

Self-knowing as against Self-Realization:

Our concern at this point is to sensitize ourselves a lot more to the *self and its ways, and even consider the esoteric theme of the ending of the self*, for isn't *moksha* centered on these very themes?

Kama is the goal of the aesthetic enjoyment of all aspects of life, including every kind of sensory gratification and appeasement. This happens through the comforts of a good life, through the eating and drinking of things delicious, through the *pampering of the body and the self* in innumerable ways, through the watching and hearing of delightful artistic creations, even an aesthetic communion with nature, through family life and marital relationship, through sexual fulfillment and progeny, etc.

Then we have also surveyed elsewhere the spiritual goals of *dharma* and *moksha*. Life began with the first chapter of spiritual education or *dharma* (7 to 20yrs of age) and culminated in the last chapter called *moksha*, because it brought in the highest spiritual fulfillment, characterized by an imperturbable inner peace and tranquility. Such an almost impossible spiritual fulfillment usually happened either through the dramatic and spontaneous *ending of the self*, as in the case of a fortunate few, or, through the less dramatic, but certainly, humbler and wiser option of the conscious renunciation of *the self and its ways*, as in the case of the majority. This more deliberate process; though 'still tainted' in the sense that, even this desire to renounce, is but an expression of that very self; it is nevertheless, at least a mature means to liberation from the totality of *sufferings*-which are a natural concomitant of the self and its ways. Such liberation (*moksha*) was held to be possible, at any stage between 60 yrs of age and the end of life, depending on the actual level of maturity of the individual, and the structure of his individual destiny. This is to be contrasted with the full social sanction for pursuing headlong *the life of the self*, with its inevitable share of joys and sorrows in the earlier spheres of *artha* and *kama*, spheres which covered the more ebullient and energetic years of youth and middle age.

As we are verily this *self* we probably do not know enough about ourselves as the knowing, perceiving, pleasure-seeking, success-seeking, enjoying, brooding and sorrowing *self*, the subject, and this ignorance is especially striking in the earlier spheres of *artha* and *kama*. This is after all expected, for the spheres of *artha* and *kama* are by and large devoted to sensory indulgence and gratification, which is possible only with the extroversion and engrossment of the self in the

pleasure gardens of life. In such an extroverted condition, the self has no opportunities at all for getting to know itself truly-for it functions here under *the Divinely programmed delusion called maya, that, it is indeed only the body, or at best, the body and the accompanying sense of self in consciousness.*

In fact, as long as the self is still feeding incessantly on the pastures of *artha* and *kama*, *it is obsessed all the time with one form or the other of, what is truly not the self, but rather, the 'other', which is invariably one of the attractive sense objects and the polar opposite of the perceiving, seeking and enjoying self.* The immersion and engrossment of the self in the pleasure gardens of *artha* and *kama* is generally a continuous process, except when the self has to face the challenge of a denial of its pleasures-then of course it becomes temporarily despondent as a sorrowing self. Because of this, throughout the exciting and pleasurable *life of the self* in the mundane spheres of *artha* and *kama*, a sustained and compelling opportunity never arises for the self, to take stock of its sorrow-breeding activities, to look within, to introspect and go to the end in its search for its true identity. For, going to the end in this ultimate search can possibly happen only with detachment and this can come to pass only with a greater awareness of the impending end of the body, so it can happen only in the last sphere of *moksha*.

When we enter into the spiritual sphere of *dharma* during the early years of our discipleship, our attention comes to be temporarily centered on the self for the first time, but this happens only on the superficial conceptual and intellectual plane, *for there is no opportunity as yet, so early in life, to meet the self, to sink into the centre of the self, that seemingly unknowable and imperceptible fulcrum, on which the whole of life seems to be so delicately poised.* In the mature sphere of *moksha*, the situation is entirely different. Here life-circumstances make it necessary for us *to know the self (self-knowing) with a greater degree of intimacy through introversion, say along the lines suggested by either Maharshi Patanjali in his Yogasutras or along the lines suggested by the Master J. Krishnamurti, through a dispassionate watching of our actual state of consciousness i.e.; what is, through choiceless awareness.*

From these preliminary considerations, it should become fairly evident to us that in the spiritual spheres of *dharma* and *moksha*, we will be obliged to substantially focus attention on the *self per se*, in the first place, and subsequently we will also have to take up the astrological decipherment of the associated riddle of *who we are* (again, the self, and our spiritual identity, in particular)? Apart from

delving into these questions, we will also be obliged to explore into the whole new question of, under what astrological conditions, the *self*, which we have all taken for granted and of whose origins we are largely unconscious; just vanishes (*moksha*), ushering us in this process into the highly esoteric realm of the farther reaches of *moksha-life without a self*.

In so far as I am aware, there have been at least four extremely well known classical examples in recent spiritual history, examples which bear ample testimony to *the ending of the self*, when the same has happened in a dramatic and spontaneous way: Ramana Maharshi, Nisargadatta Maharaj, U. G. Krishnamurti and Bernadette Roberts. In the case of the Master J. Krishnamurti, the loss of the self does seem to have happened in a revocable manner. For there is some evidence of the loss of the self to have had an intermittent character. Such a process naturally created an enigma even for the Master. This was seen in his raising the rather perplexing, and at the same time, the vulnerable question regarding his own spiritual identity: ‘Who is Krishnamurti?’. It is significant that such a question was neither raised by Ramana Maharshi nor by Nisargadatta Maharaj, nor even by Bernadette Roberts. For these reasons, though we may be justified in giving him a different place in our study, we must not fail to recognize that through his life-time work, he has definitely created a world-wide impact by drawing attention to an new authentic kind of spiritual life that is based *not on the pursuit of spiritual ideals* but rather, on looking inwards and accepting *what is*, on learning about the self, and on choiceless awareness as a way of both self-knowing as well as a means to the possible ending the self(if one is so fortunate) and thus learning to live without the self. It is likely that there are many more of such authentic examples where there has been either a perfect ending of the self, or the ending of the self has happened in an intermittent or incomplete way. It is just that I am unaware of all those fortunate individuals, so that I am unable to cover those examples as well in this survey.

The Self as Siva and Sakti, Two Birds of the Mundaka Upanishad:

In the first place, this whole theme of *the self and its ways* and even *its ultimate ending*, may not make much sense to all seekers. There are bound to be vast numbers of seekers, who may still be quite unaware of their self. This suggests that we might as well introduce the subject in a simple way, starting with first principles. The abode of the self is human consciousness-this is where it properly belongs. It arises, changes, suffers and builds itself here, and if at all, it is fated to

come to an end, this desirable ending will also transpire here in its own abode.

We will have to either 'locate' the self in the abode of human consciousness or, identify the nature and mechanism of its working in this same abode. As we observe our human consciousness closely, we find that *though the self is certainly indivisible and integral*, yet, it also appears to consist of two rather complementary 'halves', two kinds of 'engines', with two distinct styles of functioning. A subtle, almost ethereal, invisible, imperceptible, quiescent, almost 'non-existent' but nevertheless ever present *witnessing and knowing self* (if you like, you can call this self, the 'knower', yes, but without the implied individuality) which is aware of and serves to perpetually register two kinds of stimuli or impressions which knock at the door of this *knowing self*. (i) The sense impressions streaming in from the outside world. (ii) And all the feelings and the thought perceptions generated by the 'thinking self', from the inner world. *This 'thinking and feeling self' is the other half, and the other dimension of our human consciousness. Thus, we seem to have two facets or aspects of the self, the witnessing and knowing self, and the thinking and feeling self.* The former is in the background, unchanging and timeless, imperceptible, silent, watchful and passive, the latter is in the foreground, changing, ever wandering between the past memories and the imagined future, perceptible, active, energetic and noisy, the source of all the 'chattering', to use the Master J. Krishnamurti's apt description.

As a rule, most of humanity appears to be unaware of the witnessing and knowing self, while everyone will readily attest to the existence of the thinking & feeling, active, noisy and chattering self. To go more deeply and *create some appreciation for the central role of the self in the spiritual spheres*, we must bring in some fundamental framework of understanding in which we may cast these two complementary halves. Once we do this, we will have more clarity and can then move on faster down the road. There is a universal *sutra* available from the Hindu scripture of the Bhagavad Gita, from Ch XIII, as sloka 26. The theme of this chapter is *the differentiation of the knower from the known*. By 'known' is meant the field observed by the 'knowing self'. It is so universal a *sutra* that we can turn to it, to understand a wide variety of phenomena, irrespective of whether it be the foundations of *Vastu Shastra* or *Vedic astrology* or even our human consciousness.

यावत्संजायते किञ्चित्सत्त्वं स्थावरजङ्गमम् ।

क्शेत्रक्शेत्रज्ञसंयोगात्तद्विद्धि भरतर्षभ ॥

॥ १३.२६ ॥

Yāvat sañjāyate kiñcit sattvaṁ sthāvarajaṅgamam ।

kṣetrakṣetrajña saṁyogāt tadviddhi bharatarṣabha ॥

॥ 13.26 ॥

Its meaning is this: “Whatever comes into existence, whether a so-called living being or a non-living being, know that it is the union of the observed field, the ‘other’ (*Kshetra* or field of observation) and the observing ‘knower’ (*Kshetrajna*)”.

Going a step further, we should identify the ‘observing or the knowing self’ as the ‘knower’ (*Kshetrajna*) with the *Siva* aspect of consciousness, whereas, the observed field, in which the activities of the ‘thinking and feeling self’, transpire, namely, the ‘other’ (*Kshetra*), should be identified with the *Sakti* aspect of consciousness (*in the circumstance that we are looking inwards and watching this ‘thinking & feeling self’ at work*). Implied in this is the truth that the ‘knowing self’ is indeed the auspicious *Siva*, whereas, the frenetically active ‘thinking and feeling self’ is *Sakti*, which appears to be a ‘radiation’ or an energetic emanation from *Siva*, the Divine. Human consciousness has the option of being either dominantly *Siva*, or dominantly *Sakti* or even a balanced harmonization of both. When there is the loss of the self or the ending of the self, then the ‘thinking & feeling self’ or *Sakti* becomes void, and with it *maya* too becomes void, leaving *Siva* alone to be majestically and serenely present as the *Atma*, the imperceptible inner Self. The other extreme is the so-called ‘fallen condition’ of humanity, one in which *Sakti* or the ‘thinking & feeling self’ is so frenetically active and so dominant (the ‘thinking & feeling self’ fully under the spell of *maya*) that *Siva* is eclipsed, and goes missing!

This same truth is also reiterated and corroborated by the *Mundaka Upanishad* (III.1, 2, *slokas*):

द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते ।

तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्त्यनश्नन्नन्यो अभिचाकशीति ॥ १ ॥

dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā samānaṁ vṛkṣaṁ pariśasvajāte ।

tayoranyaḥ pippalam svādvattyanaśnannanyo abhicākaśīti || 1||

समाने वृक्षे पुरुषो निमग्नोऽनिशया शोचति मुह्यमानः ।

जुष्टं यदा पश्यत्यन्यमीशमस्य महिमानमिति वीतशोकः ॥ २ ॥

samāne vṛkṣe puruṣo nimagno'niśayā śocati muhyamānaḥ ।

juṣṭam yadā paśyatyanymīśamasya mahimānamiti vītaśokaḥ || 2||

Their meaning: “Two birds are always together on the same tree (i.e.; the body), both with beautiful plumes and similar to each other. One of them eats the sweet fruits; the other simply looks on without eating anything”. In terms of our understanding, the bird which eats the sweet fruits is the ‘thinking, enjoying & feeling self’, fraught with desires as well as disappointments, the *Sakti* aspect, the individual self; while the other bird, who is ever vigilant and ever observing, is the ‘knower’, the ‘knowing and witnessing self’, the *Siva* aspect.

Again the meaning of the second *sloka*: “The ‘individual self’ is with the ‘Cosmic Self’ on the same tree (i.e.; the body). Because the ‘individual self’ is engrossed, deluded and therefore unaware of its own Divine nature, it is given to sorrowing. However, *when* the ‘individual self’ sees its essential oneness with the ‘Cosmic Self’, then, it is released from all sorrows.” Here the translator has used the expressions, the ‘individual self’ and ‘Cosmic Self’, whereas we had coined the more reasonable terms, ‘thinking & feeling self’ and ‘knowing self’ respectively.

In its engrossed and deluded state, the ‘individual self’ (thinking self) cannot possibly know its identity with the *Siva* aspect of consciousness, ‘Cosmic Self’ (knowing self). It is only when its excessive activities subside, Self-realization becomes possible. This is the reason, the condition, *when* in the *sloka* becomes extremely significant. We have cited the authority of the Hindu scriptures, just to drive home the fact that our line of analysis, using the terms, the ‘thinking & feeling self’ and the ‘knowing self’ is not by any means speculative and arbitrary, like a modern line of psychological reasoning. On the contrary, it is not only exactly in accordance with my direct meditational insights, it is also in unison with the Hindu sacred texts, rooted in the Self-realization of countless sages.

‘Thinking & Feeling’ and the ‘Self’, Mutually Sustain Each Other:

Knowing is also seeing, perceiving and understanding, so this faculty of knowing seems to be also the unsuspected and loftier faculty of intelligence. Wondering, pondering, gazing also belong to this knowing. But for these higher potentialities to come into manifestation, it is very necessary for the ‘thinking and feeling self’ to more or less fall silent, to renounce its activities and learn how to make way for the ‘knowing self’. With its falling silent, there is *the awakening of intelligence*, a happening corroborated by the Bhagavad Gita in Ch II, and repeatedly emphasized by the Master J. Krishnamurti.

In fact, our knowing is automatic. If we consider this carefully, we will even come to the rather startling conclusion that though the body has been steadily ageing, the faculty of knowing, i.e.; *the ‘knowing self’, alone seems to be practically untouched by time*, and we also feel, we are this ‘unknown’ knower. ‘Unknown’, yes, because while we may feel comfortable with being referred to as the ‘knower’, at a deeper level, we certainly have no clue-wherefrom this mysterious ‘knower’ sprang into existence? Did this happen, possibly as a quantum leap in the evolutionary development of hominids?

We have to realize that the ‘thinking and feeling self’ is a dynamically active process that is more or less going on all the time, using and retrieving memories, making decisions, creating goals, planning for the future, brooding over the past, remembering the hurts, shying away from pain, building castles in the air, literally. And all of this dreaming built on the foundation of *maya*: that the ‘I’ in the ‘thinking self’ is the body, or the ego!

However in our entirely extroverted state of consciousness, the sense objects we perceive on the one hand and the stuff of the ‘thinking and feeling self’, on the other ‘come upon’ the ‘knowing self’ so completely that we, as the ‘knowing self’, seem to have lost awareness (inherent in the knowing Self) of our true spiritual identity as the same is completely encroached upon, overwritten, eclipsed and swamped not only by the dazzling sense impressions streaming in from the external world, but also by the incessant frenetic activity of day dreaming and worrying, in which the ‘thinking and feeling self’ is engrossed. This is the reason we are total strangers to the *Siva* aspect of our consciousness, and remain puny, with only the limited identity of the ‘thinking and feeling self’.

We have been emphasizing that in *Vedic* astrology in the spheres of *dharm*a and *moksha*, the self will be our focus of attention, mainly because in these

spheres, we will be concerned with the *life of the self* as a prelude to its ending in the last sphere of *moksha*. For the mystic J. Krishnamurti, the self on which all human civilizations are based, had undergone periodic liquidation, so it was easy for him to question the foundations on which this ‘thinking & feeling self’ rested. In paying attention to his philosophical enquiry into the genesis of the self, we will become better equipped to examine both the self-perpetuation of the self, as well as its ending, in the spheres of *dharma* and *moksha*.

“How is the psyche, the ego, the self, the “I”, the person, put together? How has this thing come into being and from which arises the concept of the individual, the “me”, separate from all others? How is this momentum set going, this sense of the “I”, the self? We will use the word *self* to include the person, the name, the form, the characteristics, the ego. How is this self born? Does the self come into being with certain characteristics transmitted from the parents? Is the self merely a series of reactions? Is the self merely the continuity of centuries of tradition? Is the self put together by circumstances, through accidents, happenings? Is the self the result of an evolution, the gradual process of time, emphasizing, giving importance to the self?

It is obvious that all of Krishnamurti’s observations and questions pertain only to the ‘thinking & feeling self’, *for it is this ‘thinking & feeling self’, which weaves maya or the illusion that one is the body, and that one is a separate individual, etc.* Krishnamurti, for some reason is not making any reference at this stage to the ‘knowing self’, which is the Divine centre in us, unobtrusive and in the background of our all too noisy and frenetically active ‘thinking & feeling self’. So long as the thinking and feeling self is not liquidated, even the knowing self, will suffer a complete veiling, though this ‘knowing self’ is certainly bereft of all mischief and all calculations. *But with the liquidation of the thinking and feeling self, even the knowing self, may experience itself differently, in that, there may not be a ‘knower’ any more, though ‘knowing’ may continue undiminished.*

See further, how Krishnamurti’s caution when applied to the ‘thinking self’, the ‘seeking self’, in its quest for enlightenment, reveals that this could be an utterly illusory quest:

“The “me” can never become a better “me”. It will attempt to, it thinks it can, but the “me” remains in subtle forms. The self hides in many garments, in many structures; it varies from time to time, but there is always this self, this separative, self-centered activity which imagines that one day it will make itself

something which it is not.

“So one sees there is no becoming of the self. There is only the ending of selfishness, of anxiety, of pain and sorrow, which are the content of the psyche, of the “me”. There is only the ending of that, and that ending does not require time. It isn’t that it will all end the day after tomorrow. *It will end only when there is the perception of its movement. To perceive not only objectively, without any prejudice, bias, but to perceive without all the accumulations of the past; to witness all this without the watcher.* The watcher is of time, and however much he may want to bring about a mutation in himself, he will always be the watcher. Remembrances, however pleasurable, have no reality; they are things of the past, gone, finished, dead. Only in observing without the observer, who is the past, does one see the nature of time and the ending of time.” (*Italics given by me only*).

Here, Krishnamurti is suggesting being aware of the activities of the ‘thinking and feeling self’ even as they are happening, but without the motive to alter what is perceived. According to him, any desire to change what is seen going on in the ‘thinking self’, will be futile, because it is bound to add only further momentum to the ‘thinking self’ and in this way come in the way of its ending. ‘Watcher’ as he uses the expression is the ego, which is hopeful of a radical transformation, so this watcher is only *within the web* of the thinking and feeling self. The kind of observation he is talking about, totally bereft of all motives is what he calls *dispassionate observation of what is, or the choiceless awareness of what is. For him, choiceless awareness opens the doors to self-knowing and also to the ending of the self.*

In J. Krishnamurti’s writings, reference is invariably made to the *self* that sustains thinking and feeling and which in turn is itself also thrown up, by the very processes of thinking and feeling, as both thinking and feeling arise in response to challenges of survival. This *self* is invariably only the *anatma* that one is the body, or some other *anatma*. *Much of human thinking and feeling, becomes wasteful and conflict ridden, when centered on the self, as an anatma.* However, we must not fail to realize that in clear and deep thinking, and enquiry into truth, *this self may have no place at all, it may simply be non-functional, during deep enquiry and spurts of clear thinking.* In such cases, where lofty thinking and feeling is free of the *self*, thinking and feeling becomes sanctified, truth-bearing and fruitful. Implied in this is the precious converse *sutra* as well: that where thinking and feeling are contaminated and corrupted by the *self*, that thinking and feeling loses the fruitful

truth-bearing potency (*sutra*). Some of us may have been witnesses to such comical phenomena, seen in the conversations between people.

In the case of Ramana Maharshi, the definite ending of the ‘thinking self’ happened suddenly, through a definitive and irrevocable kind of knowing, and is best described in the Maharshi’s own words. In this example, *it is the ‘knowing self’ which has had the Self-realization*-because, the ‘thinking & feeling self’ seems to have ended more by an abrupt stroke of fate, by the invisible hand of the Divine. A *Vedic* astrological decipherment of this very unusual happening constituted the theme of Sri Ramana Maharshi’s Moksha.

“It was about six weeks before I left Madurai for good, that the great change in my life took place. It was quite sudden. I was sitting alone in the room on the first floor of my uncle’s house. I seldom had any sickness and on that day there was nothing wrong with my health, but a sudden violent fear of death overtook me. There was nothing in my state of health to account for it and I did not try to account for it or to find out whether there was any reason for the fear. I just felt ‘I am going to die’ and began thinking what to do about it. It did not occur to me to consult a doctor, or my elders or friends; I felt that I had to solve the problem myself, there and then.

The Abrupt Ending of the ‘Thinking and Feeling’ Self:

“The shock of the fear of death drove my mind inwards and I said to myself mentally, without actually framing the words: ‘Now death has come; what does it mean? What is it that is dying? The body dies’. And I at once dramatized the occurrence of death. I laid with my limbs stretched out stiff as though *rigor mortis* had set in and imitated a corpse so as to give greater reality to the enquiry. I held my breath and kept my lips tightly closed so that no sound could escape, so that neither the word ‘I’, nor any other word could be uttered. ‘Well then’, I said to myself, ‘this body is dead. It will be carried stiff to the burning ground and there burnt and reduced to ashes. But with the death of the body am I dead? Is the body I? It is silent and inert, but I feel the full force of my personality and even the voice of the ‘I’ within me, apart from the body. So, I am spirit transcending the body. The body dies, but the spirit that transcends that cannot be touched by death. That means I am the deathless spirit.’ All this was not dull thought; it flashed through me vividly as living truth, which I perceived directly, almost without thought-process. ‘I’ was something very real, the only real thing about my present state, and all the conscious activity connected with my body was centered on that ‘I’.

From that moment onwards, the 'I' or Self, focused attention on itself by a powerful fascination. Fear of death had vanished once and for all. Absorption in the Self continued unbroken from that time on".

'Knowing Self' Reflexively Turned Upon Itself (Self-Realization):

It is obvious that by the term, 'I', Ramana Maharshi must be meaning only the 'knowing self', after the 'thinking & feeling self' had become void, leaving only the majestic and serene presence of *Siva*, as the knowing self, the *Atma*. His concluding words sums up the realization, and confirms to us, how his consciousness became *Siva* filled and *Siva*-centric, with hardly any room for *Sakti* or the 'thinking self': 'From that moment onwards, the 'I' or Self, focused attention on itself by a powerful fascination.' *In the Siva-Sakti drama that is going on in our human consciousness, the knowing self as a rule never turns permanently upon itself in a reflexive 'fall-back', for it is ever 'knowing' only what it perceives as the 'other', namely either the sensory impressions which are streaming in, or 'knowing' all the goings on in the Kshetra (field) of the thinking and feeling self. In the case of the Maharshi, the knowing self, discovered itself alone, as the primal reality, and not the body nor the sense impressions, nor the contents of consciousness nor even the world. This was his Self-realization, the knowing self, through Divine intervention, underwent a reflexive falling back upon itself.*

The 'Self' in Vedic Astrology:

As you may already know, the manifestations in the spiritual spheres of *dharma* and *moksha* take on a number of varied forms. Spiritual inspirations and inclinations, devotional adoration of the Divine (*Bhakti yoga*), perfection in the understanding of the Divine, either directly or through the scriptures (*Jnana yoga*), astral journeys to other worlds, inclinations towards *Hatha yoga*, spiritual activism (*Karma yoga*), psychic gifts, creative insights or creative mathematics or creative poetry sourced in communion with the Divine, expressions of spiritual austerity, *sudden* illumination and realization of the Divine without any *sadhana* (spiritual practice and spiritual seeking), meditational discovery of the Divine (*Dhyana yoga*), renunciation of the world, celibacy, unspiritual traits co-existing with true spiritual greatness, profound seeking and profound curiosity about the Divine, enigmatic spiritual patterns, religious ecstasies, mystical experiences and journeys, Kundalini awakening and experiences, materialization of sacred substances, near-death experiences, activation of past-life memories, communion with the Divine, psychic intuitions, miraculous healings, aspirations to serve the helpless because of

compassion (*Karma yoga*), visions, insights, realizations and teachings, etc.

Reading this long list, we may wonder what *Vedic* astrology may have to do with the self? In truth, the whole of *Jyotisha* (*Vedic* astrology) is concerned in essence with the drama of the *self*, as we shall presently see, though this is certainly not the way *Jyotishis* are used to approaching their discipline of learning. There are twelve houses (Hs) in *Jyotisha*, each describing a certain department or aspect of life, and that taken together, these twelve Hs, constitute the totality of life. We are now going to see how the knowing self is disguised in each department of life. We shall express this fact by saying that *the knowing self is made to wear a certain characteristic cloak in each department of life, the cloak then giving the illusion to the knowing self that this covering, this cloak is itself, its true identity*. We are using the verb, to cloak in the sense: to conceal, to disguise. The encasing cloak essentially has the function of self-veiling, of making the knowing self unconscious of its true *Atmic* nature. *In the case of Sri Ramana Maharshi, the Atmic nature of the knowing self was discovered by the reflexive turning of the knowing self upon itself, but this did not happen through a volitional act of the knowing self, it was a Divine happening, on which the boy Ramana had no control whatever.*

In each of the twelve Hs, there are activities of the knowing self going on; activities of self-seeking, founded on a particular ‘cloak’ being in situ and *this cloak will itself be the sure deterrent for the knowing self to make that momentous and reflexive turning upon itself. The cloak is a God-given conviction, a false perception that one is something or somebody, an infatuation, an attachment-as a surge in thought and feeling*. In the first H, the knowing self is made to adorn the cloak of attachment to the body and personality: ‘I am the body’, ‘I am such and such a personality with such and such likes and dislikes’, etc. *It is very important to realize that this cloak which has fallen upon the knowing self is not certainly any deliberate doing of the self, it has automatically happened to the knowing self, in the course of the human life drama(maya)*. Hindus call such a cloak of illusion, a covering on the true self, the *Atma*, so the cloak is referred to as *anatma*, meaning, ‘this is not the true Self, the *Atma*’. Thus in every H, the self unavoidably and of necessity (thanks to Divine *maya*), comes to disguise itself and goes round wearing a cloak, an *anatma*, appropriate to that H or department of life. *It is the Divine that clothes the knowing self in these cloaks (anatmas), and this must be thoroughly understood, at least in the spiritual spheres of dharma and moksha.*

The truth of *maya* must be accepted provisionally as an axiom, till such time as we actually come upon it as our own spiritual discovery. At least in the last sphere of *moksha*, *mumukshus* (seekers after *moksha*) are expected to make this discovery for themselves, and the scriptures are there to attest such a discovery. The Bhagavad Gita (Ch VII, *sutras* 14 and 27) [18] deepens and clarifies our understanding, regarding *maya*.

दैवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।

मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते ॥

॥ ७ ॥१४ ॥

daivī hyeṣā guṇamayī mama māyā duratyayā ।

māmeva ye prapadyante māyāmetāṁ taranti te ॥

॥ 7.14॥

The meaning of the *sutra* 7.14 is this: “My Divine *maya*, constituted of the three *gunas* is difficult to overcome. Whoever takes refuge in Me alone, in utter devotion, overcomes it.”

इच्छाद्वेषसमुत्थेन द्वन्द्वमोहेन भारत ।

सर्वभूतानि संमोहं सर्गे यान्ति परंतप ॥

॥ ७ ॥२७ ॥

icchādveṣasamutthena dvandvamohena bhārata ।

sarvabhūtāni sammohaṁ sarge yānti parantapa ॥

॥ 7.27॥

In this *sutra*, Bhagavan Krishna, is telling Arjuna: “All beings, since birth are subject to the delusion of duality (‘self’ and ‘other’, ‘me and not-me’, i.e.; *maya*). From this *maya* arises, all expressions of duality, attraction and repulsion, pleasure and displeasure, etc.” This validates what we had said earlier, namely that the self does not wear a cloak, volitionally, it is made to wear a veiling cloak by the Divine and the cloak which disguises the knowing self, varies from one H of astrology to another H.

In the second H, the knowing self, takes on the cloak of attachment: ‘I belong to this family’, ‘I am so and so in society, I have this status in the

profession', 'I like to eat sweet things or sour things', etc.

In the third H, the knowing self, wears the more martial cloak, 'I have this and this younger sister and younger brother, they will listen to me', 'I like to communicate, and love sports', 'I like to do team work and have people under my care', or, 'I like to write'. In the fourth H, the knowing self wears again another cloak of attachment: 'this is my house, I like it', 'this is my mother, I love her', 'this is my car', 'I am happy'. In the fifth H, the knowing self, wears the cloak of enjoyment: 'I am intelligent', 'I love to enjoy myself', 'I love to speculate and dream', 'I love my children', or 'these are my children, I love them', or '*Ganesh* is my *Ishtha Devata*, very dear to me'. In the sixth H, the knowing self, wears a cloak, that has the fragrance of aggression or service: 'I will win this court case', 'I'll defeat him', 'my house was burgled and I suffered a loss', 'I love to serve', etc. In the sphere of the seventh H, the self wears the cloak of marital desire, of sexual desire: 'this is my wife', 'I like her', 'I love to go abroad'. In the eighth H, the self wears the eighth H cloak: 'I love research', 'I love easy gains, I must get it', 'I am a *mumukshu*', 'I suffered dishonor and disgrace', etc. In the sphere of the ninth H, the self wears the *dharma* cloak, 'I am religious', or 'I love my father', or, 'I enjoyed living in distant lands'. In the tenth H, the knowing self, wears the professional cloak, 'I have lot of Grace professionally, I love my profession, I love the skill, the work, etc'. In the eleventh H, the knowing self, wears the cloak of ambition, so, it becomes the self-seeking and ambitious self: 'I must earn ten crore rupees this year', or, 'I love my friends', or 'next year and in 2016, I must earn three times what I am earning now'. In the twelfth H, the knowing self wears the cloak of either pleasure seeking or renunciation: 'I love to sleep, nobody must disturb me', or, 'I love to meditate', or 'I like to enjoy and relax' or 'I thoroughly enjoy sex', or, 'I love to go shopping and spend', or, 'I do not like this world, wish to go away to an *ashram*.'

When one or more Hs are strong, by their lords being strong, then the knowing self, wears the cloaks corresponding to those strong Hs, more 'tightly'. In other words, the knowing self, gets attached more to the activities in those Hs, and also secures *ananda* or bliss by getting engrossed in the activities of Hs which are strong (*sutra*). Why *ananda*? Because, whenever there is more Divine Grace in any sphere of life, in any H, there will be more success in the activities and affairs of that H, *and this makes the thinking and feeling self, quiet and contented*. This helps the knowing self to abide within itself, experiencing *ananda* or *bliss*. Other

details of the *moksha* Hs or *dharma* Hs will be gone into at a later stage.