

### In Search of Fullness – 87-09-13

Om. A-sa-to ma sad gam-ma-ya. Ta-ma-so-ma jyo-tir gam-ma-ya. Mri-tyor ma a-mri-tam ga-ma-ya. Avir avir ma e-dhi. Rudra yat te dak-shi-nam mu-kham. Tena mam pahi nityam. Tena mam pahi nityam. Tena mam pahi nityam.

Lead us from the unreal to the Real. Lead us from darkness unto Light. Lead us from death to Immortality. Reveal to us Thy Resplendent Truth and evermore protect us, Oh Lord, by Thy Sweet and Compassionate Face, by Thy Sweet and Compassionate Face, by Thy Sweet and Compassionate Face.

The title of my talk this morning is: The Search for Fullness.

The experience of “fullness” is very well known to us in many situations of our life. Before going to a long distance journey we have to be sure whether our car is filled with gas. When we are hungry, the stomach is empty, we have to fill our stomach with food. But we should be careful not to overfill! Just the other day in our monastery one resident devotee, he had finished the general course and there was a very delicious dessert. But he said, “Oh, I shall not take any dessert. When I am filled, I don’t care for dessert.” And that is a good policy.

Now, somebody buys a house, a big house because he’s a rich man, and, the wife has a craziness for things, for furniture, for vases, for lights, for pictures. And she wants the house to be filled with furniture and other things. In two years the house is really filled, over-packed. So they have to, in order to make room enough, they have to arrange for a garage sale. [Audience chuckles with him.] Then in three years again the house is filled. Like that, this we seek to fill.

Knowledge. Some person is very much interested in a particular subject. He reads and reads on that particular subject: like astronomy, or sociology, or wildflowers – whatever it may be. That person goes on reading and collecting books. He collects more books than he can read, because sometimes he has to show his knowledge. [Audience laughs.] So in this way he fills and now knowledge is so varied. Subjects for study are increasing day by day, year after year. So one cannot really, one has not the scope now to fill his mind with knowledge. In the old days a person could say that, “Yes. I am a man of knowledge. I know so many things. I have read so many books.” But these days of specialization we cannot say that. No doctor can say he is through with all medical knowledge. Nobody can say [that].

So in our various walks of life the search for fullness goes on and on – as if man is born with a desire for seeking more and more and more. When we come to religious life, spiritual life the same search for fullness goes on, because God is **the** Full. Nothing can be so full as God. This is indicated by a well known verse of the Upanishads. “Om purnam adah, purnam idam, purnat purnam udacyate purnasya purnam adhaya purnam evasisyate.”<sup>1</sup> “What is there is full. What is here is full. From the full, full proceeds and after the fullness come out from the full, what remains is the full.” That means, this is true in the case of God –and in the case of that knowledge: that there is nothing else but God. Creation has come from God. All actions are coming from God, and all movements **are**

from God. God is through and through into everything! So this great truth is indicated by this verse. This movement of life is really the movement of the full.

Now, it takes time to understand this, but we should remember this great truth. When we are seeking God, we cannot stop. We have to know Him someday as the Full. All our earthly searches for the full have a limit. When you seek money, wealth, there is a limit to that. There is a reaction to that. The well known saying in America, "from the log cabin to the White House," this is a spiritual maxim. This is the great rule of life. We are seeking more and more and more. If there is opportunity, then one cannot stop. One cannot stop. Every American... now things have changed, but there was that American expression and everybody believed it, that this is a Land of Opportunity. If, just as Abraham Lincoln, it happened in the life of Abraham Lincoln from the log cabin he was in the White House and that can happen to any... anyone. That was taken for granted in this country, but things have changed.

Anyway, in our spiritual life we have to remember that the search for God is the search for the total fullness: fullness in power, fullness in love, fullness in life, fullness in honor -- because God is the totality of everything. The Upanishads, the most important scripture of Vedanta, gives us these various contemplations, beginning from a well-known principle in life. For example, "power." We know what is power: power in nature, power in man, power in ourselves, power of the state. And we worship power. We cannot but help worshipping power, adoring power.

We are fond of beauty. But beauty is a thing that has its gradation. All people are not equally beautiful. One hundred fifty girls compete for becoming the world figure in beauty, but one tops [the rest], so there is a gradation of beauty. The Upanishad starts with some aspect of this world and instructs us to try to think that Brahman is this. If you are thinking of power, Shakti, and Brahman is the Infinite Power. If you are thinking, thinking, thinking of beauty, Brahman is the Supremely Beautiful. His beauty surpasses all beauty ever dreamt of in the past, in the present or in the future. If you think of love, God is the infinite love. If you think of joy, God is infinite joy. In this way the mind is being trained to think of God from the known, from some little thing.

We know what love is. Some person loves their child dearly. Now if he is a spiritual seeker, the Vedanta would advise him to try to see that the love you are directing to your child, it is coming from God. God is manifesting Himself in that little child. And God is the summation of all dear, darling children like this. In this way the mind is being trained to start from something limited to the unlimited, which is God.

The Full, which is God, takes many examples. Say, "mind." Everyone knows what mind is. Start with mind, but you are seeking spiritual truth. You are a spiritual seeker. You have not ... you cannot take mind just in the normal way. So instruction is given. Meditate [on] the mind as God: Infinite Mind -- summation of all minds! We know that in our practical life. Just as I have a mind, the person sitting [next] to me has also a mind. Every person has a mind. Now here the instruction is: in your contemplation try to think of all the minds, all the minds, great minds that were in the past, minds that are in the present, and

minds that will come in the future. Mentally try to think of the totality of all these minds and then think: this is God -- then this is the Full, the fullness in mind that is God. These contemplations, these meditations are taught in order to lead the mind to greater and greater comprehension of Brahman.

One of the Upanishads, the Taittiriya Upanishad speaks of joy or happiness. It says the perfect happiness, the full happiness that can be attained by a human being is when a person has good health, has good character, has [a] good education, and has... is a person of dharma, is a highly moral character. When he has all these combined, he is an ideally happy person. But, the Upanishad says, just as this world is one phase of creation, so there are many different spheres of existence. They are called lokas... the lokas. So this Upanishad, Taittiriya Upanishad describes the scale of happiness. What in this world, being a human being with all its limitations, you can come to a summit of happiness when these conditions are fulfilled. But you cannot aspire [to] more than that. There is a limitation of happiness.

There is a common saying in Sanskrit that man has one hundred years of life span. "Shatāyur vai purushah."<sup>2</sup> And this notion is in many cultures: that a person's life, total life, full life that can be expected is one hundred years. He can celebrate his centenary and after that he should not extend a desire [for longer life]! [Audience chuckles.] If he does, he'll have to suffer. If at the age of eighty he wants a transplantation of [his] heart, that is not a good policy. One should be satisfied with what has been attained through [the] years. A person living to eighty or even to ninety, he should be satisfied. He should not say, "No, no, no... if possible I should live one hundred and twenty years. It happens: this thirst for life.

Again, what is this thirst for life? This is again that basic desire in man for the search for the fullness. Now, if you say that man has only one life, then that is irrational. That basic hunger is there to live and live and live and live. That does not go, even when I am [one] hundred years [old], that desire does not go. We try to live more! You see, there's a basic desire. ~~Man~~ [It] is as if man is born with that search for fullness.

Now, to go back to this Upanishad theme, there are other spheres. [The] human sphere is only, is not the only sphere of existence. There are different types of gods. There are different types of all existence. There are Sanskrit names [for these]. In this way it goes and goes and goes to different spheres of existence and in each succeeding sphere the happiness that can be attained is one hundred times of the preceding one. Next to the human sphere is the sphere of the gandharvas, celestial musicians, angels. They don't take food like us – corn bread... [Audience laughs.] No. Their food is music and their body is not the body of this, like our human body, which needs food every day. Their body is a very subtle fine body, which subsists on music. And so, that is called gandharvaloka. So like that there are many spheres [that] are described and in each sphere the joy or the happiness which can be attained, is one hundred times more than the preceding one. Ultimately it comes to the sphere of what is called Prajapati, the creator.

In the Vedantic tradition, God is creator in a sense, but He does not go into the details of creation. He has an expert manager: he is called Prajapati, who out of the basic materials which come from God, the five bhutas, the five elements, this Prajapati (another name is Brahma) he goes on creating. So he... his fear, being the creator we know if we create a little thing we are so proud. If we draw a picture, if we write a poem, we are so proud. If we build a house, we are so proud. Creation has its joy. So this creator, who is creating the whole universe – in each cycle there is a different creator, a different Prajapati – so we can well imagine his joy, his fulfillment. Wherever he looks, he sees his own creation and he becomes... it once happened... There is an allegorical story in the the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. One such Prajapati, after manifesting this world, this universe and seeing this vast universe, he was afraid. He said, “Well, everything is so great, the sky, the stars, the moons, and I am going to be crushed. Where am I in this sphere of this vast creation? So he was afraid. Then suddenly Self-intuition came. He thought, “Well it is my creation. I have created all this out myself. So why should I be afraid of myself? Anything that we see and experience is my creation.” So all his fear was gone. Then the Upanishad summarizes that it is from the second that there is fear. If you can see unity, there is no fear. If you see something different from you, there is the possibility of being afraid of that second thing.

So, the Taitiriya Upanishad goes on to say that the joy of this brahmaloka, the spheres of Prajapati or Brahma surpasses the joy of all other spheres. Then the Upanishad says, but the joy of self-realization, the joy of God-realization cannot be measured. All these other things can be measured –a hundred times, hundred times, hundred times multiplication can merely be done by an adding machine. You can exactly say compared with human bliss, human joy, what would be the joy of the prajapatiloka sphere, but when you come to Brahman, when you come to God, you cannot express it in any measurement. Immeasurable joy! And that is why we mention that verse, “What was there is full. What is here is full. Full is proceeding from the Full.” So God is really fullness.

Now we, in our spiritual life, we should remember this. We should, if we have begun a religious life seriously with practice of meditation, the practice of self-control, the practice of purity, there are some essential virtues that we have to attain. But we should always maintain that dream, just as Lord, Jesus Christ said, “Be ye therefore perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect.”<sup>4</sup> This perfection, in this Vedantic terminology, is this “purna.” Purna means the fullness from all sides. It is the fullness of love. It is the fullness of knowledge. It is the fullness of strength. So spiritual life becomes more and more interesting and rewarding when we remember this, when we set this ideal before us.

Spiritual life is a process. It is not a question of one life. But we should always remember that parable of Sri Ramakrishna. There was a woodcutter and he used to collect wood from the forest and sell [it]. And one day... his income was not much... Selling dry wood does not bring you the income of a businessman or income of a college professor, or the income of a doctor, but he was satisfied. Then, one day a holy man saw him. This man wanted some

advice, some good counsel from this holy man. Then this holy man said, “Well remember this: Go forward.” And this man heard this. “What kind of spiritual advice is this? Go forward?” He forgot all about it. One day at home this word came to his mind. That holy man asked me to go forward. Well, let me take it literally. So that was a great forest and so he began to, after collecting his usual bundle of firewood, he began to walk. That was a big forest. You should remember this is a story. We should not be too objective about it. In stories, great imagination is permitted.

So this man went on and on, until he came to a place where he found sandalwood trees, and sandalwood is a very expensive wood. He collected sandalwood and he became very rich. And then, he thought, well that holy man told me not to stop at sandalwood. So, go forward! He went forward and forward, until he found a copper mine, and he was still richer. Then he went forward and forward and found a gold mine. We should remember this is a story. [Audience laughs.] We know what it is to collect gold, in California. [More laughter.] What a struggle it was.

Anyway this man, by walking forward and forward found copper, found gold, and found platinum, and found like this. In those days there was no platinum, but anyway the story is: he found [a] much more precious metal than gold. So Sri Ramakrishna said that we should remember this in our spiritual life. We should not stop. We should remember that God is perfection; God is fullness. A little joy won't do. A little joy of prayer won't do. We have to go deeper and deeper and deeper – till we find God face to face.

Eventually, the Vedantic ideal says that man really is spirit. Man really is not this body-mind. Man is not a physical being. Physical being is a part of his personality. His life-energy is a part of his personality. His mind, his egoism, these are parts of his personality, but he has a deeper personality. He is a soul! In the depth of his existence there is a light. That is the light of God. And that light shares the Truth of God. Just as God is perfection, so that light in us, that soul in us is perfection. But we have to discover that. It is light lying deeply buried in our heart.

Through what is called sadhana, spiritual practice, we have to more and more and explore – explore our own being. Just as science has explored our body, the body: what the bones are, what the muscles are, what the nerves are. There has been an elaborate exploration through the years in science. So there is exploration of the mind in science of psychology. Like that, there is a science of the soul – how to find out the soul, the spirit in us, the immortal principle in us. Vedanta dealt [with] this problem, and [explored] through the sadhana, through spiritual practice -- like prayer, like contemplation, like meditation, like yogic concentration, like analysis. These different ways there are to explore within, and by this exploration it is possible to build up a spiritual life.

Our life becomes really spiritual when we are conscious of our soul, when we are conscious of the spiritual principle within us. Normally we are not. We are conscious of the body. We are conscious of our eyes, ears. We are conscious of our mind. We are conscious of the world outside, but one thing escapes our consciousness. We are not conscious of consciousness. What is

consciousness? Consciousness is day and night operating in us, but we do not normally know what consciousness is. So there is a science, there is a method and in India these things were developed very much: how to touch the core of our personality.

Spiritual life means the search for the Full, and we should never be impatient. We should-- just as a person who has undertaken a journey of several thousand miles-- he is not impatient. He goes on. He has his map with him and he goes on driving. He stops at [a] roadside motel, but he does not stop. So, spiritual life should be a non-stop journey, knowing all the time: this is not a wild search. This Fullness which is God, has been experienced by many people before us. In all countries, in all religions, there have fortunate persons, men and women who have found this Fullness – which is God. Either through love, through bhakti, or through unselfish karma or action, or through reasoning, vichara, it is possible to have a taste of God, an experience of God. But we should not stop.

We should remember, we should come to this point when we become **filled** with God. And then there will be, just as the Upanishad says, “Chidyante hrdaya-granthis”<sup>5</sup> [Mundaka Upanishad 2:2:9] All the knots of heart are torn asunder. “Bhidyate sarva-samsayah.” All doubts disappear. “Ksiyanta casya karmani.” All past deeds, all past karma is exhausted. “Drste tasmin paravare.” That Great Being, which is God, the Supreme Person, the Supreme Spirit, if He is experienced, He is seen, than all karma is gone. All darkness or doubt disappears.

That is called the spiritual fulfillment!

Our scriptures always encourage us. Whatever you are doing, you can bring this ideal. If you are in the midst of many worldly activities, don't say, “I have no hope.” You spiritualize your activities. That is called karma yoga. If you have time and if you are a person with emotion, or love, try to direct your love to God. Just as you love your child, just as you love your husband or wife, just as you love flowers, just as you love the rivers and nature, so also this love can be directed to the source of all love, which is God, which is the Supreme Self, Paramatman.

So there is hope for everybody and if there is no hope, still there should be hope, because life is not just one life. If one person has sincerely asked for God vision, but if that person has been so much involved with family, children, duties, responsibilities, then the task is not fulfilled in one life. The Gita says: still that person has hope. If that germ, if that seed has been planted, that seed will grow one day. It will... Like that, spiritual life is a life of hope and fulfillment.

If we take spiritual life seriously then it is a very interesting life, very joyful life. In the beginning it may be frustrating; it may be tedious. Day after day you sit for contemplation. You close your eyes, try to see, but you see only darkness. You try to meditate on the form of Krishna or Siva or Christ. The form does not come. So there are frustrations, no doubt. But the great teachers tell us that don't... You see, negative thought, negative ideas are not helpful. Instead of saying, “Oh I am worthless. I have so much passion. I have so many desires. Spiritual life is not for me. I can never attain love of God.” This is a negative

thought. Instead, say to yourself, “I am a man.” That is a great privilege to be born as man instead being born as a cat or mouse or dog -- great privilege, because it is only man, it is only on the human level, it is only the human understanding that can comprehend these spiritual truths. So say to yourself, “How fortunate I am, that I am a man.” And if that desire for God has come, desire for spiritual things have come, I am so fortunate. If the desire for meditation or contemplation has come, I am more fortunate. In this way, don’t undermine [yourself]. We should never undermine our potentiality.

Man has the potentiality to be divine. Just as Lord Jesus Christ has enumerated some conditions, all spiritual scriptures teach us, saints and seers, they say, “These are the things you should remember.” So in the Vedanta we find in Vedanta books what we should take care of in the practices, spiritual practice – the control of the senses, the control of the mind, the practice of Divine Name. These are the things. With these things one should proceed with that idea, just as Vedanta says: the Supreme Truth about man is that man is sharing the fullness of Brahman or God. And these are indicated by short sentences in the Upanishads.

A man in the later stage of spiritual life experiences that unity, unity with everything – just as God is one with everything all the time. Nothing is separate from God, because He is God. He is Brahman; He is the Full. He is the All-Comprehensive. So God is connected with everything. Everything belongs to God and God is in everything. So this man, this spiritual seeker at the later stage of his spiritual life finds that I am Brahman, I am the Infinite. I am one with the sky. I am one with all space. I am one with all time. I am one with all living and non-living creation. This experience comes to that person and that is indicated in one verse of the Bhagavad Gita. A person after deep meditation... day after day he is practicing deep meditation and afterwards when he comes out he feels unity with everything. He sees persons. He says, “I am in that person.” The truth in that man is the same truth in me. The truth in the sky is the same truth as [in] me. So he feels a kind of total unity with the universe.

The Isa Upanishad also says this. “Yasmin sarvani bhutany atmaivabhud vijanatah tatra ko mohah kah sokah ekatvam anupasyatah.”<sup>6</sup> [Isa Upanishad, Sloka 7] “In that stage when a person sees that he is one with everything, then what delusion, what fear, and what misery can come to him.” He feels that he is one with Him! Now that experience cannot last all through the day. [It’s] not necessary. If in a period of meditation, in the depth of meditation one has a glimpse of this great truth, that I am really one with everything, then that is a life’s food. That is a life’s resource. Then he won’t forget.

In the depth of his consciousness, that will remain as music: I am one with everything. I am one with everyone. Really speaking I am neither a man, nor a woman, nor a devil, nor a god. I am the atman. I am the Full. That will go into the deep unconscious and that will go. That will stay and that will be the strength of his character —and that will show. If a person is really a prince – then, in his behavior pattern that will show. Whatever is in the depth of our experience that is shown in our talk, in our behavior-pattern. So, in the depth of experience, if we have this, that I am the All-perfect Soul, then in his life gradually, the sense of

difference, the sense of hate, the sense of weakness will go. He will feel, “Oh, though at this moment I don’t feel that I am that atman, but I have felt it. I have felt it some time. And there are many seers who have seen this. So his faith in this truth will remain very strong.

A practical benefit of this is that his life will be free from petty meanness, pettiness, hate, fear. When you have identified yourself with a body, with the surrounding with some... then you will become, you become a slave to many passions, many hates, many likes and dislikes. But when you know yourself to be divine, then normally you act as divine. Your moral pattern, your character pattern will be different. That is the practical benefit of a deep spiritual life.

So this search for fullness in our everyday life, it is there. We find it in many ways, but in spiritual life the same thing is there. We are searching for God. We are searching for what in the language of Upanishad, the Chandogya Upanishad, [is] “bhuma.” Bhuma means the unlimited. And the same... that passage in the Chandogya Upanishad says, “Nalpe sukam asti.”<sup>7</sup> [7:23:1] “There is no happiness in the little, in the limited.” “Bhumaiva sukam.” “There is real happiness in the unlimited, in the Bhuma, in the Greatest.” So that is the great goal of our spiritual life. We have to reach the Bhuma, but we should not be afraid of time, because God is timeless, and we ourselves, as spirit are also timeless. If we restrict ourselves to time, then all calculations will come. All fear will come. But if we try to see that we are really timeless, we are on the way, we are on the path, we are on the road, so we shall drive on, drive on, drive on, walk on, walk on, walk on. That should be the great goal of our spiritual life, this search for, this search for.. for the Full.

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Om. Madhu vAtA R^itAyate madhu xaranti sindhavaH.  
 mAdhvlrnaH santu auShadhIH..  
 madhu naktamutoShaso madhumat.h pArthivam.h rajaH.  
 madhu dyauH astu naH pitA..  
 madhumAnno vanaspatiH madhumAm.h astu sUryaH.  
 mAdhvlrgAvo bhavantu naH..  
 Om madhu madhu madhu<sup>8</sup> [Rg Veda 1:90, 6-7]

Sweet blow the winds and the very oceans give forth blessedness. May the herbs and plants bring us health and happiness. Sweet be unto us be the nights and dawns. May every particle of mother earth be charged with blessing and may the heavens shower us with benediction. Sweet unto us be the noble forest trees. Sweet unto us be the shining sun. Sweet unto us be all living creation. Om. Sweetness, Harmony, Peace.

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1. Isa Upanisad: Invocation, in The Principal Upanisads, ed. by S. Radhakrishnan. New York: Harper & Brothers, c. 1953, p. 566.

2. Hinduism Stack Exchange. Blog posting.

<https://hinduism.stackexchange.com/questions/22197/if-the-vedas-say-human->



[lifespan-is-100-years-how-can-humans-live-for-thousands](#) "The full span of life, according to the Vedas, is one hundred years: Shatāyur vai purushah. Says Shankaracharya in his commentary: tavad hi purushashya paramayuh nirupitam-'that long, verily, has been determined to be the length of human life. This determination was the product of a close study of human life. The sages came to the conclusion that if an individual lived a healthy life, physically and mentally, he would live a hundred years;" - [wisdomlib.org/hinduism/book/isha-upanishad/d/doc122461.html](#) – SwiftPushkar Dec 29 '17 at 13:17 Accessed February 6, 2018.

3. "Gandharva." Wikipedia. (checking spelling)

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gandharva> Accessed February 6, 2018.

4. Bible Gateway. King James Version. Matthew 5:48.

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+5:48&version=KJV>  
Accessed February 6, 2018.

5. Mundaka Upanisad 2:2:9, in The Principal Upanisads, ed. by S. Radhakrishnan. New York: Harper & Brothers, c. 1953, p.684. [Quotes in talk are given slightly differently than they appear in the book.]

6. Isa Upanisad: 7, in The Principal Upanisads, ed. by S. Radhakrishnan. New York: Harper & Brothers, c. 1953, p. 572.

7. Chandogya Upanisad: 7:23:1. in The Principal Upanisads, ed. by S. Radhakrishnan. New York: Harper & Brothers, c. 1953, p. 486.

8. [Transliteration of Rg Veda verse is taken from [http://satsangh.tripod.com/pujatexts/satya\\_baskegar.html](http://satsangh.tripod.com/pujatexts/satya_baskegar.html)] accessed June 26, 2012. Alternate version of prayer with somewhat simpler spelling

<http://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/rvsan/rv01090.htm>

madhu vātā ṛtāyate madhu kṣaranti sindhavaḥ |  
mādhvīrnaḥ santvoṣadhīḥ ||