

Talk Given by Professor Anil Kumar in North Carolina, USA

“Question and Answer Session”

May 29, 2010

OM...OM...OM...

Sai Ram

With Pranams at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan,

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

How are you?

Good.

Say, “Sai Ram.”

Sai Ram.

Perfect.

Well, I will read out the questions and try to answer them. Frankly, all the answers are only from Sai literature. No answer is based on my imagination or concoction. (I am not capable of that yet!) When I do not know an answer, I will be plain enough to admit it and seek the earliest opportunity to get an appropriate answer from Bhagavan at the right time.

Some questions that are repetitive have been dropped. Questions that have similar answers have also been dropped. So also are questions that are trivial or out of context. After finishing this list of questions, if we still have time and the regional president permits, you are quite welcome to ask any other questions that you may have.

LOVE IS UNCONDITIONAL

I constantly struggle with Swami’s statement, “Love all, serve all”, especially when I see bad or wicked elements.

How to love others without attachment?

Well, my friends, when you encounter bad and wicked elements, how are you to love all? How are you to serve all? When you know fully well that someone is wicked or bad, how can you love and serve him? That is a very, very genuine question.

My friends, love is unconditional.

“I love you only if you are good.” This is conditional.

“I serve you only if you are good.” This is also conditional.

But love is unconditional. Therefore, whether one is wicked, good, or bad, we have to love them. Why? Because we see our Father loves all, and Jesus has loved everybody too. Therefore, we also can love everybody. Baba loves everybody, so we too can learn to love everybody.

Suppose Baba says, “This category of people (those who are only good) may come for *darshan* tomorrow, while that category (those who have done something bad) cannot come.” The whole of Prashanti Nilayam would be empty! (*Laughter*) Then there will be no accommodation problem! *Seva dals* will have no job! Therefore, my friends, to love unconditionally is true love, irrespective of whether people are good or bad.

Point number two: let us not be judgemental. How do you say so-and-so is bad or good? As long as the terms and relationships are good between you, everything is alright. When anything goes wrong, you condemn him. So, let us not be judgemental.

So, love is both unconditional and non-judgemental.

One example: A few children were playing, and doing lots of mischief. One person sitting there got disturbed. He told an elderly man who was in charge of those children, “Would you mind controlling your children? They are doing a lot of mischief. I am not able to bear it any longer. Please take them inside.”

The elderly person said, “You know, they are blind children. They have just been operated on. They are able to see the world now. They are so thrilled by the wind. They are so thrilled by raindrops. Therefore, they are jumping in joy.”

Can you still afford to be judgemental? Therefore, when someone is bad, don't brand him. Love is non-judgemental. By being non-judgemental, we are unconditional. We can love all and serve all.

LOVE IS UNIVERSAL

The second part of this question is: How to love others without attachment?

Well, to love others without attachment is pure love. Attachment is different from love. You are attached to your property. You are attached to your family. You are attached to your community. But, love is universal.

Loving material objects is different from loving family members. *Moha*, *abhimana*: both these words mean 'attachment'. *Anuradha* means 'infatuation'. *Maitri* is 'friendship'. These are all different forms of love, leading to attachment. But pure love is beyond 'true love'. It has nothing to do with attachment.

Attachment is expectational:

"I am sure that my children will take care of me."

"If I say 'yes' to my wife all through, I am sure she will say 'yes' to me."

"I have been giving a lot of help to my friend, so I am sure he will also help me."

These are all examples of attachment. So, attachment is expectational, while love is non-expectational.

Attachment is time-bound. "I am attached to my office." After retirement, even if I am attached, the watchman will kick me out. (*Laughter*) So attachment is time-bound, while love is not time-bound. Attachment is limited, whereas love is universal, unlimited, indeterminate, and infinite. That is love.

Attachment is human, while love is Divine. You are attached to objects, people, persons, and properties; but you love mountains, words, rivers, clouds, and rainbows. Love is spread all over the organic and inorganic elements. So love gives you the feeling that you are one family, whereas attachment will make you focused and narrowed down.

Suppose Swami asks you, "How many brothers do you have?"

You say, "Two brothers."

"*Che, che!* Two brothers?!"

"How many brothers do you have?"

"All are my brothers, Swami."

Aah! That is the correct answer. (*Laughter*)

"How many sisters do you have?"

"One sister."

"*Che!* How many sisters do you have?"

"All are my sisters."

Correct!

So, expansion of love is life. Contraction of love is attachment, which is death.

So, how to love others without attachment?

"I don't expect anything, Swami."

He loves, but He is not attached. In the morning, He grants you an interview. He talks to you so intimately and so closely, as if the *Avatar* has come for you only. (*Laughter*) And, you begin to brag outside, “You know how Swami spoke to me?” (You do not know that He spoke to a thousand people like that.)

“You know He gave me a ring?” (Millions of people got rings!)

“Swami saved my life.” (That is Swami’s purpose!)

He gives you the feeling that you are so important and that you are so close to Him—this is in the morning. In the evening, He stands in front of you and acts as if you are nobody, as if you’ve never even met. (*Laughter*)

Another example: In Kodaikanal, the conversation is so personal. Swami talks about family matters – sometimes even romantic topics! But after returning from Kodaikanal, it is like, “I don’t know who you are.” That is detachment. So you can love and yet be detached. Swami is the best example of that.

PUNISHMENT IS ALSO BORN OUT OF LOVE

If ‘Love all, serve all’ is true, why did Rama kill Ravana, or why did Krishna support the Kurukshetra war?

We have some knowledge of the *Puranas*, but that little knowledge has led to confusion.

A doctor operates and performs surgery, but it is not out of any hatred or rivalry from a previous birth. (*Laughter*) He does it out of love to save your life. So Krishna supported the Pandavas in the Kurukshetra war out of love, to uphold *dharma*, to save the righteous from the wicked. He did this out of love, just as the surgeon operates out of love.

And then, why did Rama kill Ravana? Rama killed Ravana because of his wicked qualities, that’s all; yet He loved him.

“Killing and loving?”

Why not?

When death approached, Rama asked Lashmana to go to Ravana and learn political science. (*Laughter*)

“What Swami, you want me to...?”

“Yes! Why not? Ravana was a senior king. He was the grandson of Pulastya Brahma, a scholar of the four Vedas, six *shastras*, *Veda Vedantas*. Such a great man! Go and learn from him all about political administration.”

Then Vibhishana (the elder brother of Ravana) said, “Swami, my brother is a #1 useless fellow! (*Laughter*) In fact, he was running after Mother Sita, which he should not have done. Now after he dies, I am not going to perform the last rites. I am not going to perform the obituary rites.”

Rama said, “You are wrong, Vibhishana. If you are not prepared to do it, I am prepared to do it. It is out of love.”

Therefore, punishment is also born out of love. A mother is angry with her child, not out of hatred, but out of love. Many examples can be given like that.

SADHANA IS GOING BACK TO OUR ORIGINAL NATURE

What are the most effective ways for an individual to produce positive energy?

Energy, as students of science know pretty well, is neither created nor destroyed. The kinetic theory of energy says that energy is not produced; it is already there. So positive energy is always within us, but selfishness makes it negative. Envy, pride, jealousy and greed make it negative; otherwise, it is positive.

Take a simple example: We see the handkerchief in Swami’s hands. The handkerchief is white in colour. As you go on using it, it becomes dirty, right? Is the dirt the nature of the handkerchief? No! The handkerchief is white. You made it dirty because of constant use. Similarly, energy is positive within us. Envy, greed, pride and ego, they make it dirty; they make it negative.

So what is the solution? You use detergent and wash it. Or you use electric dry cleaners so that it is brought back to its original white colour. You cannot say, “Oh, the handkerchief is not white in colour.” It was white already, but you made it black. Nor has the washerman painted it white. He simply made it as pure and white as it was originally.

This process of going back to the original nature is what is called *sadhana*. Spiritual practice is to go back to our original nature. It does not mean to import, export, deport or report. It has to do with going back to our original nature.

So the effective way for an individual to produce positive energy is not to be egoistic, not to be envious, not to be proud, not to be pompous, not to be boastful, and not to indulge in self-glorification or self-aggrandisement. These acts only make the positive turn to negative.

ENTERTAIN GOOD THOUGHTS TO BE FREE FROM BAD THOUGHTS

How do you prevent yourself from getting bad thoughts? Can everything be categorised as good or bad?

“How do you prevent yourself from having bad thoughts?” The point is this: the more you try to prevent, the more the bad thoughts will come. (*Laughter*)

“Let me not have bad thoughts.” You will have them in full force!

“Let me give it up.” You will have them in multiples.

To remove bad thoughts is not possible. If anyone says, “I have been successful in removing bad thoughts,” he is a liar number one! *(Laughter)* Keep him away from you. He is a hypocrite! It is not possible to remove bad thoughts because the mind is like that.

“So what am I to do?”

Direct the mind towards good thoughts. When you develop more and more good thoughts, bad thoughts will naturally become less and less, as a balance. Therefore, entertain more good thoughts so that the bad thoughts are reduced.

On the other hand, if you fight more and more with bad thoughts, it is like an Alsatian dog; it will come back to you with double the force. So, entertaining good thoughts is the solution to being free from bad thoughts.

WHAT IS GOOD AT ONE TIME IS BAD LATER ON

Can everything be categorised as good or bad?

We cannot categorise something as good or bad. What is good at one time is bad later on.

For example, back in those days in India, in the forties and fifties, to go abroad was considered as *chandala yoga*—the worst thing that could ever happen! *(Laughter)* Today, **not** to go abroad is *parama chandala yoga* (even greater bad luck)! *(Laughter)*

Therefore, my friends, the definition of good and bad changes with time. What was good then is bad now. We cannot decide what is good and bad on the spur of the moment. Good and bad depend upon the times, geographical conditions, and social conditions. You cannot generalise about them.

To quote one of Baba’s oft-repeated lessons: “The fruit you eat—the apple—is good now. By tomorrow morning, it is terrible.” *(Laughter)* Why? It is a question of time, it is a question of circumstances, and it is a question of the position which decides what is good and what is bad. So there is nothing like ‘absolute goodness’. There is nothing that is absolutely bad.

Some people condemn a person as bad because they think they are good. This is another psychological disease most people suffer from.

Some people come and say, “Mommy, that fellow smokes.”

“So what? That fellow smokes. So what?”

He wants to prove to his mother, “I am a non-smoker.” *(Laughter)*

This is a psychological weakness: pointing out bad things in others, implying that they themselves are created good. There is something wrong with such people.

Therefore, good and bad is not left to you. Who are you to judge? “I am nobody.”

On the other hand, if you are totally good, you will never brand anyone as bad.

It was Jesus Christ who said, “Oh woman, go forth. Sin no more! Sin no more!”

So the topmost man who is totally good will never brand anyone as bad.

RELIGIONS ARE DIFFERENT, BUT SPIRITUALITY IS THE SAME

Is Sai spirituality different from spirituality?

Oh! There is nothing called ‘Sai spirituality’. Why? Baba said very clearly in the first World Conference held in Mumbai, Dharmakshetra, that ‘Sai’ is not a religion. ‘Sai’ is not an independent current.

“All names belong to Me. All forms are Mine,” declared Sathya Sai Baba. You can verify this by reading Swami’s discourse to the delegates at the first World Conference.

What is ‘Sai spirituality’? There is no such thing. Spirituality is the same. Religions are different—Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism. Religions are different, but spirituality is the same.

*Matamulu Anniyu Manchivaina Mata Bedhi Cheddadhi
Matulu Manchivaina Matamedhi Cheddadhi
Vinudu Bharatiya Veera Suthuda*

If your minds are good,

Matamedhi Cheddadhi

Which religion is bad?

Matamuluannicheri Manchine Bodhinche

All religions have taught what is basically good, what is fundamentally good.

Matulu Manchivaina Matamedhi Cheddadhi

If your mathi (mind) is good, no mata (religion) is bad.

So there is nothing called ‘Sai spirituality’. Please don’t make it a dogmatic, narrow-minded thing or reduce it to the level of fundamentalism.

THERE ARE SOME VERY GOOD BENEFITS TO TV

What are your thoughts on the impact of TV? How do we shield children from this, when an adult at home is used to watching TV?

I see. This is an individual problem, I believe. (Laughter)

Even if others at home don't watch TV, children will watch TV at the neighbour's house. *(Laughter)* Can you prevent it? You cannot.

In watching TV, we can say that there are some very good benefits as there are some very good programs. On Discovery channel, they can watch animals of different kinds. And there are many TV programmes with music. For example, Zee TV music channel hosts music competitions for tiny tots. How excellently they sing! What talent they have! So we cannot brand TV as 'bad'. No, no! People who don't watch TV are much worse than people who watch TV. *(Laughter)*

TV watching won't decide your personality or reserve your place in heaven or hell. Of course, for people of our age, what do we lose by watching TV? Back in those days, some were spoiled by watching TV. But now there is nothing still precious (e.g. innocence) remaining within us. *(Laughter)* There is no point in telling us, "Don't watch TV!" What will happen if someone says that to us? *(Laughter)*

Children can be encouraged to watch certain TV programmes that have educational value like music and dance, and IIT (Indian Institute of Technology) students' quiz programs. Most of the adults cannot answer these quiz programmes, but IIT students answer them wonderfully. How eloquent those students are! With what clarity they speak! So one can learn languages, one can learn the methods of communication and acquire certain knowledge from some TV programmes.

So there is nothing wrong with TV. There is something wrong with this TV (pointing to his head). *(Laughter)* Please clean that up. That is the point.

OM IS THE PROCESS THAT SENDS POSITIVE VIBRATIONS

What is the spiritual value attained by chanting Vedas? When the chanter does not understand the meaning of what he or she chants, is that still fruitful?

A good question, but the sound of *Veda* chanting has its own implications. Take *Omkar*.

When you say *Om*, the breathing process—*pranayama*—should come from the navel. *(Anil Kumar says 'Om'.)*

The breathing process of inhalation and exhalation—*Omkar*—regulates the thought process. *Omkar* is a process that sends out positive vibrations.

Suppose we are all seated here and you hear the loud sound of an atom bomb:

"Aaah!"

You ask, "What happened? Are you safe?"

So sounds can frighten you.

Take for example, music and beautiful songs, film songs—the latest or old Raj Kapoor film songs, like *Sangam*. Most of the people in South India, although they don't know Hindi, can sing Hindi songs. So sound has its own importance. But it should be said with the correct diction,

intonation, and pronunciation. If something is wrong with the pronunciation, the whole meaning is lost.

Baba gives an example:

A man once prayed, “O Goddess, save me!” But instead of saying, “*Rakshatu* (save me),” he started saying, “*Bhakshatu* (consume).” (*Laughter*)

“*Devena Bhakshatu!*” In saying that, he lost his first wife successfully! (*Laughter*)

Then second wife was also lost in the same way: “*Devena Bhakshatu!*” Unknowingly he was chanting “Consume wife” (“*Devena Bhakshatu!*”) instead of “Save me!” (“*Rakshatu!*”)

Hari Om Tat Sat! (*Laughter*) There went the third one too...! This fellow became very disturbed as no one else would marry him.

Then God appeared and asked, “What is wrong with you, My dear son?”

“Swami, I am repeating Your *mantra*.”

“Please repeat it.”

“*Devena Bhakshatu!*” (“*Consume my wife!*”)

Then God said, “You chanted this, so I gave it. Therefore, it is not My mistake.”

Therefore, wrong intonation—anything that is misspelled or mispronounced—can give you evil effects. This is very clear. Therefore, one should be trained. This is the first point.

The second point is this: If you don’t know the *Vedas*, there’s nothing wrong in it. Some foreigners ask me, “Mr. Anil Kumar, we don’t know the *Vedas*, so what shall we do?”

I tell them, “God knows English also. (*Laughter*) You can pray in English. It doesn’t matter.”

I see people above 70 holding a book and reading loudly. Are they barking at the book or what? (*Laughter*) At this age, they don’t remember the words. So, why this exercise? You can simply close your eyes and listen to the sounds. Therefore, my friends, if we know the meaning, it is very good. If we cannot do it, it is better to keep quiet. To the extent we know the chants, we can participate.

EVERY TIME, EVERY SECOND IS ‘SAI TIME’

How to find time for Sai daily?

He never asks you to give Him some time. (*Laughter*) He never asked, “*Arre* boy, give me some time.” (*Laughter*) He never sought your appointment. He never wanted any engagement.

Time for Sai is not special. Time for Sai is not accidental, incidental, or abnormal. Time for Sai is usual, casual, and regular.

“How do you say it is usual and casual? Why?”

Because, as I do my work, if I think of Him, it is time for Sai. As you drive to your work place or office, most of the Sai devotees have tape-recorded Sai *bhajans* and listen to them. It is time for Sai. Yes. I know many people who have Swami’s picture on their office table. It is time for Sai.

I know many people who have time in between. For example (not to blow my own trumpet), in those days at the Andhra Christian College in Guntur, where I taught medical entrance for a long time, I used to teach for thirteen hours daily, speaking about highly complicated subjects. If you diluted your teaching even a little bit, the timetable would change. The other teacher would get extra periods. So that’s what medical entrance teaching entailed. Please believe me, as I am speaking in front of Swami.

The other teachers in between two periods—their intermission—used to have *dosa*, *upma*, and a couple of *idlis* bathed in *sambar*. But when I had my breakfast at home, I never used to touch anything throughout those thirteen hours of work. Why? Because, between one period and another, as I moved from one class to another, I used to sing Sai *bhajans*:

(Anil Kumar sings “Gopika Mala Hari Pyari..”)

That was equal to taking Calcium Sandoz tablets for me. It had the effects of a multivitamin tablet. Therefore, you don’t have time for Sai? No, no, no! Every time, every second is Sai. That’s all.

It is difficult to follow Sai principles in this era. Please give a few guidelines or pearls of wisdom for young adults.

Follow Sai principles in this era? Baba belongs to this era, not *Thretha* or *Dwapara Yugas*.
(Laughter and applause) Why do you outdate Him like that? *(Laughter)*

There is no other *Avatar* or *guru* (this is an open challenge!) who has explained the entire *Vedantic* spirituality in a nutshell, in a practical way, other than Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.
(Applause) He is the only one who has done it and done it most successfully.

Take a simple example: If you ask, “What is spirituality?” great scholars will say, “Please give me an hour’s time to explain what spirituality is.”

Others will say, “You cannot understand this philosophy.” *(Laughter)*

But what does Baba say? “Spirituality is nothing but a journey from ‘I’ to ‘We’.”

Hari Om Tat Sat! Show me any *guru* who talks like that. Impossible! It is only Sri Sathya Sai Baba who can speak like that. “Spirituality is a journey from ‘I’ to ‘We’.”

Swami asked a great scholar, V.K. Gokak (a great man of international repute, and a Padma Bhushan and Gyanapeet awardee), “What is love?”

“Love is a very important subject for me and I have to speak about love.”

“Aaah, you want to *speak* about love? You have to *live* love, not *speak* on love.” (Laughter)

Swami asked again, “What is love?”

“Swami, I cannot say immediately.”

And Baba answered, “Love is selflessness. Self is lovelessness.” Who can explain like this? Self is lovelessness. Love is selflessness. That’s all.

Who can tell it like that?

“Swami, I have no time for meditation. I have no time for religion. What shall I do?”

“No, no, my boy! *Sarva Karam Bhagavad Preetiyartam*. ‘Whatever I do, let it be pleasing unto You, my Lord. Whatever I do is an offering to Your lotus feet, My Lord.’ ”

That is divinisation or the spiritualisation of human life. If you cannot practice this in this era, with Sathya Sai’s teachings so available, then you can never practice anything (please take it from me) even for a thousand lives to come, because this is the easiest and simplest method. That’s what Baba says.

“Swami, there are so many values. How can I practice all those values? (Laughter) For every one value, there are sub-values. Then sub-values have sub-sub-sub values. So what am I to do?”

“*Bangaru, anni levu naayana!* If you have love, all other values follow naturally.”

Who can tell you like that? Therefore my friends, it is easy to practice Sai principles!

“I AM VERY PLAIN”

How did you get chosen to be Swami’s translator? (Laughter)

He is the chooser, so how can I answer? (Laughter) He should know why He has chosen me. If I have chosen Him, I can explain. When He has chosen me, what am I to do? I am helpless.

In the same context, let me tell you—it was the year 1988 and there was a World Conference. The national presidents of the Sai organisation had a meeting in the Mandir and Swami was seated there. I was the state president of Sathya Sai organisation of Andhra Pradesh at that time.

Swami wanted to speak in Telugu. There was nobody there. Suddenly He called me: “Do you translate?”

If I say, “I can,” I have utterly failed. If I say, “I cannot,” He will ask me to do it. What should I say? So I kept quiet. (Laughter) God has given us nice teeth (smiling). (Laughter)

Then Baba said, "Come on."

He started speaking and I started translating. This was in 1988, my debut or very first movie as a translator. *(Laughter)*

Then, at the end of that Swami said, "*Baaga speed ga undappa!* You are very, very fast."

"Oh Swami, first time."

"*Chala emotion ga undade* (too much emotion)!"

"Swami, I am not a mechanical microphone. I love Your message. Naturally I am emotional. I cannot keep a blank face when You are speaking like that."

"*Serele, manchidi!*" *(Laughter)* ("*Okay, good!*")

Then, after a couple of years, there happened to be another translator. That translator was also present at one time when some top delegates, the All India president, the World Council president, vice president, etc., were all there. It was in Kodai Kanal.

Swami said, "Both of you translate. *Hmm*, who is better than the other?" *(Laughter)*

Who is better than the other? Shall I say, "I am better than her?" I cannot say the other person is better because then He will say, "Why are you here?" So, immediately I understood the point.

"Swami, I am no comparison to the other person. The other person did her postgraduate in English literature, whereas I am a student of botany, not literature."

She did her post-graduation in Madras. Madras was the centre of English language training in those days, the seat of learning for English language all over the country. I had my education in Telugu medium up to the tenth class. I only started English medium from the eleventh class. So I am not a product of an English medium school. The other lady is from a metropolitan city like Madras, while I am from Guntur, just a small town. So I was in no way equal to her; there was an ocean of difference!

Do you know what Baba said? "You are enough for me." *(Laughter and applause)*

Further Baba said, "If I select a translator, a man of letters as you say, devotees have to listen to two speeches: my speech and the translator's speech. *(Laughter)* You are enough for me."

So, it is all His compassion. It is all His goodness. Maybe it is the blessings of my parents or the blessings of my teachers, or maybe it is due to merit accrued in a past life that has brought me and made me the translator as you see me today. I have nothing more to claim. I am very plain, very plain...nothing to claim.

As William Shakespeare said, "Some are born great. Some achieve greatness. Some have greatness thrust upon them." This job of a translator has been thrust upon me. It has not been achieved or attained. It was simply thrust upon me. *(Applause)*

THE EXPERIENCER CANNOT BE EXPRESSED

Did you experience the Experienter?

Who is asking the question? The questioner himself is the Experienter (Self). The one to give the answer is the Experienter.

The Experienter here and the Experienter there are one and the same. Who is to ask whom? The Experienter in you asked this question. The Experienter in me has to answer. And the Experienter in both is the same (Self)! Who is to answer whom?

But at the mind level, you can say, "I asked the question!"

At the level of the mind, I can say, "Yes! I am ready to accept the challenge."

So the Experienter is not given to expression. Expression is one thing, while the Experienter is another. Experience can be expressed, but Experienter cannot be expressed. Experienter only speaks, but the point is that he is unaware. So Experienter is asking, but you are unaware of that.

But when we are aware that this is all the Experienter (the one Self) and nothing more, when you are aware that the light and the mike are running due to the same electricity, that current is the same as the Experienter. These are our experiences.

EGOLESSNESS IS THE PURPOSE OF SURRENDER

What does it mean to surrender?

A funny question: What does it mean to surrender?

A devotee came to Bhagavan and said, "Swami, I have surrendered my life to You."

"Huh? *Chaalā manchidi, bangaru!* Very good. *Yemi surrender chesavu?* What have you surrendered?"

"Swami, I have surrendered my life."

"*Aah!* Are you the owner of your life? How can you donate your mother-in-law's property? (*Laughter*) You can donate your property, but not your mother-in-law's property. When you are not the owner of your life, how can you surrender that life?"

Then that fellow came to his senses.

"Swami, I surrender my body." (*Laughter*)

"Oh, oh! Are you the owner of your body?"

"Yes Swami. I am only the one who is walking"

Aah, aah. But you see that which you don't want to. You go where you are not supposed to go. You hear what you are not supposed to hear. The body does not follow you. The body is in the opposition party. The intellect says, "Don't see that," but the eyes are ready to see *only* that. The intellect says, "Don't listen to that." But the ears are ready like a ceiling fan, drawing only gossip.

"So, when the senses are not under your control, how can you surrender that useless body? First gain ownership, and then speak of surrender. As you are not the owner, you cannot surrender."

Then this man was clever enough, "Oh Swami, if I am not the owner, then what am I to surrender?"

Baba gave a simple answer: The feeling that this body is mine, the feeling of 'my mind', 'my intellect', any feelings of 'my' are all *maya* or illusion. So identification with the mind, body, and intellect all come under ego. So what is to be surrendered? Surrender the ego.

Anybody can surrender their property. If you don't surrender, the government will take it away. (*Laughter*) Income tax officers are there. They will let you know how to surrender. (*Laughter*) If not, the police department is ready.

So surrendering money, used clothes, and left-over food is not surrender. True surrender is to surrender the ego. So achieving egolessness is the purpose of surrender.

And, how does one surrender? Yes, surrender is not an act.

How do you prepare coffee? You use decoction, cream and sugar, am I right? You don't use pepper or anything like that, right? (*Laughter*) These are three ingredients. Surrendering is not an act like making coffee; it is not any action.

To repeat, surrender is not an action. It is not a process. Surrender is not done. Surrender is a happening. It happens. It is not done. Surrender is the result.

Take a simple example: When you just put a drop of curd into milk, it gets curdled the next morning. You don't make the curd specially. It gets curdled on its own, right?

If you mix the decoction, cream and sugar, you get coffee. You don't make anything special there, right? "*Aah*, I have all these three. So when I mix them, coffee happens." Instantly coffee happens. Similarly, surrender is a happening, not a doing.

I am very thrilled and thankful to Baba for having given me beautiful seekers and devotees like you who listen to these spiritual truths with rapt attention. I pray to Baba to bless all of you. These are things you have to learn and remember. This is philosophy. A fellow who was saved from death, who escaped death, if not this year, still he will die next year. Being safe from death is only a question of the calendar. If not this year, then next year you will have to go. Therefore, forget about these things. This is philosophy, my friends.

Prior to surrender, there is another step: What is it? It is devotion.

Devotion is done; devotion is an act. Devotion is a process. Devotion is an ocean. However, surrender is a happening, a culmination, a zenith, a climax. How do you say that?

In devotion there are two aspects. When you say you are a devotee of Baba, there are two parts there: deity and devotee. "I am devoted to Him." You cannot say, "I am a devotee . . . to what?"

You may be devoted to your wife. You may be devoted to your job. You may be devoted to your office. You may be devoted to money. So, you must say you are a devotee of someone or something. You are a devotee of whom?

Am I clear? Devotion needs two: I am here, and there is God. I am devoted to Him. There is duality here. This duality that starts in devotion leads to a state of, "I am not here, I am not there. Oh God, You are the only one."

Only God exists—no one else, nothing else. I do not exist as a mind, nor do I exist as an ego. You only are there. How is it possible?

A simple example: (These are all given by Baba any number of times.) Take water and sugar. Sugar is God, water is the devotee. Mix both of them. Now where is the sugar? In the water. How is it? Mixed. It got dissolved totally. In constant thought of God, I got dissolved. I got totally identified with Him. I am no longer there.

(Anil Kumar sings "Antaranga Sai..")

You think of Sai as *Antaranga*, as *Indweller*. You are not there. That is surrender. That is what you call non-duality. From devotion—which is duality, which is a happening, which is a process—'you' dissolve in a happening called 'non-dual surrender'. Am I clear?

What does one surrender? Ego. How does one surrender? Devotion makes you surrender.

So did you experience the experiencer? He only is doing the talking. That's it.

THE BLISS YOU ARE IS NEITHER GAINED NOR LOST

As long as we are in this body, how can we experience bliss beyond the physical?

This morning I thought I was successful in giving a good talk. *(Laughter)* Now you have proved that I have not understood. *(Laughter)*

We had one principal at the Christian college where I served (long back) by the name of Roy Stark. He taught Shakespearean drama. Anthony and Cleopatra is a lovely, romantic drama. So Roy Stark taught drama. At the end of the year he asked, "Any questions, please?"

One student got up and said, "Only one question: please repeat the whole thing!" *(Laughter)*

Similarly, I explained at length this morning about bliss...well, ok. Doesn't matter! Doesn't matter!

Bliss is not physical. What you experience at the physical or sensual level, on a momentary, ephemeral, transitory, or worldly level—whatever you may call it—it is happiness and joy. Happiness and joy are momentary, ephemeral, sensual pleasure. But that which is beyond these is bliss.

That which is non-physical, beyond the physical frame, beyond the psychic domain, beyond the body and mind is bliss. That is the non-dual spiritual being. Am I clear? You are bliss. Physical happiness is acquired temporarily and then lost with time.

When I wear a blue suit, I am happy physically. I look at the mirror and feel like I am the only handsome man on earth (though thousands tell me that I am not . . . in fact, every fellow thinks he is very handsome!). So, physical happiness happens by acquiring a new suit or having a hot cup of coffee. Hence, physical happiness and joy can be acquired, but are lost later. However, the bliss that you are is neither gained nor lost. It is neither obtained nor retained. It is what you are. It is always there as you. You are bliss and bliss is you. That's what it is. Am I clear, please?

SAKARA AND NIRAKARA

Is it wrong to crave for the physical presence of Swami, friends, and relatives? How to go beyond this?

You can crave for the physical presence of Swami so as to feel Him in His absence also.

Take a simple example: Most of you who are here are away from your native place. Most of you are away from your parents. But don't you think of them? You think of them more here than there. At least that's my experience all these years.

This is my nth visit to the US. My conclusion is that children who are staying abroad think of their parents more than children who are staying with them in the same country. This is the hard, naked truth.

Why? That is in the mind. "My father, how is he? My mother, how is she? My brothers, how are they? My country, how is it? My country, the town or village to which I belong, how is it?"

So, your parents are in India, which is a twenty-two hour flight from here. But you feel for them. Why? It is due to the mind.

So, His physical frame gives you the *sakara* experience of the Divine form. It also takes you to the experience of Him in formlessness, in His physical absence. His physical form is *sakara*. To feel Him in the absence of His physical frame is *nirakara*. So we are moving from form to formlessness.

Take a simple example: You know of Lakshmana and Bharata. Someone once asked Rama, "Rama, oh God, You are the king of righteousness, *dharma*. *Ramo Vighavan Dharmaha!* You are the very embodiment of *dharma*."

"So what?"

“I have one question, Swami.”

“What is it?”

“You have three brothers. Who is the best among the three?”

It was a very difficult question. Rama said, “Bharata is the best among the three.”

Then somebody said, “Oh, oh! God also has biases. Lakshmana has been with Him, serving Him all this period of exile, remaining vigilant throughout these nights, spending sleepless nights, forsaking food and drink, in constant watchfulness of his brother, Rama. But Rama says, ‘Bharata is the best.’ ”

(I think this should be taken up in a debate. In this debate, let this section of the audience take Lakshmana’s side and that other section take Bharata’s side. But I am not Rama, of course!)
(*Laughter*)

Well, the point is this: Rama immediately replied, “Lashmana is serving Me. I am here right in front of him. He sees me and serves Me. He exalts in My physical presence and enjoys My Divine benediction. So there is nothing strange about it. But Bharata, who stays far away, who is denied this physical form and has no chance to see Me anywhere around, thinks of Me. He has kept the throne there, and on that he kept My *padukas*. He has been ruling the whole kingdom while chanting My name in My physical absence. So, Bharata followed the *nirakara* form of worship, while Lakshmana followed the *sakara* form of worship. *Nirakara* is greater than *sakara*. Therefore, Bharata is greater than Lakshmana,” said Sri Ramachandra.

You are all Bharatas, thinking of Swami from afar, which is *nirakara* worship, while we who are staying with Him are the Lakshmanas. So we are the second group. Let me be plain enough.

Therefore, this physical frame of Sai, *sakara*, should take you to a state where you feel Him psychologically, where you identify yourself with Him intellectually, and experience that inseparable non-dualistic oneness or unity, the culmination of all spiritual *sadhana*, all spiritual effort and endeavour. That is *nirakara*.

THE ‘EXPERJENCER’ IS EXPERJENCED BY ALL IN DEEP SLEEP

How to practically go beyond the duality of joy and sorrow?

Take a simple example: You are in deep sleep. You are tired, working from morning until night. And you are sleeping. So you are in deep sleep, no dreams, just deep sleep. (It is a sound sleep with snoring too!) The next morning you wake up, and you look very fresh.

Someone says, “Oh, had a nice sleep last night?”

“Oh, fantastic!”

“How was the deep sleep? Was it sweet?”

“Shut up! Why do you ask me?”

“Is it hot?”

“What kind of silly question?”

“Is it tall?”

“Are you sensible or not?”

“Is it short?”

“Are you mad?”

Deep sleep experience or *sushupthi* is not sweet, not hot, not tall, and not short. It is not ugly. It is not beautiful. It is the same, a uniform, homogenous state: an equanimous, balanced state which is non-dual. That is what is called ‘the Experiencer’.

All of us experience the Experiencer.

“No, no! What nonsense you are speaking?”

When all of you get up the next morning, if someone asks, “How was your sleep last night?” you say, “Oh, good! Had a nice sleep.”

“How do you know you had a nice sleep? Please tell me.”

“I know.”

“How do you know? How was it?”

Please don’t ask those questions because the deep sleep experience is not given to expression. Why? In deep sleep, the mind is passive, inert, withdrawn, and dull.

“*Mano Laya, Mano Nasana.*” (In deep sleep, there is withdrawal of the mind.)

Therefore, you are peaceful. Where there is mind, there is agitation. When the mind comes into the picture, there is agitation. When the mind is withdrawn, it is non-dualistic state.

Therefore, the effortless state, the automatic, natural state of the Experiencer happens in *sushupthi*, but we are unaware of it. If we experience that in the waking state by meditation, it is called *dhyana*.

Let me repeat, experience of the Experiencer in the waking state, while in meditation, is called *dhyana*. The state of the withdrawal of the mind in the waking state (without meditation) is called *samadhi* (*sahaja samadhi*), the natural state. This is the state of a sage.

But nobody says, “I had *samadhi* in deep sleep.” If he was in *samadhi* in deep sleep, the next day would be a holiday! (*Laughter*)

Samadhi is the natural state of being (without mind) obtained in the waking state. It is not automatic, but acquired by grace and *sadhana*.

So, you can go beyond joy and pleasure automatically in deep sleep and with effort in meditation (while in the waking state).

REMOVE THE REFLECTION AND SEE GOD

How do you deal with the duality of His physical form and the form that is in your mind?

It was the day when I took charge as the principal at the Brindavan campus of Sri Sathya Sai University. Swami wanted me to stay in the bungalow next to His residence, which He had inaugurated. He opened the door and went straight in; I was just following Him.

Suddenly, I noticed Swami adjusting His hair in front of the mirror. I was taken by surprise! 'Does God also look into the mirror? Does God also adjust His hair?' That was my question. But I did not dare to ask. I just stood and watched.

Suddenly, Swami said, "Come on, what do you see?"

"Swami, I am so happy." (*Laughter*)

Then Baba said, "Look here, Anil Kumar. There is a mirror. I am here. In the mirror, I see My reflection. We are three now. I am here, the mirror is there, and there is My reflection: so there are three things here. But remove the mirror and only 'I' remains. So, the mirror is the nature, the mirror is the object, while I am the subject. However, when the mirror is taken out—meaning, when the illusion and delusion are gone—only 'I' remains."

Similarly, Swami outside and Swami inside are very much the same: like you and your reflection in a mirror. Am I clear? That's all. That was a good question.

A SPIRITUAL EGO IS MORE DANGEROUS THAN A WORLDLY EGO

This morning, I would like some clarity on a point that we made earlier. I believe it was said, "Spirituality is not individuality." Cannot spirituality, being individual, be another way of saying, "Look inward"? Secondly, we do not have an obligation to share verbally or talk about it. Every single moment, the impressions or the encounter with the spirit that we have is spiritual. If we talk about it, we would all be yakiti-yaks. Therefore, I feel the need for clarity on that individual, personal, looking inward moment of spirituality. Sai Ram!

Religion is individual, while spirituality is general. To repeat, spirituality is general whereas religion is individual. Experiences are definitely individual, while the Experiencer (Self) is general and the same in all.

There is nothing wrong in sharing one's experiences. But if sharing amounts to blowing one's own trumpet, being more egoistic and feeling that one is special and superior to others, then that is dangerous for that person.

Spiritual ego is more dangerous than worldly ego. Ramakrishna Paramahansa said, "The danger of spiritual ego is fatal with no return." The spiritual ego is most dangerous.

Therefore, you can share a message that is meant for someone or share an experience that carries a message to everyone, a message that sets an example or illustrates a point. But on the other hand, if you want to share your bio-data or your biography, then it is nonsense! The sooner we stop it, the better it is for the organisation and the institution.

THE REDEEMER IS ONLY ONE GOD

You basically said that all religions have paths to God. But, I attended a class on comparative religious studies. In this course I found out that there are numerous cases where each individual religion claims that their road is the only way to God. For example, in the Bible, Jesus says that the only way to reach God is through Me (Jesus). Islam says Allah is the only way to God. Why is there that discrepancy?

Hmm...good!

Alla Yanchu Mahammadeeyulu

Mohammadans call Him Allah

Jahova Yanchu Sadchristavul

Christians extol Him as Jehova

Phullabjakshudatanah Vaishnavulu

Vaishnavites call Him as Vishnu

Sambhundatachu Saivul Sada

Saivites call Him always as Siva

Ullasambuna Golva

When all pray to Him enthusiastically

Ellaranu Aayubhogabhagyadi Sampallabhambubbrochu Praramathmun Do Kkade Choodudee

God is the only one who grants plenty and prosperity to all.

Notice this!

(Anil Kumar sings "Sarvantaryami Sathya Sai Rama...")

If I call it 'petrol' or 'gasoline', it is still one and the same. 'Rest room' or 'toilet', it is one and same. 'Rupee' or 'dollar', its one and the same—just currency, that's all! Similarly, my friends, God, the reality, is only One . . .the One-without-a-Second.

Thank you very much. Sai Ram!

OM

*Asato Maa Sad Gamaya
Tamaso Maa Jyotir Gamaya
Mrtymoraa Amrtam Gamaya*

*Om Samastha Loka Sukhino Bhavantu
Samastha Loka Sukhino Bhavantu
Samastha Loka Sukhino Bhavantu*

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti

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