

Sandeha Nivarini

Dissolving Doubts

Sathya Sai Baba

Chapter V. Thai! Thai! Thai! Dummy!

Swami: Well, my boy, I am glad you have come. Are you reflecting on the answers I gave last time, and are you practising with firm conviction what has been told? Are you deriving bliss (*ananda*) from it?

Devotee: Swami, would any devotee like me allow your nectar-like words to go to waste? No one aspiring to attain real bliss will throw away the ambrosial words that you confer in Your grace. I don't know about others, but I reflect upon your answers night and day and practise them with courage and conviction. I am awake all the time, waiting for the next chance to meet you.

Swami: It is this alertness that devotees should cultivate. To attach oneself to the flimsy, paltry foolishness of the world and to run after them and worry when they slip out of the hands or jump about in glee when you get them, all this is ignorant illusion. But your counting of days, waiting for the chance, keeping awake for the opportunity to hear the words of the Lord and imbibe their essence, that is illusion of knowledge (*vidya-maya*). If devotees fall into this illusion, they will attain fulfillment some day or other, without fail. So, since this illusion of knowledge has illumined you, you are fortunate. Develop this, that is to say, this dwelling on the thoughts of God; don't give it up or reduce it for any reason, to any extent. You will become holy without fail. You will reach fulfillment and attain the goal.

Devotee: Swami! Last month, You said You would explain to me who "I" am. If I understand that also, I can be rid of the little delusion that I have and, without the slightest trace of doubt, meditate on You and be blissful. What greater fortune can I have?

Swami: Well, my boy! To speak about the real nature of "I" is very easy, but until it is experienced, full contentment is impossible. For me to tell you to my satisfaction and for you to grasp its full meaning needs some time. This month, even the allotted hours of the day are not enough for me! Though it is like this, I am using all the time only for the bliss (*ananda*) of devotees; I have nothing of my own. Being useful for my devotees, that is my selfish purpose. Throughout the last month, I went to Nellore, Gudur, Venkatagiri, and the surrounding villages. Afterward, I went to Bangalore and returned. I used what little time was available for writing *Prema Vahini*! This month, I visited Hyderabad, Rajahmundry, Samalkot, Chebrolu, Nuzvid, etc. So there is no spare time.

Next month, I shall tell you about who "you" are to your full satisfaction. For the present, try to grasp the meaning of this song, in folk dance style; then you will understand who this "you" is to a large extent. It is possible you will achieve detachment (*vairagya*) to a large extent through this. Later, you will understand the meaning of what I have to say more clearly and with greater ease. Do not merely read this song but think well on the meaning of each word. The song will certainly turn your brain!

Devotee: All right. Give me at least that. I shall satisfy my desire; I shall drink the nectar and digest it.

Swami: Listen, carefully.

1. Thai! Thai! Thai! Thai! Thai! Dummy!
See the ignorant (*thamas*) play of this puppet doll.
O soul (*jiva*), listen to the long long tale
Of its past, its future, behind and front!
2. It rolled at first in mushy mire

Of mother's womb, its prison dark.
It came with a whimper, but all around
They smiled in joy and feasts galore.

3. "O tragedy! I am born again",
It knew and wept, both loud and long.
But all the while, they caressed it
And laughed to raise a laugh!

4. In its own dirt it wallowed by day,
Without a sense of shame;
It rose and fell, at every step,
Acting daily a childish play.

5. It runs and skips with gangs of chums
And learns a hundred tricks and trades;
It grows so tall and thick and broad;
From year to year, very fast and fair.

6. It moves in pairs, and bills and coos
In rosy rainbow style;
It sings in tunes unheard before,
And quaffs the cup, unique and strange.

7. 'Tis *Brahma* who makes these dolls in pairs
And dolls and dolls in millions,
But this our puppet does not know
When it plays with dollies:
Thim! Thim! Thim!

8. This illusion (*maya*) doll, like the holy bull,
Has the slothful (*thamas*) rope in nostril hole;
Lust and anger are the scorpion whips
That whack the back of the slave.

9. It gloats with glee, when others stop
Before it shuddering low;
It doles them pain; but cannot bear
A microscopic share!

10. It swears and shouts and waves its arms
And frets and fumes with blood-red eyes;
It is indeed a wondrous sight-
Possessed by devil ire!

11. It scans and spells, it scribbles and swots,
It does not know the reason why,
It runs in panic trying to glean

Fodder for belly, willy nilly.

12. Ah, did you see this queer little dummy,
With so many books in its tummy,
Turning and twisting in jealousy green
When a learned doll encounters it?

13 . And, you should hear its secret cluck
When a shameful sensual urge,
A wicked lurking greed
Is satisfied in sin!

14. It proudly pats; what? – its own back!
For beauty, brawn, vitality,
While all the time and step by step
It moves on toward senility.

15 . It totters and blinks through wrinkles and folds;
And when the children cry, “Old Ape, Old Ape”,
It gapes and grins a toothless grin;
Its bones do clatter so!

16. Unto the last, it is lost in fear,
Wear and tear and many a tearsome fray!
Of what avail, O dummy doll, you gasp and groan,
You needs must meet the doom.

17. Aha! The bird! It shakes its wings!
It flies out, brrrr, from out the cage of skin.
Empty, it tightens; vacant, it straightens;
O, drag it out of sight; it bloats and stinks.

18. The elements join their parents five;
The doll’s desires are dust and ash;
Why weep, you fools, when one of you
Falls on the crowded stage?

19. Uncles, cousins, aunts, and friends
March in gloom until door of room!
The illusion (*maya*) doll, alas, forgot its kin,
The divine name, redeemer true!

20. O soul (*jiva*), don’t lean upon this slender reed;
Just a sneeze! This frail skin boat
Endowed with thrice three leaks
Will plunge you, middle stream!

21. This puppet weeps, it sleeps and wakes,

When the string is pulled by unseen hand
The Lord it is, who stands behind,
But the dummy swears, it is I, I, I.

22. *Dharma*, fate (*karma*) are the hardy strings
He tightens or He loosens.
Unaware, the puppet swaggers
Criss-cross, on the planks.

23. It takes the world as stable,
This silly strutting dummy!
A twinkle! He winds up the show!
Exit the pomp and pride!

24. O soul (*jiva*), you have waded
Through ant and snake and bird;
Seek and find without delay,
The road to lasting bliss!

25. Bless your luck! You now can see
Sai Krishna, He has come!
Be kin with him and you will know
Your what and why and how.

26. A million words so clever and nice,
Can they appease your hunger's maw?
Light the lamp of the soul instead,
And, freed from bondage, run out and play.

27. This song that tells of dummy doll
Makes soul (*jiva*) sad and wise! I know;
But (*jiva*)! See the grand play (*leela*) of
Sathya Sai Nath and . . . know Thyself!

Devotee: Ah! I have understood! I have clearly understood that “I” am not the body, intellect (*buddhi*), mind (*manas*), or memory (*chittha*). If I am not any of these, “I” must be only the *Atma*, and if “I” am the *Atma*, then “I” am the Supreme *Atma* (*Param-atma*), so everything is the Supreme *Atma*! All this I have understood! Believing out of ignorance that “I” is the body (*deha*) and the intellect, we experience all these miseries. True, true. We are passing through all that you said now, one after the other, as beads in a string. Oh! What a truth! What a truth! Listening to this one song is enough; the brain, as you said, turns into detachment (*vairagya*).

Swami! I felt very disappointed when You said first that You had no time to spare. But that was due to my ignorance. Though I knew that our Swami would never disappoint anyone or cause trouble, I feel as if You have conferred even more bliss (*ananda*) than what I thought I would get. How is Your kindness to be described! They sing of you, “For a single drop of tear, Sai will melt.” And they say you can never bear to see us suffer. This is proof of the truth of these sayings.

Shall I take leave?

Swami: Very good. Go and come again. I also have no time to spare. I have to see and send those who are going to their places.