

**OM SAI RAM!**

**Welcome to Prasanthi Sandesh,**

**PODCAST 242, “OTHER BARRIERS IN SPIRITUALITY”**

**May 23, 2024**

*The following text contains excerpts from Prof. Anil Kumar’s book  
“Sai-Chology,” pg.282-289*

**EGO IS A BARRIER IN SPIRITUALITY**

How do we define death? Actually, death is nothing but the death of the ego. We call it death in the ordinary sense because it is the so-called “I”, “I am that, I am this”. Man dies as an ego and never in relation to life. It is only in relation to the ego that there is death. Egolessness is deathlessness and immortality. Death means the death of the ego.

We should then welcome death and not be afraid of the loss of ego. Here, Baba quotes Jesus Christ, who declared on the Cross – “Death is the dress of life.”

When we change our dress, we do not cry. Similarly, death is the dress of life wherein the Atma has changed vesture. Therefore, the death of ego is a celebration and a festival, because the ego is the worst barrier in spirituality, and in fact, we should welcome death in relation to the ego.

Baba always says, “You are the Truth. Truth has no end. Truth has no beginning. Truth is eternal. You are part of the Truth - *Satyam Jnamam Anantam Brahma.*”

*Satyam* – Truth, *Jnanam* - wisdom, *Anantam* – Infinite, *Brahma*. You are Truth; you are Infinite; you are Wisdom. Wisdom is deathless. Infinity is deathless. Truth is deathless. You are the Truth. You are deathless. That is why the Holy Bible says, “You shall know the Truth and the Truth shall set you free.” Once you know the Truth, you are set free through the death of your ego.

*Asatoma Sat Gamaya* – From untruth to Truth! Truth is the death-knell of the ego. Truth is eternal and immortal. So, once you are part of the Truth, there is no question of death at all. Therefore, to experience God, we should see that the ego dies as early as possible. So the third hindrance to enlightenment therefore is ego. (The first two are Knowledge and Fear of God as discussed in “Barriers to Spirituality, Part 1” last week.)

*Tamasoma Jyotir Gamaya* – There lies the light of wisdom. *Tamas* is the darkness, *Jyoti* is light. Light dispels darkness. Darkness is death. Light is Truth, Bliss, Peace. Light is eternal.

We are birthless, deathless and eternal; we are Truth itself. We celebrate birthdays because having enough money, we want to have a social celebration. We enjoyed it for a while. "Happy Birthday!" But actually, you were never born. It is only the body that appeared. That is all! You existed even before the existence of this body.

Baba gives the example of electricity, which is everywhere. When it is in a lamp, it gives out light. Even when the bulb is removed, the electricity is still there, ever present. With the bulb or without the bulb, electricity flows. Likewise, we are the divine and cosmic energy – the eternal Truth. The bulb is the body, that's all!

Somebody asked Swami, "What will happen after death?" Baba replied, "Nothing will happen." After death, nothing will happen. There is no birth at all. Just as electricity exists, so too does energy! Energy exists everywhere, but it is transformed into various forms. Sometimes the energy becomes matter. The latest quantum theory of physics states that there is no matter. As a matter of fact, everything is energy. But in practicality, the various forms of energy are there for the use of humankind.

The only one that exists is cosmic energy, divine energy – *sat* (truth) that is existence. *Sat* means truth and it also means existence. So, we are ever existent, we have never appeared or disappeared.

### **SEEKING GOD IS A BARRIER IN SPIRITUALITY**

The fourth barrier is the tendency to seek God. Some people say, "After coming to Swami, I found God." Others say, "I am in search of God." Both are wrong! The greatest gift that Bhagawan has given us is the gift of wisdom, the practical Indian spiritual knowledge from *Vedanta*. This is only due to Bhagawan. All things that Bhagawan does are only to ultimately benefit us.

When the child refuses to eat, the mother coaxes it by telling story after story and the child slowly completes the meal. The mother goes on singing and telling stories although she is very tired. However, it is only love that makes the child eat.

So, Swami may give us interviews, rings, watches, locket, sweets, *darshan* and *sambhashan* (speaking to Swami). All these are stories to make all the children eat the food of spirituality.

Bhagawan's food is spirituality but we don't want spirituality. We want our mundane matters to be sorted out, relating to family, career and health, and that is the reason we are in Puttaparthi. All this is utter foolishness. The more egoistic we are, the more we become puppets for Him to play with. The more foolish we are, the more He makes us greater fools. Why? So that we come out of this folly, until we come out of His play.

Baba also arranges functions, discourses and cultural programmes with much care. The Divine Mother is more merciful and more compassionate, so that we may eat a little morsel of the food of spirituality.

If we say, “I want to know God”, this is what Baba says, “If you say, ‘I want money’, you can get it by working for it. If you want a position, you can get it by struggling for it. If you want to be influential, yes, you can be. You can desire anything in this world but you attain God by **non-desiring**.” This is indeed a paradoxical situation – we should not desire God!

Let us understand this word, ‘desire’. One desires money or position because one does not have it. One may want influence because of neglect and the ego is affected. Therefore, one wants to be influential. So, one desires what one does not have. But we cannot desire God because He is **already in us**. The fact that we are eating, talking, walking and doing all other activities in life is because of God. We are alive! That life is God. Then, why do we desire God?

### **RELIGION IS A BARRIER IN SPIRITUALITY**

The next impediment in spirituality is religion. We have gathered at the Feet of Baba, who does not speak of any religion. In what religion do we categorise Baba? Baba has no religion. – He does not speak of any religion. Why is this so? Every religion tells us the way to God. Christians say, “Christ is the goal. Christianity is the way.” Muslims say, “Allah is the goal. Islam is the way.” Buddhists say, “Buddha is the goal. Buddhism is the way.”

So, every religion speaks of two things – the goal and the way. Both of these are ludicrous issues because **God is not a Goal**. When we are planning to visit a restaurant we may have to climb the steps to reach it – the goal is the restaurant and the way is clear. The time is not yet. So, when there is a goal and a way, there are two points – one is the time, the other is the distance.

Whether it is here or there, every goal has a time and distance. When God is within me, when I am God, what is the distance? There is no question of distance at all! How much time will it take? Does it take any time to know our name or identity? It also does not take any distance. Similarly, when we are God, we don’t need to go any distance, nor do we need time to know. There is no “way” to reach the goal because time and distance do not exist and are totally irrelevant. God is **not** our goal because **we are God!**

What does Baba do in Prasanthi Nilayam? In May, Buddhists come from all over the world to celebrate Buddha Purnima and Christians come to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. Hindus celebrate the birth of Lord Krishna on Janmashtami and of Sri Rama on Rama Navami. Here we taste Divinity as being the same in all Forms!

A simple example: To know that seawater is salty, we don’t have to go into the sea. To know the taste of the sea, we don’t have to go to any specific place in the ocean; it can be tasted anywhere. So, Christmas, Buddha Purnima, Janmashtami, Sri Rama Navami, Ganesh Chaturthi, Sivaratri – these are all the different points located in the ocean of the Divinity of Sathya Sai Baba. He is the ocean and these are the special occasions for us to taste His Divinity.

There will be more spiritually enlightening thoughts and facts in the next session.

Thank you for your time,

**OM SAI RAM**