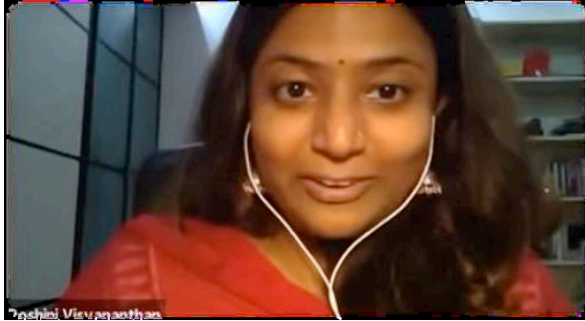




International Young Adults Veda Programme Veda Webinar – Mr. George Bebedelis

Roshini Visvanathan: My most humble and loving pranams at the lotus feet of our beloved Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Brothers and sisters, welcome to the second webinar for the International Young Adults Veda program. My name is Roshini Visvanathan and I currently serve as the Deputy International



Young Adults Coordinator. Today, it is a great honour that we are all gathered here to experience the second webinar for the Veda program. Today's title that we will be exploring is a very interesting one. It is "Vedic ideals and ancient western wisdom". We also have a very important speaker, who will be exploring this topic with us today. Today's speaker will be Br. George Bebedelis. Br. George was born in Athens in 1962, he has a degree in Mechanical Engineering and

also a degree in Pedagogy, and a Master's degree in History and Philosophy of Science and Technology from the University of Athens. He currently teaches Mechanical Engineering in secondary vocational schools in Athens. Brother George joined the SSIO in 1987 inspired by Sathya Sai's message of universal love and truth. Since then, he has been an active member of the Greek Sathya Sai Organization. For many years, Br. George has been a faculty member of the European Sathya Sai Education Institute. He is now the Director of the Institute of Sathya Sai Education of South Europe. George has been visiting Praśānti Nilayam for more than thirty years and has experienced the power of Veda chanting in the daily program of the ashram. Motivated by Swami's wish clearly expressed in many discourses and writings to gain an understanding of the Vedas as an important tool for spiritual upliftment of all humanity, George has been practicing for many years Vedic chanting and has studied thoroughly the importance of Veda mantras by learning Sanskrit. He has conducted regular Veda satsangs for many years in his country and is very happy to see that Swami's message is now spreading more and more to every corner of the planet. Brothers and sisters, we are indeed fortunate today to witness this wonderful webinar conducted by Br. George.

George Bebedelis: Sai Ram dear brothers and sisters. Dear Roshini, thank you for your introduction. It is really my great pleasure and honour to be here with all of you all around the world with all young adults following this wonderful program on Veda learning. Putting into implementation in this way the very clearly expressed wish of Bhagawan Baba that Veda chanting and learning and understanding the basic principles of Vedas should spread all over the world. So, I'm very happy to





share this important topic “Vedic ideals and ancient western wisdom”. I think it is appropriate to start with a prayer this meeting for invoking peace and concord and divine blessings.

Invocation for Peace and Concord

सह नां-ववतु । सहनौ भुनक्तु । सह वीर्यं करवावहै ।
तेजस्विना-वर्धत-मस्तु मा विद्विषावहै ।
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥ १ ॥

Saha nāvavatu saha nau bhunaktu

Saha vīryam karavāvahai

Tejasvi nāvadhītam astu mā vidvishāvahai

Om Shānti Shānti Shāntih

May He protect us all; may He nourish us all

May we work conjointly with great energy

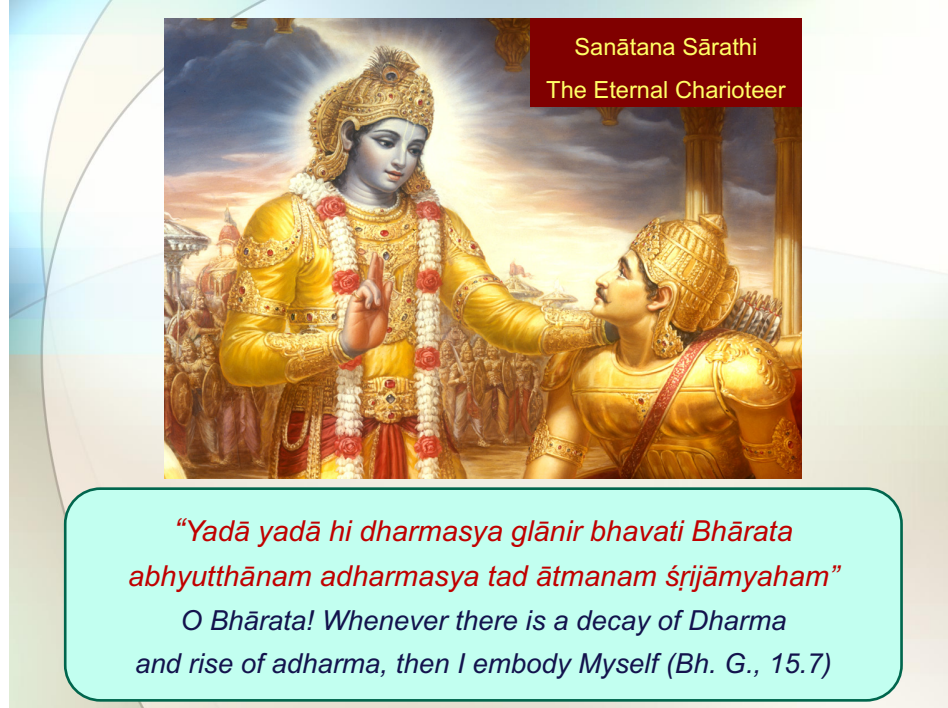
May our study be vigorous and effective

May we not dispute and live always in Friendship and Love

Om - Peace, Peace, Peace

Bhagawan Baba has said since the beginning of His Avataric mission that “My task is not merely to cure and console and remove individual misery but is something far more important. My main task is the re-establishment of the Vedas and Sastras and revealing the knowledge about them to all people. This task will succeed. When the Lord decides and wills, His Divine Will cannot be hindered”. We are really witnesses of this divine task. He’s not anymore in the physical plane with us, of course, He is in our hearts closer than before. We see how this task that He has announced from the beginning of His mission now it becomes a reality. This task of Swami can be summarized in three very important words. *Veda Samrakshana* which means protection of the Vedas, *Dharma Sthāpana* - establishment of Dharma and *Vidvan Poṣaṇa* - fostering the wise. These three are going together because the saints, the sages, the wise people are those who through the study of the Vedas established Dharma and implement Dharma.

The same was announced by Sri Krishna thousands of years ago. He said in Bhagavad Gita:



This is exactly the situation today, where Swami embodied Himself and came among us in order to guide us back to the basic principles of right living, what we call Dharma. And then Sri Krishna continues

*“Paritrāṇāya sādḥūnām vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām
Dharma samsthāpanārthāya sambhabāmi yuge yuge”*

“For the protection of the good, the reformation of the evil minded and the re-establishment of Dharma, I take birth age after age” (Bh. G., 15.8)

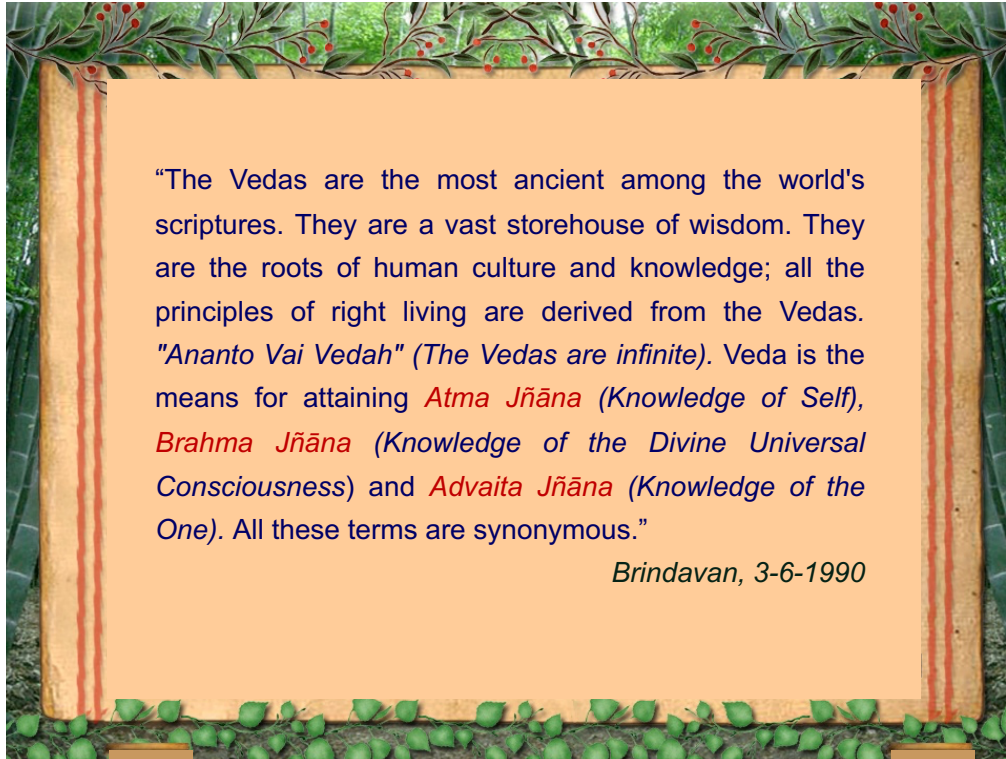


So, many times when I visited Prasantha Nilayam –more than thirty years ago it was the first time I went in the early age of 25 years old– I have seen Swami enjoying Veda chanting and Bhajan singing. Here we can see a nice photo from October 2004. Swami has called a primary school boy and then he says to the boy to chant. And the boy chants in front of Swami. Swami looks so happy and then He makes a chain and puts the chain on the boy, and then Swami sits in His chair to enjoy the chanting. This is something that personally I have seen so many times. And this was a motivation because Swami

had taught all of us in silence. He taught all of us in silence and He shows us what is the real way to come closer to Him, to come closer to our self and to experience the divine truth.



So, Swami has said “The Vedas are the most ancient among the world’s scriptures. They are a vast storehouse of wisdom. They are the roots of human culture and knowledge; all the principles of right living are derived from the Vedas. “Ananto Vai Vedaḥ” (The Vedas are infinite). Veda is the means for attaining *Ātma Jñāna* (Knowledge of Self), *Brahma Jñāna* (Knowledge of the Divine Universal Consciousness) and *Advaita Jñāna* (Knowledge of the One). All these terms are synonymous”.



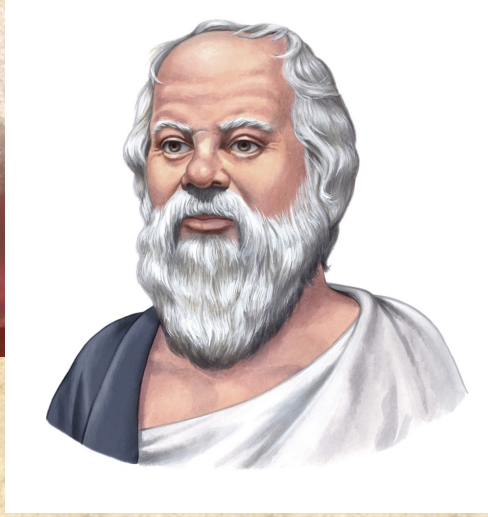
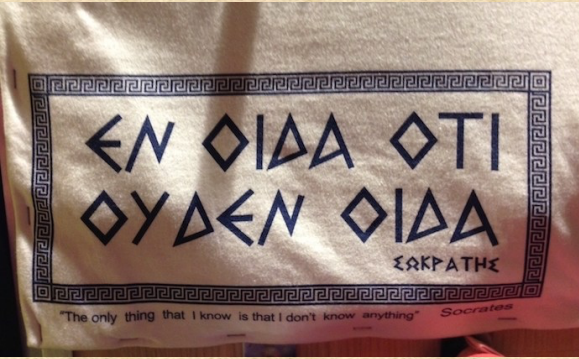
As we all know, the word Veda means “Knowledge”. It comes from the Sanskrit root *Vid*. Literally the word “Vid” means to see. And Veda is the past perfect of this verb that means I have seen. When I have seen, then I know. The same is with Greek language because ancient Greek and Sanskrit are very much connected. We can say that Sanskrit is the elder sister of Greek language, and ancient Greek language is at the root of all western civilization. So in Greek the root is the same; *Vid* means exactly the same to see and from this verb we have the past perfect ‘*᾿Οἶδα*’ or ‘*ὄϊδα*’ –is written here in Greek letters– which means the same, “I have seen, I know” and this word is very famous because of Socrates. But before moving to Socrates, lets see also the Latin language, where we have again the word ‘Video’ from the same root *Vid*, which means to see. So we see that it is very important to know the language, because through the language we can realize the connection at the root of these civilizations that they look distant but actually in the ancient past there was one source of these two civilizations in East and West.



वेदः VEDA = KNOWLEDGE

- **Sanskrit:** Veda < vid = to see
(Veda = I have seen)
- **Greek:** Fiδ = to see
(Foiδα = oĩδα = I have seen, I know)
- **Latin:** video < vid = to see

So Socrates is famous because he said this saying ‘*En oida oti ouden oida*’. This is easy to understand if we remember *Oida* means Veda, that means ‘I know’, *En* is very easy. *En* means one –one comes from *En* in Greek– so “I know one thing”, *ouden oida*, *ouden* means nothing, that “I know nothing”. This is said for Socrates, but maybe it’s not really true that Socrates said this. Or if he said, he didn’t really mean it.



**“I know one thing,
that I know nothing”**

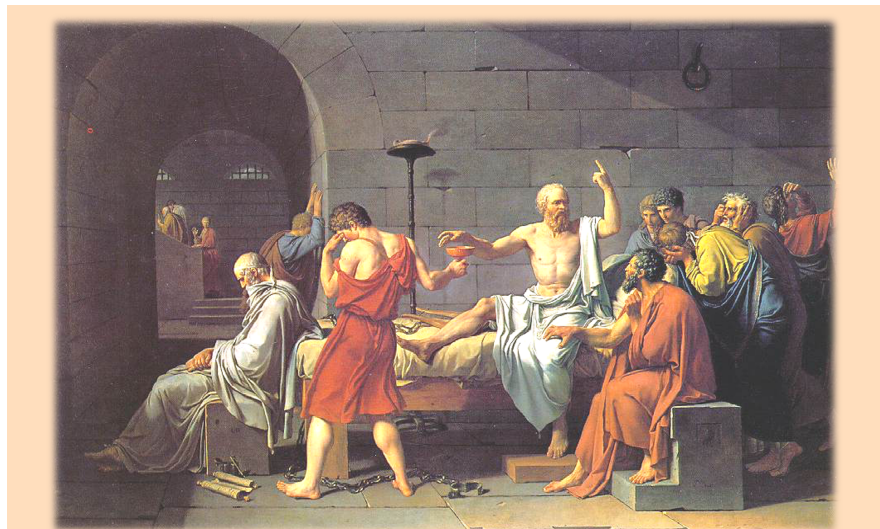


He just wanted to show his humility. Because Socrates had realised the Truth and he knew. He had this immediate experience. His main message was “Know thyself” and this is something that has been

underlined to us Greek devotees visiting Praśānti Nilayam by Swami many times in interviews. He was the one who showed to us the importance of this great Master. He even once said that “Socrates and Me are the same, because Socrates was teaching the same thing like I do: Know thyself, know who you really are!” Because this is the essence of Sai teachings. Even once He corrected the pronunciation. We say Socrates in English but then Swami said in the interview Socrates is not correct, the right pronunciation is **Socráris**. We were all very surprised because indeed in Greek the right pronunciation is **Socráris**. Then he explained what **Socráris** means. **So-Crat-is: So** means That-He, **Crat** means Creator, **is**, i.e. He is Creator, He is Divine. We were very surprised to here this.

He’s divine. He wanted to stress this and we were wondering because Socrates is not considered an Avatar. He’s a wise man. But in Vedas we have a saying ‘*Yad bhāvam tad bhavati*’- “What you think, so you become” or another very important saying that Swami repeats: ‘*Brahmavid brahmaiva bhavati*’ - “the knower of Brahma becomes Brahma”. So in this sense Socrates was divine because he knew the divine nature, so he was one with God, one with the Divine. And another very important similiarity with Swami is the way that Socrates taught his disciples. He’s very famous about his method of midwifery and often he said that I was taught this from my mother. Because his mother was a midwife, so Socrates was bringing out this wisdom from within. This is exactly Educare. How many times Swami has underlined that the root, the etymology of education is educare, which means in Latin to bring out the wisdom from within. So, Socrates was aware of this divine nature and this was proved in the way that he died. We have a very important dialogue of Plato –because Socrates didn’t write anything, everything was written by Plato– Phaedo is the name of this dialogue and there we can read “The true philosophers are always most eager to release the soul from the chains of the body; and the study of philosophers is just this – the release and separation of the soul from the body”.

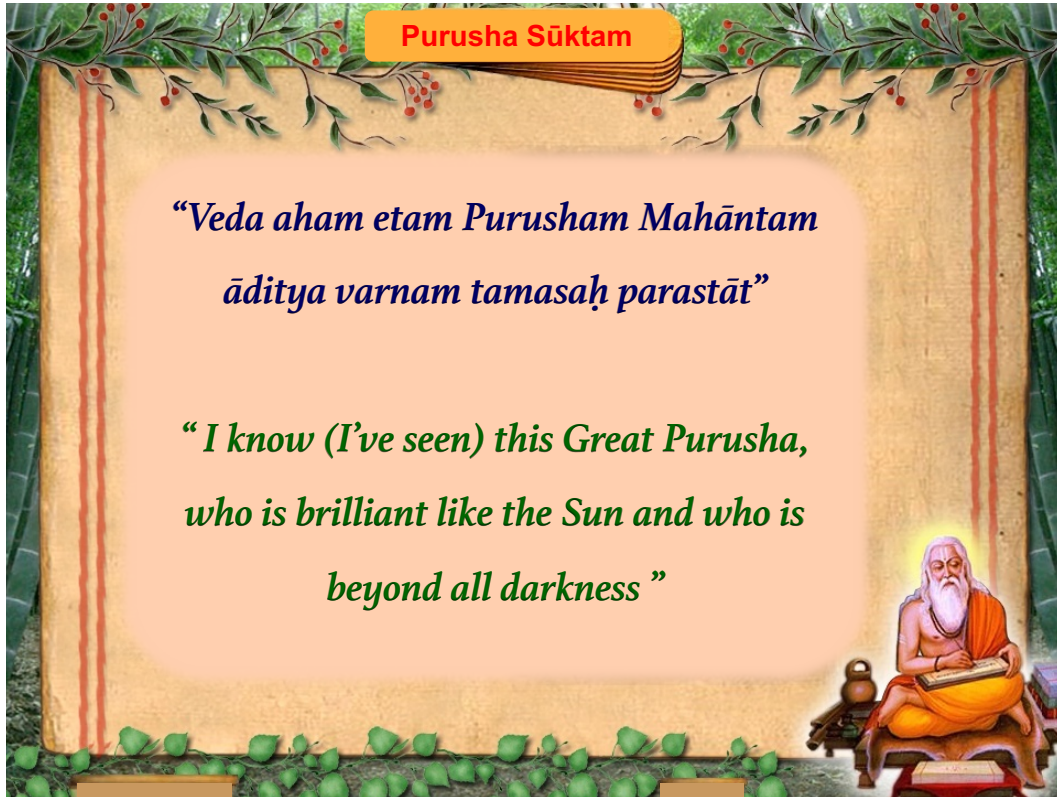
So, we see that this is the definition of philosophy according to Socráris: the release and separation of the soul from the body. Isn’t it exactly the same with what Swami says again and again? “Realize your Atmic reality, your Atmic nature, you’re not the body, you’re not the mind, you’re not the senses. Realize that you are Atma; you are the divine Self”. So, Socráris taught exactly the same. This dialogue is really



“The true philosophers are always most eager to release the soul from the chains of the body; and the study of philosophers is just this - the release and separation of the soul from the body.”
(Phaedo, 67D)



wonderful and it is worth to take some time and read it. So, Socrates had this immediate experience and this immediate experience is what we can find in the Vedas. That's why the Vedas are so important because they are not coming out of the mind. It is not a logical argumentation or a mind invention. It is an experience of the heart. In *Purusha Sūktam* we have this very famous saying: "*Veda aham etam Purusham Mahāntam āditya varnam tamasah parastāt*". It's very easy to understand. Sanskrit is not difficult! Some people say it's difficult to repeat Vedas because of Sanskrit. No, it is not! "*Veda* – I know, *aham* – I, *Veda aham etam Purusham Mahāntam* – the great *Purusha*, *āditya varnam* – who's brilliant, *varnam* with the colour of the sun, *tamasah parastāt* – beyond all darkness".



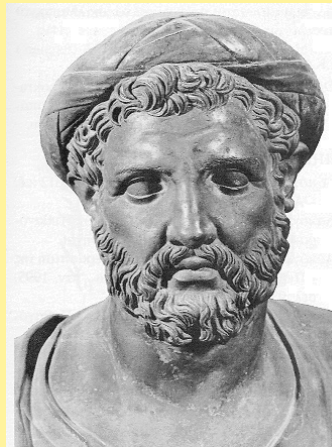
We know this word *tamasah*: *Tamaso mā jyotir gamaya*. So this is the experience. It's the experience of the Rishi who is speaking, all the Rishis. That's why also we have this name Rishis. Rishi originally means seer, not sage or saint. Seer, because it comes from the root *Drish*, which means to see.



So, you see the connection with Veda. When we say to see, we mean to have the straight experience, this is very important. It is not to think, it is not a conclusion that comes out of some mind analysis. This is very-very important. So, because of this seeing of Rishis, we have this third eye, the third eye of Siva, the eye of wisdom. But this eye of wisdom, the eye of the soul or what we call the third eye was also present in ancient Greek philosophy. A great philosopher before Socrátis was Pythagoras. Pythagoras lived in sixth century B.C.; a Pre-Socratic philosopher.

“Pythagoras purified and healed the soul from anger, pain and pleasure, low desires, and, all the more, from ignorance, which is the most harmful and unholy of all the rest. He directed to the spiritual world the divine eye, which, as Plato says, is more worth saving than ten thousand corporeal eyes. Because it is only through this eye, when strengthened and clarified by appropriate means, that one can perceive the Truth about all beings.”

Iamblichus, The Life of Pythagoras, v. 70



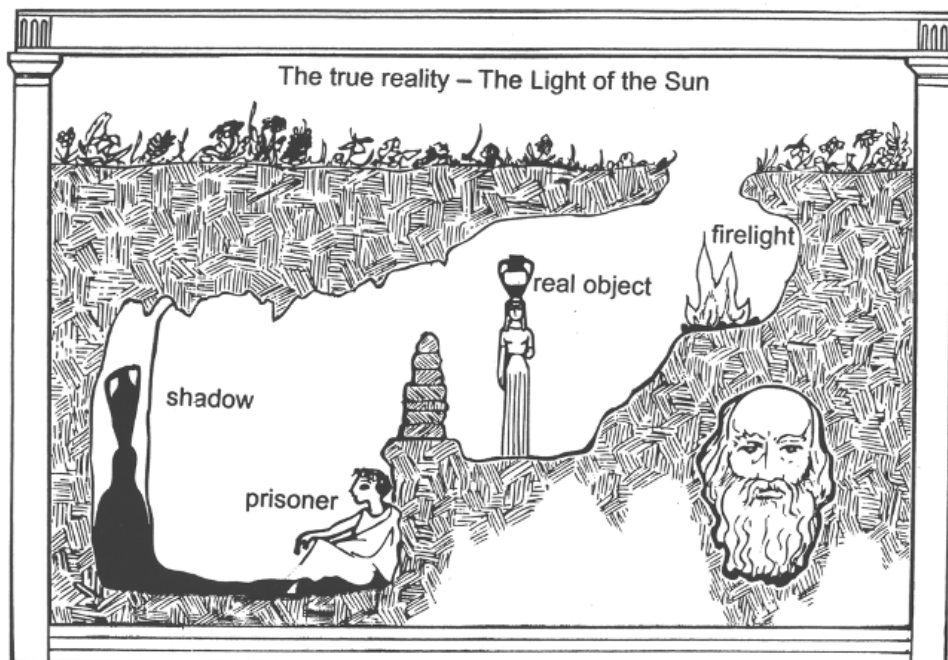
Pythagoras
c. 575 - c. 495 BC

Once we had the chance to ask Swami. We did a drama in Poornachandra auditorium many years before, almost twenty-five years before. It was a group of earnest Sai devotees, young devotees, young adults like you all over the world, we went there with zeal to perform, to come closer and to experience the



teaching of Swami. So we had prepared a drama based on Swami's stories on three great sages of ancient India. These was Vashishta, Suka, and Ashtavakra and the meeting of King Janaka with these 3 sages. It was a wonderful experience. We had so many, so many interactions with Swami. And, at one of these interactions, we had the chance to ask Swami about Pythagoras and some other Greek Pre-socratic philosophers, not Socrates or Plato. And then immediately Swami said that Pythagoras, Heraclitus, Parmenides were great rishis. This is the word that He used – 'Rishis'. And then, in order to make it very clear, He explained. "Like Vasishta, Suka and Ashtavakra." So it is very important to discover this ancient wisdom in the writings of these philosophers, which as I said before, we find at the root of all Western civilization. So, "Pythagoras purified and healed the soul from anger, pain and pleasure, low desires, and, all the more, from ignorance, which is the most harmful and unholy of all the rest. He directed to the spiritual world the divine eye, which, as Plato says, is more worth saving than ten thousand corporeal eyes." You see here, the mention of the divine eye, and again the mention of Plato, again was saying that this divine eye is more worth saving than ten thousand corporeal eyes. "Because it is only through this eye, when strengthened and clarified by appropriate means, that one can perceive the Truth about all beings." (Iamblichus, *The Life of Pythagoras*, v. 70)

So let's move now to say a few words about Plato, because Plato or Pláton in Greek, Plato was one of the greatest philosophers of the past. He was the best disciple of Socráti. He was together with his master and he has written everything that we know about Socráti. Many times Swami in the interviews, in the dramas and in the interactions we had He asked: "What was the essence of Plato's teachings?" And then He himself answered because we could not answer of course in front of Him. It would be very difficult; how to answer very quickly this question? Then He answered, "Truth, Goodness, and Beauty; *Sahyam, Sivam, Sundaram*"-Truth, Goodness, and Beauty. Goodness is the fundamental topic of one of the most famous dialogues of Plato, which is the republic, and in order to explain this Goodness, this truth, this divine reality, he has given in this book this wonderful expression of a cave.



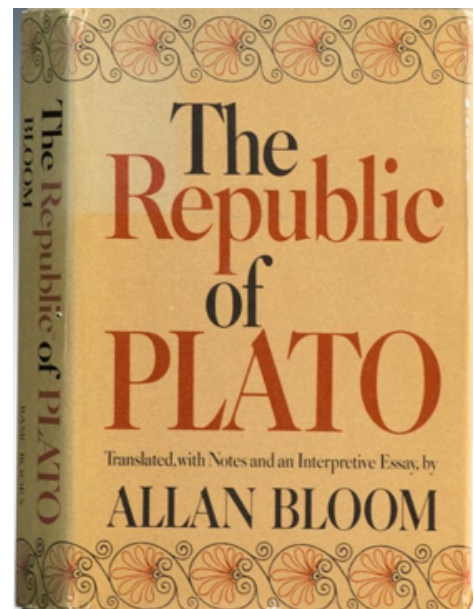


This is very well known. He describes the common people as prisoners at the bottom of the cave that they see only shadows, and then the philosopher is this one who gets free from the chains, turns around and

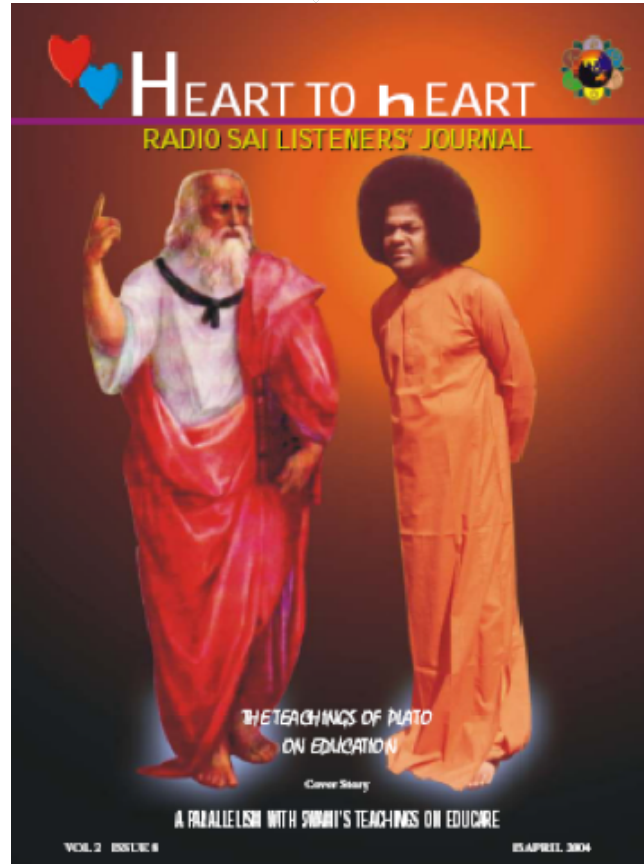
starts climbing. He finds an opening of the cave, and then he is going out of the cave, and there, he can see the true reality. The true reality is much more beautiful than this reality that we experience with the senses. This is the intelligible world as it is called, the spiritual world of ideas of Plato, which is experienced with the heart, with the divine eye, with the mystical eye. Then, Plato goes on to explain that at the top, as the source of this true reality, this wonderful world of spirituality, the spiritual world, is the ultimate goal, this real source, and this is the sun. This sun is what we call real Goodness, the divine goodness, the divine Truth, the divine Beauty. He goes on in this book, in the Republic, this is very famous. I'm sure you know; you have heard of this book.

He goes on to say, "Education is not putting knowledge into a soul which doesn't have it, just as giving sight into eyes that are blind. The capacity of knowledge is present in everyone's soul. And just as an eye turns from darkness to light, the soul has to turn away from the world of becoming towards Truth. Education should be the art of orientation. Educators should devise the simplest and most effective methods to turn the soul towards the Light of Goodness."

So here again, we see a definition which is so close to the definition of education given by Swami and about Educare. Because Educare is exactly this turn of the soul to the light of truth. Truth, in Greek, is called *Aletheia*. This is very important because if we see the etymology of this word, comes from the "a" which is privative, and "lethe" which means to hide or to forget. So, Aletheia, or Truth, means that which is not hidden or forgotten. Again, this is the principle of Educare, so we don't have to find something which is outside, but it is inside and we have forgotten. We have forgotten this truth, which is deep in our hearts. That is why Plato emphasized that, knowledge is not information, is not getting from outside but a recollection of what is hidden already within.



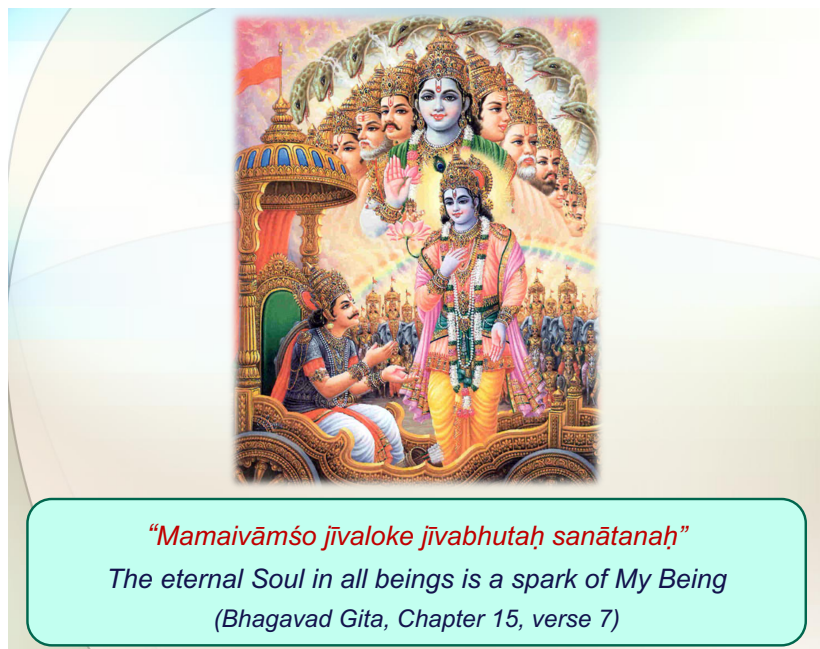
Many years ago, after all these interactions with Swami, I was very motivated to study Plato's teachings. Actually, this was not my studies because my study was in mechanical engineering and still I work as a teacher of mechanical engineering, but because of Swami I started studying philosophy. I was so much enthusiastic about this and inspired by seeing the unity with Sai message. Then I gave one article to Heart to Heart magazine at that time, this was April 2004. A parallelism with Swami's teaching on Educare - the teachings of Plato on education. And then, I was very happy to see that this article came with this cover, blessed by Swami.



And here we can see Plato and Swami side by side. This was very clear by Swami, how similar is His teachings with the ancient teachings, not only of India –of course this we know– but also of Greece and of West.

What is the essence of Sai teachings and what is the essence of the Vedas? I would say that the essence is the Unity. So many times, Swami has repeated this verse, *“Mamaivāṁśo jivaloke jīvabhutaḥ sanātanaḥ”* from Bhagavad Gita. “The eternal Soul in all beings is a spark of My Being.”

He says that this is the real sadhana we have to do, to experience the omnipresence of the Divine.





But this same thing is also said by Jesus. Jesus, as we can read in the Gospel from John, has said,

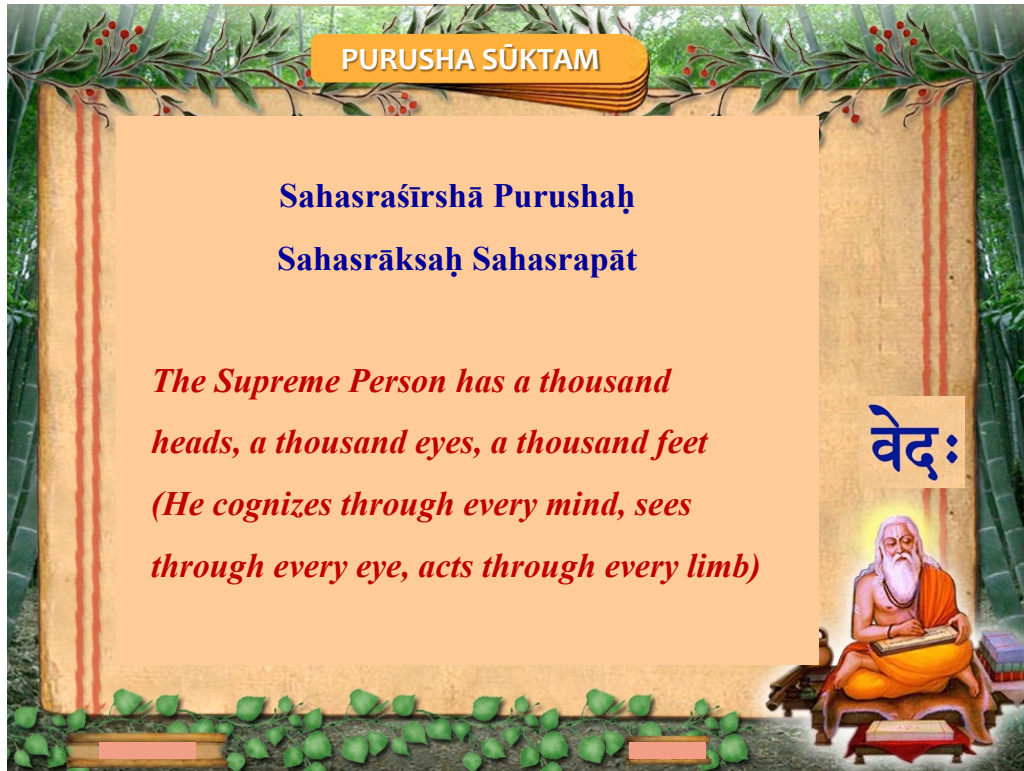


“I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you” (John, Ch. 14, v. 20).

And He goes on explaining this intimate relation and this omnipresence of the divine within everybody and everything. So this is the ultimate experience and the ultimate goal we can say of all spiritual sadhana: Unity. Unity is Divinity, as we have the topic for this year. But let’s move now from the saints and the sages to the scientists, because science has approached the same truth. And I would like to quote from Sir Isaac Newton now. Many centuries after all these ancient philosophers he has said a very important thing in his famous book *“Principia Mathematica.”* At the end he has a commentary *“General Scholium”* and he says many things among of which: “There is a certain most subtle Spirit, which pervades and lies hid in all gross bodies, by the force and action of which Spirit, the particles of bodies mutually attract one another...This most beautiful System of the Sun, Planets and Comets, could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an Intelligent and Powerful Being ... This being governs all things as Lord overall, He is Eternal and Infinite, Omnipotent and Omniscient... In Him are all things contained and moved... He is all eye, all ear, all brain, all arm, all power to perceive, to understand, and to act...”



This especially the last line, reminds me so much the first verse of *Purusha Sūktam* - He is all eye, all ear, all brain, all arm, all power to perceive, to understand, and to act. What is said in *Purusha Sūktam*, the first verse: *Sahasraśīrṣā Puruṣaḥ Sahasrākṣaḥ Sahasrapāt*



The Supreme Person has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet (He cognises through every mind, sees through every eye, acts through every limb).

The truth is the same, and it is really wonderful to see that even modern scientists like Newton (have reaffirmed it). Because Newton was mostly known for physics, but actually he is a very spiritual person. He was so dedicated to the inquiry of truth and he was very close to the divine and to the experience of God. This is confirmed by Swami in a discourse many years ago, 1985, 22nd of November on the occasion of celebration of the University. He said these very important things about the western science. “Great sages like Vasishtha, Vamana, Jamadagni, Vishvamitra, Gautama and Parasara were among the Saptarishis (Seven Sages), who achieved this distinction because of their spiritual greatness. Even today there are some noble minds, who, even in the pursuit of science, are exploring spiritual truths, analysing them and trying to see how these can be used for transforming man. Newton, after discovering the law of gravity, declared: “While I have been able to identify the force of gravity, I did not create it. The Universe is a manifestation of God and everything revolves through the power of God”. And then Swami continued, “These great scientists, like Newton, Einstein, Heizenberg, Shroedinger, Dirac, De Broglie, who have examined, explored and declared the truth, are akin to the ancient Saptarishis.” This is really very important, very-very important declaration of Swami and then He even continued to mention one scientist who is still alive. His name is Fritjof Capra and he has written a very famous book, a very important book “*The Tao of Physics*”. Swami went on and said, even about him, that “Fritjof Capra, at the present day has explored the link between the atom and vibrations in nature”. This is a really wonderful book, I



would recommend to all of you. We find an Exploration of the Parallels between Modern Physics and Eastern Mysticism and then in the introduction of this book, Fritjof Capra describes an experience of him, during which he felt the omnipresence of the divine. Like the dance of Shiva, this is what he describes.

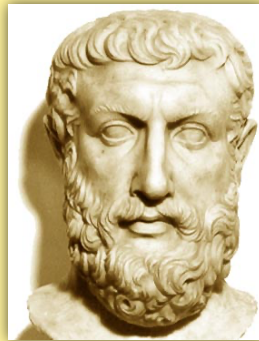
So the fundamental principle and Goal of all philosophy and spirituality is Unity. Unity comes from the Latin UNUM, in Greek EN and in Sanskrit EK. We have a very famous saying, “*Ekoham bahu syām*” - I am One, let me become many. This is how all this world manifested.

UNITY < Lat. UNUM < Gr. EN = Sanskr. EK

“EKO’HAM BAHU SYĀM”

“I am ONE, let Me become Many”

Another great philosopher, sage of ancient Greek is Parmenides. This is one of the three sages about whom we had asked Swami and He confirmed that he was also a great rishi. So he lived before Socrates, early 5th century BC and one saying which summarises his teachings is “*En To Pan*”- En is One and Pan means the whole universe.



Parmenides of Elea
early 5th century BC

“EN TO PAN”

“The All is One”, i.e. “The whole universe is One”



So “The All is One”, “The whole universe is just One”. Now we see all this multiplicity around us, but we know that this is not the real truth. We have to reach the point to experience this Unity, this oneness and this is the goal of *Advaita*. *Advaita*, which is the essence of all philosophy - monism or non-dualism. “A man with a dual mind is half blind”. Many times Swami repeats some sayings from the Vedas - “*Vasudeva idam sarvam*”; “*Sarvam khalv idam Brahma*”. ‘Idam Sarvam’ means ‘All this’, All this is Vasudeva, all this is Divine. “*Sarvam khalvidam Brahma*” - All this is Brahma. All this is God.

ADVAITA = NON-DUALISM, MONISM

Advaita < A + dvaita = Not Two

“A man with a dual mind is half blind”

“Vasudeva idam sarvam”

“Sarvam khalv idam Brahma”

The founder of Advaita Vedanta, Adi Shankaracharya, a great Sage about whom Swami has spoken so many times and he has sung so many times His poems like *Bhaja Govindam*:

*Bhaja Govindam bhaja Govindam
Govindham bhaja mūdhamate
Samprāpte sannihite kāle
Nahi nahi rakshati dukṛñ karane*

This is from *Bhaja Govindam*. This is from Shankaracharya. Swami sings a lot of poems from Shankaracharya. The connection between Swami and Shankaracharya is very-very close. If you want to summarise the teachings of Shankaracharya on *Advaita*, we have this saying:

“Brahma Satyam Jagan mithyā, Jīvo Brahmaiva na paraḥ”

Brahma is truth, the world is just an illusory appearance. Jiva is verily Brahma, there is no difference.



**Adi
Shankaracharya,
The expounder of
Advaita Vedanta**

So again, here we hear this fundamental teaching that we saw also from Socr tis: “Who am I? Am I the body, the senses, the mind? No, I am divine”. “*Jivo Brahmaiva na parah*”-There is no difference. Jiva and Brahma, they are One. So from the four Vedas, Shankaracharya, is taking these Four Mahavakyas repeated by Swami many-many times in His discourses.

***“Brahma Satyam Jagan mithy 
Jivo Brahmaiva na parah”***

Brahma is Truth, the world is just an illusory appearance

Jiva is verily Brahma, there is no difference

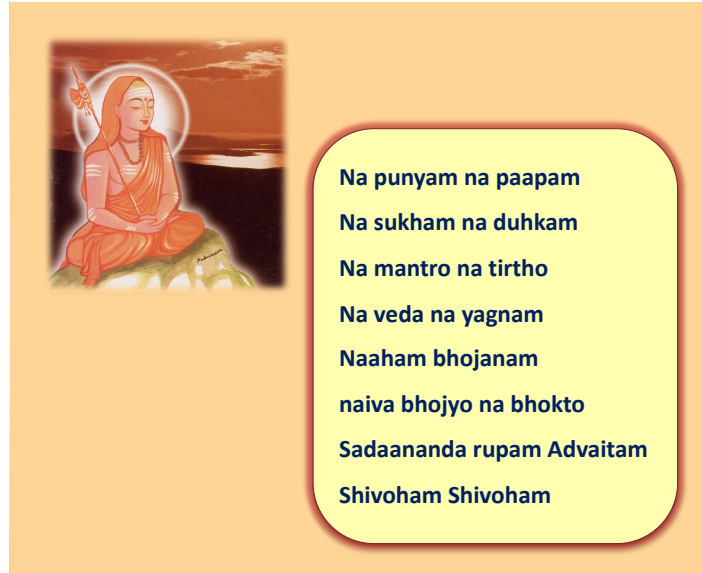
1. *Aham Brahm smi* - I am Brahma. This is from Yajur Veda
2. *Praj n nam Brahma* - Consciousness is Brahma, from Rig Veda
3. *Tat Tvam Asi* - That you are, from Sama Veda or from Chandogya Upanishad, a very important Upanishad
4. *Ayam  tm  Brahma* - This Atma is Brahma, from Mandukya Upanishad

These four sayings contain the essence of the truth about ourselves. Even this Swami has made it simpler. He gives us a very simple mantra:



Deham? Am I this body?
Nāham No, I am not
Ko'ham? Who am I?
So'ham I am He

Then He explains to us, our breath repeats 21,600 times per day this So'ham reminding us our true Self. There is again a wonderful poem from Shankaracharya, which Swami has sung many times:



“There is no good or bad, there is no happiness or sorrow, no mantra no pilgrimage, no Vedas, no rituals... There is only one Truth... I would like to sing this for you.

It is a wonderful poem and a wonderful way that Swami has sung so many times during His discourses. Many people say that it is very difficult to learn Vedas, indeed it is not very easy. But, Swami has said during this great Yajna, which took place in 2006 in Praśānti Nilayam. It happened that I was present at that time. Swami spoke many times about the importance of Veda. This was the motivation to start learning. So Swami in His discourse said “The Veda mantras can be chanted by one and all. It is Swami’s wish that the Vedas shall be spread to every country, so that every human being irrespective of religion, caste or nationality learns Vedas and chants them. A few fortunate ones are learning the Vedas and propagating them. Today all the students in Sri Sathya Sai Educational Institutions are being taught Vedas. It is the prelude to the learning of the Vedas one has to acquire knowledge of Sanskrit, the language of Vedas. This is also important and underlined by Swami.



I will come to a close and I would like to take a piece from all this Veda chanting from Narayana Upanishad. Narayana Upanishad is a small, not very big Upanishad, but very important because in this Upanishad, the principle of Unity of everything is very clearly expressed. This is chanted very often in Praśānti Nilayam during the weekly program. This was the first that I learnt, because it is not so difficult and also I was very inspired of the message of this Upanishad. I would like to chant the second section.

SECTION TWO

om atha nityo nārāyaṇaḥ *Nārāyaṇa is Eternal*

brahmā nārāyaṇaḥ *Brahmā is Nārāyaṇa*

śivaś ca nārāyaṇaḥ *Śiva is Nārāyaṇa*

śakraś ca nārāyaṇaḥ *Indra is Nārāyaṇa*

dyāvapṛthivyau ca nārāyaṇaḥ
The heaven and the earth are Nārāyaṇa

kālaś ca nārāyaṇaḥ *Time is Nārāyaṇa*

dīśaś ca nārāyaṇaḥ *All dimensions are Nārāyaṇa*

ūrdhvaś ca nārāyaṇaḥ *The upper world is Nārāyaṇa*

adhaś ca nārāyaṇaḥ *The lower world is Nārāyaṇa*

antarbahiś ca nārāyaṇaḥ
The inner and outer worlds are Nārāyaṇa

nārāyaṇa evedaḡm sarvam
Nārāyaṇa is indeed everything



yadbhūtam yacca bhavyam^{''}

Whatever has been in the past and will be in the future

niṣkalo nirañjano nirvikalpo nirākhyātaḥ
śuddho deva ekō nārāyaṇaḥ

*Nārāyaṇa is undivided, blemishless, without any
differentiation, beyond words, pure, divine, One*

na dvitīyo^{''} 'sti kaścit^{''} *There is no second whatsoever*

ya^{''} evam veda

He who knows thus

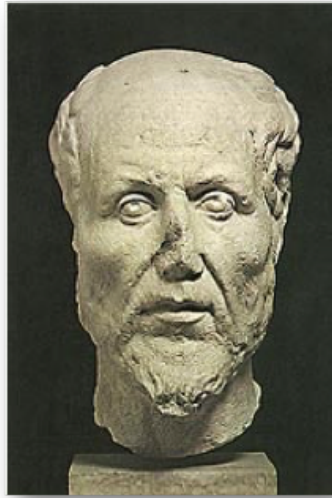
sa viṣṇur eva bhavati sa viṣṇur^{''} eva bhavati

He becomes Vishnu Himself; he becomes Vishnu Himself



This is really a very high teaching. You see here it says, “*Na dvitīyo ‘sti kaścit’*” - Narayana is one, God is One and there is no second. “*Ya Evam Veda*” - He who knows this it is true that there is only God, then he becomes one with God. This is the ultimate goal: “*Sa Viṣṇur eva bhavati sa Viṣṇur eva bhavati*”, “*Brahmavid brahmaiva bhavati*”. The ultimate goal of all spiritual practice is to become one with God.

Finally, I would also like to share a quotation from another great philosopher of the West. He is a platonic philosopher many centuries after Plato, but platonic philosophy was very strong and created a great current of thought throughout the centuries in the West. So, Plotinus lived in third century AD and his last words were “Try to merge the Divine in you with the Divine in the universe”.



Here is a wonderful quotation from a treatise of Plotinus. He has written many treatises, but a very important one is called *On the Good (Śivam) or the One*, because this Śivam or Goodness, which is spoken about in the *Republic* and the One was the same for the Platonists. So speaking about this truth, about the Goodness, Plotinus has said, “One should not say ‘I will see’ or ‘that which is seen’, as if there are two, the seer and the seen; both are One - what a bold statement! At that time, the seer does not see and does not distinguish and does not perceive two...He has united with That and there is only One. The two have come together and they are One. For this reason, the vision is hard to put into words. For how could one speak of another, since he did not see another, but his own Self?”

The vision is hard to put into words, really. You can only experience. In *Taittirīya Upaniṣat*, it is said ‘*Yato vācho nivartante aprāpya manasā saha’* - The Truth is beyond the mind and the words. So it is very difficult to put it into words.

We can close with this saying of Swami - “*Ekam eva advitīyam Brahma*” - ‘There is only One without second and this is Brahma’.

This truth is difficult to put into words but, maybe it’s easier to put it into music to make a poem and sing about this. That’s why Swami loves so much music - in bhajans, in singing, in Veda chanting. All this is music, because the music comes into our heart and conveys this message, and this message gets imprinted into our heart. So, I would like to close with a wonderful poem sung by Swami - we will see a video, which



expresses exactly this fundamental Vedic Truth, this fundamental Universal Truth, that there is only One without a second. There is only God, there is only Brahma!

