

PODCAST 213, WHAT IS A LONELY PLACE?

Om Sri Sai Ram

Prasanthi Sandesh, 213th episode welcomes you.

It can happen that we often feel vexed and disgusted with our surroundings. We don't want to be in the midst of the crowd any longer. We want to be alone. We want to be somewhere where we will not be disturbed. So we seek a lonely place. Let us examine what a lonely place is.

We may think that a lonely place is fit for meditation. This is wrong! A lonely place has nothing to do with meditation! After all, our concept of a lonely place is some place where no other person is present, which is a desolate place, where you can be alone. Some people go to the mountains. They may sit in the Himalayan caves and think that they have found a lonely place. However, this kind of lonely place has no real relationship whatsoever with meditation.

The reason is that even if you remove the people on the outside, they will still be there inside you. Even if you move away from the crowd, it is still hidden within you.

It is also possible that while sitting in the middle of a crowd, you may still feel that you are in a lonely place, in solitude. And it is also possible that you may be sitting in a lonely place and still feel as if you are in the midst of a crowd.

If one sits down quietly and remembers oneself even in the middle of a crowd, all others will be forgotten. If one is filled with his own self-remembrance even in the middle of a crowd, the remembrance of all others will disappear. The reason is, that one of the intrinsic qualities of the mind is that at any given moment, only one thing at a time can be present on the screen of the mind.

If I can fill my mind with my own presence, all other presences will disappear. The presence of others continues to be there because I am not present in my own mind. So your understanding of a lonely place is shallow and very superficial.

The true meaning of a lonely place is to be seated within you, within yourself. To sit within is less of an outer experience and more of an inner experience. This space where the other is not present is a space where there is less outer activity and more inner activity.

Even if someone is sitting in the marketplace but there is no other person in his mind, then that person is in a lonely place. Also remember well that if you cannot be alone while sitting in a market place, then you cannot be alone in a lonely place either.

Another law of the mind is that the mind will miss whatever is not there. For example, one wants to be physically in a place where one is not. Hence, it often happens that a man who is sitting in the marketplace thinks about how beautiful it would be if he were in a lonely place, while the man sitting in a lonely place is filled with a desire for the marketplace. That is the nature of the mind!

When something is not easily available, the mind cannot lose interest in it. The mind loses interest in whatever is available to it all the time. This is why the moment you achieve something or get something, you lose interest in it.

For a long time you wanted to have a big house and now you have it. In just a few days you'll find that it has no more value for you. You'll not even find it as important as it was in your dreams. The enjoyment that the big house gave you in your dreams will disappear as soon as the house is actually yours. In a month or two you'll have completely forgotten that the house is there at all, although you'll be living in it, coming in and going out of it all the time. In a couple of years, other people will see it, but not you.

So when the mind attains something, that thing becomes valueless because the mind's interest is in the unattainable. It is in that which it has not yet acquired. The mind's whole passion is for what is not here; its passion is for the distant. The mind is interested in the distant.

We have a saying which states that the sound of distant drums is hypnotic and the reason for that is not because of the drums, but because of the mind. The greater the distance, the more difficult it is for a certain thing to be attained, then the more interested the mind will be in attaining it.

Please understand this law of the mind well, because when you are in the marketplace, your mind will want to be alone, and when you are alone, your mind will want to be in the marketplace. So, when a man is sitting in the temple, he is thinking of other places and if he is staying outside in a business centre, he will be thinking of the temple.

Life is not as simple as we think it is. It is very complex. If you don't understand its complexity correctly, it will become very difficult for you to move into meditation.

The true meaning of a 'lonely place' is that there is solitude within you. Kindly note this!

It is good when there is outer solitude. But that's not enough. Within you there is always a crowd. It would be better to say that you are less like an individual and more like a crowd! There is no singularity within you. You are a crowd. Every single person is a big crowd!

This is why a man feels one way in the morning, he feels somehow different at noon and yet again he is different at night. You feel that you are at a loss because in the morning you were so happy, so why at noon have you become so sad? Or why have you become loaded with anger by the evening? In the morning you felt like blessing the whole world and in the evening you feel like murdering the whole world. What is going on inside you? This is a result of your inner crowd.

There are many faces within you. One face is there in the morning, a second face appears at noon and in the evening there is a third face. There are many people within you. In the morning one person speaks, at noon a second person speaks and in the evening a third person speaks. Hence, you are in great difficulty because what

you said in the morning, when you wanted to bless the whole world, will not be the way you feel by the evening. Who you are in the evening, is not that same person who gave his word in the morning. That person is no longer present.

Psychologists are now saying that their belief that man has only one mind is wrong! They are now saying that there are many minds within man. They say that man is multi-psychic.

For example, a man decides in the evening that he will wake up at five o'clock the next morning. He decides that no matter what happens, he has to get up at five the following morning.

But at five o'clock in the morning the same man says, "Ah! Forget it! What a crazy idea! It is too cold! What harm is there if for once I don't get up early?" He turns over and goes back to sleep!

Later on, at eight in the morning, the same man will complain, "How did it happen? I decided for sure that I would get up in the early morning." So, that's how the mind works!

There are simply different parts of the mind and it's possible that these different parts never meet each other and they are not even aware of each other's existence.

Psychologists will be surprised to learn that Mahavira used a word twenty-five centuries ago. The word is *bahuchittawan*. Its exact meaning is 'multi psychic'. Mahavira said that man is multi psychic. He said that there are many minds in a man, not just one! So, with these many minds it is impossible to be alone.

Hence the deeper meaning of a lonely or a solitary place is that you become uni-psychic instead of multi psychic. Then, only a single mind will remain within you, not many. This is one meaning of what we can say is a 'lonely place'.

It will be good to understand another meaning of a lonely place. That is, that the crowd which is constantly chattering within you is certainly originating from the mind. Then there is also a crowd of acquaintances, friends, relatives and enemies all around you, on the outside.

So, man does not live much in this outside world. He lives much more in his inner world. It will help you to understand these two types of worlds, in which man lives.

One is the inner world of his mind, in which he lives around the clock. The other world is the physical world, which is outside his mind. He lives in the outside world to some extent, but mostly he lives in the world of his own mind)

For example, you have already rehearsed beforehand in your own mind what you intend to say to your friend. Mark Twain was going home after speaking at a meeting. A friend of his was with him and he said, "Today, your talk was very beautiful". Twain said, "Which one?" He had given only one talk. So why ask, which one?

The friend said, "Which one! The one which you have delivered right now!"

Twain said, "I have given at least three talks. I gave one inside my mind before the talk. I told myself that I would say this and this and this. Then there is the talk I actually gave. The third I am giving right now inside me, saying that I should have said this and this and this. So which talk are you referring to?"

You live in your inner world. Before a word comes out of you, it has already moved a thousand times inside you. Before an action is carried out on the outside, it has already been carried out a thousand times inside of you.

For example, a man commits murder. So far, there has not been a single murderer in the world who could say that he had not first committed that murder many times within himself in his mind. Hence, if you kept an account of the murders that you commit within yourself, then it would be hard to find a single person who is not a murderer. Inside your mind, you go on committing murders. It is a different matter that they do not happen in your actions the way they do with some people.

Psychologists say that this is true, not only about committing a murder, but it is also difficult to find a person who has never committed suicide in his mind, who has not finished himself off many times and who has not said in his mind, 'Let me get rid of myself once and for all!' Even though it has not become an actual action, still it could become real at any time, because a thought is a seed and if it goes on becoming stronger and stronger, it can become an action at any moment.

So we have created a world within our minds, and that's where the crowd is. Desires are created first in the mind, where they grow from their roots and sprout. It's only later on that the leaves and the branches arrive in the outside world.

Out of thousands of desires created in the mind, one reaches to the outer world. Of the many plans that germinate inside the mind, perhaps not even one out of a hundred is actualised.

So this is how we have to figure out and understand what a lonely place is.

We'll continue in the next session.

Thank you for your time.