after attaining enlightenment, shows that perfection can reside in a human body.”

First of all, those who ‘attain God’ cannot be God. ‘Attaining God’ means realizing His Presence in our lives. More specifically, it means experiencing our Essence, which is the Soul of our own soul. God never stands in need of attaining Himself. God is never subjected to the state of Ignorance. Ignorance and enlightenment are states of the embodied soul (Jivatman); the Supreme Soul (Paramatman, GOD) is never embodied.

Study the Vedas and you will certainly learn that Supreme Consciousness cannot be embodied:

**OM SA PARYAGAACCHUKRAM,  
AKAAYAM, AVRANAM, ASNAVIRAM,  
SHUDDHAM, APAAPAVIDDHAM.**

(From the Yajur Veda)

Elucidation:

The Supreme Self (GOD) is all-pervasive, completely pervading every eternal, uncreated, indestructible soul and also completely pervading every particle of Matter (the uncreated, indestructible Prakriti). [This is what is conveyed by the words OM SA PARYAGAACCHUKRAM.] That ever-shining Supreme Self is bodiless (AKAYAM): the bodiless quality of the Supreme Self is eternal and unchangeable, just as all His qualities are eternal and unchangeable. That Supreme Self is AVRANAM, invulnerable, ASNAVIRAM, absolutely imageless, SHUDDHAM, absolutely



pure, APAAPAVIDDHAM, absolutely incapable of any wrong doing whatsoever (sinless), and hence is NEVER embodied as we are in the form of Jivatman. [There is NO such thing as JivaParamatman.] If the Supreme Self were embodied, this would nullify His eternal qualities of bodilessness, invulnerability, absolute purity, etc. In other words, it would contradict the TRUTH.

**Idol worshipper:**

“You praise the human body so much and yet have so low estimates of what the human body really is!”

The human body is the vehicle of the living soul. Along with the mind, senses, intellect, and self-consciousness (ego), the body is used by the soul to play the Game of Life, the Sport of Existence, with the ultimate goal of attaining Liberation

(Moksha). The ever-present (and everywhere present Supreme Self) does not attain Liberation because It is NEVER subjected to the state of Ignorance (bondage), not even in the form of a dream or play (Lila).

The Supreme Self is NEVER embodied, but we (the innumerable souls), including Krishna, Buddha, Ram, Christ, Mohammed<sup>13</sup> and everyone else are certainly embodied from time to time, either under the compulsion of our past karmas or by our own free choice (after having attained the Liberated state).

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<sup>13</sup> Muslims do not believe Mohammed was God. However, they believe Mohammed is His prophet, and just like all the other followers of religion, they believe their own manmade religion is the only true religion.

It may very well be a 'true religion' but so are all the other religions true *religions* too. But none of these religions is the religion of Truth, rather, they are the religion of 'man,' meaning they are manmade religions. The Truth does not stand in need of any 'religion.'

**Idol worshipper:**

“You have said that the Supreme Consciousness, for whatever reason, can just not be embodied in gross material body. However even after being embodied (just supposing) in a gross material body, I don't see anything stopping it from being the Supreme Consciousness and all pervading etc.”

It is totally irrational and illogical to think that an infinite entity can be contained or embodied. To realize this, simply go on expanding your conception of GOD as embracing the whole world, the whole galaxy, the whole universe, the whole Multiverse (multitude of universes), and all Time (previous Universes, and Universes yet to be manifested), and then keep on expanding your conception still further and further, and further into Infinity. THAT is not even an

infinitesimal expression of the unfathomable magnitude of the all-pervasiveness of the Supreme Self.

The Supreme Self is Indivisible and thus has no parts or part-manifestations. The Supreme Self is present in Its Entirety (Completely) in everyone and everything, and yet no one or anything can contain It.

The Supreme Self pervades us (the innumerable, ETERNAL souls) but we are NOT the Supreme Self. As the pure Self (ATMAN), each of us completely pervades Prakriti (just like the Supreme Self does), but we do NOT pervade one another. Our communion with one another is only through the Supreme Self which pervades us, and through Prakriti (Nature) which all of us (including the Supreme Self) pervade together. But ONLY the Supreme Self is absolutely All-

Pervading (VISHNU) and thus pervades everyone and everything.

**Question:**

“You say the Supreme Self cannot be embodied in a human form or stone image because of the imperfect nature of material existence...so do you mean to say the "Prakriti," which is ever existing along with the Jivatman and the Paramatman (according to you) is basically an imperfect thing? Then how can Prakriti be beginningless and endless?”

GOD (Paramatman, the Supreme Soul) is Eternal and Infinite (Unlimited). Atman (the individual Soul) and Prakriti (Nature) are eternal and *finite* (limited). The Supreme Self (Paramatman), Atman, and Prakriti are all PERFECT, meaning that their qualities are **complete and unalterable**

(unchangeable). However, their qualities (which are ETERNAL) *are also distinct*.

The qualities of the Supreme Self express the nature of the Supreme Self; the qualities of Atman express the nature of Atman; and the qualities of Prakriti express the nature of Prakriti. The qualities of Prakriti (such as the quality of ‘unconsciousness’) can NOT express the qualities of the Supreme Self or the Self (except by contradistinction).

**Question:**

“How can a perfected being reside in a human body unless the body is also perfect?”

The human mind and body are the residence of the soul. While residing in the mind and body, we have taken up the task of refining the mind.

We use the mind and body for the sake of playing the Game of Self-Discovery. Once we have discovered our Real Self (by purifying the mind), we will continue to reside in the body (and use the mind) as we see fit, for the time being. It doesn't mean the mind and body have the same nature of PERFECTION as the Atman. The mind and body, though refined with divine wisdom and disciplined with good habits and practices, will continue to retain their essential Prakritic qualities of Sattoguna, Ragoguna, and Tamoguna.

**Assertion:**

“Also, an interesting point I would like to draw to your attention is that Gautam Buddha himself is said to have told about 'anatman', which means 'no-self' as opposed to a concept of a 'self' or soul or atman.”

I do not know the context in which Buddha may have coined or used this term 'anatman.'

However, as you have used it in the above paragraph, it would seem to indicate the state of complete selflessness (self-sacrifice) in which the living self offers its own self (Jivatmanhood) into the Yajna of Cosmic Energy (Supreme Divine Spirit). I am reminded of the following words from the Isha Upanishad:

**Om Vaayur Anilam Amritam Athedam**

**Atha**, now, **Vayur**, the life energy (individual), **Anilam**, should be transformed into Cosmic Life Energy, **Amritam**, individual conscious energy should be transformed into Cosmic Conscious Energy

Meaning: **May our lives enter into Eternal**



**Nature and Eternal Nature enter into our lives. May the individual life force be transformed into Cosmic Life Energy. May Cosmic Energy enter into our consciousness. Then may our soul enter into Cosmic Consciousness and remain hooked to it.<sup>14</sup>**

**Question:**

“Also, how and where does the ‘brahman’ fit in the equation of ‘atman’, ‘paramatman’ and ‘anatman’? Please do throw some light on this if you can.”

Brahman refers to the Supreme Self (Paramatman, the Absolute). However, Brahman can also refer to Atman because Atman is also Absolute (i.e., eternal and unchangeable) but differs from Paramatman. Since it differs

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<sup>14</sup> From an elucidation of the Isha Upanishad, by Dr. T. R. Khanna.

from Paramatman, we can distinguish the two as ParaBrahman and Brahman.

Brahman (or Brahma) also means 'the Creator.'  
The phrase "Aham Brahm asmi:" I am Brahman,  
means "I am the Creator (of actions)," it does  
NOT mean "I am GOD." [No one says 'Aham  
Parabrahm asmi.']

As for 'anatman' in the context just now used, it  
can refer to the non-self, which is the make-  
believe 'person' most of us think we are, but  
which really we are not.

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The human mind  
and body are the  
residence of the soul.

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## **God, Guru, and the Vedas**

God is the First Teacher (Guru), and without His touch (direct influence upon the spotless minds of the original seers), no one could ever be enlightened. That knowledge (or more correctly, 'Divine Wisdom') has been passed down to us since times immemorial. Those true channels of Divine Wisdom are part of the play of Eternity, the Divine Game of Life.

After God, our mother and father are our first gurus. Without proper instruction and guidance from our earthly parents, the journey of life is very difficult. However, without the guidance of a Satguru (True Guru), the realization (attainment) of the ultimate destination or purpose of life is impossible.

One must continue to purify the mind and humble one's ego (through self-discipline, self-study, and self-surrender) and eventually the living Guru (Teacher) will appear. It is a matter of both God's Mercy and our own intense desire. (With regard to this, we should keep in mind the saying: "First deserve, then desire.")

GOD is the Supreme Guru (the Supreme Educator). He is One Without a Second. All other teachers come after Him, and none are His equal or can even approximate His Greatness. That Supreme Being is Incomparable and absolutely pervades every Atman (Soul).

Those living souls (Jivatmans) who have divested themselves of every trace of selfish ego and have even sacrificed their own being (Jivatmanhood) into that Divine Essence, they realize the Ultimate Reality which is the

unbroken union of the Self (Atman) and the Supreme Self (Paramatman). This realization (actualization) is impossible without a True Teacher.

**Bahai follower:**

From the Bahai religion: "If thou lovest Me, turn away from thyself; and if thou seekest My pleasure, regard not thine own; that thou mayest die in Me and I may eternally live in thee."

As you know, these words from the Baha'i writings are very similar to passages from the Gita (and the Christian Bible).

Nowadays, it is customary to teach in the 'third person' and use words such as 'he' or 'it' or 'that.' In times past, it was perhaps customary to teach in the 'first person' using terms like 'me'

and 'I'. When reading such passages in the Gita (or other scriptures) one has to keep this in mind.

For example, a common phrase at the end of a number of *slokas* (passages) in the Gita is "... he is very dear to Me." Krishna is saying (for example) that a person who is very unselfish is very *close* to the Supreme Self; or we could also say it means "he is very close to his Essence," or "his nature is aligned with his Real Nature," etc., etc.

Krishna was a living human being; and so were all the other great souls who have come to this little planet Earth and shared their Divine Wisdom with us. Such souls are very godly (god-like) but they are NOT God, nor did they ever profess to be God. However, again, as mentioned earlier, if one uses the 'first person'

method of instruction it could easily be misconstrued that they were saying “I am God.”

For example, in a *Satsang* (wisdom gathering) I might go into a meditative state of consciousness and give a discourse on Samsara (the ‘world’). In the discourse I might start saying... ‘This world of unreality is filled with pain and misery. I am an orphan in this world of Samsara. Abused, neglected, and forgotten am I. For so long I have been living in the back alleys and gutters of the World. Feeding on the flesh of once living creatures, my stomach has become a graveyard and my mind a torture chamber. I want to find my way Home but I am lost in the dungeon of my ego. My heart is pulled in two directions: to the Spirit and to the Flesh.”

Now, in truth I am not an orphan nor am I a meat-eater. In fact, my mind is not a torture

chamber but a garden of good thoughts, and my ego is my helpmate and not my tormentor. My heart is set on the Supreme and I am not at all overwhelmed by my natural earthly instincts. However, someone could easily misconstrue my words and think I was actually speaking *personally*, when in fact I was speaking *universally*.

**Follower of religion:**

“In my perception, there is no such thing as a 'new religion' because all major religions come from One Source, and all are forms and manifestations of worship unto the Supreme Lord. But I reckon that your definition of 'religion' and mine are two different things.”

The true meaning of religion (if one insists on embracing this term) is DHARMA. There are not



two or more Dharmas: there is one Eternal Dharma because there is one eternal trifold Reality: (i) the beginningless/endless SatChitAnanda (the eternally existing, eternally Supremely Conscious Absolutely Blissful Supreme Being); (ii) the beginningless/endless souls (eternally Sat and Chit: i.e., eternally existing Conscious beings); and (iii) the beginningless/endless Prakriti (eternally existing non-conscious Matter, characterized only as SAT). This divine Trinity (God-Soul-Matter) is the one Eternal Reality.

The nature of this One and only REALITY, is just as eternal and unchangeable as the Reality itself and is called DHARMA. The exposition of this Dharma is found in the Vedas and in all teachings consonant with the Vedas.

As this REALITY is complete and perfect, so too

is its Dharma. This Dharma does not require interpretation: it requires implementation (PRACTICE). It does not require explanation: it requires expression (manifested through our thoughts and actions).

There never was, no will there ever be, any need for ANY religion other than this One Eternal Religion (DHARMA).

**Follower of religion:**

“I believe that all human additions and superstitions attributed to religions are manmade. However, you cannot deny that very Holy Beings such as Zoroaster, Buddha, Krishna, Christ, etc. did not just pull stuff out of their butts and pose it as a way for humanity to follow. Their teachings are a token of Eir Love and Grace to send unto us Holy Daysprings of Divine

Guidance to bring us to the true Dharma.  
Without these sanctified Manifestations of  
Holiness and Detachment, we would never  
have any examples that we poor,  
transience-attached humans could aspire to,  
despite the existence of the Vedas.”

The only thing that came from the butts of  
Zoroaster, Buddha, Krishna, Christ and others is  
human feces. They were human beings, not  
‘Holy’ beings. If by ‘holy’ you mean ‘pure,’ then  
that is a good thing. But this word ‘holy’ is very  
much misused nowadays.

Human beings should be ‘whole’ by living  
wholesome lifestyles and doing good deeds.  
There is no need to play ‘holy’ or play into the  
drummed-up feigned ‘holiness’ of others.

Buddha, Krishna, Ram, and others were not  
make-believe people: they were real people like

you and I, except they had reached much further in their Journey than us, and may even have reached the Destination. We too can reach the Highest Goal, but only through due diligence and not just by eulogizing the Wise.

All great souls have had to study and work hard on themselves to attain the pinnacle of Consciousness. If you read the so-called Maha Ramayana (Yog Vashista), it reveals how Ram studied vigorously under the guidance of his Guru, Rishi Vashista, and only by such study, humility, introspection, and practice did he attain the mastery of his own mind, and thus became known as Lord Ram. The same was the case with Krishna who studied under the guidance of his Guru, the sage Sandipini.

The truth is, no one ever becomes learned (Wise) without the instruction of the Wise, because this

is the tradition established by God Himself at the beginning of Creation.

**Follower of religion:**

“There are many who have not even known the Vedas, but I am sure they have accomplished an exalted station as to stand reminiscent of the Holy Vedas. After all, God manifests Truth in every aspect of Creation, and transcends the Vedas.”

There are *not* many ways to reach the Goal; there is only *one* path, *the Path Within*. The Vedas are the exposition of that Path to the Supreme. Eventually, as the drama of Life unfolds, one realizes this.

This doesn't mean it is necessary to memorize thousands of Mantras or become a Sanskrit scholar. It means that 'To Know' (VEDA) one must first empty the pitcher filled with mud and

water, so that the fresh water may be poured into the receptacle of the mind.

The Ved Mantras, when reflected on with an open mind, reveal the true nature of Reality, and this divine knowledge purifies the mind.

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There never was, no will  
there ever be, any need for  
ANY religion other than the  
One Eternal 'Religion'  
known as **DHARMA**.

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## **The Nature of Truth**

The Truth is not something new that requires a 'new religion' for its realization. The fact is, it doesn't require ANY religion at all. The Truth is the very core of our being; the Truth is our Essence. The realization (manifestation) of Truth is our very nature – it is our DHARMA.

The exposition of Dharma is coexistent with the Truth and is manifested (initially) as the Vedas. Those who are truly knowledgeable of the Vedas (Divine Wisdom) exemplify the Truth in their thoughts and actions.

All the religions of the world are MAN-made; and ALL prophets of religion are self-appointed. They are NOT the messengers of GOD because GOD requires no messenger. GOD is closer to you than your own thought. GOD pervades

every particle of your being, but unless you realize (*actualize*) your real nature (as ATMAN) you will not know Him.

To realize our real nature (our Dharma), we need only study the Vedas and the teachings of the Wise (who are those who have learned the Vedas by both precept and practice, i.e., they have put what they have learned into practice).

The Truth is not hidden in religion or between the covers of a book or in the mind of a prophet or so-called avatar. The Truth is hidden in ourselves; and it is hidden only because we ourselves are hiding behind our ego (false identity) which is propped up with our images (false notions, misconceptions, bias, and shallow personality).

Our images are broken to pieces with Divine



Wisdom; and when that happens our ego has no support and falls to the ground (i.e., we realize our ego is just a phantom, a paper-tiger, fashioned of Prakriti, and has no essence — no consciousness). When this happens, one's spiritual growth has truly begun. Until then, one remains caught-up in the 'spiritual' circus, pandering for attention from those who are absorbed in the games of the mind.

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GOD is closer to you  
than your own  
thought.

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## Images

**Assertion:** “Images, or ‘rupas,’ are formed in our mind and not our soul.”

**AP reply:** This is true, but who or what possess the mind and the soul? You have used the word ‘our.’ Who or what is this ‘our?’

Images are indeed formed in the mind, but this ‘mind’ does not exist separate from the embodied soul (Jivatman). Nor does any ‘person’ exist separate from the mind. Thus, ‘person,’ ‘mind,’ and ‘soul’ (jivatman) can be construed as one and the same entity.

‘Rupa’ or form may refer to quality or shape, depending on whether it refers to the subtle (realm of mind) or gross (realm of physical matter). Likewise, ‘image’ may refer to a mental

conception, projection, or superimposition when referring to the subtle, or a physical object when referring to the gross.

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**The Truth is the very  
core of our being.  
The Truth is our  
Essence, and our  
Essence is imageless.**

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## **“Cleanliness is Next to Godliness”**

We have all heard the saying: “Cleanliness is next to godliness.” This ‘cleanliness’ means both mental and physical purity. The mind and body become ‘clean’ when mental and physical impurities have been removed.

### **What Are Impurities?**

Unhealthy thoughts are mental impurities and unhealthy substances constitute physical impurities. An unhealthy thought is any mental wave that disturbs the equilibrium of the mind, and an unhealthy substance is any physical substance that disrupts our physical health.

Negative feelings and emotions (likes grudges, anger, lust, jealousy, infatuation, etc.) and their associated verbal (both vocal and mental) thoughts clothed in language are mental

impurities. Consumption of alcohol, meat, junk foods, and even excessive good foods, along with excessive bacteria produced by unhygienic habits (like not properly caring for one's teeth, skin, hair, and other body parts), as well as any other physical malpractice (wrong practice) invariably malign our physical health and cause imbalance, (avoidable) disease, and premature aging and death.

The mind and body must be kept clean in order to actualize (*realize*) their full potential. In other words, if these instruments are neglected and not properly cared for, we will not be able to use them to the fullest benefit.

The mind and body are instruments of Consciousness. If the instruments are damaged due to misuse, our life will be discordant and we will never find fulfillment or lasting peace and

happiness. A healthy mind and body are prerequisites for the highest spiritual attainment.

### **How are the mind and body cleansed?**

We clean the mind with wisdom and meditation, and we clean the body with good hygienic habits including a proper diet, fresh air, clean water, and exercise.

Cleaning the mind with wisdom and meditation means to remove our bias, images, arrogance, false pride, and other products of ignorance.

When the mind is purified, it becomes extremely clear and simple—it is no longer cluttered and complex—instead, it becomes rooted in the basics of Consciousness, which include humility, gratefulness, truthfulness, non-violence, and so forth.

When our mind is purified we can no longer ignore our conscience; hence, we tend to do what is right (what is conducive to our well-being, and the well-being of everyone) without delay or procrastination.

When the body is clean (when the physical impurities have been removed), the body becomes a fit instrument for carrying out the noble desires of the purified mind.

When the purified mind and body work together creatively, we are able to realize our full potential as human beings. Our highest potential is to be fully liberated from all the pain and misery that ensue from the bonds of Ignorance.

Purifying the mind and body are essential practices on the Path of Enlightenment, but they are also essential just to have a happy, satisfying, and productive human existence.

## **Essence of Wisdom**

The essence of wisdom is that each and every one of us is Immortal, Unborn, Indestructible, Unselfish, All-loving, Pure Consciousness.

Anything that makes us more conscientious of our Real Nature is conducive to our happiness and the welfare of everyone, and we should embrace THAT. On the other hand, that which ignores the universality of consciousness and stresses individuality, sectarianism, selfishness, hatred, and violence – in fact, anything that is contrary to our Real Nature – even if it is embraced by one's religion, should be shunned.

Every Muslim, Hindu, Christian, Jew, Buddhist, Humanist, Pagan, atheist or agnostic should strive to be more honest with themselves by



continuing their search for Truth until every element of falsehood is removed from their mind. For this, we need the Divine Wisdom which has been passed down to us since times immemorial. To receive it we need to be humble; to keep it we need to share it by putting it into practice to improve ourselves and our environment, and inspire those who come in our contact.

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The essence of  
wisdom is in  
being unselfish.

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## Non-hording (Aparigraha)

*'Parigraha'* is the state of being possessed by one's possessions, and *'Aparigraha'*<sup>15</sup> is the state of being self-possessed (self-contained). The possessions may be mental possessions in the form of ideas, images, memories, etc., or physical possessions such as the material objects one accumulates.

All the 'yamas,' including aparigraha, are self controls. The 'yamas' are Self-imposed. This means they are 'imposed' by our Higher Nature (soul-nature, Self-nature), which simply means they are integral to 'who' and 'what' we really are. These principles constitute the foundation of our Dharma, and their practice is the implementation of the law of our being.

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<sup>15</sup> Aparigraha, non-hoarding (or non-greediness) is one of the basic (essential) practices of Yoga. It is one of the Yamas.

When we abide by the law of our being (in other words, when we follow our Dharma) we practice being self-contained, which means we discipline our mind and keep our ego in check.

The desire to hoard our ideas and material possessions is born out of ignorance of our real nature and is a violation of who we really are. We are violating our real nature when we are possessive and greedy, and this makes us nervous and uncomfortable. This unease leads to disease, which, on the mental level, causes the disintegration of our mental constitution and equilibrium.

The intrinsic nature of the soul is that it is FREE. It is the material nature that makes us feel bound. The materialistic mind is contrary to our real nature. The mind must be transformed into

a likeness of the Self and this only happens when it is divested of its material nature.

The deliberate practice of unselfishness rids the mind of its possessive nature and makes us feel free. This feeling of freedom resulting from the state of non-possessiveness is a reflection of the true freedom of the Self, which is beyond both mind and matter.

In truth, in reality, WE ARE DIVINE, which means we are beyond mind and matter. Our divinity is made manifest when our lives are imbued with the practices of **Ahimsa** (non-violence), **Satya** (truthfulness), **Asteya** (non-stealing), **Brahmacharya** (self-restraint), and **Aparigraha** (non-hoarding).

With this foundation of Yoga firmly in place, we can eventually attain the greatest heights of Yoga

and experience the union of the Self with the Supreme Self, and thus realize the ultimate aim of our existence: Moksha; Absolute Freedom, Perfect Love, and Divine Bliss.

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**Your essential  
nature is that  
YOU ARE  
FREE.**

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## **That Which Is Eternal Cannot Be Reproduced**

Can God be reproduced? Can souls be reproduced? Can Prakriti be created or recreated? The answer in each case is NO, because all of these are beginningless (uncaused), whereas anything that exists by the process of replication is the effect of a cause.

Ved Mantras can be understood as the 'thoughts of God.' Just as God's qualities are eternal and unchangeable, likewise God's 'thoughts,' in the form of the Vedas, are eternal and unchangeable. Similarly, the innumerable souls (you, I, and everyone else) are eternal and unchangeable in our essence.

In other words, since we are eternal, our soul-nature is also eternal and unchangeable.

Similarly, the laws of Nature (Prakriti) are also eternal and unchangeable since Prakriti is eternal and unchangeable.

The changes we observe in ourselves are **changes in the mind being observed by the Jivatman** (soul embodied in Prakriti). Our Real Self (Atman) does not change, but it is the nature of our Real Self to become embodied from time to time to play the Game of Life (i.e., to experience Creation).

When a person puts on a uniform and steps onto the playing field to play the sport of soccer or football, they DO NOT cease to be the person they were before putting on the uniform and playing the game. Naturally (*Prakritically*) they will play the game with full attention to the game, they will abide by the rules of play, acknowledge the boundaries, and they will play

to win even though there is no real ‘meaning’ or ‘purpose’ to the game – after all, it is just a game, it is NOT reality; it is just *really* a game. In other words, it is only real in the sense that it is a real game, but it does not change or modify who the players are in real life. For example, the ‘father of Askok’ might be a linebacker in the game, but whether on the field or off the field he never stops being the ‘father of Ashok’. Likewise, we remain Atman (Pure Consciousness) whether embodied as living souls and playing in the field of Prakriti, or not embodied. Of course, the significance of the Game of Life is that when we win over our mind, ego, and negative tendencies (i.e., when we conquer Ignorance) we (the living self) get to experience Moksha, which is absolutely incomparable.

The purpose of the above paragraph is to establish in your mind the unchangeable nature



of Atman. Its nature is that it is changeless but is embodied from time to time as the Jivatman to play in the Game of Creation. Since this is the soul's eternal nature, it means the soul has *always* been embodied from time to time and will continue to do so in the future too (i.e., the soul will come back to play another 'Game' again even after enjoying the state of Moksha), because this is its nature to do so.

Prakriti too is unchangeable but its effects (brought about by means of the influence of Atman and Paramatman) are changeable and multifarious.

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**We remain Atman (Pure Consciousness) whether embodied as living souls and playing in the field of Prakriti, or not embodied.**

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## **Eternal Nature of the Vedas**

The Vedas (Divine Wisdom) are eternal because they are not 'caused,' they are not an effect. The Vedas are NOT an effect because they are inherent in the Creator. Of course, paper, books, and sounds made with vocal chords are effects; these effects are produced by human beings and are employed to record the Vedas.

The same Perfect Being (GOD) Who creates the Creation and breathes life into it, also reveals His Wisdom to the pure-minded Rishis (sages) who are qualified to receive it (by virtue of their previous good karmas during previous cycles of Creation).

The people who received this knowledge at the beginning of the current Creation were absolutely motiveless. They received the

knowledge through their Pure Soul (Atman) without any alteration.

In the Vedas, we see the names of specific Rishis associated with the mantras, indicating that the sages were 'seers' of specific Mantras only. To thoroughly grasp a Mantra, it is necessary to take the time to meditate and contemplate on the Mantra's deep meaning.

Meditating on a Mantra over and over, again and again, one gains insights which alter the focal length of one's perception. We begin to see 'from here to Eternity,' which means we break out of our little shell of ego and the limited mentality of personality. We get a taste of what is Real and Permanent.

That 'realness,' or 'permanence,' frees us from self-doubt. We become established in *Atam-Stiti*,

the soul-status, which is accompanied with *Atam-vishwas* (soul-confidence). This soul-confidence is far superior to the ordinary self-confidence born of ego and the fulfillment of egotistic images.

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**Be Real.**

**Get out of your ego.**

**Be yourself.**

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## **What is Enlightenment?**

Enlightenment is the state of the Jivatman (embodied self) freed from Ignorance.

Ignorance is tri-fold: [1] ignorance of this world (of Prakriti), [2] ignorance of the nature of the self (both Jivatman and Atman), and [3] ignorance of the Supreme Self (GOD).

Similarly, 'enlightenment' can be understood as tri-fold when we consider it as the removal of each of these elements of Ignorance. However, only when Ignorance is completely dispelled are we truly Enlightened. This is why 'Enlightenment' is really One, and the one who is enlightened is the 'Enlightened One.'

## **Don't Be Dogmatic**

We need to guard ourselves against the tendency to be dogmatic or closed-minded in the name of adherence to principles. Often what we call principles are really just our images.

Our mental images prop up our ego and this is surely a self-curse. We put a hex on ourselves when we cling to our images. The 'hex' is that we cut ourselves off from the healing, rejuvenating, and enlightening energies of the Creator.

Each of us is duty-bound by our own soul-nature to break free from our limited mindset and embrace the universality of Consciousness. To unite all the members of this Family of Mankind we will need to 'give each other some space,'

and not think that everyone should think just like we do.

We need to adhere to basic principles, that's all. All of the principles of Consciousness are fundamental and not dogmatic. Within the scope of these principles, there is much room for expression and this expression should always be expansive and not constrictive.

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**Principles are  
rooted in practices,  
whereas images are  
rooted in ego.**

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## Realizing the Supreme Bliss

By observing your own mind and body (elements of Nature), you realize that many of the functions performed by the mind and body are carried on without your conscious direction or assistance. Your heart is beating, the body breathes, the hair grows and falls out, the eyes blink, and you sleep, and think, and so on.

We live by a Power (GOD) which is beyond us, but we also live and interact in this world by the power of our own Atman, as well as by the power 'inherent' in Nature.

The entire Universe is 'breathing' with the Power of God, expanding and contracting with each 'breath.' That Supreme Power is the Author of the various seasons of Time in the form of the various *Yugas* (Ages of the World) and



transformations of mind and matter.

Every particle of the Universe is infused with the Power of God in the form of PRANA. This Creative force sets in motion the primordial Matter (PRAKRITI), bringing about the manifestation of the various qualities (GUNAS) inherent in Nature (Prakriti). Essentially, the Gunas can be understood as cosmic forces, since they (the Gunas) constitute Prakriti infused with Prana.

Life is the interplay of the **Cosmic Forces** (the Gunas, representing Prakriti), **Atman** (through its inherent soul-force, or Prana), and **the Absolute** (through the ever-abiding Presence as SatChitAnand – which is Absolute BEING, CONSCIOUSNESS, and BLISS).

To experience the Highest State of Being, the Supreme Consciousness, and the Supreme Bliss we have to realize the Divine Presence within ourselves and within the Universe. This means we have to improve ourselves and our environment through the daily, lifelong, Yajna of:

1. *self-study* -- studying the Self,
2. *self-experimentation* -- applying the principles of Consciousness in the 'laboratory' of life's experiences such as childhood, young adulthood, adulthood, and old age, and
3. *Self-application* -- applying the Knowledge of the Self for the attainment of MOKSHA: complete freedom from Ignorance.

## **What is the real meaning of 'Back to the Vedas?'**

'Back to the Vedas' means back to Wisdom and common sense. It means it is time to 'wise-up' and stop making excuses for our pig-headedness and stupidity. It is piggish to acquire good things (like Wisdom) without sharing them, and it is stupid to follow our ego.

If we acquire wisdom but do not use it, then we are misers and will remain miserable in spite of what we know. The only time we don't employ wisdom is when we are in the employ of our ego. If we are busy doing the bidding of our ego we will be cut off from prosperity even if we have a fat bank account and numerous 'fair-weather friends' who sing our praises.

True prosperity lies in Self-Realization. True

happiness is only found when we actuate ourselves to 'be ourselves.' In other words, we are only happy and content when we remove the mask of ego from our mind. This can only be accomplished through our ACTIONS and not just our noble intentions.

As the saying goes. . . "If wishes were horses, the beggars would ride." If changing our religion from one religion to another (like changing from one image to another, or changing one mask with another) would make us REAL, then everyone would be really happy. But, this is not the case. Instead, people remain basically discontent and unhappy because they basically do not understand their own real nature – they do not understand themselves.

People squabble over religion, caste, and class because of the mistaken notion that these things

are important. If people studied the Vedas (and the knowledge and wisdom derived from the Vedas) they would have absolutely no identity problem on the level of religion, caste, class, or economic status. This does not mean they will be instantly 'enlightened' and attain MOKSHA; it just means they will no longer get bogged down with the false feelings and emotions associated with the various states of the mind and body, because they will be firmly grounded in Atam-Stiti, the 'soul-status.'

One who is established in the Real Self sees the same soul everywhere and has no disdain for anyone. On the other hand, a person with a superiority-complex will have a mind stained with disdain. To remove that stain one needs to practice true Yoga (mental balance) and keep his (or her) ego in check. If we slip, we should just get back up and move forward. Eventually there

is no turning back, and when that happens, we have arrived at our Destination.

We are all destined to be FREE. Moksha is our Destiny. Our religion (by birth), caste (by vocation), and economic class are of no consequence.

[On the other hand, the religion *we embrace* and the caste to which *we assume* we are bound, can indeed create negative consequences.]

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You are the  
author of your  
own destiny.

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## **Why is Idol Worship Bad?**

The Wise reject idol worship because in essence it is simply 'idle' worship. In other words, the active worship of God (TRUTH) is the application of truthfulness in all our thoughts and actions. Truthfulness consists of the conformity of the mind to the Nature of the Self.

When we worship an idol we are 'making believe' that God exist. For the purpose of 'making believe,' we tell ourselves stories and create fictional characters in our mind. Little children are known to do this, but when they grow up they realize life is not a fantasy.

Unfortunately, even after 'growing up' many people still do not realize what life is really all about. Now, instead of living in a childhood fantasy they create a make-believe world of self-

importance and imagine that they have everything all figured out. Or, they just give up trying to understand and simply become complacent in their make-believe world of temporary friendships and 'body-relationships.'

Idol worship perpetuates Ignorance because it induces us to cling to our false persona in the name of spirituality and religion. In truth, there is no spirit, no 'essence' (no 'spirituality') and no real self-discipline (religion) in idol worship.

People realize this in time, and when they do, they give up their idols the same way children give up their dolls and toys.

It is important to realize that not all 'idols' are physical in nature. Our mental images are also 'idols.' Idolizing our mental images in the name of idealism is a trap even non-idol worshippers



(like Muslims and Arya Samajees) are known to fall into.

We all have to do our own homework. Diligent *Swadhyaya* (Self-study; studying ourselves and realizing the nature of the Self) is the inner work everyone must engage their mind in. When the mind is engaged in the deep study of the Self one automatically becomes selfless and no longer looks outside the Self for any assurance.

Only when our completely purified mind is completely consumed in the fire of Wisdom, Service, and Devotion (NOT idol-worship), only then will we become completely selfless and fully grasp the Truth and experience divine happiness (ANANDA). It can never happen so long as we are caught up in idol worship (whether material, emotional, or intellectual in nature).

## **The First Sages (Rishis)**

A Rishi is one who 'sees.' This means a Rishi is one who perceives the Truth (Reality) as it really is. It is impossible to see so long as 'we are in our own way.' This means that when our ego obstructs our vision we are blind to the Truth and consequently we live in unreality.

Unreality is the notion of duality; it is the idea that we can be both good and bad, happy and sad, excited and bored, pure and impure, and so on and so forth. Duality is born of Ignorance (Avidya). Ignorance is the idea that unreality is real.

Ignorance contrasts with Enlightenment just as darkness contrasts with light. The 'contrast' is the 'show', the drama, the Lila of Existence, the 'play of the World.'

The 'show must go on,' and so it does. This drama of Existence has been going on since Eternity and continues into Eternity with 'brief' intermissions during the Mahapralaya (Final Dissolution), and extended intermissions during the 'vacation' of Moksha which takes place only when the living Self (Jivatman) has completely vacated the mind of all traces of ego.

Such a pure mind, and *only* such a pure mind (free of ego), is a fit channel to receive and grasp the Divine Wisdom. The mind is purified with wisdom, remains pure with wisdom, and attains the highest state of Consciousness with wisdom.

Really there is only one 'state' of Consciousness because Consciousness is indivisible and non-modifiable. The various 'states' of Consciousness actually refers to the states of the mind. The

mind that is completely purified fully reflects that Consciousness (i.e., becomes fully Conscious).

One who is fully Conscious is fully able to perceive the Truth. When the ability to perceive the Truth is manifested (when one opens the inner eye of Wisdom, *Gyaan Chakshu*), the receptacle of the mind is filled with that Light of Consciousness.

In the beginning of every Creation, the essential elements necessary for the orderly flow of the Creation are made manifest. Some of these elements are purely Prakritic in nature, others are purely Atamic, and still others are a combination of both.

For example, Purush is purely Atamic, the Tanmatras (subtle states of matter) as well as the

gross elements (Earth, Water, Fire, Air, and Space) are purely Prakritic, while Ahamkara, intellect, mind, and senses are a combination of both. Beyond all these elements (including Purush) is the Supreme Self (Paramatman) and the Self (Atman), which completely pervade Prakriti.

Inherent in the Self (both the Supreme Self and the individual Self as Atman, *not Jivatman*) is the Divine Wisdom. This Wisdom is manifested as the Vedas in the beginning of Creation. The receptacle of that Wisdom is the pure mind of the original sages (Rishis).

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Ignorance is the idea  
that unreality is real.

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## **The First Stanza of the Oldest Book in the World**

The first mantra of the Vedas is:

OM AGNIMIILE PUROHITAM  
YAJNASYA DEVAMRTVIJAM.  
HOTAARAM RATNADHAATAMAM.  
(Rg. I.1.1)

This mantra is instructing us about the qualities (characteristics) of the Supreme Self (GOD), as well as our own self (the embodied soul), and Nature. The mantra reveals that our real nature is to worship (invoke) GOD by observing the ways (or laws) of Nature and realizing the Supreme Conscious Power that works through Nature for our benefit and supreme happiness.

Like every other mantra, this mantra conveys unfathomable (limitless) wisdom. As one dives deeply into the mantra, one gathers more and more pearls of wisdom.

This mantra is telling us that the way to worship God is to light the fire of Wisdom in our life. We worship God when we invoke that Supreme Power by putting forth good energy to take control of our mind and create something good with it.

We worship God when we take charge of our life and are proactive to make positive changes. Our own higher nature commands us to transform ourselves from ordinary individuals into extraordinary devotees.

Our life has emanated from our Original Self (ATMAN), and back to that Same Self everything will be resolved and dissolved.

The treasure of Divine Wisdom is buried in the Mind. To uncover that treasure requires tremendous effort in the form of the purification of the mind through the practice of Yoga.

Our own Real Self (the core of our being) takes us on the path of progress by which we ultimately reach our destination and discover within ourselves the Supreme Self.

OM

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**We worship God when we take  
charge of our life and are proactive  
to make positive changes.**

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## **The Message of the Wise**

If one has studied all the scriptures but has NOT studied his own Self, it matters little what he calls himself, or what others call him (such as a Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Jew, atheist, etc.). One who follows 'the calling' of his small self ego may make a reputation for himself in the world of the self-deceived, but he will never perceive the truth until he gives up his ego and images.

The Truth is realized neither by an intellectual approach nor a superstitious one. The first one (the intellectual approach), though perhaps logical, cannot unlock the door to one's real Self (though one can certainly insert the key). The latter one (the superstitious approach) is rooted in blind faith coupled with mistrust of science. Both are entangled in a cobweb of images,

woven by ego. This ego, like a spider, sucks the spiritual juice out of the misinformed seekers who fall into its web.

The aim of the Wise is to remove the misinformation spread in the name of religion, and awaken everyone to the universal Truth, irrespective of their religious background.

The message of all the saints and sages is that we should all look back to our common Vedic (universal) roots, and thereby arrive at a common understanding and common purpose. United in Truth (not in religion, or caste, or cult), together we can create heaven on earth.

First we have to create a heavenly space within our selves by emptying our minds of all our vested interests. In other words, we have to give up our images and become truly universal in our

outlook. This is not very easy for people who are intent on acquiring personal power, adulation, and economic superiority (for the sake of unrestrained pleasure-seeking).

It is time that people from all religious backgrounds dropped their immature and false feelings of spirituality based on 'religion.' When they do that, only their Vedic background will remain and their Vedic 'foreground' (path of Wisdom) will become more and more revealed to them.

When we realize from where we came and where we are going (when we know we all came from the same Source and are returning to the Same), then we can live our lives in harmony, with great originality and creativity.

The Vedic teachings, and the teachings of the sages tell us to return to our Original Self

(Atman). **When we are our Selves (Atman), only then can we know our Essence**, only then is life complete, only then is the Truth fully known, only then is True Happiness (Divine Bliss) really attained, and only then is the Soul really Self-Satisfied.

No one can ever find satisfaction in any religion or image of religion. Dissatisfied religious followers will always vent their frustration on other similarly dissatisfied followers, and will continue to create sectarian violence which can spread into larger conflicts in the form of wars.

The root of all violence is Ignorance and ego; these are NOT removed by religion or religious wrangling. They are removed by the practice of Yoga.

## **True Enjoyment versus Bogus Enjoyment**

### **Question:**

“You have said that a true Yogi is not a bhogi-yogi, meaning he is not one who revels in enjoyment. Well, in that case, what do you have to say about Krishna, who had fun while playing the flute, singing songs, and cracking jokes? If this is not bhoga (enjoyment), what is it?”

Playing the bansuri (flute), singing songs, and cracking jokes can of course be ‘enjoyable,’ as can many of the other things we do during our lifetimes. So, if by the word ‘bhogi’ you simply mean one who thoroughly enjoys life (in all its variety), then there is no doubt Krishna and other imageless souls are true ‘enjoyers.’ Everyone should aspire to become completely imageless and thoroughly enjoy this Sport of

existence. However, we can do so only when we build a firm foundation in Dharma (the knowledge of our Real Nature) and acquire the necessary resources, or Artha, to live our life dispassionately. 'Artha,' as the term is used here, is in the form of 'skillful living' through years of practice.

For example, to play any sport well (such as cricket or tennis or golf, etc.) one first learns the rules of the game and how to play. Next, one practices a lot and becomes skillful at the game. Then one can thoroughly enjoy the game with little risk of injury. Having fully satisfied one's desire to play the game (and having played the game fairly and skillfully), one directs one attention to other matters. In the case of the Game of Life, we are here to learn, to grow, to be happy and fulfilled, and finally to go beyond all of this and be liberated (completely free).

**Comment:**

“Just because someone is a yogi, doesn't mean that they have to be a boring, dull and humorless person, and abhor fun like some hardcore ascetics and monks.”

Anyone who truly practices Yoga is neither bored nor boring, and never experiences a single dull moment. Also, true Yogis have a very deep sense of humor because they fully realize this life is just a drama; hence, they never take themselves so seriously that they forget who they really are.

We are the Essence of Consciousness; that's all. From the point of view of the body, mind, and their innumerable relationships, we are just stardust.

## **Yoga and Bhoga**

Only the Wise can live happily and effectively in this world; others might have fun from time to time, but they remain prisoners of their own shallow mentality and never become established in the depth of Consciousness (in the core of their own being).

The Wise are immune to the pull of Samsara. They are not drawn into the whirlpool of 'me, my, and mine' because they have given their hearts to the Divine. These mature souls are not attracted to the fruits of karma because they are established in Dharma; hence, they do not deviate from their real nature, their Higher Nature.

Our natural state (Atam-stiti) is beyond the duality of attachment and detachment.



However, to shape our mind to think like this (to make the mind exemplify our higher nature) requires lots of work. If the mind is deformed it will not conform to the Truth (to our Real Nature), and will form the habit of making excuses for its weaknesses and justifying its shortcomings. The effectiveness of such a mind, even if it is concentrated, will be negligible.

The soul (Jivatman) has taken birth for one purpose only, and that is to realize (actualize) its Real Nature in this drama of human existence. Our playmate is the Supreme Self, but we cannot play with our True Friend (the Supreme Being) unless we are free from our false pretenses. We have to give up our phoniness which is rooted in ego and supported by our images.

A wise human being is image-free. They become image-free through the practice of YOGA, and

their advice to others is to practice 'simple living and high thinking.' They never advise anyone to 'be a bhogi.' Wise people exemplify the state of being 'imageless.' One does not become 'imageless' by becoming morally reckless.

**Commentator:**

"I think it is good that pleasure seekers admire bhogi yogis like Krishna. Let's hope that from his example, they will learn to temper and discipline their pleasure seeking with yoga and non-attachment. In this way they will be able to avoid the pain and misery that comes with uncontrolled attachment, and at the same time enjoy life, both materially and spiritually to the limit."

There is absolutely nothing at all wrong with enjoying life. However, life can only be enjoyed to its fullest with self-discipline. Without self-

discipline a person is bound to suffer from ill-health sooner or later (or sooner AND later). Without good health, life is difficult. Without good character, life is HELL.

Bhogi yogis (fake yogis) are self-centered; they are not centered on the Self. They are selfish; they are NOT unselfish. Bhogi yogis (phony gurus and their ignorant followers) talk about non-attachment even though they have put the rope of attachment around their own necks and are engaged in self-murder.

The Wise are not 'bogi-yogis.' All wise people (including Krishna) recommend the Path of Perfection (Shreya Marg) which, though difficult in the beginning, is like nectar in the end. They do NOT recommend the Path of Pleasure (Preya Marg), which though pleasurable and easy in the beginning (because it feeds into our 'comfort

zones'), eventually makes one's life extremely painful, empty, lonely, miserable, and absolutely 'hellish.'

Only fools are pleasure-seekers and make excuses for their weaknesses. The Wise seek the super-sensuous Joy which can only be found in the highest state of Consciousness.

**Comment:** "I would not use the term 'fool', it is too strong a word. I would say it is the ignorant who seek the pleasures of the senses only."

Yes, the ignorant seek the pleasures of the senses. However, those who 'know better' but do NOT 'do better' are certainly fools.

**Comment:**

“I know of many people who don't know of yoga, but are self-disciplined and possess a strong character, and seek pleasures in moderation and enjoy their life.”

Anyone who practices self-discipline, possesses a good character, and lives a life of balance is a practitioner of Yoga (even if they haven't received any formal training in Yoga). So long as they continue on the right path (following their Real Nature, Dharma) they will eventually be led to a deeper study of Yoga in the course of the evolution of the living soul (jivatman).

The evolution of the living soul from the most primitive life form to a fully enlightened being is not a chaotic or random occurrence. It proceeds methodically, rhythmically, and melodiously, as a beautiful expression of Consciousness, just as

the Creation, Sustenance, and Dissolution of the Universe unfolds with great artistic mastery.

**Comment:**

“Still, I think it is improper to call such people as 'fools' just because of their ignorance of yoga.”

Again, no one is a fool because of their ignorance of yoga. Only they are fools who upon learning of the real purpose of this life, waste their life in the pleasures of the senses and lose this rare opportunity to be Liberated (to become completely free from their small self, ego).

Yoga must be practiced deliberately and earnestly. Being earnest and being energetic go hand in hand. One who is earnest to realize the Truth will energetically reject that which is untruthful. In other words, they will STOP lying

to their self and will deliberately renounce those actions which cause bondage. Such actions include smoking, drinking alcohol, taking drugs, having a loose character, and eating meat, as well as overindulgence in legitimate pleasures.

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If the mind is deformed it  
will not conform to the  
Truth (to our Real  
Nature), and will form the  
habit of making excuses  
for its weaknesses and  
justifying its  
shortcomings.

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## **'Fun' and THAT which is beyond it**

There are different connotations of the word 'fun.' In my mind, fun is the same thing as excitement, and hence, 'fun' is not happiness. 'Fun' has the taint of personality, whereas true happiness is based on something much deeper.

Personality is an extension of ego. Happiness based on personality (in other words, 'fun') is a form of ego fulfillment, which is why it is always short-lived. On the other hand, happiness (true happiness) is an expression of the Spirit-Self (Purush) and is based on True Love (the union of the Spirit-Self with the Supreme Self or Universal Spirit).

True happiness is unpretentious and unselfish, whereas 'fun' (or excitement) arises out of the cravings of the mind under the influence of ego,



which is a mistaken or pretentious identity. The ego in little children is a mistaken identity only, and is not usually pretentious; hence, a child's 'fun' is natural and is a reflection of true happiness. However, after years of adulteration, that mistaken identity (when it is not removed by the application of Wisdom) completely masks one's real Self.

The one who wears the mask of ego over their mind cannot see the Real Self and cannot be really happy. So, they pretend to be happy by 'having fun,' 'making love,' 'partying,' and so forth.

When the mind is ruled by ego it is always outward bound. The mind ruled by the Wisdom of Consciousness is inward bound, meaning it is directed to the Spirit-Self.

One whose mind is connected to one's essence is free of images. Such a one is childlike but not childish. They enjoy the simple pleasures of life without any craving or obsession. They are not possessed by their feelings, moods, desires, and images because their mind is under their control.

Only those who are true Yogis possess these qualities. 'Bhogi' yogis are 'bogus' yogis; they are not real Yogis, even if they are admired and envied by thousands of pleasure seekers.

A person who seeks enjoyment never finds real joy. Enjoyments come naturally to one who seeks the inner joy; and when those enjoyments present themselves, the wise are very selective, self-restrained, and self-contained.

As I said before, very few people choose the Path of Perfection (Shreya Marg); most people choose

the Path of Pleasure (Preya Marg). Krishna and countless other noble souls chose Shreya Marg, which is how they attained the state of Perfect Peace, Perfect Love, and Perfect Happiness (Bliss).

It is important for us to realize that the Path to Liberation (Moksha) [Shreya Marg], is a very challenging one that requires our utmost diligence, discipline, and devotion. The traveler on the Path should guard him- or herself from taking the wrong advice which could distract one from reaching one's Ultimate Destination.

In the Journey of Life we will sometimes meet others who give us wrong directions (bad influences) that can lead us away from reaching our Goal. There are many false gurus who are 'rugas;' who are rogues, who lead others away

from the Light (Wisdom) and into Darkness (Ignorance).

We should always listen to the Wisdom of the Wise. The Wisdom of the Wise is ALWAYS beneficial to our own well-being and the well-being of everyone; it is NEVER harmful or injurious to one's health, wealth, and peace of mind.

**Question:**

“So are you saying that having fun is a crime?”

No, having fun is not a crime; it is usually just the play of duality. Getting caught up in fun or excitement is the same thing as getting caught up in duality (because excitement and boredom go hand in hand). Duality is unreality, and unreality is the essence of unhappiness.

High people do not succumb to the duality of excitement and boredom. High people enjoy life to the fullest because they are connected to Supreme Consciousness. People who are full inside do not seek fun and excitement, and never experience boredom.

Foolish people are 'feeling people,' and they never realize 'feelings are failings.' In other words, they do not realize that there is only ONE feeling, and that is the absolute feeling of absolute commitment and love for the Absolute. Everything else is 'bunk' and baseless. Feelings based on the whims and moods of the mind are baseless because they originate out of Ignorance.

**Question:**

“What do you have to say about the fact that Krishna had 1000’s of wives?”

Krishna was NEVER a womanizer. He had one wife, named Rukmini. If anyone is to believe the stories in the Bhagavatam, one has to take them as allegories describing mystical states of being. Otherwise, they can only be considered myths and enjoyed as literary works of art only.

Charlatans (and other ignorant people) often cite the examples of imageless souls (such as Krishna) and attempt to fit them into their own little mental mould for the sake of lending support to their distorted perception of life. Charlatans do not follow the precepts and practices of the Wise; instead, they follow their own impure mind and ego.

Charlatans want to 'have fun.' True spiritual seekers (*sadhaks*) want to be liberated. Fun is cheap; spiritual depth is priceless. Those who are established souls attained such heights of Consciousness by constant and consistent effort.

Pleasure and Perfection do not go together. Few people — very few people — are Shreya margis; everyone else (including most of the well known so-called 'spiritual masters') are life long Preya margis.

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Feelings based on the whims  
and moods of the mind are  
baseless because they originate  
out of Ignorance.

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## **The Different Religions are NOT 'Different Paths' to GOD**

### **Question:**

“Then which path is the only valid path?  
If you say that the Vedic path is the only  
valid path, I must emphatically disagree  
with you.”

The only valid path in the 'Path of Truth.' The path of Truth leads to the Highest Truth. The path of Truth is revealed in the Vedas. When the Vedic knowledge is understood and put into practice, the Highest Truth is attained.

The path of Truth is known as DHARMA. The meaning of Dharma is expounded in the Vedas (and Vedic literature), which reveal the nature of Reality.



There are not two Realities; there are not two Truths. There is One Reality; there is One Truth. The one Reality is Truth, and the nature of Reality (Truth) is revealed in the Vedas.

As explained earlier, the nature of Reality is revealed to be three-fold, yet One and indivisible. That Reality is SatChitAnand. SAT is Existence, CHIT is Consciousness, and ANANDA is Bliss.

The reality of innumerable particles of Existence devoid of consciousness and bliss is known as PRAKRITI. This is one aspect of Reality. Another aspect of Reality is the reality of the existence of innumerable conscious beings known as Souls (ATMAN). Pervading all of this, and beyond all of this, is the Highest aspect of Reality which is All-existing, All-conscious, and All-Blissful and is known as SatChitAnand, the indivisible, One

Supreme Reality.

The One Supreme Reality is Eternal: it is beginningless and endless. Similarly, the innumerable souls and Prakriti are uncreated (beginningless) and indestructible (endless), and like the qualities of that Highest aspect of Reality their characteristics too are eternal.

These three: the Supreme Self, the innumerable Souls, and Prakriti are eternal aspects of Truth. One who is truthful, one who is real, completely embraces the Truth and manifests all aspects of Reality. Such a truthful one lives a natural life, knows the limits of mind and matter, and worships (reaches for) the Supreme Self.

One who is not truthful ignores natural boundaries (the limits of Prakriti and Purush), breaks the laws of nature, and never reaches

beyond himself, but instead worships the mortal as immortal, the limited as the limitless, and the half-truth as the whole truth.

The path of half-truth leads nowhere. In fact, half-truth cannot be called truth at all. Truth is indivisible and whole, and only those who wholly embrace it know it. **Completely embracing Truth means practicing it in thought, word, and deed.** This does not mean one has to be perfect to know the truth; it only means one needs to be truthful.

Those who are truthful do not hide behind images or the mask of ego (false-identity). This does not mean they are completely free of their images (including their self-image) and ego; it only means that they do not lie to themselves and others by pretending to know what they do not know, or pretend to see what they do not

perceive, and pretend to be free when they are not yet free.

Those who pretend to be free remain in bondage like a caged bird that sings. When a person is accustomed to their mental cage (of ego and images) they choose to remain in their ego and hold onto their images even when their images are broken and their ego is confronted.

The path of ego (personality worship) and images (mental superimpositions) is not the One Universal Path of Truth; it is the fragmented path of manmade religion. The many paths of different religions all lead in circles and never bring the Self face to face (so to speak) with the Supreme Self, because these different religions are ALL halfway measures to reach the immeasurable imageless TRUTH.

ALL of the various religions resolve themselves back to a particular person, personality, or image. One who really wants to know the Truth has to leave all these religious trappings and turn his or her mind inward to the Light of the Soul. Guided by Divine Wisdom, and protected by one's own solid practices, one will tread the only true path which is the Path Within.

The 'Path Within' is not some New Age buzz word employed to justify one's self-involvement or self-centeredness. The 'Path Within' simply means that one stops looking outside of himself for the answers that can only be found within. The Truth Seeker stops trying to validate his or her ego with false knowledge and flimsy images of spirituality. The Truth Seeker drops ALL images and becomes like a child sitting on the lap of his Divine Mother or Father. The Truth Seeker embraces universality and sheds all his

images of unreality, his personal bias, and any cravings for personal recognition or appreciation.

This is the one Path of Truth which is known by various names: the Path Within (the search for Truth within), the Path of Dharma (the practice of Truth), the Path of Divine Wisdom (the knowledge of the Vedas), the Path of YOGA (the realization and *actualization* of the essence of the Vedas). We can call it the Vedic Path, or we can call it the Universal Path; or we can simply call it the Path of the Wise.

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**Completely embracing  
Truth means practicing it in  
thought, word, and deed.**

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## **Back to the Basics**

The 'basics' are non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, non-sexual behavior, and non-greediness. These are known as the five YAMAS.

1. Non-violence means not causing harm to living beings; it means being a vegetarian and being sensitive about how one's thoughts, words, and deeds affect ones self and others.

2. Truthfulness means not deceiving yourself or others for selfish gain.

3. Non-stealing means not taking what is not yours. It also means not trying to get something for nothing. For example, when we receive wisdom and don't put it into practice it is a form of theft, because

practice is the 'price' of wisdom. (If we don't practice it, we lose it.) Also, buying things we cannot afford to pay for is also a form of theft. Gambling is also a form of theft because we are trying to acquire wealth without work.

4. Non-sexual behavior means being a deep human being and not a 'cheap' person. Acting 'cute,' seductive, or having other expressions of 'loose character' all constitute sexual behavior, and the opposite of this is non-sexual behavior.

This does not mean 'sexuality' is a bad thing. On the contrary, sexuality is natural and its expression is healthy. However, intimate expressions of sexuality have natural boundaries and are



usually reserved for the privacy of the bedroom.

5. Non-greediness means not accumulating more than we can use or distribute; it means living simply and not piggishly.

The Yamas are the 5 *Mahavratas* (Great Vows). It means these are the five promises everyone MUST make to themselves regardless of their religious, cultural, economic, academic, political, philosophical, or racial background. The one who breaks these vows is lying to him- or herself, and will never secure permanent happiness or peace of mind.

When people are unhappy with themselves and in mental turmoil, they need to examine

themselves and see where they have gone wrong. When people do this self-examination (self introspection or inner-inspection) they realize the solution to their problems is in their own hands (i.e., in their own practices). Otherwise, (if they are in their ego) they will play the 'blame game' and blame themselves or others. In the first case (blaming ones self) leads to self-hate, and in the case of blaming others it leads to hating others. In both cases it leads to self-destruction.

Breaking any of these promises means we are going against our Real Nature (our Higher Nature, the nature of Pure Consciousness or ATMAN). Going against our Real Nature means we are doing actions that are in violation of our Dharma. All vile actions are against Dharma (our Real Nature). All such vile actions are VIOLENT. Thus, the essence of our Dharma is

## NON-VIOLENCE.

Non-violence is the most basic practice. If one ignores this fundamental principle one can NEVER *really* solve or resolve any conflict within ones self or in the World.

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Unless you practice the basics, you will remain basically confused, even if you have a Masters or Post Doctorate degree.

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## **Bad Character**

Never associate with people whose habit it is to look upon you or others as objects of their lust. Such people are extremely deluded, and keeping their company will surely result in increasing one's own self-delusion. People are 'deluded' when they convince themselves they are dead right when in fact they are dead wrong. In either case, they are 'dead' to the truth of who they really are, which is ATMAN, soul.

A person who has murdered their own soul (meaning they have extinguished the light or awareness of who and what they really are), lives in dense darkness and is like a dead corpse. As a dead corpse stinks and becomes a breeding ground for disease, similarly, a person who kills their true self by living an immoral dog-like life, is like a body without a soul. Such persons are

shallow, mean, and have no essence. When we associate with them, we too become shallow and our life loses its meaning.

The purpose of life is to attain the highest state of Consciousness. We can achieve our noble aim only by associating with the noble, with those who are raising their consciousness. We can NOT rise higher by associating with those who are degrading themselves and who have no desire to improve.

Self-degradation leads to self-hate and self-destruction. A person with no character is a person who has no hesitation to use you or another as a means for satisfying their selfish carnal desires. We should distance ourselves from such people, because their intentions are deliberately deceptive and their actions destructive.

A person with **low** character will suffer from low self-esteem, but a person with **no** character is totally deluded and will hide behind a façade of charm and false charisma. A person with no character should be avoided like the plague, even if they are wearing saffron robes, are eloquent speakers, religious leaders, or famous personalities.

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Self-degradation  
leads to self-hate  
and self-destruction.

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## **We Do Not Require Any Labels**

We are all human beings with common Vedic roots. We do not require any labels (Hindu, Sikh, Muslim, etc.) to realize (actualize) who we are.

Before the birth and after the death, no one belongs to a particular religion. Even when we are born, we are NOT born as Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims, Jews, Christians, etc. We become that way due to external influences.

We should influence one another to be good human beings, that's all. For that, we need to know both our real nature and the nature of this world. We learn this by studying wisdom under the guidance of the Wise.

## **What do you mean by 'Vedic?'**

'Vedic' is that which is in agreement with the Vedas, which reveal in detail the absolutely monotheistic, imageless, formless, all-pervading, immaculate, non-sectarian TRUTH.

It is a great irony that human beings who share the same eternal heritage of the ever-shining Truth, actually reject the diamond of Truth and squabble over their make-believe religions (and philosophical fantasies), like little children fighting over the plastic jewelry found in a cereal box or won at an amusement park.

It is not necessary for anyone to change their religion. It is not even necessary that you call yourself 'Vedic.' The labels do not matter. It is the understanding that is important.



## Where Does the Soul Reside?

### Question:

“We hear that soul lives inside the body.  
But where exactly inside the body?”

Before answering your question, it is necessary to first reestablish an understanding of related matters:

The Supreme Soul (Paramatman) is all-pervading. The Supreme Self (Supreme Consciousness, SatChitAnand) completely pervades every soul (Atman) and every particle of Prakriti, and is absolutely boundless (Aseem).

Atman is also ‘all-pervading’ in the sense that it pervades Prakriti. Each of us is an eternal (ever-existing) conscious being, each of us is one-

without-a-second because every soul is unique (meaning each of us exists and each of us is eternal, and we can never cease to be a self-contained 'unique soul'). Our relationship with each other (Atman to Atman) is through our common 'body' of Prakriti, and our common 'Soul' the Supreme Soul (Paramatman, the Soul of our soul). Thus, as Pure Consciousness (Atman), before the manifestation of Creation, we 'reside in' the Supreme Being with Prakriti.

At the beginning of Creation, Atman (both Atman and Paramatman) is projected as Purush and 'joined' with Prakriti. In the case of the Supreme Self (Paramatman), this union with Prakriti results in the manifestation of the Universal Spirit and the Universe. In the case of the individual soul (Atman), it results in the manifestation of Jivatman.

Manifested as the Jivatman, we have three bodies:

(1) First is the Causal body comprised of the *Anandamaya Kosha* and the *Vigyanamaya Kosha*. The *Anandamaya Kosha* is the blissfulness associated with Purush (the Spirit Self). The *Vigyanamaya Kosha* is the wisdom associated with Mahatatva which arises from the union of Purush and Prakriti.

(2) Next is the Subtle body (comprised of the *Manamaya Kosha* and the *Pranamaya Kosha*). The *Manamaya Kosha* consists of Ego, Intellect, Mind (including Memory), and Senses. The *Pranamaya Kosha* consists of the energy force creating the connectivity between the Ego, Intellect, Mind, and Senses and joining the subtle body to the gross body.

(3) Finally, the Gross body (comprised of *Annamaya Kosha*) consists of the physical sense organs, tissues, etc. arranged in the form of the visible body through which the Subtle body comes in contact with the worldly objects.

When it is said that “the soul lives in the body” we are referring to the Jivatman. By virtue of the *Pranamaya Kosha*, the ‘soul’ lives ‘everywhere’ in the body, from the top of our head to the soles of our feet. When we focus our mind (for example, in the space between the eyebrows), we are concentrating our Prana on that area alone and feel our consciousness (soul) is localized there. In fact, what is localized is our attention (prana as ‘mental force’).

In reality, since the soul has no physical dimension it cannot be said to be characterized by physical reality. For example, the soul in an

elephant is not bigger than the soul in a fly or ant. Nevertheless, as embodied souls (Jivatmans) we do indeed include physical characteristics (since the gross body is an aspect of Jivatman).

It is important to remember that the Jivatman (that means you, me, and everyone else) includes ego, mind, senses, and body. It is true that we are NOT the body, not the mind, not the ego; but the body, mind and ego cannot exist without us. There is a philosophical term called a '*gestalt*,' which is useful in grasping that Jivatman is all these things (ego, mind, etc.) and yet NOT these things. Dictionary.com gives the following definition of '*gestalt*:'

**Quote:**

"A configuration, pattern, or organized field having specific properties that cannot be derived from the summation of its

component parts; a unified whole.”

So, in essence, the soul lives everywhere in the body, yet remains distinct from it. When it is said that the soul enters or leaves the body, it is the subtle body that enters and leaves.

By perfecting the Subtle body (which one does with the help of the gross body), we perfect our nature as a living soul (Jivatman), and by perfecting our nature we attain the highest state of Consciousness and become Liberated (free from imperfections).

The body of energy (Pranamaya kosha) connects the mind (Manomaya kosha) with the brain, and through the brain the mind is connected with the rest of the body (Annamaya kosha).

It is this subtle body (in the form of the mind and its energy field, collectively called the ‘spirit’) that resides in the body and makes it ‘alive.’ When the spirit leaves the body, the body is said to be ‘dead.’

## **Spreading the Message of Divine Wisdom**

To spread the message of Divine Wisdom, we must imbibe the spirit of the Wise. The 'spirit of the Wise' means **'compassion in action,' guided by the Vedic Light, the Wisdom of Supreme Consciousness.**

We must be energetic and enthusiastic (high-spirited), and this good energy (spirit) must be a healing force ('compassion in action'). When we are guided by wisdom, our thoughts and actions are always healing, they are not harmful.

We can be a powerful force in changing the world only if we are changing ourselves. In other words, when our practices are dynamic and not

stuck in our images we will remain fresh and vibrant. We will be open to change for the better, to listen to good advice and give it too without ego. We will be inwardly relaxed but intensely engaged in doing good.

‘Doing good’ starts with the basics. We need to go “back to the basics.” Everyone can understand this statement, regardless of their religious and cultural background. Basically, we are human beings, so WE HAVE TO BE HUMANE. If we are NOT humane, we are basically messed-up (disconnected from who and what we really are).

If our own lives are in discord how can we create harmony in this world? Everyone should look at him- or herself and do a ‘reality check.’ This means: **“Simplify, verify, and rectify.”**



We need to lay a strong foundation in good practices like vegetarian diet, exercise, good character, self-study, self-discipline, meditation, and surrender to GOD.

Divine Wisdom has always existed and will always exist. The Wisdom of Consciousness will NEVER be lost. What is lost is our understanding. We fail to understand because our approach is wrong. The intellectual approach (alone) will not work. We must understand *and* practice.

Our approach must be an intelligent one coupled with action. When we put wisdom into practice in our own lives, our lives will automatically be an inspiration to others.

Just as a Vedic scholar goes back to the roots to understand the Vedic words and the context in which they are used, it is necessary to go back to

our own roots to understand our life in the context of this World. When we realize we are ATMAN, soul, we know our life is a small role in a big drama, and we play our part without getting disturbed, restless, or anxious.

When we are really focused on playing our part as noble human beings (Aryas), we will be united in spirit. We will be playing an integral part in helping this world, even though our help may not be noticed.

It is far more important to put wisdom into practice in our daily lives than it is to propagate it through the mass media.

The truth is, the only way to propagate the Wisdom of Consciousness is to be wise, be conscientious, be practical, and live a life of simplicity and good character, abiding by the

principles of sound mental and physical health,  
and continue to explore (go deeper into) the  
limitless Divine Wisdom.

Whether others change for the better or the  
worse is really their own choice, and not  
something we can choose for them. We can make  
the entire Vedas (in written form) more available  
to the whole world but it would make more  
sense to help a loved one 'see' a single Mantra by  
exemplifying its secret and sacred teaching in  
our own life.

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We need to go  
“back to the  
basics.”

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## **Do Your Own Homework First**

### **Assertion:**

“We should open churches, temples, and mosques to purify the whole world.”

Why not do your own 'homework' first? How will anyone help purify others if they haven't purified their own mind? We need to convert our good intentions into good actions. If we don't make this 'conversion' in our own habits, speech, thoughts, and lifestyle, then no one will be inspired to change for the better.

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The only way to propagate the Wisdom of Consciousness is to be wise, be conscientious, be practical, and live a life of simplicity and good character.

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## On 'Spiritual Experiences' . . . .

Many people (perhaps all of us) have had very deep spiritual experiences. It is impossible to fully describe these experiences because they are beyond the realm of the ordinary mind and intellect.

The *impression of the experience* (samskara) recorded in the mind is only a faint expression of the experience itself. The mind grasps for words to describe the experience, but ultimately only the impression (and not the experience) is expressed by these words.

The verbal expression of the impression (samskara) can at best only allude to the experience. Allusions are often clothed in allegories, symbolism, and other elements of poetic expression and by their very nature are indirect. The state of spiritual ecstasy is beyond

description and can only be known by direct experience.

When, in a state of spiritual ecstasy, the mystic exclaims, "I am God," the expression refers to (alludes to) something beyond the speaker. This exclamation refers to 'the experience' and not to 'the experiencer.'

All mystics have experienced the state of spiritual ecstasy, and some of them have expressed this 'experience' with these words ("I am God"). However, never has there ever been, nor will there ever be, a true mystic who actually believes that he himself (the 'experiencer') is the God Lord of the Universe, the Supreme Being, Parabrama, or Paramatman.

Nanak, Kabir, Tulsidas, Surdas, Meera, Shankar, Swami Rama Tirtha, Ramana Maharishi, and

others have never claimed to be GOD. Although some of these persons (Shankar, Rama Tirtha, and Ramana Maharishi) were modern day Vedantins and Advaitists, they were certainly not megalomaniacs who actually considered themselves to be God. However, those who study their teachings without entering into the spirit of what they have said, could easily misconstrue their expressions to literally mean that they were asserting that they themselves were in fact GOD.

This same error arises when trying to understand the Upanishads without entering into the spirit of the Rishis; in other words, the Upanishads (and other scriptures) can be grossly misunderstood if our approach is too analytical, overly intellectual, or based on preconceptions (images) rooted in ignorance and false knowledge.

The Upanishads contain the secret teachings handed down from the Guru to the Disciple. These teachings are secret and sacred and sometimes clothed in cryptic and poetic expression. The teachings are 'secret' in the sense that they are the intimate experience and knowledge of the teacher conveyed to the worthy student. To grasp the meanings of the Upanishads it is necessary to approach them with an image-free mind and a humble heart (that is, without the ego-notion that 'I already know').

Ultimately, the only way to fully realize the Truth is to approach a wise teacher of Truth. By living under his (or her) guidance, oftentimes one's questions are answered without ever asking. Our earnestness, humility, and intense desire to grow and transform, make our mind a fertile field in which the seeds of wisdom sprout



and eventually bear the fruit of self-realization.

Until one is blessed to meet a *Satguru* (true spiritual teacher), one should regard the Scriptures (Vedas, Upanishads, Darshanas, etc.) as one's guru, and approach these scriptures with the same humility with which one would approach a living teacher. Indeed, one can surely expand the horizon of one's understanding without ever coming in direct contact with a true Guru. However, without any hesitation, and with full conviction, I can firmly assert:

**“Without a True Guru, Liberation is impossible.”**

## **Necessity of Humility**

Though my words flow effortlessly from my  
lips, or from the point of my pen;

Though I memorize all four Vedas along with  
their limbs, *and* the six Darshanas, *and* the  
Upanishads, *and* the Ancient Histories;

Though I earn the highest degrees from the most  
prestigious universities in the world;

Though I attain the secret powers of Yoga by the  
practice of Samyama; and though I am held in  
awe by millions of people from all over the  
Earth. . . .

Unless I am as humble as a blade of grass  
beneath the Feet of My Guru, what will be the  
use of all this?

As long as my ego stands in my way, that long I  
remain in Ignorance.

## **Why is Moksha So Hard to Attain?**

### **Question:**

“Please tell me one thing. Why do we have to work so hard for Moksha? Why not go directly there, why do we have to suffer?”

First, the short explanation, and then the longer one.

The short one:

We have to work so hard for Moksha because in this Game of Life (wherein Moksha is the Goal) we are here to test ourselves to the limit (because it is our Real Nature to be our best and not accept mediocrity).

When the Game begins, we don't just walk on and off the field (of Prakriti) and claim ourselves

victorious (Liberated). We are here to 'play with gusto and give it all we've got' and thoroughly enjoy this Game from the beginning to the end.

Naturally, when we play so hard (with all our heart and soul), there might be some painful moments, but if we learn from each mistake, play fairly, and keep the goal in mind we will never suffer the loss of our dignity (our Divine nature).

Now, the long one:

According to Rishi Patanjali:

**Quote:**

To him (or her) who renounces the fruit of his actions, the power of perfect discernment comes, and all selfish motives and pain end. *Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, Chapter 4, Sutra 29*

We have to suffer because we make the wrong choices. We make the wrong choices due to ignorance and ego.

In the beginning of life we are ignorant, but we remain ignorant only because we stay in our ego. We do not have to stay in our ego. We stay in our ego because we choose to. You might remember the story of Duryodhana from the Mahabharata: Krishna advised him to do what was right and avoid the war. Duryodhana replied (to the effect that): “I know what is right and I know what is wrong, and I choose to do what is wrong.” Nowadays, many of us exemplify that same mindset of Duryodhana.

Now, you might say that it must be Ignorance alone that would make one choose to do what is wrong and remain in their ego (false identification), and you would certainly be

correct. In the beginning, Ignorance and ego cover the mind and naturally we are unable to see (perceive) our real nature (soul-nature).

However, when the light of Wisdom shines on the mind by the grace of the Wise or by virtue of our own past karma, then our ego loosens its grip on the mind and we gain an insight into our real nature as ATMAN. Now (having this insight), we can choose to broaden our understanding by going deeper (continuing to clarify the mind) or we might ignore the insight and continue to follow our ego, in which case, we would be ignorant to do so.

Ultimately, each soul must deliberately choose to do what is right and give up their ego and drop all their images (false beliefs, expectations, misconceptions, etc.). This is the process of spiritual growth (Sadhana). It doesn't happen by chance. It happens because we want it to

happen, **and we make up our mind to make it happen.**

Animals do not 'want' to give up their ego (that is, no such desire arises in their mind). First of all, they have no awareness of their ego or ignorance. Only human beings are aware that they are self-conscious and ask the question "what am I" or "who am I." As human beings, we want to know the answers to these questions.

The problem (or really, the *challenge*) is, when we are born for the first time as a human being we have already accumulated innumerable impressions (samskaras) having lived through millions of other lives as various creatures. From these impressions in the subconscious arise tendencies that can conflict with our desire to 'Know Thyself' (to be completely free of Ignorance).

As human beings, we sometimes find ourselves torn between doing what is conducive to our higher well-being (Self-realization) and doing what suits our mind and ego (which have been influenced by our lower self). This 'tug-o-war,' or dichotomy continues until we make up our mind. Until then, we will have to suffer. But do we really have to suffer? NO. We do not *have to* suffer. . . .

**Pain is inevitable, but suffering is optional.**

Certainly there are times when we may have to endure pain for the sake of doing what is right. However, even though that pain is painful it will not cause any suffering, and may even bring happiness. On the other hand, sometimes we do things we know we shouldn't do — things that we know could cause pain and suffering — but we do them anyway because we want to satisfy



our images or selfish desires. In the short term, we might experience some sensation of pleasure or ego gratification, but in the long run we inevitably suffer.

Does this mean we actually choose to suffer? No, it means we choose to 'take our chances,'-- we take risks that we should not take, but because we are in our ego we take them anyway. We think we can 'get away' with doing something wrong, like being lazy, for example. If we are lazy, we don't say "I am going to be lazy because I choose to suffer ill-health and financial ruin." Nobody says that. In other words, they don't *choose* to suffer.

If we do not know that smoking tobacco is bad for us, and we go ahead and smoke, we are doing so out of ignorance. If we know smoking is bad but do it anyway, we are doing it because

we are in our ego. In both cases, we will suffer (but more so in the second case).

Since ego is a byproduct of Ignorance, we might as well say that all suffering is the result of ignorance. Since everyone is born ignorant (more or less) we could conclude that everyone must undergo suffering. This is probably the case, but I don't believe it is absolutely necessary.

It is possible that someone, upon being born as a human being, would never deviate from the path of Dharma (from following their Higher Nature) and could avoid all suffering. Now, even if such a thing is very unlikely, it is still good to keep in mind that *pain is inevitable and suffering optional* because it helps us to forbear life's trials and tribulations, and also makes us take responsibility for our actions and well-being.

## Practice Makes Perfect

*Arya Putra:* The Truth is known when the Self realizes the Self by the Self alone. This is the state known as KAIVALYA, and is preceded by accomplishment in Samadhi. Becoming accomplished in Samadhi involves lots of practice. Most of that practice is the practice of keeping one's ego in check. To that end, it is necessary to drop one's images. This practice (of dropping one's images) is the practice of staying free like the wind and fluid like the water.

*Comment:* "But then, people like you and me cannot claim to have attained the state of freedom from these limitations of images, can we?"

*AP reply:*

It has nothing to do with 'claiming' but has

everything to do with 'practicing.' As the saying goes: **'Practice makes perfect.'** Another fitting saying is: **'An ounce of practice is worth a ton of theory.'**

Those who seek the Truth earnestly will earn good repute. What does this mean? Well, naturally they will be respected among the learned, and among the like-minded seekers. However, it also means this: When we put wisdom into practical use, we develop a strong mental constitution which will repudiate the elements of self-doubt and self-delusion.

When we form good habits (good eating-habits, good exercise-habits, good study-habits, good work-habits, and good-entertainment habits) we develop *Atam-Vishwas*, SOUL-CONFIDENCE, which makes it very easy for us to confide our innermost heartfelt feelings to the God Lord of

the Universe residing in our own heart.

There is no higher, or deeper, or more REAL, or more loving relationship than the eternal relationship of the Self with the Supreme Self (Atman with Paramatman). This relationship is discovered (re-discovered) in deep meditation when the mind is absorbed in the Absolute.

Whether or not others have experienced it is not the question one needs to ask. The question is (and this question need only be addressed to one's self):

"What am I doing now to realize the Truth, and what am I doing that blinds me to the Truth and prevents me from experiencing the Truth directly?"

## **The Magnitude of the Universe**

The reason the Universe is so big is to help us realize how small we are. How can anyone think to them self: "I am so important." Compared to the magnitude of the Universe, we are practically nothing at all.

For example, how important is Jesus, or Mohamed, or Buddha, or anyone else for that matter? Compared to the 'matter' of the Universe, they are practically nothing.

A million years from now no one will remember any of the important people we remember today. And if by chance they are still remembered a million years from now, who will know about them a trillion years from now? Even a trillion years is not even a drop in the ocean of Time, which is fathomless.

All the nonsense people argue about, such as "my God is better than your God," or "my religion is better than your religion," is absolutely meaningless before the Absolute Truth (which I call our Essence).

If we have not realized our Essence, our life's mission is unfulfilled and our life is incomplete. This is why we have to come back (be born) again and again until we 'get it right.'

We need to get our priorities straight and put our mind in alignment with our soul-nature. It has nothing to do with memorizing a few lines of 'holy' scripture or sharpening our communications skills. Instead, it has EVERYTHING to do with realizing how insignificant our little ego is, and then connecting our mind to the divine in deep meditation.

The mind cannot be absorbed in the Absolute unless it is purified, and it cannot be purified except through the acquisition of wisdom and the application of that wisdom in daily living.

Everything in the Universe exists to teach us something. The Universe is so big because we have so much to learn! The Universe is God's University, and all of us are students here. We graduate only when we have learned all our lessons and passed all the tests.

Those who have truly learned the lessons of Life and faced all the challenges with humility and fortitude, they are called the 'Learned Ones.' Those exceptionally fortunate souls have achieved the highest degree of Consciousness and attain Moksha (Liberation).



## Changing the World

### Question:

“Isn’t it the duty of everyone to teach people the truth?”

One who has learned the Truth can teach it to others. The Wise inspire and guide everyone to learn the truthful ways of 'thinking' and 'acting.' We do not need to be perfect to help one another, but to guide others to the highest Truth we do need to be engaged in perfecting our own nature.

We can teach others by precept but they will learn much more from our example (than from what we say). Many things happen in this world, but not everything is noticed. Nevertheless, the effects will still be there.

A simple man, dedicated to his family, keeping good habits and avoiding or removing bad ones, studying deeply the scriptures, worshiping God without any ostentation, and keeping his ego in check, may not be noticed by anyone; but his good vibrations will reverberate around the globe in many very subtle but very effective ways. Whereas, another man, who with great religious fervor, tries to change the world but neglects to 'do his own homework,' may cause a big commotion but never really does anything.

Ultimately, we can only change ourselves, and unless we have done that, we have not done anything.

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We do not need to be perfect to help one another, but to guide others to the highest Truth we do need to be engaged in perfecting our own nature.

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## How to Acquire True Knowledge

The Vedas contain the seeds of all Knowledge. To get the fruit (Understanding) of that Knowledge, one must plant the seeds in a fertile mind and water them with deep meditative awareness.

A mind that is filled with images (mental superimpositions) is like a field strewn with rocks and overgrown with weeds. The rocks and weeds must be removed and the soil tilled before the seeds can be planted. Unless this essential 'ground work' is done, no amount of reflection will yield the desired result, which is *correct perception and true understanding*.

A person can read the Vedas and store, sort, and analyze this knowledge in their mind, and yet never really understand it. It is like collecting

many seeds and storing them in a jar in the cupboard. The seeds will not sprout. In the same way, one cannot understand Truth merely by reading about it or being told about it.

There are many Sanskrit scholars but few Vedic scholars. Likewise, there are many scientists who study the universe but very few who study themselves in a universal way.

To study your self in a universal way means to do deep introspection devoid of ego; it means to center the mind on the Self and not to be self-centered. So long as our approach is self-centered, we will not realize the truth even if the truth is staring us in the face.

In ancient times, people learned the subtle truth by sitting at the feet of the Wise. This means they learned by humbling themselves in the presence

of a true teacher. By so doing, the self-centered habit of false perception is eventually broken, and one sees clearly.

Nowadays, the primary means of receiving a 'higher education' is to attend a college or university. However, the education one receives is NOT really a 'higher' education at all, it is just the same education the teacher received from a similar college or university. Today's standard of education is not the same as the method used by the Rishis (sages) to teach their children and others. Unless we resort to that same higher standard (as the Rishis) we will not attain the higher knowledge that we seek.

Today's students are not in search of a higher knowledge, because many of them do not accept that there is a Higher Self. For example, there are scientists who want to know how the

Universe came into being and how it operates, but they have never done any research into WHY the Universe exists. This is why they have not studied the Vedas for the answer, and even if they do, unless they study properly they will not know the answer even if the answer is right in front of them.

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To study your self in a universal way means to do deep introspection devoid of ego; it means to center the mind on the Self and not to be self-centered.

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## **There is only ONE way to attain Salvation. . . .**

There is only one way to attain Moksha and that is to accept the truth and reject falsehood.

It is absolutely essential to practice power of discernment and distinguish between what is real and what is not, what is helpful and what is harmful, what is conducive to permanent happiness and what is detrimental to it.

The Wise embrace what is noble (in themselves and others) and reject that which is ignoble.

Unless one purifies the mind by the practice of discernment, the living self (jivatman) will remain in the bondage of Ignorance.

## **Religion is Child's Play**

We should learn from everyone and everything, but we should especially learn from the Wise.

The Wise promote respect for the goodness present in every human being. That goodness is the Presence of God, and only one with presence of mind can realize God. Our mind is not fully present if it is captivated by religious dogma. The mind that is bound by religion is not open to the truth, and hence it cannot be truthful. If the mind is not truthful, then one's actions will be harmful and not helpful.

People say, "The world is one big family." If we really accept this as fact, then it becomes our duty to warn our family members when they are in danger of being cheated, defrauded, or even molested.



People who promote religion propagate ignorance and perpetuate suffering. Most people do so unknowingly. In other words, most people who promote religion are certainly not malicious; they are just ignorant. They are ignorant because they are clinging to their images. They are clinging to their images because they are stuck in their ego. They are stuck in their ego because they have not been awakened.

I am not saying these things to hurt anyone's sentiments or to divide one religion against another. I am speaking the truth, because that is my nature to do so.

Atman is immortal. Atman cannot be demeaned. The mind, however, is temporary, and reflects the light of the Soul only when it becomes

imageless. It is very demeaning and degrading to treat ourselves or others as less than Atman.

Of course, in the drama of life we play many roles, and some roles limit our capacity to fully express our Essence. For some people, the episode of religion is still playing out in their minds. Eventually they will move on to the next chapter in their lives and come closer to the Truth. The closer one gets to the Truth, the more one goes beyond religion and everything else.

Religion is child's play. The real Game of Life begins when we mature spiritually and drop all our images, expectations, superstitions, and superimpositions. It is a process.

## **Cut the Rusty Chains of Orthodoxy**

It is time to cut asunder the rusty chains of  
orthodoxy and narrow  
sectarian/cultural/political/academic/economic  
walls that divide man from man, and man from  
God.

We are all human beings. We are all earthlings.  
We should all be Aryas (noble human beings)  
and remove the façade of false persona.

Anything that reinforces false feelings of  
superiority or inferiority should be dismantled.  
We need to pull down our own ego. We need to  
grind it into dust. This is work.

It is an effort to goes against our comfort zones.  
When the effort becomes effortless, then we will  
know our ego is out of the way. When our ego is

out of the way, we will see clearly. First we will see the whole universe within ourselves. Then we will see ourselves and the whole universe in the Supreme Self.

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**Be good.**

**Be wise.**

**Be free.**

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## **Religion is Not the Answer**

We need to put the wisdom of the wise into practice. It is this that is missing from the lives of religion-followers. Most followers of religion are practitioners of blind faith and false beliefs. Any belief system rooted in ignorance is bound to lead to violence.

It is imperative that we lead by example and not just by precept. In fact, oftentimes, example alone is enough. A picture is worth a thousand words, but a good example is worth a thousand pictures.

The religions of the world attempt to present a picture of Reality (Truth) without fully grasping it (without putting it into practice). Religious zealots and their lazy counterparts (in the form of ordinary followers) have a distorted

perception of Truth because they are trying to understand the Truth through their images.

Images are born out of ego (false identification). Due to our false identification with a particular religion, we create images (imaginary truths, assumptions, and expectations). We want to believe we are right, so we fabricate stories to support our false conclusions.

When we lie to ourselves, we will lie to others too. When we mistreat ourselves, then we will also mistreat others. We mistreat ourselves by treating ourselves like the slaves of Allah, the sheep of Christ, the puppets of the pope, the priest, or the pundit. We mistreat ourselves when we treat ourselves like monkeys, or like lackeys of a corporation, a country, or a kingdom. When we see ourselves as something other than ATMAN (pure, indestructible,

incorruptible Consciousness), then we will surely misunderstand others and mistreat them too.

Religion is not the answer, and neither is so-called modern science. The answers are found when we look in the right place. Our right place is next to the Supreme.

When we experience directly our closeness to GOD, we are completely devoid of animosity and arrogance. When we fully grasp our connection to the Absolute (when we fully manifest our Real Nature) we will be free from self-conflict and self-contradiction. Neither religion nor science can accomplish this – and neither can they stop us from achieving this highest goal.

There is no reason that religion and science cannot facilitate the accomplishment of the highest good, but to do so, they must become our instruments and not our masters.

Instruments should always be improved upon – they should be made better by identifying their flaws and inaccuracies, and modifying them as necessary.

Our Dharma does not change. Our Dharma has never changed. Our real nature is to realize our Essence. We should live by our Dharma *religiously*, which simply means we should do so with great determination, regularity, and commitment to the highest ideals. We should also do so *scientifically*, which simply means we must not accept things blindly but should strive to understand the underling fundamentals and test the validity of our ideas and practices.



Conviction is born out of direct experience. There is no element of arrogance in true conviction. This conviction leads to soul-confidence. There is no haughtiness in this confidence. On the contrary, it is filled with pure compassion born of dispassion.

On the other hand, blind belief is based on ego clinging to an image of truth. Since 'Truth' has no image, it means those who are blinded by their ego imagine the truth without really knowing it. This leads to arrogance, which is contrary to one's real nature (in other words, it is a violation of one's true nature as Atman). This violence leads to more violence, and the only way to stop it is to take control of our own mind.

Violent people cannot be controlled by religion, and they cannot be controlled by science. The inner controller (*Antaryami*) must be worshiped

(invoked). We need to awaken from our slumber of Ignorance.

The Awakened Ones can show the way, but eventually we need to follow their lead by taking full responsibility for our actions. Like the Wise, we must respond and not react.

If we set a good example for others, we have done our best. The rest is up to them. It is not up to their religion, or anything else.

Remember: 'You are the problem, and you are the solution.'

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**The Truth has no image. The Truth *cannot* be imagined.**

**It must be understood, realized, and practiced.**

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## **Importance of Science**

I have no doubt in the usefulness of scientific inquiry, research, theory, and its practical application. However, it is ludicrous to think one will discover GOD (Ultimate Truth) by studying particle theory, quantum mechanics, string theory, and the like. Unless a scientist is a Rishi (sage), that scientist is only an ordinary scientist. A scientist can become a Rishi through the practice of the science of Yoga.

Unless scientists become Rishis, they can never solve the mysteries of life. To become Rishis, they should study the Vedas. A study of the Vedas will lead them to the practice of Yoga, and the practice of Yoga will lead them to Self-realization. If they have not realized the Self, then they have realized very little, even if they

have made fantastic scientific discoveries.

This Yoga is not the commercialized yoga practiced today throughout the world. Similarly, the soul-science is not the intellectualized science pursued today throughout the world. The commercialized yoga and intellectualized science are simply a dramatization of materialism.

This is the way it is at the present time (in the current cycle of Kali Yuga). In another epoch things will be different and perhaps it will be a dramatization of spiritualism. This is the play of darkness and light. This is the drama of Creation. This has been going on forever and will continue forever. THAT which is beyond this, is the Supreme, and THAT is our aim, our purpose, our origin and ultimate destination.

We should think on these things. When this is realized, we do not give undue attention to the mundane, but neither do we neglect our duties in this world.

The scientists miss the mark. The spiritualists miss the mark. Both miss the mark because they are too busy trying to leave their own mark. This is the way of Samsara (the world of the 'self-involved'). We can find our way out by looking deep within. So long as we are looking for the answers outside of ourselves we remain outsiders in our own home; we remain strangers in our own land.

A Wise Teacher will lead you on the journey to Eternity. The Original Teacher is the Supreme Being. We need to turn our attention away from our small self in order to perceive the Supreme Self.

## **Direct Perception of Truth**

Unless one is guided by the Wise, it is impossible to realize God. This is just the way it is. This is the way of this Drama of Existence, the Play of Life. Since the very beginning, we observe that knowledge is passed down from 'above.' This makes us humble, and humility makes us wise.

When we stepped onto the playing field of Existence (when Purush was united with Prakriti), Ignorance (Avidya) was manifested. This was essential for the Game of Life, just as it is essential in any game.

In other words, before the journey of Enlightenment (the journey of Self-Discovery) could begin, it was first necessary for the Self to be covered or hidden. However, the Self is changeless and ever-manifest; so, where was the

Self to hide, and how could it change into something it was not?

The Self put on the costume of mind and body, and through these instruments of perception the Self has been portrayed as a mortal being, subject to ignorance and suffering – and also to enlightenment and ecstasy.

The Self that changes is the self perceived through the mind only. The self that perceives the self through the mind is the embodied Self (Jivatman), which is the Self wearing the costume of mind and body.

In this Drama of Existence, each of us (at the core of our being) is seeking GOD, and our seeking is also part of the drama. Eventually our seeking leads us to the feet of the Wise. (This simply

means, our seeking leads us to realize we must become humble and give up our ego.)

As long as our ego is asserting itself, we have not controlled our mind. The ‘control of the mind’ simply means its purification. In other words, to purify our mind we have to deliberately shape our mind into a likeness of the Self. Since the Self is imageless, the only way to perceive the Self is to make the mind imageless.

When we let go of our images, our ego has no crutches to hold on to, and so our ego falls to the ground (it is reduced to the most subtle Prakritic level). *Then* the mind is clear – it is free of the obstruction of ego and its images. *Then* the Light of Consciousness (the Light of the Soul) shines forth in this world even as it shines in the ‘other world.’ This is the state of Total Well-Being.



Total Well-Being is attained when the living Self is fully established in Supreme Reality. When this happens, the stains of the mind are completely removed and the Light of Consciousness shines forth in all its glory.

When we are fully conscious, we fully perceive the Truth (God). Unless we are fully conscious, we cannot truly perceive the Truth (God).

GOD is indivisible, so it is impossible to partly know GOD. Either we know GOD, or *we want to know* GOD, or *we do not know* GOD.

The Wise are those who truly know God. They know the Truth because they live it. It doesn't mean they are perfect, it just means they are fully grounded in Divine Wisdom.

People who really *want to know* God are called truth-seekers. These people follow the ways of the Wise. There are few real truth-seekers.

Most people *do not know* GOD but think they do, or don't even care to. These people follow the way of the world.

Most people follow the way of the world. They do not follow the way of the Wise. This is why few people are ready to discover the Truth, even if the Truth is shining all around.

The only way to know the Truth is to know it through direct perception. Some people come to this realization late in life after exhausting themselves in the pursuit of truth through materialistic means. They eventually realize the Truth cannot be grasped through an empirical

process (which is an indirect method of perception).

It is impossible to directly perceive the Truth *indirectly*, which is exactly what most people are doing.

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The only way to  
know the Truth is  
to know it  
through direct  
perception.

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## Ignorance

### Question:

“What do you mean by . . . ‘Now, in order for the Truth to be discovered it would first have to be hidden.’ Why would it have to be hidden?”

For something to be 'discovered' or 'found' doesn't it first have to be covered or hidden? When the soul (Atman) is embodied in mind and matter, its real nature appears to be hidden from itself. I say 'appears' because really Atman is self-effulgent and is always united with God in the relationship of the 'pervaded' (soul) and the 'pervader' (God).

Ignorance is a condition of the embodied soul who possesses a mind. It is the mind that is

ignorant and it is the mind that needs to be enlightened. Of course, the mind cannot exist separate from the soul (Jivatman), so we might as well say that the soul (Jivatman) is the one who suffers from the state of Ignorance. The same soul (Jivatman) strives for Moksha (Liberation from Ignorance).

The state of Ignorance is created by means of the creation of the Universe. After the Mahapralaya (Final Dissolution of the Universe) there is no Ignorance. Ignorance is concomitant with the Universe which exists only for the sake of Liberation.

The Universe is called a great Yajna (sacrifice), because only by doing good actions in this world without any selfish motives can we become free from Ignorance and attain liberation from the cycle of birth, life, and death.

## **Empty Your Mind and Be Present**

We must invoke the Presence of God in our lives. That 'Presence' is Ever-Present, Omnipresent, and Indivisible. That 'Presence' is the Supreme Being.

People who are immersed in the darkness of materialism make GOD a limited material thing or concept, and hence, do not experience the Presence of God. Only when the Light of Wisdom enlightens their minds do they realize their folly.

GOD is never materialized, never born, never dematerialized, and never subject to death, decay, or transformation. In other words, GOD never changes form, because GOD is inherently formless. It is only our own minds which undergo transformation.

Through spiritual practices one's mind is formed into a likeness of the Self, and when one is established in the Self, one knows the Supreme Self (God).

The Self (Atman) is very similar to (close to) the Supreme Self. The mind must be made similar to the Self (Atman). The living Self (Jivatman) must master the mind.

This transformation of the mind is the *work* of the Self. This is the *expression* of the Self. This is the *art* of the Self. This is the *life* of the Self. The essence of this life is the Supreme Self, the Supreme Artist.

Unless one receives direct guidance, one can never fully grasp the subtle but simple and profound Truth. Human beings are floundering in Ignorance, tossed up and down (excited and

bored, happy and sad), drowning in the Sea of Samsara, clinging to their false beliefs, seeking relief from the fear and pain born of Ignorance. This is all part of the drama of existence.

A drama is a drama only. A game is a game only. A dream is a dream only. In reality, life is neither a drama or a game, nor is it a dream. But life is also not what we usually think it is or imagine it to be. Upon close examination it is revealed to be other than what we have thought it to be.

We can describe life as dream-like, or like a drama, or like a game. These descriptions are given only to help us gain some objectivity about ourselves (and life). In fact, life is Life, and this Life is the expression of the Self and the Supreme Self.



These things may be understood intellectually, but it is only when they are experienced directly that they are realized. One gains direct realization by living in the company of the Wise.

This doesn't mean life is of no value or purpose without having come in contact with the Wise. It only means that one must be ready to accept that one knows next to nothing before one can begin to understand anything. This too is part of the drama (Lila).

There have been many great mystics and sages who have taken birth on this floating garden called planet Earth. However, they were not typically born as sages. Ordinary human beings become extraordinary (beyond ordinary) by making an extraordinary effort to go beyond their small self (ego).

During their lifetime, the Wise come in contact with others who sometimes record their experiences according to their own limited perception. Many (most) of the religious writings prevalent today are the memoirs of those who came in contact with the Wise. These writings (in the form of the various scriptures and spiritual writings) do not always reflect fully the intentions, understanding, and teachings of the Wise. Hence, the scriptures and other writings must be read with some skepticism. It would be a slap in the face (of the Wise), for anyone to blindly believe in the scriptures or other writings.

But alas, the ignorant are by nature very credulous. Hence, the ignorant will readily accept things as absolute truth, which may in fact be only relatively true, or even completely false. People have misunderstood many things,

and will continue to misunderstand so long as they are unwilling to start fresh.

If the mind is emptied and becomes devoid of the thought of 'I', 'me', and 'my,' then that mind will reflect the Light of the Soul, and in that Light one will perceive the Supreme Truth.

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**Empty the mind filled with  
mud and water so that the  
fresh water of Wisdom can  
be poured into the mind.**

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## **Think Outside the Box**

Thinking outside the 'box' is important. To realize our Essence it is essential to 'step outside the box.' We cannot work in 'boxes.'

Our mental boxes are our images. As long as we are caught up in our images, we remain essentially ineffective. In other words, to bring about real changes in the mind we have to listen to the Wise. Otherwise, we will still remain stuck in our brain cells and will never discover the ultimate Truth.

We can make valuable contributions to the advancement of science and to its employment in the advancement of culture and the upliftment of humanity; however, to realize the highest aim of our human existence, we must transcend the sectarian and the secular and realize the

Supreme Truth which is both simple and profound.

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Listen to  
the Wise  
and change  
your life.

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## **Go Beyond Religion and Be Original**

The modern day scriptures like the Bible and the Puranas likely contain some historical facts, but they are mixed with lots of fiction. Similarly, our own lives contain some truth mixed with lots of make-believe stories.

As human beings, we make up many things. Why? . . . because we are ignorant---but nobody wants to be called ignorant, so we seek knowledge and sometimes we invent it too.

We want to know with certainty the meaning of our life, the meaning of this world, the meaning of the after-life, and the meaning of the 'other world.' However, while groping for meaning in the darkness of Ignorance (Avidya), we sometimes create meaning where there is none

and fabricate solutions to problems that cannot be solved but only dissolved (dis-solved).

People want to feel the Supreme Love (the love of GOD), but they are sometimes in a hurry and make-believe they can find true love by gazing into the eyes of their beloved. In fact, the true love between a man and a woman lies in looking together in the same direction to Eternity, and becoming one another's helpmate on the path to Perfection. Instead, too often people become 'cell mates,' trapped in their brain cells (little minds), conspiring with one another against one another in a joint venture of self-deception and self-delusion.

Such is the case also in the 'spiritual realm' – in the field of so-called religion. While believing in the make-believe stories of religions, we lull

ourselves into a stupor of ignorance and self-denial.

The Truth is not found in religious imagery and story-telling. This does not mean imagery and stories are without any value. They are most certainly of value — as tools of perception.

Imagination can facilitate the expression of Truth, but to realize the Truth one has to go beyond all the stories and imagery. We need to learn the lessons from the stories (which are made more impressionable by the associated imagery), and implement the lessons in our daily life, without any pompousness or showmanship.

We need to become our Original Self again and perceive the Original Self in everyone. The Original Self is ATMAN. The essence of the Original Self is the Supreme Self (Paramatman).



It is impossible to know our Essence unless we first become our Self. In other words, the mind must be transformed into a likeness of the Self through the practice of Dharma – which simply means living our life in accordance with our Real Nature.

Unfortunately, religion does NOT facilitate this process of self purification (i.e., the process of purifying the mind – removing all the superimpositions, false knowledge, misconceptions, negative memories, etc.).

Manmade religion is detrimental to the essential well-being of the human race, because manmade religion is rooted in dogma and superstition, which induce people to become arrogant and remain ignorant.

As good human beings (Aryas), we need to go beyond the stories of the past. We need to **'get**

**real.'** If we insist on looking back, we should look all the way back to our original State of Being.

In the beginning, we are all the same. In the beginning (meaning: before we decided to engage in this Sport of Existence), we were simply the Pure Light of Consciousness (the Spirit Self, PURUSH). From the perspective of the Spirit Self, all the characters in the Story of Life are imaginary.

When we have learned the lessons from the stories of life, then we become utterly devoid of any desire to propagate any religion, philosophy, or theoretical science. Our desire is only to live for a hundred years doing our duty without any desire for appreciation or recognition. We become very simple, yet very profound. We find solace in the depth of our

Being, and have no use for remembering the stories of the past.

You are ATMAN, I am ATMAN: all of us are souls. To realize this we need to remove all our mental images. Once the mind is established in the depth of being, the Pure Self (Atman) stands clear and the Supreme Self (Paramatman, GOD) is directly known. Once we have this highest knowledge (*Brahma Vidya*), the aim of our existence will be achieved and the Game will be over.

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We need to become our  
Original Self and perceive  
the Original Self in  
everyone.

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## **Be a Good Human Being (Arya)**

Everyone should carry out daily introspection by inspecting the inner workings of their own mind. Because the mind is filled with impressions (*samskaras*), it has a tendency to think and act in a certain way. If the impressions are based on actions done in ignorance, then the mind will continue to remain stuck in the karmic cycle of birth, life, and death. To break the cycle of violence, it is essential to listen to the wisdom of the Wise.

It is one thing to hear the Wisdom, and it is another thing to listen to it. Sometimes people are 'hard of hearing,' but more often they are 'hard of listening.' We hear the wisdom but we don't listen to it — we don't take it to heart.

A good human being (Arya) is one who listens to

the wisdom of the Wise and endeavors to implement that wisdom in his or her daily thoughts and actions.

Good human beings are not perfect people. In other words, an Arya is not necessarily a fully enlightened human being. Even good human beings sometimes make mistakes and err in their judgment. In fact, even very high souls have erred in their judgment. We must learn from our mistakes, and if we are wise, we will learn from the mistakes of others also.

A true Arya continues to improve him- or herself by stripping away the layers of false pride, ego, and artificiality. No one is perfect, but no one has a right to remain in their imperfection either. When we remain stuck in our imperfections (when we justify our flaws, bad habits, and weaknesses) we inadvertently harm others too

by depriving them of our good energy.

A true Arya is proactive, not reactive. It is the responsibility of the Arya to respond and not react. A true Arya is not a reactionary, but a revolutionary. We are revolutionaries because our lives revolve around Truth. The Truth is *Pranav*, it is ever-new, it is fresh and imageless. The Truth is dynamic, it is not static.

Sometimes people misunderstand a truthful person. A truthful person is oftentimes very intense, but not tense. Tension and stress are the result of ignorance. Intensity, earnestness, and diligence are the hallmarks of an energetic Arya (noble human being).

The word, **ARYA**, means a good human being. We should all be Aryas and do good work (actions) in this world.

## **The End is the Beginning**

The end of all mind games is the beginning of the Endless Joy. It is the beginning of the Beginningless. This is a Drama.

I am a drama. You are a drama. Everything is a drama, and this drama should be beautiful. It is up to us to make it so.

We must make the mind reflect the light of Consciousness (Soul). We make the mind reflect the Light of the Soul when we purify it – when we remove all our images (samskaras). Bad samskaras (impressions) are scars on the mind. Good samskaras are the finely chiseled contours which give beautiful definition to our life.

Our life is our masterpiece. We give positive shape to our life by shaping our mind with

positive thoughts followed through with  
positive actions.

It is not a big deal. It is not a transaction. It is not  
something we do to get something that we do  
not have. It is simply consciousness in action.  
When we deliberately act to move the mind to  
positive action, then our mind is expressing our  
Real Nature.

When our mind is consciously and completely  
used to express the Truth, we become Truthful,  
our life is fulfilled, and the living self is  
Liberated.

OM

TAT

SAT

(So be it.)



You are  
the  
Light of  
the  
Soul.

Keep  
Shining!