

## OM SAI RAM

### Welcome to this Question and Answer Session

#### Q. 328, "CAN WE BE GOOD AND JOYFUL ALL THE TIME?"

July 13, 2024

*This text excerpt is taken from Prof. Anil Kumar's book, Seeking Within, pages 3-8.*

**Q. God says to do good to all. Where do I draw the line, say, if I have done good to the best of my ability and yet another man hurts me?**

**A.** You are doing your best because Baba has said to do good. Still, the other man is hurting you. Where do you draw a line? This means, "When do I stop helping the other man? I keep on helping the man and he is not reciprocating. So, at what point should I stop helping him?" That's what the questioner means.

I will give you an example from Sai literature. It seems a wise man was having his morning bath in a river. In the river, he saw a scorpion struggling. This wise man picked up the scorpion with his hand. The scorpion bit the man, so immediately the man dropped it in the water. The scorpion went on struggling.

Out of compassion, the man picked it up again. The scorpion started biting again. Then, this wise man thought, "Oh scorpion, you have not given up your bad nature. Although you have not given up your bad nature, why should I give up my nature of helping? I will continue to help you because this is the lesson that I learned from you. Just because you have not given up your nature, why should I give up my nature?"

Therefore, when another man hurts you, he is behaving like a scorpion. Because that person hurts you, it doesn't mean that you should stop helping him. You should continue your own nature. It is something like the sun. "Oh Sun, you are giving me light. Thank you!" None of us say that. Still, the Sun goes on shedding light.

Gandhiji was highly respectful to Winston Churchill in spite of the fact that they were 'at loggerheads' (in a quarrel) with each other. Because of his

nature, he was very courteous to Churchill. Likewise, helpfulness should be your nature. It should be second nature to you.

The thought of helpfulness should not be only a Sunday affair. The thought of service should not be only for a service activity. It should be your nature. You and service should go together. You and help are one and the same. It is not that help will only dawn on Monday. «I am very humble on Sunday, service-loving on Tuesday and helpful on Wednesday.» No. Life is not a timetable. Life is not a schedule. Helpfulness should be your nature, your second nature and your in-built character – so that you are not mindful of anything else.

At this hour, I am reminded of a missionary, a great Christian missionary by the name of Wolf. He was staying in a big bungalow. A few robbers and thieves entered his house. They had stolen everything and they were leaving his bungalow.

At that moment, Reverend Wolf got up from his bed and noticed the thieves leaving. He shouted, “Oh young men, stop there! It is dark all over. There are many thorny bushes. This place is known for snakes and scorpions. I will give you a lamp, my dear sons. Take the lamp and go slowly. I don’t want you to die.” That is helpful nature!

I also remember a story from Tolstoy literature. A vagabond – a gangster and a man of vices - lost all his property. Finally, it happened that his fiancée wanted his mother’s gold chain. This fellow got fully drunk, killed his mother and snatched away her gold chain. He was leaving the house to present his gold chain to his fiancée.

Then the man heard a voice: “Sonny, be careful! Watch your step. You are fully drunk, my dear child. You may fall. So carry the gold chain carefully. The fellow looked back. What did he see? He saw the heart of his mother on the ground. The heart started speaking like that. “Sonny, be careful! You may fall. Take hold of this chain. Be careful.” That is Love.

“I will help you if you help me” – that is business, which is political. “I will continue to help you even if you hurt me” – that is the true spirit of help.

***Q. Today I accept things. But how do I accept unpleasant things with Joy?***

**A.** This is a common question. How to accept unpleasant things with joy? I don't say that it is pleasant to sit there for three hours in the morning and three hours in the evening; because your knee joints will tell you how pleasant that is! The backache will tell you how pleasant it is! It is very difficult. Yet, pleasant or unpleasant is more or less based on your temperament, based on your attitude. It is psychological. It is the way of the mind.

Let us take the Japanese, for example. Anyone from Japan works like a grinding mill. He is ready to work. Though the country was totally lost, it could come up in the field of science and technology in no time. Although Hiroshima was brought down to ashes because of bombing, (Hiroshima and Nagasaki, you must have heard of those two places), today Hiroshima is the most beautiful city. Out of rubble, they created a most beautiful city.

It is an attitude. If I can make unpleasant things pleasant, I consider myself triumphant, victorious. It is a win! Simple example: I am a smoker. (Of course, I am not. I am giving an example, as of today) and somebody tells me, "Don't smoke." This is very unpleasant to me. But if I stop smoking, which is quite unpleasant, then I have won; I am a winner. If an alcoholic stops drinking, Yes! He is a winner. So, in making unpleasant things pleasant, there lies your success. There lies your win. That is *sadhana*.

*Sadhana*, spiritual practice, is nothing but making unpleasant things pleasant, making unpleasant things acceptable. Sometimes certain things happen in our lives, which are not acceptable to us, which are shocking to us. For example, some calamity happens in the family. Some death happens. Property is stolen or a job is gone. You are deserted by kith and kin – some shocks, which are very unpleasant. When these unpleasant things are accepted with a spiritual background, with spiritual trust, with spiritual strength, YES! Then you are the winner. On the other hand, if you just take unpleasant things unpleasantly, you are a loser. You have lost the game. Success depends upon that.

Simple example: When you are a legal heir, you have all the rights in the court of law to be the king; but if you just abandon that kingship and go to the forest, you are the winner. That's what Sri Ramachandra did. Sri Ramachandra was the legal heir to the kingdom, but He left the kingdom and went to the forest, so He became great. It is not pleasant for a king to

go to the forest. He could make this unpleasant thing very pleasant. That made him chivalrous. That made Him a hero for all ages to come.

So, your heroism lies in making unpleasant things pleasant, through some effort. This is only possible by reposing faith in God. It is only faith in God that will make unpleasant things acceptable.

“Why did God do this?”

Don't question it. “God, give me strength to face this. Give me courage to face this.” That should be our attitude.

***Q. From whom and when do we start to pick up bad emotions, feelings and habits?***

**A.** As children, we are innocent. Innocence is Divine; but as the child grows, this innocence will start to develop into ego and the child will become ignorant. The child will learn to develop ego, first from his parents and his close surroundings and later from school, friends and society.

Later, through personal experiences, he realizes that he is ignorant, usually after passing through a tragedy of some sort or a death in the family, some sickness, or a deep frustration in his life.

Then he understands that what he loves is not true, that what he has been enjoying is not permanent and what he wants is not worth possessing at all. Then he starts discriminating, what is good, what is bad.

At that time, a Master shows up in many people's lives, or the connection with an already existing Master will reappear. The Master will bring you back to him when you have experienced that your desires and your mind are not what you want to experience deep down.

We all want to experience grace, love, bliss, union and peace of mind. If we are open and receptive to a true Master, he will show us the way.

Indian tradition also teaches that each person is born with tendencies and habits, both good and bad, from actions in the past lives, which can influence the person in this present lifetime.

Prof. Anil Kumar shares more wisdom with us in the next session.

Thank you for your time.

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