

THE WAY OF SADHANA

MASTER SERIES

LESSON 2

Dear Member
Greetings,

Knowledge of the Real Self is described as the only way of attaining complete Liberation from the bondages of selfishness and attachment to, the body senses, which are the CAUSE of all unhappiness and misery. This self-ignorance is the source of all false knowledge and the creator of the false ego, which in turn binds us to the little self. In ignorance, we concentrate all of our energies upon the gratification of the selfish and limited motives in the hope that our actions will lead us to Absolute Happiness. But of course this never happens, and we never completely achieve our real goals. Through Spiritual Practice, we are slowly awakened from our sleep of ignorance and we discover that the Real Self is by Its own nature All-Knowing and Free. When we rise above our ignorance, we discover the Divine Truth which underlies the relative world of physical objects.

From the very first lesson you received as a member of The Sadhana Society, you have been studying a variety of subjects in your search for the Ultimate Truth. We have always started from an immediate frame of reference, only to find that everything we consider as an object of our study had its origin in a Mysterious Something, which we call God. We have seen how everything in the Universe can be dissolved back into an Unknown Cause. Like the Ancient Forest

Teachers, we have also studied many forms of physical substance and tried to reach a greater understanding of the Divinity in all things. This method of study is exactly the same method which has been used by students for thousands of years. Unless we can understand something about the Nature of God, we will never truly understand anything about the nature of the Universe or of Life itself.

In recent years, the word "God" has come to be regarded in a derogatory sense by those who have rejected the dogmatic concept which implies that God is an old man with a long beard, having form, passions, habits and the characteristics of an earthly father that may occasionally be both benevolent and vengeful. In rejecting this idea of God, many individuals become unable to divorce the word "God" from the old anthropomorphic concept. As Sadhanists, we should understand that this old idea of God belongs to the infant stages of human thought, and the Great Thinkers of all Religions have long since outgrown this childish idea. But we should not make the mistake of assuming that everything in the old concept is untrue, for even the weakest idea can express a partial truth. God must indeed possess all of the higher attributes generally ascribed to humanity; yet in truth, God must also be SOMETHING MORE.

As human beings, our early concept of God was created to explain everything that we saw or experienced in the Universe. In this, we were not much different than any of the other creatures that roamed the face of the Earth. Let us suppose for example, that all of the creatures of the Earth decided to explain the sum-total of everything known to them – and to call that something "God." Obviously, the eagle experiences the Universe in a different way than

does man. Therefore, it would not be possible for the eagle to accept man's concept of God. The eagle would be totally convinced that God must have wings to soar and talons with which to catch its prey. The concept of a God devoid of either one of these attributes, would be looked upon as the most ridiculous and limiting idea imaginable. Out of necessity, the eagle would see God as an eagle; while the field mouse would see God as an all-powerful field mouse, capable of escaping every and all dangers from above. Like man, the lowly gnat and the mighty elephant would also attempt to explain God as being the sum-total of all things seen and experienced.

From this, we can see that man's explanation of the Universe is not totally reliable. The sum total of everything that we may become aware of, is only an infinitesimal part of the Real Universe. Because of this, our physical concept of God can only be at best, a half-truth. To insist that God is only the part that we perceive Him to be, is as foolish as trying to portray the Total Man by using a paring from a fingernail. We only know the Universe from our point of view. But when we look at it from the viewpoint of the eagle or even another human being, our concept of it must change.

What we call God is relative to our own peculiar set of experiences. When we expand those experiences by magnifying the capacity of the five physical senses, we will also expand our concept of God. WHAT WE DO NOT SEE OR EXPERIENCE, WE CANNOT KNOW. But when we develop our human capacity to KNOW, we will then experience millions and millions of forces which have always existed and yet somehow were not included in our original concept of God.

It is not the intention of The Sadhana Society to teach that the Universe is God – for that would also be a limitation. Instead, what we would have you remember is that God manifests within everything that exists – including the Physical Universe. Going further, we also teach that God is much more than that. Although God is present in the Created Universe, He also exists in the uncreated, unmanifested realm that we do not see and do not know. As you can see, this is far different than saying that God is merely the sum total of things known and seen. It is also different from the theological dogmas that declare God to be separate and apart from His Creation. You must however, understand that the Teachings of The Sadhana Society do not use the word “Creation” in its literal sense. Instead, it is used symbolically to mean ANY AND ALL manifested attributes of God.

The Ancient Forest Teachers were well aware that every individual had their own concept and mental image of what God should be like. To avoid any possible misunderstanding regarding the meaning of The Absolute Divinity, it was obvious that a better term was needed to express the TOTAL meaning of God. Therefore, two words are used to express both natures of God. The word or name “Brahman,” is used to convey an idea of The Infinite Being of God which is unseen, beyond all knowledge and therefore Undefinable. The term or word “Brahma,” is used to convey the idea of Brahman in a manifested form, which includes everything seen, experienced and knowable. Brahma therefore, is all physical powers and energies, including all knowledge and wisdom that is known or knowable. If you look carefully, you will see that the word Brahma is only a portion of the word Brahman. It is only that part of God which is knowable, while the word Brahman includes all of the knowable plus something more,

which is unknowable and undefinable. It includes every human concept of God, every personal God that man can identify with – but it is also something more.

When the Ancient Forest Teachers spoke of Brahman, they were not attempting to set up a new God. They were merely using a general term that was sufficiently broad enough to fit every concept of God that might have been held by any and all students, irrespective of their religious belief or social training. Using the same principle today, you can readily see that the word Brahman is broad enough to include not only all religious concepts, but also the highest concepts of the atheists, the agnostics, the scientists and philosophers who prefer to think of a “first cause” or “principle,” rather than adopting the seemingly limited words commonly applied to a Deity.

Everything that we see around us, everything that we feel or experience with our physical senses is merely one link in an endless chain of CAUSE AND EFFECT. When we try to intellectualize the First Cause or the first link in the chain, we find ourselves continually running up against an Undefinable Something that leads us back to the Unknown. That portion of the chain which leads into the future is also as mysterious and undefinable. Where did it begin? Where is it going? We can trace the CAUSE of anything only so far as human reason is able to comprehend. Beyond that point, we must leave reason behind and allow our imagination to carry us still further. At some point even imagination will fail us and we will be left with only the Divine Attribute of Pure Inspiration. All of the Great Teachers of the World have told us over and over again – EVERYTHING BEGINS AND ENDS IN BRAHMAN.

The human intellect is totally incapable of forming a clear concept of anything without a CAUSE. This is due to the fact that the intellect is merely an instrument of the physical world of relativity. In Sadhana, we begin with the proposition that Brahman is the First Cause which in Itself is Causeless. This statement may seem to be a contradiction until we begin to recognize that even the chain of CAUSE AND EFFECT is Infinite. Remember what we have said in previous lessons, anything that is Infinite is also Endless and Beginningless – therefore anything that has no beginning can have no cause.

The human intellect often prides itself in being able to understand every infinitesimal part of the known Universe, and yet it cannot truly answer the simple question of the little child who asks, "Who made the Universe?" At best, we can only reply by using a form of verbal symbolism which although undefinable suggests a First Cause. Therefore, we answer the child by saying, "God made the Universe." The problem here is that the adult who considers himself to be intellectually superior to the child, is at a loss for an answer when the child again asks, "Then who made God?" In the end, even the adult intellect is forced to admit that there is something which has no cause – no beginning and no ending. As Sadhanists, we merely assert that BRAHMAN IS. It is not even necessary to give It a name, but you must begin to grasp the idea that there is an Absolute Something out of which everything in existence had its origin. It doesn't matter whether you call it God, Mind, Matter, Force, Life or Love. The very existence of the Universe is proof enough that behind it all – SOMETHING IS.

We now come to the most important question of all. If Brahman or God or that "something" is undefinable and unknowable, how can we, as mortal human beings ever know what God is? To discover the answer, we must approach the question in an unlimited fashion. If we rely solely upon our limited frames of reference, we will never be able to completely answer the question. If for example, we declare that God is everything that we see, experience and know, we unconsciously make the mistake of limiting God to "all that I know." But when we declare that God is both the KNOWN and the UNKNOWN, we can come much closer to the true concept of God.

Sadhana begins by teaching that Brahman is All Powerful, All-Knowing and Everywhere. These are the same three attributes that western theologians speak of when they use such awesome sounding words as Omnipotence, Omniscience and Omnipresent. By thoroughly understanding these three words you will not only achieve a greater understanding of what God is, but you will also begin to realize that you are indeed an expression of Brahman uniquely endowed with these same three attributes of Divinity. Before you accept or reject the above statement let us examine the meaning of these three words. At the very beginning of each word, we find a major key to their definition. Omni, is derived from the Latin omnis, which is used to emphasize the word all. Omnipotent therefore, means Unlimited and Universal Power. As a title, it is used to convey the idea that all power is a manifestation of the Absolute Brahman.

Many so-called religious teachers refer to God as being Omnipotent and Almighty, but apparently they haven't the faintest conception of what the word really means. They will readily attribute

to God any manifestation of power that is pleasing to them or conducive to their own personal welfare. But when it comes to any manifestation of power that is undesirable to them, they quickly move away from the meaning of the word Omnipotent and in their ignorance, try to create a second source of power, called the devil. What they cannot understand is that if God is All Powerful then ALL POWER must be from God – There can be no other power in the Universe.

The very nature of the word Omnipotence tells us that all manifestations of power have their origin from the same Divine Source. There is no such thing as good power or bad power. POWER IS POWER. Good and bad are relative terms applied to what we experience as a result of our ignorance and our inability to use Divine Power properly. The power of the sun produces an endless variety of manifestations that keep you alive, while at the same time it is capable of disintegrating your body in an instant. The power in a glass of water that keeps you alive is no different than the power of water that you can drown in. There is no difference in Divine Power, but there is a very great difference between POWER and the USE OF POWER. The power that moves your muscles and makes you alive and aware is part of the same Pure Energy that emanates from the All-Powerful Brahman. You will never be able to use Divine Power properly so long as you choose to look upon yourself as less than Divine.

God is also described as Omniscient and All Knowing. In its original intent the word literally means, "The Source of Infinite Knowledge." We are therefore reminded that Brahman or God possesses All Knowledge that is known and unknown – The, Infinite

Source of all knowledge that is or ever will be. Yet how quickly many religious teachers would have us believe that God is capable of making mistakes, such as in the creation of an imperfect humanity. We are told that God is Perfect Knowledge that can do no less than act wisely and justly. But the words become hollow and meaningless when these teachers would have us believe that man was created in sin, and therefore incapable of reflecting God's Knowledge. Listen to their prayers as they try to call God's attention to the things that He may not know already, reminding Him of sickness and mistakes that He has made in the direction of their lives, and pleading with Him to pay greater attention to their needs in the future. It never occurs to them that Knowledge is not to blame, but rather the improper interpretation of Knowledge is the only culprit. We may be able to flatter and fool the little ego, but we cannot deceive the Divine Self which is All-Knowing.

Knowledge is Endless and Infinite. It surrounds us on all sides. It permeates everything in Creation, including the physical self. There is no place where Knowledge does not exist. Every atom is filled with Divine Knowledge. The Universe pulsates and moves in harmony with Divine Knowledge. The birth of every human being is a perfect example of Infinite Knowledge blossoming forth and unfolding as an expression of that Greater Divine Knowledge. If Brahman were not the SOURCE of all Knowledge, where then would we find it? Surely not from an empty mythical void where Knowledge does not exist. THE FACT THAT WE ARE CAPABLE OF DISCOVERING KNOWLEDGE PROVES THAT IT EXISTED BEFORE WE DISCOVERED IT. The acquisition of Knowledge is merely a discovery of our own True Nature and its Oneness with the Infinite Source of all Knowledge.

And finally, we are told that God is Omnipresent. Simply stated, the word means All-Present. It also expresses the quality of being everywhere present at the same time – The state of existing always, without beginning or end. As a child, you were probably told that “God is everywhere.” But in practice, you were led to believe that God was really only in a few selective places, such as Churches, Temples or any religiously acceptable “good” place. It is highly improbable that you were told that God was also in the “bad” places. But think about the meaning of the word Omnipresent. If God were absent from one single point of Creation, then it would be a lie to speak of God as Omnipresent. The truth of the matter is, many individuals still do not truly mean what they say when they speak of God as being everywhere.

The Great Spiritual Teachers of the World left no doubt as to what they meant when they referred to Brahman as Omnipresent. Their Teachings were very clear on this subject. “Brahman is present in all places at the same time, in the things seen and unseen, in mind and matter, in every atom of the Universe, in all things created, and in the physical and Spiritual person of every human being.” Think for a moment about the scope of such a statement. If Brahman is present everywhere, then there can be no room for anything else to be present at any place or at any time. If Brahman is everywhere and in everything, then everything must be a part or an emanation of Brahman.

Although modern science may use a different terminology, the consensus is basically the same. We are told that there appears to be one substance pervading all of space, one force manifesting in an

endless variety of ways. Although these conclusions are new to modern science, they are practically identical to those taught by the Ancient Forest Teachers for thousands of years.

The most important cornerstone in the Teachings of The Sadhana Society is, THE UNITY OF GOD, MAN AND THE UNIVERSE. All things are Brahman. Once we are able to recognize this and make it a part of our everyday Awareness, then and only then will we be able to lift ourselves beyond the illusions of duality, beyond the illusions of good and evil, pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow. Only then will we be able to recognize our Real Self as One with the Infinite.

As an Expression of Brahman, you and I are endowed with the Free Will to create undreamed of Blessings of Divine Expression. In the words of Lao Tzu:

“The Great Tao flows everywhere, to the left and to the right. All things depend upon it to exist and it does not abandon them. To its accomplishments it lays no claim. It loves and nourishes all things but does not lord it over them.”

As a student of Sadhana, never forget that your True Self is One with Brahman. Once you have attained this Supreme God Consciousness, you will be able to live in the world like an Eternal Witness, who sees all physical and mental changes taking place and yet is unaffected and undisturbed by them. Your existence in the world will be like that of the Flute Player, who travels from place to place in Absolute Freedom

and Perfection, teaching the rest of mankind by the example of your Being. Remember always, the Perfect Sadhanist strives to live as the Perfect Embodiment of Absolute Divinity on Earth.

May the Peace of God Surround You and Guide You.

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