

Experience The All-Pervading Divine Consciousness

The Lord of Kailasa has manifested his Divine form with the crescent moon adorning his head, the cool water of the Ganga flowing between the matted locks, with his radiant eye in the middle of the forehead and the purple neck gleaming like the sheen of a blackberry. He wears serpent bracelets and a snake belt, his entire body is smeared with Vibhuti, his forehead is adorned with a Kumkum dot, his ruddy lips glow with the juice of the betel, diamond-studded gold earrings dangle from his ears and his whole swarthy body glows with divine effulgence.

(Telugu poem)

No one seems to have made an effort to recognise the meaning and significance of Shivarathri. In fact, the very word Shivarathri reveals its meaning. "Shiva" means auspicious and "rathri" means night. Thus, Shivarathri means auspicious night. Then the question arises, "Who is Shiva?" The divine consciousness pervading all the living beings is none other than Shiva. This *Shivattwa* (divine consciousness) permeates not only human beings, but the birds, beasts and animals as well. In fact, every moment in our life can be taken to be Shivarathri. We need not wait for Shivarathri on a particular day in a year.

Embodiments of Love!

The Shiva-consciousness is all-pervading. How can we limit it to a particular time and place? *Sarvatah Panipadam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvatah Sruthimalloke Sarvamavruthya Tishthati* (with hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe).

If we carefully analyse this aspect once, it will be obvious that all that we witness around is Shiva consciousness; nothing else. Shiva does not mean a particular form with matted hair and tiger skin. Wherever we look and whichever form we come across whether a child or an elderly person, whether

an woman or a man, in every form the Shiva consciousness is resplendent. How can you describe that all-pervading Shiva-consciousness or limit it to a particular time and place? People display a particular dance form to portray the Shiva Tandava (the Cosmic dance of Lord Shiva and Parvati). But, this is only symbolic and does not portray the real Shiva Tandava. How can one describe the transcendental Shiva consciousness which words cannot describe or the mind cannot comprehend? Lord Shiva is described by some as *Mukkanti* (the Lord with three eyes). All of us have only two eyes. But, the Lord has a third eye as well. We are aware of only the past and the present. We cannot visualise the future. Only God can. Lord Shiva, who can visualise the future with His third eye, i.e., *Jnana Netra*, is therefore referred to as *Mukkanti*. God is described by different people in several ways. He is described to be donning several forms. Nevertheless, all those descriptions fail to describe Him in full. Each one describes God and ascribes Him a particular name and form, depending on his imagination. The nameless, formless God is omnipresent and all-pervading. He is *Avanmanasagochara* (neither words can describe nor the mind can comprehend Him) and *Aprameya* (immeasurable). Who can describe such Divinity? There is only one sign for Divinity, that is, Consciousness. In whichever form this Divine Consciousness permeates, it will assume that form it may be the form of a dog, a crow, a crane or a human being. *Easwarattwa*, therefore, can be described as Divine Consciousness. This Divine Consciousness is permeating all the human beings, nay, even the insects, birds and beasts and animals. One of the names given to this divine Consciousness is *Shivattwa* (Shiva Consciousness). It is not therefore correct to describe *Shivattwa* by such appellations like *Mukkanti*, *Trinetra*, etc. *Shivattwa* means the all-pervading Divine

Consciousness. In fact, all the devotees sitting in this Hall are embodiments of Lord Shiva. *Sarvam Shivamayam* (all that you witness in this objective world is a manifestation of Shiva). It is pervading all the three worlds, the earth, the space and the nether world. It exists in all the three periods of time, the past, present and future. It is indescribable. Any length of time is insufficient to describe the Shivattwa. Several people are worshipping such an omnipresent and all-pervading Divine Consciousness by describing it through different names and forms. Just as the all-embracing divine love does not make a distinction between living beings, so also the Divine Consciousness does not differentiate. It is only we who make distinction between people as my father, my mother, my brother, my sister, etc., based on our earthly relationships with them. In fact, every living being is an Embodiment of Divinity. God assumes all names and forms. You are God. Once Parvati, the consort of Lord Shiva enquired of Him, "How can people recognise the divine consciousness which is said to be all-pervasive?" Easwara replied that the same consciousness that is immanent in Him is permeating all the living beings. He also explained that it was permeating every cell even of her body. One cannot explain; one has only to experience it. Once Parvati could not find her own son Vinayaka though he was very much near Lord Easwara. She was searching for Vinayaka everywhere, except in the divine proximity of Lord Easwara. How strange! Similarly, man today is searching for God everywhere, not knowing that he himself is an Embodiment of Divine Atma.

Lord Easwara never tended His hair. He left them in their natural position as matted locks. His matted locks, His third eye, His ash-smearred body all were left in their natural position and colour. But, they appeared differently to different people. Who can describe the colour and effulgence of Lord Shiva's body? Once, there arose a controversy between Lakshmi and Parvati about the physical appearance

of Lord Easwara and Lord Vishnu. Lakshmi, in the course of arguments enquired, "Parvati! How did you court this strange person who does not keep His body neat and who smears the ash from the cremation ground all over his body?" Parvati was offended. She retorted, "Amma! Your husband Vishnu reclines on the serpent, Sesha. He is blue in colour. Why don't you mend His ways and try to change the colour of His body?" When they were arguing thus, Saraswati entered the scene. She tried to counsel them saying, "There may be some differences in their physical appearance. So far as I am concerned, I do not find any difference between them. The same divine consciousness permeates both these forms. I am able to realise it. Since you are not able to realise it, you are entering into argumentation. Hence, forget all the outward differences." This type of transcendental nature is immanent only in Saraswati. All such differences in physical appearance are only in the minds of human beings, but God is attributeless. It is the devotees who ascribe different names and forms and attributes to God. Based on their imagination, they picturise God in different forms like the great artist Ravi Varma. As you think, so shall be the form of God. People describe the form of God as Rudra and Santhiswarupa. But, God is always Santhiswarupa (Embodiment of Peace) only. He is always pleasant and smiling. To imagine such an Embodiment of Peace in a different form is only the making of the devotee. If at all there are any such illusions, one has to get rid of them. One has to realise Divinity by cultivating love for God. It is only love that can bind God. Through such divine love, the oneness of God has to be realised. If the attributeless God has to be described, the description would be *Ekam, Nityam, Vimalam, Achalam, Sarvadhee Sakshibhutam Bhavateetam Trigunarahitam* (One without a second, eternal, pure, unchanging, witness to all functions of the intellect, beyond one's imagination, beyond the three Gunas (Sattwa, Rajas and Thamas). We are attributing differences to such an attributeless God and feel very

happy. This is not correct. The oneness of God has to be realised. There shall be no confusion in this regard, though poets and artists like Ravi Varma portrayed God in different forms, giving expression to their imaginative skills. Whatever be the different forms of portrayal by poets and artists, God is only one. For example, Lord Vinayaka appears as only one, wherever you see. He has no attributes, whatsoever. One who has no Gunas (attributes) is Ganapati. He has no leader above Him. That is why He is called Vinayaka. If you thus analyse, each name ascribed to God would reveal one meaning. Since He has no leader above Him, even Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara worship Him.

Embodiments of Love!

People today are promoting differences among human beings by attributing different names and forms to the nameless, formless and attributeless God. This is a serious mistake. Divinity is being divided by devotees. The oneness of God is not realised, with the result, futile arguments and counter arguments ensue. Whether it is Rama, Krishna, Easwara or Vishnu, all these are only different names

ascribed by devotees to God. But, God is only one. These names are ascribed to God only for our own satisfaction. Divinity, however has no difference at all! The best *sadhana* would be to realise unity in Divinity and worship God as such. You may, however, worship God in the form you like. There can be no objection to it. But, the underlying unity between the different names and forms should never be forgotten. It is a misconception to think that Lord Rama may be angry if you worship Lord Krishna and vice versa. Such differences may be felt by the devotees, but they are not in Lord Rama and Lord Krishna.

God does not entertain such negative feelings. It is only the human beings who have differences and negative feelings. In fact, there is no possibility at all for negative feelings to enter divinity. He is all positive only.

Dear Students!

Do not ascribe any difference or negative feelings to God. You may worship God with whatever name and form you like. If by any chance you find any difference in divinity, it is the mistake of your negative feelings, not that of God. Hence, worship God with single-minded devotion.