We are in the world of objects, and we are perpetually in confrontation with these objects. This is the great Daiva-Asura Sangrama of our epics and Puranas. The subject tries to overcome its limitations in respect of the object, which is the struggle of life, the continuous effort on the part of every unit of creation, until the finale of the conflict is reached to the fullest satisfaction of each and every individual.

We have mostly a highly misconceived notion of our relation to things. Whatever be our learning, it does not seem to help us when we are face to face with the objects of the world because our connection with the things of the world is not an intellectual connection. It is not anything connected with our scientific knowledge of things. It is also not purely psychological in the ordinary sense of the term. The relation we bear among ourselves is more than purely psychological, more than the visible physical relation of things, more than anything our intellects can comprehend. This is the reason why we become helpless and utterly fail when we are tempted or thwarted by the powers of the world in spite of our qualifications, scholarship or learning. Learning does not help because it does not bear a relation to our fundamental connection with things. The relation of one thing with another is neither purely physical nor entirely psychological, though it is also both of these aspects.

The connection of things is subtle. Therefore, it is not usually an object of the vision of the physical eyes or even of the mind, which always goes along the track of the perception of the senses. There is a deeply hidden relation among things, which tries to come to the surface of consciousness so that reality may be established in the practical life of people. The struggle of God to overcome the Asuras is depicted in the Avataras of Mahavishnu and the various epics. This seems to be the main content of our scriptural lore, especially the Puranas, Itihasas, etc., all which try to bring out the great truth that the fundamental connection among things is stifled by an outer appearance of sensory vision, and this fundamental truth tries every moment of time
to gain access into the surface of public perception and master the forces which appear to be outside the knowing subject.

The object contends with the subject, and the subject contends with the object. This happens in every level of existence – in the astronomical level, in the cosmic level, in the physical level, in the chemical level, in the biological level, in the mental level, in the intellectual level, and in every conceivable level of life. The whole world, in all its manifestations, is a field of intense conflict, which is the great encounter in the field of Kurukshetra in the Mahabharata. Life is such a wondrous spread-out field of activity that its meaning is not clear to those who are involved in its activity.

As I tried to point out yesterday, our activities do not bear a vital connection with our personalities. They have always remained a function of our personality rather than a manifestation of our self. Today we are casually discussing this in reference to the *kalas* mentioned in the scriptures. We are told that Bhagavan Sri Krishna incarnated with 16 *kalas*, and people generally are at a loss to know what these *kalas* are. What are they? They are nothing but the powers present in every human personality, the difference being that in the human individual each power exists as external functions operating in a very discreet fashion, while in the Godhead they are identical with the being or the essence of reality, and they work together in unity.

Thinking and feeling, understanding, breathing, seeing, hearing, and various faculties of our individual makeup operate isolatedly, and not in unison. This is the reason why the eyes cannot hear, the ears cannot see, the tongue cannot walk, etc. Each organ has its own function. But in Ishvara it is not like that. He can hear with the eyes and see with the ears, and any organ can perform any function. Every limb, every organ, every activity, every performance of God is also every other performance. His existence itself is action, whereas our existence cannot be identical with action. This is only to digress into what difference exists between the main essence underlying our being and the outer operations in the form of activity outside.

The essential reality tries to manifest itself in every field of life, which is what we mean by saying *satyameva jayate* (Mundaka 3.1.6): Truth alone triumphs. Truth triumphs, and it alone can triumph. Nobody else can succeed in this world. All other forces are demonical in the sense that they are external features. What is called the Asura Sampat or the demonical element in life is the externality involved in perception, the externality of objects themselves. The Asuras, or the demons of the Puranas and the epics, are those who vehemently exert the externality and the physicality of their being, whereas the Suras are those who become as gods.

The celestial or the divine elements in us operates in one way, and the objective or the externalised Asuric elements operate in another way. Generally, the Asuras are sensual and materialistic. If we read the lives of such persons such as Hiranyakashipu, Hiranyaksha, Ravana, etc., we would gather that they were intent upon sensual
enjoyment much more than spiritual knowledge or realisation. They believed in bodily existence, physical force, earthly enjoyments, and social grandeur, which is all quite different from the glory of the Spirit.

The senses move outward, while the Spirit is universal. This is, to state precisely, the difference between the Deva and the Asura. While the Deva is the tendency towards the realisation of the Cosmic Spirit, the Asura is the tendency of the senses to move towards what is external, which also implies the physical, the sensory, and all that is connected with desire.

Desire is a kind of disease of consciousness because it is not a natural state of the mind. Desire is disease in a very literal sense. Absence of ease is disease. When the Spirit is not at ease with itself, it projects itself outwardly through the avenues of the senses, and this activity of the Spirit through the senses is also towards the regaining of the ease that it has lost. Our endeavours through the manifestation of desire in respect of external objects have the intention of gaining what we have lost. The Asuras want the highest enjoyment possible, but the enjoyment that they think of is the externalised form of contactual enjoyment.

We are always accustomed to enjoyment through contact. It is not necessarily tactile contact, but contact through any of the senses – visual, auditory, etc. We cannot think of any kind of satisfaction other than through the senses. This is the Asura element present in the individual. But the Spirit, which is opposed to all these untrue movements and efforts, the asatya involved in activity, vehemently asserts itself so that there is an avatar of God at every juncture or crisis of human effort. Sambhavāmi yuge yuge (Gita 4.8) says Bhagavan Krishna: Wherever there is a crisis arisen on account of this sort of conflict between the spiritual and the material, God descends, manifests Himself. This means to say that Truth itself reveals itself, sends forth its powers, and this is, speaking in the terms of the Puranas, the avatar of God. This is a perpetual activity of the Spirit. The avatar is not a temporal event but a perennial flow of divine force into the world of materiality and externality for the sake of establishing the rule of the Spirit over the realm of matter. This is spiritual effort, to put it in general terms.

This effort of the Spirit, this endeavour of Truth to manifest itself, this effort on the part of reality to gain access into the realm of matter is with the intention or supreme purpose of absorbing materiality into spirituality. The Spirit is not ultimately opposed to anything; it is an absorber of everything. The matter that we usually think of in ordinary language as external to the Spirit is not really external to the Spirit. There is nothing external to the Spirit because Spirit alone is. The eternal, which is of the nature of spirituality, consciousness, is the sole existence, ultimately speaking. So finally, there cannot be any opposing sense to the nature of the spirit.
The so-called opposition or conflict is the peculiar involvement of a principle which is not easily intelligible to our minds. What makes one an Asura? The spiritual element in things somehow or other gets localised. It is a transcendent mystery which has not been solved even today and will never be solved. Localisation of the Spirit in space and in time, which we call creation of the world by God, the manifestation of the jivas and prakriti by Ishvara, means the externalisation of the Spirit, which is not true to its own nature. Anything that is not true to one’s own nature is unpalatable, painful, and there cannot be a greater disease than that. Your natural element should manifest itself; then alone you are at ease and you are happy. The Spirit being the essentiality of everything, it has to manifest itself in all its glory and grandeur in order that there can be ultimate satisfaction.

So human life cannot be the life of ultimate happiness as long as the Spirit does not manifest in life because the ultimate reality of the human individual is the Spirit, the Atman, as we call it, and as long as it is smothered by the sway of the Asura’s forces of sensory enjoyment, sense activity and material concepts, there will be a Narasimha hidden in every pillar. He can burst forth at any moment, which is a terror, as it were, which is there lying in ambush to rise with all its might and main when materiality and externality go to their extremes. God manifests Himself when untruth becomes an extreme, when it is intolerable, as a high fever may arise in our own body when the irregularity that we have meted out to it is intolerable. A little mistake is pardoned, forgiven, but when it goes beyond a certain limit and cannot be borne any further, then it is that Truth manifests itself as a power. So in order for this activity of the Spirit to overcome the externality involved in matter so that it may absorb matter into itself – the Asura may overcome the Deva – there is this mighty universal process called evolution, about which I made mention yesterday.

The whole of yoga, or spiritual endeavour, is a conscious participation in the evolutionary process. It is, in other words, to be natural to one’s own self. Yoga is natural being, natural activity. It is natural in the sense that it is in consonance, coextensive with the evolutionary process of the cosmos. When we oppose the evolutionary process, we are ill at ease, but when we participate with it, nature also cooperates with us. And when we consciously and purposely cooperate with this evolutionary movement of the universe towards the realisation of its own self in Godhood, we are said to be practising yoga.

The ancient masters and seers of Truth have told us that this evolutionary process, which is called yoga, is difficult of comprehension and more difficult to practise. The Asura elements are very powerful indeed. Ravana ruled for thousands of years, though he was put down by Rama later on. We do not know why God gave such a long rope to these Asuras. They are overcome, no doubt, but after thousands of years. Pity indeed, but this is the rule of the world.
The difficulty about the practice of yoga is that all its aspects cannot easily be comprehended by the individual mind. We know that we have to realise the Ultimate Truth, and we may have an honest aspiration about it. We may get up early in the morning and be at it throughout the day, but there may not be a proper assimilation of the pros and cons of the practice. There may be misconception about it from beginning to end, resulting in an erroneous movement of our pious aspirations. Even goodness can go wrong when it is not properly directed. This is often the pitiable state of many of the seekers of Truth and sadhakas who are honest in themselves but have been misled by lack of proper direction from a competent teacher.

The aspects of yoga are difficult to comprehend because of their cosmic implications. We forget that we are involved in this world in many ways. We cannot believe this involvement because it is not visible to our physical eyes. Even advanced sadhakas make the mistake of thinking that they can do private deeds and entertain private thoughts in their minds and in their own rooms without the knowledge of the laws of the world. Nothing of the kind. The laws of the world will operate even in the nether regions. Even if we go to Patala, those laws will operate. This is a very important point that every seeker of Truth, every sadhaka should remember. Do not go contrary to the laws of Truth even when entertaining private notions about it.

Unfortunately, every human being has his own or her own foibles. We have private weaknesses which we cannot always manifest outside. Sometimes we know these weaknesses, and sometimes we do not know them. We may have some weaknesses that are submerged in the subconscious or unconscious levels, and they may not be outwardly manifest to our open consciousness. Many a time we know our weaknesses, but we deliberately put them down for the sake of practical convenience in life, which will not work. One who is opposed to God will not succeed in the world. We are not going to succeed if we are a fool in the eyes of God, even if all the world regards us as an Incarnation itself.

This is a very serious matter which should not miss the attention of our seeking minds. We have our own ahankara, or egoism, as we call it, which asserts itself, and the main Asura principle in the individual is the ahankara. The principal characteristic of an Asura is egoism. “Nobody is like me. I can see to it, and I shall defeat them.” Yakṣye dāsyāmi modiṣya ity ajñānavimohitāḥ (Gita 16.15). The Sixteenth Chapter of the Bhagavadgita gives a long description of what the Asura element is which, unfortunately, seems to be present in every one of us. We cannot be completely free from this element unless a mysterious grace of God descends unasked and places us in the fortunate position of being in contact with a great master or yogi.

All aspects of yoga cannot be understood by the mind. Therefore, we cannot have a quick success in the practice of yoga, and have to be very cautious. The ancient masters have told us that there are various aspects of yoga, and emphasised the four
aspects known as dharma, artha, kama, and moksha so that proper attention may be paid to them. These are the various aspects of our duty in this world, and we cannot miss any of them.

Dharma is that aspect of duty which is obedience to the law of the Spirit. Our duty should not go contrary to the law of the Spirit, and this is dharma. Artha is our present relationship with the objects of the world. I am going to explain what this means a little later. Kama is our predominant emotional condition at this given moment of time, and moksha is the aim or ideal towards which we are moving. All these four sides should be considered properly, and we should not go to extremes in the emphasis of any particular thing here.

Oftentimes we go to extremes, not understanding the proper relationships among them. There are some who say, “I am only after moksha.” Well, it looks all right. We praise and eulogise that great aspirant who says, “I want only moksha.” But unfortunately, that person does not know what moksha is. That is why he may come a cropper in spite of his pious intention because the world in which he lives is a part of the moksha that he is seeking, and the world is not going to leave him. The world is the element of artha and kama. If we are completely oblivious of the factor of artha and kama involved in our personality, we cannot reach moksha. One cannot escape the world because the world is woven into one’s very fibre. We are in the thick of the world and the world is in our own head, and so complete freedom from the world by any mistaken idea about it will not be a successful endeavour.

The world is not outside the Spirit, and the moksha that we are seeking is nothing but the realisation of the Spirit. So the asking for the Spirit or the craving for moksha or mumukshutva, the yearning for liberation, should not exclude the factor of the world in which we are involved. If we are not involved in it, it is all right, but unfortunately we are involved in it. We are in it, and we cannot say the world is not there. The very concept of our bodily existence, the very notion that we exist implies that the world also exists. If the world does not exist, we also do not exist because we and the world go together and are counterparts of each other, so one who denies the existence of the world automatically denies himself or herself. As long as we feel the existence of our body and have the desires of our emotions, the world is very much before us, and the devil has to be paid its due, as they say proverbially. “Give unto Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s.” This is what Christ said. What is due to Caesar is due to Caesar, and what is due to God is due to God, but we should not ignore Caesar because we are after God, nor ignore God because we are in the realm of Caesar. Now, ‘Caesar’ means the world. The empirical values are the Caesar, which means the material needs of the human personality are what are known as Caesar in this statement of Christ. That is what is called the devil which has to be paid its due.
As far as practical life is concerned, truth is inseparable from experience. Anything that is involved in our experience is a truth for ourselves. There are degrees of reality. Though the Ultimate Reality is universality, in the degree in which it manifests itself before us at this given moment of time it may not be universal. For us it is external. The due that is to be paid in proper proportion – proper proportion, underline this word – to the material aspect of things in the form of our relationship with objects is the factor of artha and kama.

That is why ancient seers have introduced the systems of the ashrams of Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanaprastha, and Sannyasa so that our life may be a very systematised growth of the lower into the higher, of a gradual absorption of matter into the Spirit. Life is a search for God, and the search has to be conducted diligently and scientifically. While it has to be conducted very efficiently, it has also to be done very intelligently. The search for God is the various strata of life. The four I mentioned – Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanaprastha, Sannyasa – are only the social terminologies connected with the spiritual stages of one’s growth in this world.

These classifications are not social, as we generally think them to be. The stages of life are connected with our being, and are indicative of the extent of our own progress in the realms of our aspiration. According to the culture of our country at least, bharatiya samskriti, life is a search for Spirit, and our every activity is conducted towards the realisation of God. Religion is not meant only for the church or the temple. All activities are religious, and there is nothing but religion in this world. This is the grandeur and the glory of this culture. According to its principle, our efforts and endeavours have to be regularised so that they may be harmonised with the various degrees of reality. I have to emphasise again and again that we should not be too enthusiastic even in the search for God. Over-enthusiasm is as bad as having no enthusiasm at all. We should know our own powers, we should know our own degree of knowledge, and we should not exceed our limits because too much is not good.

If we know our own present state of existence, we also know our own powers and our own weaknesses. Then we will know how to conduct ourselves efficiently in this world, and we will not come in conflict with other people. The conflict that we are facing is due to a maladjustment of personality due to the overenthusiasm of our desires and aspirations, which suddenly project themselves outward and then try to have their way for the fulfilment of their purpose. The world is as much real as we are, to reiterate what I said before. We are not more important than other people in this world, our importance is only as much as anyone else’s. so we have to give as much importance to other agents in the world as we are giving to our own self.

Mostly, we have an overweening explanation about our own self. We sometimes think, even without our wanting to, that we are slightly superior when we begin to aspire for God or seek for perfection or practise yoga, and there is a subtle,
contemptuous dealing towards the other elements of the world, as if they are not God. This will not work. While our aspirations may be quite all right inasmuch as they are directed towards God, God is also present in all those elements which are opposing us. It is God Himself Who is confronting us, and there is nothing else but that. That aspect of God’s law which we have ignored due to our egoism comes as an opposition force from outside. Who opposes us in this world? Only God, nobody else. Why does He oppose? Because we have ignored one aspect of His law. Though we are emphasising the aspect of spiritual aspiration, practice of yoga, teaching, etc., we are ignoring another aspect of God that He is present as a counterpart of our personality in the form of the world of beings outside.

Very difficult is the practice of yoga because we cannot easily harmonise ourselves with the elements that are external to us. We resent externality; that is the difficulty. We hate anything external to us, and even if we have a slight liking for other people in our minds, it is only a kind of apology that we are making for the satisfaction of our desires. We have to be very good psychologists of our own mind. The truth is that we really do not love others, and we have no liking for anything. We like only our own selves, though we seem to like others. We appear to have an affectionate feeling towards others on account of a subtle egoistic undercurrent of desire connected with the body and the personality, which can be fulfilled only in its cooperation with other people. We seem to be making the world an instrument in the satisfaction of our desires, so the world opposes us. Then the truth comes out into the light of the day.

We have to treat the world as a part of our personality, and treat ourselves as an integral part of the world in our aspiration for God. We should not make the mistake of thinking that the world is hanging on us, as it were, like an appendage. It is not like that. Neither is the world is hanging on us, nor are we hanging on it. There is an organic connection between the world and the individual. This is a very essential point in our concept of God and our concept of practice of sadhana. We should be humble and patient in our practices, and very slow though steady.

Our personality manifests itself in spite of our trying to sublimate it in our aspirations, and whenever such manifestation of personality becomes overbearing, there is conflict. So the artha and kama aspects of the institution of ashrama dharma are prescribed as an antidote to the subtle urges of materiality in our nature – fulfilment for the sake of sublimation, satisfaction for the sake of overcoming the desire for satisfaction. We take our meals, we go to sleep, we dress ourselves, not because we want to do it but because it is a necessary means to the growing of our personality, the outgrowing of our limitations. Even the meal that we take is to be regarded as a yajna. We are not supposed to eat food like an animal, as a dog or a cow eats its food. There is a prayer that we offer before meals. Anna is regarded as Brahma in the Taittiriya Upanishad. Every activity of ours including meals, including bathing
and putting on dress, and all social works is to be contributory to the manifestation of the spiritual reality in ourselves in a very harmonised manner in its relation to the outer world.

But this harmonisation should be according to the law of God. Dharma is again emphasised. We should not harmonise ourselves with the world in a personalistic manner, as for example, a father or a mother harmonises himself or herself with the family members. This is not necessary according to the law of God, because there is personal attachment involved in family relationships.

This spiritual harmonisation that we are speaking of here in our practice of sadhana is according to the law of God, which is free from all attachments. Dharma is not attachment; it is obedience to the universality of law, which is at the same time an affection, a love free from passion and attachments of every kind. *Dharmāviruddho bhūteṣu kāmo'asmi bharatar ṣabha* (Gita 7.11): “I am desire also,” says Sri Krishna. The Lord says, “I am also desire.” A desire in us is only God manifesting Himself. “But what kind of desire am I? Desire which is not opposed to dharma is God.” If it is *asuric* desire, then it is demonical.

We have to sublimate our *asuric* desires into a spiritual longing. This is the purpose of the Grihastha dharma. The householder’s life is not a materialistic, undivine life. It is as much spiritual and necessary as any other type of life that anyone can lead. Every stage is as important as every other stage. In the treatment of a disease there are stages of the administration of medicine, but all the stages are as important as every other stage. We cannot say that tomorrow’s stage is more important, today’s stage is less important. The dharma of the Brahmachari, the Grihastha, the Vanaprastha and the Sannyasa are a gradual manifestation of the universal dharma which is, in other words, the revelation of reality by degrees.

The practice of yoga should also conform to reality, which manifests itself in degrees. We should not miss any of the stages, neither dharma, artha, kama, nor moksha. Then it is that *samatva*, spirituality, balance, is introduced into the spiritual system. *Nātyaśnatas tu yogosti na caikāntam anaśnataḥ, na cātisvapnaśīlasya jāgrato naiva cārjuna; yuktāhāravihārasya yuktaceṣṭasya karmasu, yuktasvapnāvabodhasya yogo bhavati duḥkhahā* (Gita 6.16-17) is a verse from the Bhagavadgita, which means balance, harmony, proportion in action, effort, enjoyment, speech, thought, etc. Proper proportion is the golden mean maintained in every one of our activities, and this is contributory to the practice of yoga.

So be moderate in your conduct. Do not go to excess. When you speak, speak only what is necessary, and never project your personality because then nobody will speak to you afterwards. Some people always talk only about themselves. They have no subject other than themselves – where they went, what they did, what others thought about them; this is the only subject. You do not feel satisfied or happy when
listening to a person speaking about himself or herself. Whenever you speak, try not to speak about yourself – either for yourself or against yourself, condemning yourself or praising yourself. Exclude your personality completely when you talk to anybody. You will be taken care of by powers which are in the world, so do not bother about yourself.

And maintain a proportion when you speak. Sweet speech, well organised speech, necessary speech is manasika tapas, a great penance. The Bhagavadgita says that good speech, properly directed speech and well-conducted speech are also an austerity. Tapo mānasam ucyate (Gita 17.16). Three types of tapas are mentioned: tapas of the mind, tapas of the speech, and tapas of the body. The sublimation of the urges of the body, this proper proportion bestowed is physical tapas, and the regularity maintained in speech and thought is tapas of speech and the mind. Your thoughts should be well conducted. You should not have erratic thoughts in your mind because otherwise, you will not be able to sit and meditate. You should not start thinking everything that is projecting itself into the mind. Even when you go for a walk, do not start looking at everything, or even if you do look, the mind should not be unnecessarily connected with the objects. The mind and the speech and the bodily urges have thus to be regulated and made contributory to the final purpose of our existence.

Over and above all things, what we lack is an ultimate faith in the existence of God. We have faith in God, but it is a child’s faith, faith in a God who seems to be far away from us, Who may help us or may not help us, Who is physically distant from us, a concept of God which does not leave us even after long study of scriptures such as the Upanishads, the Gita, and so on. We can never believe that God is near us because it is something which the mind cannot contain. The mind is always under the notion that God is a little far off, and that is why we do clandestine activities. We entertain private notions, prejudices, and repellant attitudes in our own hearts due to the feeling that the divine principle ruling the world is a little far away from us. Even when we pray to God, we pray as if He is a little far from us. This is a notion which has been in engendered in our mind from our birth. But to the extent that we regard God as distant, to that extent there will also be delay in the response from God.

We pray, and Prahlada also prayed, but the prayer of Prahlada was instantaneously answered on account of his trust in the omnipresence of God. The Vaikuntha, the Kailasa or the Satyaloka where the supreme divinities dwell, to speak in the language of our own theology, is not far away from us if we honestly believe it. If this belief takes possession of us, we will not stretch our hands begging for favours from other people. Vaikuntha and Kailasa are not away from us, and the Narayana of Vaikuntha or the Rudra or the Siva of Kailasa can come to our aid just at this moment because they are nearer to us than our own throat, our own nose and our own eyes. It does not take time for them to manifest themselves.
The more clarified your concept of God is, the quicker is the response that you receive from God. If your concept of God is muddled, then there is no proper response. So clarify your intellect, purify your understanding, and then take to the path of yoga. Then you will see that the moment you sit for meditation, the mind will run to God like an arrow towards its target because of the similarity of nature between the mind and your object of aspiration. But if the mind and the objects of your aspiration are made differently in constitution, the one will not attract the other. Just as your mind is connected with your subjectivity, the ultimate Godhead that you are seeking also is a universal subjectivity. If you regard yourself as a subject and God as an object, then it will take a lot of time for God to come near you. You regard yourself as a subject, thinking God is an object; therefore, there is difficulty in contacting God. But God is not an object; He is the subject behind even subjectivity.

So to conclude, the evolution of the cosmos is a tendency of the Spirit to gradually absorb externality and objectivity into subjectivity and universality. The outside God becomes the inward God, and then the universal God. The world that is outside us and away from us, of which we are very much afraid, becomes our own friend and becomes inseparable from our own self. Natural forces become our own friends. The world becomes our guide, and the God Whom we are seeking becomes our nearest and dearest possession.

With this clarity, or viveka, discrimination, with japa, svadhyaya, dhyana, we must also have adequate understanding of the anatomy of the practice. We must not merely be a good person, but also a wise person. They have to go together. Industriousness, effort, tenacity should be coupled with understanding, clarity, patience, and the wisdom of the true nature of things as they are in their relation to our present state of existence in every level of our life.

Considering all this, we can very well imagine how difficult it is to bring home to our own minds the various aspects of the practice of yoga. We may miss one or another aspect of it, and then we fall. It is said that Ravana had ten heads, and he used to offer yajna daily to Siva, Rudra. He was doing upasana of Rudra, and was expecting the grace of the master, Rudra, so he cut off every one of his heads and offered each one of them. But as Rudras are eleven, and the heads were only ten, Ravana could not offer anything to the eleventh Rudra. That eleventh Rudra opened his eyes and said, “You have ignored me. I shall see to it.” That Rudra entered Hanuman and burnt Lanka, destroyed everything. Then Ravana said, “If only I had eleven heads, this great catastrophe would not have befallen me.”

This is only to give an illustration of how an ignored aspect can retaliate upon us, though it may be simply one aspect. If there is even one small sand particle in the eye, you cannot see. You are restless, and go on rubbing your eye until it comes out because you have something unnatural in your personality, something unwanted in
your body. Likewise, a weakness of any kind of the necessary aspects of life of any particular degree of reality will rebound upon you and deter your progress, hinder your march so that you will not be in a position to know as to what difficulty you are actually facing.

Yoga is a universal truth. You are not a single isolated individual practising yoga. Remove this misconception from your mind. You require the assistance of every blessed thing in the world, visible and invisible, in the practice of yoga. In reality, it is the universe that is practising yoga, not you or I, and when we participate in it God will bless us.