

## Chapter 18 The Atma: Our Divine Nature

### 1. Know Thyself

Humanity has from the earliest days tried to understand its own nature. We have turned in every direction to find our place under the stars. From earliest times, people worshiped their ancestors and nature. They created pantheons of gods and goddesses to personify divine traits. They developed systems of philosophy, psychology, and religion.

There is no end to the ways in which human beings have sought their identity and life's meaning, but the ultimate answer has eluded most of us. We have sought outwardly for a goal which lies inside us. When we search within, we have a chance for far greater success.

*There cannot be anything more useful than knowledge of one's own self. What do we mean by knowledge about one's own self? It is the knowledge of the atma (inner divinity). To know the atma and to know one's own self is the most useful aspect of one's learning.*

*Summer Showers 1977, p.46*

It is said that in the earliest days the gods wished to hide our divinity from us. The gods considered as hiding places the highest mountain peaks and the deepest ocean canyons. They finally decided that the last place human beings would search would be in their own hearts.

Rarely do people look deeply within themselves, but when they have, great saints and sages have emerged. A saint of India, Ramana Maharshi, recommended that his disciples ask continually, "Who am I?" Through deep introspection, the answer inevitably emerges: "I am divinity itself." Jesus Christ said to his followers, "The kingdom of heaven is within you." (Luke 17:20-21). Atma, not the personality, holds the secret of our blissful fulfillment.

*Your reality is the atma, a wave of the paramatma (universal divinity). The one object of this human existence is to visualize that reality, that atma, that relationship between the wave and the sea. All other*

## 第十八章 阿特玛：我们神圣的本质

### 1. 认识你自己

人类在最早时期就尝试去了解其本质。我们已转入天下每一个方向去寻找我们的立足之地。在最早时期，人类膜拜他们的祖先和自然。他们创立神祇的万神殿以人格化神圣的特质。他们发展了哲学，心理学和宗教的体系。

人类尝试过无数的方法去寻找他们的本来面目和人生意义，可是大部分的人始终无法摸透那终极的答案。我们向外追求一个在我们之内的目标。当我们向内探寻时，我们就有很大的成功机会。

没有任何事物能比认识自己的自性更为有用的了。何谓认识自己的自性？那就是阿特玛（atma，内在圣灵）的知识。认识阿特玛及认识你自己的自性是你求知的最有用的层面。

《夏季浸濡1977》46面

自始以来，人们就说众神要隐藏我们的神性，不让我们知道。神祇考虑过最高的山峰和最深海底作为蕴藏之处。最终他们判断人类要寻找的最后一处就是他们的内心。

世人很少向内探寻，而如果有的话，伟大的圣贤于是出现了。印度一个圣者，罗摩纳大仙（Ramana Maharshi）向他的信徒们建议，要不断自问：“我是谁？”通过深入的内省，答案必然出现：“我是圣灵本身。”耶稣对他的追随者说，“天国在你之内。”（路加17：20-21）掌握我们至福的实现之秘诀者是阿特玛，而不是人。

你的本真是阿特玛，最高我（Paramatma，神我，宇宙神灵）的一个波浪。目睹或心见本真，那阿特玛，那波浪与海洋之间的关系，是人类存在的一个目标。一切其他行动都无足轻重；鸟兽一

*activities are trivial; you share them with birds and beasts. But this is the unique privilege of man. He has clambered through all the steps of the ladder of evolution in order to inherit this high destiny.*

*Sathya Sai Speaks 6, p.224*

## **2. Atma, the God Within**

The traditions of self-realization are not unknown to Western religion. Witness the teachings, for example, of St. Ignatius Loyola (the so-called classic method of meditation), the Orthodox Churches (the Prayer of the Heart, a method of repeating the name of the Lord), the Sulpician Oratorian Fathers (the “head” and “heart” meditation), Martin Luther (structured meditation, but to be abandoned in the Presence of the Holy Spirit), the Kabbala, the Quakers (hearkening to the “inner voice”), and especially, perhaps, Meister Eckhart, the German mystic, and Jan van Ruysbroeck, the Flemish mystical theologian.

However, the systematic understanding of the divine journey has been more notable in the Eastern disciplines. For thousands of years, a great spiritual tradition has flourished in India. The ancient teachings of realized sages have been passed from teacher to student. The Vedas, particularly the Upanishads, contain the teachings necessary for self-transformation. They illuminate the message of the divine self, the atma, characterized by being, consciousness, and bliss. The atma resides in all of us as our guide and goal – the identity sought in the question, “Who am I ?”

*The atma is immanent in everyone. It is the spark of divinity which gives him light, love, and joy.*

*Sathya Sai Speaks 9, p.15*

Because divinity is inherent in all, we all have an opportunity for God-realization. Realization can be achieved by the beggar or the king, the educated person or the illiterate. It is not dependent on sex, age, or status, only on the spiritual consciousness of the seeker. The goal is the same for all. All are finally driven to achieve that victory by the growing experiential knowledge of who and what we most essentially are.

样做到。但这本真的想见是人独特的权利。为了继承这崇高的天命，他已攀登了所有进化的阶梯。

《沙迪亚赛说》第6章224面

## 2. 阿特玛，内在之神

有关‘自我证悟’（自性证悟）的传统思想，西方宗教也不感到陌生。例如，见证以下诸名人与组织的教导，如：圣依纳爵罗耀拉（St. Ignatius Loyola）（所谓的古典坐禅方法），正教会（Orthodox Churches）（心的祈祷，重复念诵神号的一种方式），稣尔比斯奥拉托利会长老（Sulpician Oratorian Fathers）（“头”和“心”的坐禅），马丁路德（有组织的坐禅但必须在圣灵出现之时中止），卡巴拉（Kabbala译注：犹太教神秘哲学，玄学），贵格会教徒（Quakers）（聆听‘内在的声音’），以及，尤其是德国神秘主义神学家，梅斯特埃克哈特（Meister Eckhart）和佛兰芒人（Flemish）的神秘主义神学家，詹凡勒依斯伯洛依克（Jan van Ruysbroeck）。

然而，对灵道有系统的认识在东方的灵修上比较显著。几千年来一个伟大的灵性传统在印度已有了健全的发展。得道者的遗训已一代一代地流传下来。吠陀经（Vedas），尤其是奥义书（Upanishads），包含了自我改造所必需的教导。它们阐明真我，阿特玛的要旨，而阿特玛就是以存有 - 意识 - 至福为特性而见称。寓于我们之内的阿特玛既是我们的向导又是我们的目标 -- 是在“我是谁”的问题中所探求的本来面目。

阿特玛寓于人人之内。它是圣灵的火花，提供光，爱和喜悦。

《沙迪亚赛说》第9章15面

由于人人都赋有神性，人人都有得道的机会。不论是乞丐或皇帝，受高深教育者或文盲都能得道。这与性别，年龄或地位无关，只与求道者的灵性意识相关。大家的目标是一样的。大家最终都朝向那胜利迈进，凭借着有关“我们基本是谁”的日益增长的经验性的知识。

*There may be differences among men in physical strength, financial status, intellectual acumen, but all are equal in the eyes of God; all have the right and the potentiality to achieve the goal of merging in him. Note that everyone, from the beggar to the billionaire, is prompted by the urge to achieve ananda, supreme bliss, based on inner peace, unaffected by ups and downs. Every activity, however elementary or earth-shaking, is subservient to this ideal.*

*Sathya Sai Speaks 8, p.77*

Due to our own misunderstanding, some people fear the loss of individuality that liberation seems to imply. However, the truth is that we are not the small body or personality with which we identify. We are greater and more complete than the wave: we are the ocean.

A story is told about the king of the gods, Indra. He once had to take birth as a pig, resulting from the curse of a great holy man. After some time, Indra forgot that he was king of the gods. He wallowed in the mud of his yard and took on the cares of an ordinary hog. His only concern was for his piglets, his sow, and his feed trough.

When the other gods came to wake him from his pitiable state, he cried in grief. He did not want to be removed from his sty and his porcine family. He had forgotten his blissful divine nature. But upon awaking from that life he realized his error. Similarly, we have forgotten our divine nature and become attached to the petty pleasures and griefs of our small concerns.

*But please do not be afraid of reaching the goal of moksha (liberation)! Do not conceive that stage as a calamity. It is the birth of joy, a joy that knows no decline, and the death of grief, grief that will never more be born.*

*Sathya Sai Speaks 3, p.178*

就人而言，体力，经济状况，睿智或有不同，但在神的眼睛里，人人平等；人人都有权利和能力去成就与神融为一体的目标。要知道，每一个人，从乞丐到亿万富翁，都热衷于获得根基于内在平和，不受起起落落影响的无上福乐。每一个行动，不管它是多基本的或惊天动地的，都迎合这个理想。

《沙迪亚赛说》第8章77面

由于我们自己的误解，有一些人惧怕失去个人特质，而个人特质的失去似乎是因超脱而起的。然而，事实是这样的，我们不是这个渺小的肉体或个性。我们比波浪更大也更完整：我们是海洋。

有一则有关众神之王，因陀罗（Indra）的故事。有一次，他必须转世为一只猪，原因是受到一个伟大圣者的诅咒。过了一些时日，因陀罗竟然忘了他就是众神之王。他在农场的烂泥里打滚并承担一只普通猪的工作。他唯一关心的是他的小猪，他的牝猪及他的饲料槽。

当其他神祇前来叫醒他于此堪怜状况时，他悲伤地哭了起来。他不要离开他的猪寮及其龌龊的家眷。他忘了他的福乐而神圣的本质。但当他从那生活中醒过来时，他认识到自己的错误。同样，我们忘了我们神圣的本质而被我们无聊的欢乐和我们微不足道的担心所引起的哀伤所束缚。

但请不要害怕抵达超脱（*Moksha*）的目标！不要认为那是一个灾难的阶段。那是喜悦的诞生，不知衰落为何物的喜悦，以及，哀伤的死亡，不再诞生的哀伤。

《沙迪亚赛说》第3章178面

### 3. The Source Of Understanding

The Rosetta Stone unlocked the mystery of Egyptian hieroglyphics. That slab of black basalt, found in 1799, held the key to the ancient codes. That single tablet enabled Egyptologists to use a known language on the stone to decipher the meanings of countless ancient Egyptian inscriptions. However, even that black basalt pales beside a greater key: the Atmic experience of self-realization, which enables us to know our identity and the purpose of our life. It is the light that illumines the immortal truth of our divine state. The atma is the light that penetrates our fog of illusion to reveal our divinity.

*When the atma is understood, everything else is understood. All effects are subsumed by the cause.*

*Upanishad Vahini, p.39*

It is quite possible to attain the Atmic vision while still in the body. There need not be a long-term loss of relatives, everyday identity and role – but these do disappear in the experience of Oneness. While functioning as a person, then, we have the potential for realizing our nature as divine. Many spiritual masters and advanced disciples have achieved this blissful state and have continued their missions for many years. When the experience of Oneness is attained, the goal is won. There are no prerequisites of superior intellect or graying hair.

*When the obstacles in the path of truth are laid low, deliverance is achieved. That is why moksha is something that can be won here and now; one need not wait for the dissolution of the physical body for that.*

*Sathya Sai Speaks 3, p.140*

The truth is known when we explore our own consciousness. The path is inward. To understand God, we need only to understand ourselves.

*When you cannot reach down to your own basic reality, why waste time in exploring the essence of Godhead? As a matter of fact, you can understand me only when you have understood yourself, your own basic truth.*

*Sathya Sai Speaks 2, p.141*

### 3. 悟的泉源

罗塞塔石碑 (Rosetta Stone) 解开埃及象形文字的奥秘。在1799年找到的黑色玄武岩石碑给古埃及象形文字提供解读的线索。那一个石碑让埃及文物研究者利用刻在石碑上的一种所知的文字去解读无数古埃及碑文的意思。然而, 在一个更伟大的解读之前, 就算是那黑色玄武岩亦显得黯然失色: 这伟大解读就是自我证悟的自性体验, 使我们认识我们的本来面目及人生的目的。它是照亮我们神圣状况的不朽的真理之光。阿特玛就是光, 穿透我们的虚幻之雾以揭露我们的神性。

认知阿特玛, 就认知一切。一切果都包含在因之中。

《奥义之川》第39面

在有生之年, 获得自性的视像是极为可能的。大可不必长期性的丧失亲属、日常的身份和角色 -- 但这些都会消失于一体性的体验之中。当以一个人身操作时, 我们就有体验我们神圣本质的潜能。许多灵性大师和先进信徒已臻达这至福境界并已继续他们的使命多年。获得一体性的体验, 即达到目标。不需要卓越智力或满头白发的先决条件。

当真理路上的路障隐蔽时, 解脱就达到了。这就是为什么解脱是此时此地可被赢取之物的原因; 不必等到此肉身毁灭的那一天。

《沙迪亚赛说》第3章140面

当我们探究自己的意识 (识) 时, 真相即大白。这条路是向内走的。要了解神, 我们只需了解我们自己。

当你不能向下伸延至你自己的基本真性时, 为什么浪费时间于探讨神的本质? 其实, 只有在你了解你自己, 你自己的根本真相, 之后, 你才能了解我。

《沙迪亚赛说》第2章141面

When we experience our divinity, we find we were never bound. Bondage, like liberation, lies in our minds. We bind ourselves with the ropes of attachment and wrong desire. Like Indra in the pig form, we are caught by our own ignorance of our self-nature. We must cast off desires and wrong thoughts and allow our souls to rise to their divine destiny.

***The Gita directs that even the eagerness to be liberated is a bond. One is fundamentally free; bondage is only an illusion. So the desire to loosen the bond is the result of ignorance.***

***Sathya Sai Speaks 10, p.246***

Self-fulfillment is a state of true independence. We can know complete contentment and joy whatever external circumstances we face. Liberation is the process of fully coming to terms with oneself, without any semblance of bondage. It is the process of reconciling all internal contradictions – stilling the mind and experiencing essential being, consciousness, and bliss (sat-chit-ananda).

***Moksa is only another word for independence – not depending on any outside thing or person.***

***Jnana Vahini, p.6***

When we realize our innermost being as divinity, we also recognize others as divine. The waves of the ocean are not separate from each other, nor from the whole, which is God. When we perceive God within ourselves, we also see God within all others.

***All is divine. When you are firmly established in the fact of your divinity, then you will directly know that others are divine.***

***Conversations, pp.115-116***

If we are joyful embodiments of Oneness, why do we not feel that way? It is because we obscure the ever-present sun of God with the black clouds of selfish egoism. We cling to our limited personalities and hide our light. Our imaginations create fears, cravings, death, and all manner of limitations. As a result of improper training, we distort the clear and pure vision of divinity.

当我们体验到我们的神性时，我们发现我们从来就不曾被束缚。束缚，如解脱，寓于我们的心念。我们用执着的绳子和错误的欲望把自己给捆绑起来。就如因陀罗之转世为猪的形象一样，我们被自己对自性的无知所逮住。我们必须放掉欲望和邪念而让我们的灵魂提升到它神圣的天命。

梵歌 (*Gita*) 指示我们，即便热衷于解脱也是一种束缚。人基本是自由自在的；束缚只是一种虚幻。所以，松绑的渴望是无知所造成的。

《沙迪亚赛说》第10章246面

自我实现是真正自主的一个境界。不论面对任何外在环境，我们都能知晓完整的满足和喜悦。解脱是完全跟我们自己妥协的过程，不具任何束缚的假象。它是对所有内在矛盾作出协调的过程 -- 平静心念并体验基本的‘存有，意识和至福’ (*sat-chit-ananda*)。

解脱 (*Moksha*) 是自主的另一个同义字 -- 不依赖任何外在之物或人。

《识之川》 (*Jnana Vahini*) 第6面

如果我们体认我们最深处的存有就是圣灵，我们也就知道他人也是圣灵。海洋与波浪彼此不分离也不与总体，神，分离。当我们理解神寓于我们之内，我们也就看到神寓于他人之内了。

大家都是圣灵。如你确认你的神性，你就会直接认识到他人也是神圣的。

《会话》115-116面

如果我们是充满喜悦之‘一’的化身，为什么我们不那么想？因为我们以自我主义的乌云去模糊一直出现的神的太阳。我们依附于我们有限的人格而隐藏起我们的光。我们的想象建立起恐惧，渴望，死亡以及各式各样的局限。基于不正确的训练，我们扭曲圣灵清晰而纯净的视像。

#### 4. Realize Yourself and Be Free

When we awaken from a dreadful nightmare, we are greatly relieved. The terrifying monsters of the night evaporate with the dawn. All the horror is seen to be our own creation, projected by our mind. But another step must still be taken, for we must now awaken from our waking dream. Fears and monsters of a more subtle nature continue to pursue us because we still fail to see the reality of omnipresent God.

Spiritual practice enables us to assert our true nature, the universal self. We learn to see through the illusion of the body and realize that we are, in fact, the totality of our consciousness. We grow in love and wisdom beyond what we thought possible. Until this state of blissful joy is attained, we feel that something is missing. We continue to strive until we know our true nature.

*Do not tell me that you do not care for that bliss, that you are satisfied with the delusion and are not willing to undergo the rigors of sleeplessness. Your basic nature, believe me, abhors this dull, dreary routine of eating, drinking, and sleeping. It seeks something it knows it has lost – santhi, inward contentment. It seeks liberation from bondage to the trivial and temporary. Everyone craves for it his heart of hearts. And it is available only in one shop – contemplation of the highest self, the basis of all this appearance.*

*Sathya Sai Speaks 1, p.115*

There is no limit to the eternal truth of a human being. The boundaries between self and others are false limitations. Where do the limitations exist? Are we limited by our physical bodies, by our range of sight, or even by our minds? No. The limitations are self-imposed by the wrong desires and wrong thoughts of our egoism.

*You and the Universal are One; you and the Absolute are One; you and the Eternal are One. You are not the individual, the particular, the temporary. Feel this. Know this. Act in conformity with this.*

*Sathya Sai Speaks 4, p.236*

#### 4. 认识你自己而获致超脱

从恶梦中惊醒时，我们感到如释重负。夜晚可怕的怪物随着破晓而蒸发。所有恐怖似乎都是我们自己的创作，由我们的心念投射。然而，我们还是必须采取另一个步骤，因为我们现在必须从醒着的梦中苏醒过来。一个更为诡异的恐惧和怪物继续追逐我们，因为我们还是看不到全在之神的真实性。

灵修使我们坚持我们真实的本质，宇宙的真我（共相的自性）。我们学会透视肉身的虚幻，并认识我们其实就是我们之意识（识）的总休。我们在爱与智慧中成长，那是出乎我们认为可能的事。直至此至福的喜悦境界达到之前，我们会感到若有所失。我们继续努力探索直到我们认识我们真正的本质为止。

不要告诉我，你不在乎那至福，你满足于虚幻并且不愿意接受得不到休息的困苦。相信我，你根本的本质厌恶这单调的，枯燥乏味的吃，喝和睡的刻板生活。它寻找某种它知道已经遗失的东西——平静（*santhi*），内在的满足。它只求解脱，解脱自琐碎和短暂之事物的束缚。人人渴求此平静于其内心的核心。而此平静只能得之于一个专柜——静虑于最高自性（最高我），所有此现象的根本。

《沙迪亚赛说》第1章115面

一个人的永恒真相是无止境的。介于自我与他人之间的界限是虚假的限制。这限制存在于何处？我们被我们的肉身所局限吗？被我们的视力范围或甚至我们的心念所局限？不。这限制是基于错误的欲望和错误的自我主义而强加于自己的。

你和万有的一切（共相）是‘一’；你和绝对者是‘一’；你和永恒者是‘一’。你并非个体，并非特别的，并非短暂的。要感觉这。要认识这。要遵照这而行动。

《沙迪亚赛说》第4章236面

To enlarge our vision to encompass all within ourselves, we must cultivate selfless love. Love shelters all within its fold. The mind separates, the heart unifies. Love is the method to realize the divine. When we feel another's joy and sorrow as our own, we may be confident of our progress on the path. God is the ocean of love into which all of us must plunge. Love is the royal road for realization of the goal.

*Realization, which is not possible through logic, which is not possible through offering sacrifices, and which is not possible through discussion and other disciplines, can be achieved only through love.*

*Summer Showers 1972, p.249*

### Questions for Study Circle:

1. What is the atma?
2. How do we discover our true nature?
3. What do others tell us about ourselves?
4. Is there anything to fear in liberation?
5. How is liberation achieved?
6. Why is the concept of spiritual liberation uncommon in the West?
7. What are the characteristics of the liberated person?
8. Is the atma the key to all understanding?
9. Do we all have an identical divine nature?
10. How do we give up the desire for liberation and still attain it?
11. How do the scriptures and the saints describe our essential nature?

### References for Further Study

1. Conversations, p.102 (The distinction between divine vision and God-realization).
2. Dhyana Vahini, p.59 (Both good and bad must be overcome for liberation).
3. Jnana Vahini, p.64 (Desire for liberation is the result of good past karma).
4. Sathya Sai Speaks 1, p.192 (The truth of all is the same).
5. Sathya Sai Speaks 3, p.183
6. Sathya Sai Speaks 10, pp.263-266.
7. Sathya Sai Speaks 11, p.216 (atma).

要扩大我们的视野以包含一切在我们之内，我们就得培育无私的爱。爱保护一切于其庇荫之下。念分离而心统合。爱是认识神的方法。若对另一人的喜乐和哀伤感同身受，我们就会有自信在灵道上迈进。神是爱的海洋，我们大家都必须跳入。爱是体现目标的康庄大道。

证悟不能透过逻辑去获致，不能透过供奉祭品去获致，也不能透过讨论和戒律去获致；证悟只能透过爱去获致。

《夏季浸濡1972》249面

### 学习圈的问题：

1. 阿特玛是什么？
2. 如何认知我们真正的本质？
3. 有关我们自己，他人告诉我们些什么？
4. 在超脱中，有什么恐惧之物吗？
5. 如何获致超脱？
6. 灵性超脱的观念，为什么在西方不普遍？
7. 得道者的特质是什么？
8. 阿特玛是所有证悟的关键吗？
9. 我们大家都有同一的神圣本质吗？
10. 我们如何放弃超脱的渴望而又能获得超脱？
11. 经典和圣者如何描述我们基本的本质？

8. Summer Showers 1973, p.128 (The goal of life is to realize the atma).
9. Summer Showers 1974, pp.33-42 (Brahman).
10. Summer Showers 1974, pp.202-203 (The divine self is hidden by clouds of ego).
11. Summer Showers 1977, pp.28-29, (Liberation comes when the mind is free of desire).
12. Summer Showers 1977, pp.46-51, 56, 66, 75-79 (The nature of atma).
13. Summer Showers 1979, p.13 (Spiritual beatitude is gained by grace).
14. Upanishad Vahini, pp.49-50 (Atma has no limitation, attribute, or quality).
15. Upanishad Vahini, p.51 (Atma flashes like a stream of lightning).

One wants the fruits of heaven, without planting the seed of 'goodness'!

- Baba

人总是不要种下善的种子，却想得到善的果实。

- 峇峇