



## THREE ASPECTS OF NATURE (THREE GUNAS)

### The evolution process, the three *gunas* and Bliss

Extract from 9/2/05 Satsang

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*Om Shri Paramatmane Namaha*

Most of you are acquainted with the teaching that all that exists in nature is divided into three qualities - *tamas*, *rajas*, and *sattva*. The rajasic quality is in the centre with tamasic one side and sattvic on the other side. *Rajas* means 'desire' and *tamas* means laziness or stupor, absence of activity and lethargy. *Sattva* means wisdom, knowledge, brightness and light. Human beings are predominantly rajasic - something in the middle - and animals are predominantly tamasic. It is left to human beings - if they want to become tamasic, they can be. No one will stop them. If they want to be sattvic, they can be. This freedom is given to them. It is from the plank of the sattvic path that a jump into spiritual experience happens. Those who want to realise the aim of human life - Enlightenment - have to evolve towards a sattvic principle of life. There is no other way out for them.

Here is an important point about the *rajas*. By indulging oneself in the rajasic path, after some time one becomes tamasic. For example, the male/female relationship starts from the rajasic nature - the desire for physical love and for a sexual relationship. At the culmination of the male/female union, before the discharge of semen and if and when there is orgasm, both partners become blind and forgetful to everything! It is in that forgetfulness that they feel some sort of relief and comfort, and a feeling of well-being. But it is all temporary. This is not happiness but delusion.

It is just like the ostrich in South Africa. When an ostrich senses danger, it puts its head in the sand and thinks that there is no danger! The ostrich forgets that danger is coming and that the lion can attack it even when its head is in the sand. In fact, one will be a prey more easily.

Forgetfulness and temporary relief in sexual pleasure will not save one from frustration and misery. But if we try to control our desire, to channel it and purify it in various ways, through self-discipline, from that time onwards the sattvic side starts in our life. All this is not only mental philosophy but here spirituality is a fact of life. All these three principles exist in our body, and anybody can recognise it. On some days without reason we feel lethargic and indolent, with no desire to work, and would prefer to stay in bed. This is a symptom of being tamasic on that day. On another day a person may be completely alert and want to be very active. Here there is a prevalence of the rajasic element. On yet another day one may be light and full of wisdom, giving sermons and teaching people. This is an indication of being sattvic. It happens in everyone's life. We go on changing. But after the transcendence of all three qualities, there is Truth and there is the Self. Beyond the three *gunas* is our true and pure Existence. Then there comes into life what is known as 'equanimity' - serenity. One is not plagued by feelings of gloom and pleasure or liking and disliking. One remains the same always - a realised man. The whole of this science is given in the Bhagavad Gita.

Chapter V, verse 21

The translation goes like this:

*'He whose mind remains unattached to sense objects derives through meditation the sattvic joy which dwells in the mind. Then that yogi having completely identified himself with Brahma enjoys eternal bliss.'*

The Lord says: "*He whose mind remains unattached to sense objects...*" What does it mean? The mind is attracted by sense objects. The mind runs towards the opposite sex. Even when one is in one's room and one's friend is somewhere else, one's mind runs: "Oh, how nice it would be for me to be with him or her! Oh, the embrace would be so fine!"

The Lord says that you should forget about the embrace. You have to become detached from sense objects. Then the Lord says: "*...derives through meditation the sattvic joy...*", as soon as you detach yourself from your desires, from *rajas*, sattvic joy starts. To become sattvic it is necessary to be detached from the rajasic.

This should be the attitude of every sincere seeker because the Lord says that only by withdrawing from rajasic pleasure you will be able to experience sattvic joy. In the *rajas* there is pleasure but in the *sattva* there is joy. There is a difference between pleasure and joy. After you have attained sattvic joy, there remains one more step - to attain Bliss. '*Then that yogi*' - which yogi? The yogi who has withdrawn from the *rajas* and has started enjoying the *sattva* - '*then that yogi, having completely identified himself through meditation with Brahma*' - a state comes inside - those waves of joy, which are very similar to bliss, start arising inside - '*enjoys eternal Bliss*' And in the word 'Bliss', the 'B' is a capital letter. There is no difference between that Bliss and the Lord. The Lord is the Bliss. God is Bliss.

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