

THE GOLDEN DAWN CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

LESSON 145

THE TATTWAS : SPIRIT

THE SPIRIT

This is the Anandamaya Kosha, being literally the Coil of Bliss of the Vedantins. With the power of psychic perception, the Soul knows of the existence of this entity, even though it has hardly made its presence directly felt within the Human constitution in the present stage of Human development. The characteristic difference between the Soul and the Spirit is the absence of the "I" in the case of the latter, i.e., the Spirit.

It is now the dawn of the day of evolution. It is the first setting-in of the positive current of the Great Breath; it is the first state of cosmic activity after the Night of Mahapralaya. As we have seen, the breath in every state of existence has three differentiations: the positive, the negative, and the Sushumna. The Sushumna is pregnant with either of the two remaining states: this is the state which is described in the Parameshthi Sukta of the Rig Veda as neither Sat (positive) nor Asat (negative). This is the primary state of Parabrahman, in which the entire Universe lies hidden like a tree in the seed. As billows rise and lose themselves in an ocean, the two states of evolution and involution take their rise in this state, and are lost in the same in due time. What is Prakriti itself in this state of potential omnipotence? The phenomena of Prakriti owe their origin and existence to the modifications of the Great Breath. When that Great Breath is in the state of Sushumna, can we not say that Prakriti itself is held in that state by Sushumna? It is in fact Parabrahman that is all in all:

Prakriti is only the shadow of that substance, and like a shadow it follows the modifications of the breath. The first modification of the Great Breath is the setting in of the evolutionary (positive) current. In this state, Prakriti modifies itself into the ethers of the first degree, which compose the atmosphere from which Ishvara draws Life. The subject (Parabrahman), whose breath causes Prakritic modifications, is in this first state of evolution known as the Sat, the fountain-head of all existence. Naturally enough, the "I" is latent in this state, since it is differentiation which gives birth to the "I". But what is this state? Must Man be annihilated before he reaches this state of what is called Nirvana or Parinirvana? There is no reason to suppose that it is the state of annihilation anymore than is the condition of latent heat in water to be considered as undergoing annihilation in order to be released through the water. The simple fact is that the color which constitutes the ego becomes latent in the Spirit's higher form of energy: it is a state of consciousness or knowledge above self, certainly not destroying that self.

The individual Spirit bears the same relation to the Sat which the individual Soul bears to the Ishvara, the individual Mind to the Virat, and the individual Life-Principle to the Prana: each center is given birth by the Tattwic rays of that degree; each is a drop in its own ocean. The Upanishad explains this state under many names; the Chhandogya however, has a very comprehensive dialogue on this subject, between Uddalaka and his son, Shvetaketu.

Professor Max Muller has made some very questionable remarks on certain assertions in this dialogue, calling them "more or less fanciful." These remarks could never have fallen from so learned a man had he known and understood something of the ancient Science of Breath and the philosophy of the Tattwas. The Upanishads can never be very intelligible without this comprehensive science. (It must be remembered that the Upanishads have clearly laid down in many places that a teacher is wanted for the proper understanding of their divine words. The teacher taught nothing else but the Science of Breath, which is said to be the secret doctrine of all secret doctrines: in fact, it is the key of all that is taught in the Upanishads. The little book, which these essays attempt to explain to the world, appears from its very beginning to be a compilation of various couplets on the same subject inherited from various esoteric circles: in fact, it is as a key to the Aryan philosophy and Occult Science that this handful of stanzas now presented to the reader has its chief value. Regretfully, we cannot hope that they will dispel the entire veil of gloom which have surrounded this subject through the ages.)

To return however to the dialogue between the father and the son. It is contained in the sixth Prapathaka of the Chhandogya Upanishad:

"In the beginning, my dear, there was that only which is one only, without a second. Others say in the beginning there was that only which is not one only, without a second, and from that which is not, that which is was born."

This is the translation of Professor Max Muller. Notwithstanding the authority of his name and scholarship, the writer ventures to think that the sense of the Upanishad is totally lost sight of in the translation. The words of the original are: Sad eva saumvedamagre asit. No word can be found in the translation giving the sense of the word idam in the original. Idam means, "this", and it has been explained as meaning the phenomenal world; this that is perceived, etc. The accurate translation of the text would therefore be:

"This [world] was Sat alone in the beginning".

Perhaps in the translation of Professor Max Muller, the word "there" is printed by mistake for the word, "this". If such is truly the case, the defect in the translation is at once remedied. The text means that the first state of the world before differentiation was the state known as Sat. From what comes afterwards, it appears that this is the state of the Universe in which all its phenomena- material, mental, and psychic, are held in posse. The word eva, for which the word "alone", or "only", stands in the translation, signifies that at the beginning of the day of evolution the Universe had not all five, or even two or more of the five planes of existence together: at present it does, but in the beginning, the Sat existed alone.

The Sat is only, without a second. In these two epithets there is no qualification of time. The Sat is one alone; and unlike Prana, Virat, and Ishvara (the three existing simultaneously), does not have a shadowy side of existence. The next sentence goes on to say that in the

beginning there was Asat alone. As Professor Max Muller renders it: "There (?) was that only which is not." This carries no meaning, notwithstanding the Greek accompaniment which infers such. That the word Asat is used in the sense of "that which is not" or briefly, "nothing", there is no doubt. But that such is not the meaning of the Upanishad there is also no doubt. The words are used here in the same sense in which they are used in the "Nosad asit" Hymn of the Rig Veda.

"Then there was neither the Sat nor the Asat." This of course, is a state quite apart from the Sat of the Upanishad: it is nothing more than the Sushumna of the Brahmic Breath: after this in the beginning of evolution, the Brahman became Sat; this is the positive evolutionary potential phase. The Asat is nothing more than that which rules during the Night of Mahapralaya: the Negative Life Current. When the shadowy Prakriti has undergone the preparatory influence of the negative current, the day of evolution sets in with the beginning of the positive current. The dispute as to beginning is merely of a technical nature: in reality, there is no beginning. It is considered as motion within a circle, and from this viewpoint, we may place whatever state we like in the beginning.

But the Asat philosopher argues that unless the Maya undergoes the preparatory influence of the Night, there can be no creation. Hence, according to him, we must place the Asat in the beginning. To this, the sage Uddalaka would not consent. According to him, the active impressive force is in the Sat, the positive state, just as all the Life-forms take their origin from Prana (the Positive Life-Matter), and not from Rayi

(the Negative Life-Matter). It is only impressibility that exists in the Asat, the real names and forms of the phenomenal Universe do not exist there. In fact, the name Sat has been given to the primary state of the evolving Universe for this very reason. If we would translate these two words into English, we would have to coin two very unique compounds:

1. Sat : that-in-which-is.
2. Asat: that-in-which-is-not.

It is only such a rendering that would carry the true idea, and hence it is after all advisable to retain the Sanskrit words and explain them as best as one may.

That actually existing state in which the names and forms do not exist cannot properly stand as the cause of the names and forms which do exist: hence, the Sat alone was in the beginning, etc. It should also be noted, that the individual Spirit has the same relation to the Sat as the Soul has to the Ishvara.

This is sufficient to show that there is no annihilation anywhere in the Universe. Nirvana simply means the extinguishing (which is not extinction) of the phenomenal rays.