

PODCAST 215: COME CLOSER AND EXPERIENCE

Om Sri Sai Ram

Prasanthi Sandesh, episode 215 welcomes you. Thank you for your time.

What is our concept about benediction? What do we think about benediction?

As per the dictionary, benediction is a blessing. Benediction is a sentence or an utterance composed of blessings. So, benediction is something to do with blessings. It may be an utterance or a blessing. So, what is our idea about this benediction? To put it in one simple sentence: The Divine is benediction!

Wonderful! The Divine is benediction! The ultimate reality is a benediction! But the idea which comes to your mind whenever you hear that the Divine is compassionate and showering grace, is wrong! It is bound to be wrong because you don't know the meaning of benediction.

The idea which comes to you when you hear that the Divine is benediction is the same as when you see a compassionate person and you say that this person is very kind and well-wishing.

However, the person you think about in these terms can also harm you. He can also become unkind. He can become cruel and mean because the opposite of kindness is also present in him. So, he has to be kind and suppress any unkindness. Even the kindest man has to suppress the unkind within him when he wants to do the kind thing. It means the unkind is also present in him.

Hence, a kind man is always in deep conflict. The conflict is that he has to suppress any unkindness and do the kind thing instead. Because goodness is something he does, even a kind man is slowly filled with the ego of being good.

It often happens that bad people are not as egoistic as good people are. In a sense, bad people are simple. Whatever they want to do, they just do it! Even the bad things, they just do them! Therefore, because they go on doing bad things, they never feel that they are good or great. So, their ego never grows.

If you go to a prison, the prisoners there are more simple people than the so-called noble people or spiritual people. They have no idea of being special. They have done bad things, so how can they think that they are special? But a do-gooder suffers from a deep ego. His ego becomes subtle and condensed. A criminal or a bad person does wrong to others, but a good person does wrong to himself! His ego takes its toll on him!

The reason why the Divine is called a benediction is completely different. It means that the Divine nature, the original nature of the Divine, is a benediction. It does not offer benediction to you. You go near it and benediction begins to shower on you. It is not His doing. Rather it is the Divine nature.

For example, I am walking towards a garden and as I approach nearer to it, the cool breeze starts coming to me. The garden does not make any effort to send the cool breeze to me and also the garden does not withhold its cool breeze when no one passes by, or if sometimes an enemy or someone who does not love the garden passes by. Nothing of that sort happens! No! The garden has no interest in all of that

It is the nature of the garden to have a cool breeze around it. The closer you approach, the coolness of the breeze grows stronger. When you go still closer, the fragrance of the flowers will also start coming to you. All this is not being sent to you personally. It is intrinsic in the very nature of the garden. Even if the garden wants to do otherwise, it cannot! It has no way to send hot winds to you. Even if it wants to send a stink to you, it does not have that kind of flower.

The Divine is benediction. It means that as you move closer to the Divine, you start experiencing the benediction. Remember that this is **your** experience. It is **your** experience that the Divine is benediction. The Divine does not know anything about that. How can it know? It can know only when the opposite is also present.

For example, If you know that you love a certain person, it means that hatred is also present in you. Otherwise you would have no awareness of the love. How could you? If you say, "I have forgiven a certain person," it means that anger is still present within you. Otherwise how would you be able to notice the forgiveness? You are able to notice it only because of the presence of the opposite part.

The Divine does not notice that it is a benediction. If it were able to notice that, then it would also be capable of harm. Hence it is better not to consider the Divine in terms of human language at all, because that which knows no opposites is an energy, not a person.

Please note this point! No opposites! Therefore, the Divine is an energy, not a person. A person is created on the basis of the experience of duality. I experience love, I experience anger and forgiveness. The centre of all these experiences becomes what is known as the person.

When nothing is experienced, imagine that!

The Divine does not experience anything. But this does not mean that it is stupid and ignorant. It just means that there is no duality. Everything happens but the Divine does not experience it self-consciously. It is an endless expanse of consciousness. Not a person, just a consciousness. It is a formless expansion of consciousness, of energy.

It's our experience that when we go nearer to the Divine, benediction starts happening to us. And then when we move away from it, malevolence or misfortune starts happening. The misfortune that happens is not because of the Divine. It is because we have moved away from it. The benediction that happens is also not because of the Divine. It is because we have moved closer to it. So, it will be better to say that the name for the experience of coming closer to the Divine is benediction and the name for the experience of moving away from it, is misfortune.

But these are experiences. If we take a total jump into the Divine, then we'll also have no idea about benediction. One day, when you no longer even notice the benediction. On that day, understand that oneness with the Divine has happened to you.

As long as you can notice benediction, it means that you're only moving closer. Benediction is growing, bliss is growing, peace is growing, but you are only getting nearer. On that day that you don't even notice these, understand that a jump has happened. You are immersed in the Divine!

We say that people like Buddha are absolutely peaceful. But we should not say this. Neither is he peaceful, nor is he disturbed anymore. It is only a miserable person who experiences peace. If there's disturbance then we can call the gaps that happen between two disturbances, peace, because peace is experienced only between two disturbed states.

If after some disturbance, another disturbed state never comes, then after a while the experience of peace will also disappear. The person will be peaceful but the experience of being peaceful will not be there anymore. Even the experiencer will not be there!

This is a very interesting point. Swami made a reference to this, and I remember one example which He cited in one of His discourses. He said, "When you travel by train, the train starts, and leaves the platform. Then what do you say? Anantapuram left, Anantapur left. Is that the correct statement? You left the Anantapur railway platform. The railway platform has not left. You travelled away from there because you are in a moving train."

Similarly, when you are coming in the opposite direction you say, "Anantapur is coming, Anantapur is coming." Is Anantapur coming? No! It is a railway station. It is located where it has always been. You are coming closer to the platform. So, you say, "Anantapur is coming", just as when you leave the platform you say, "Anantapur left." When you approach the platform you say, "Anantapur has come." But it neither left nor arrived. It is there as it always has been.

Similarly we enjoy the benediction. Why? We come closer to the Divine and therefore we enjoy the benediction. When we are away from the Divine, it's most unfortunate. A misfortune indeed!

Some people say, "Swami has avoided me!" How can He avoid you when He is in you? You are avoiding Him! How? You turn towards the world! You have not turned towards Him! You have totally ignored Him though He is seated within you!

Therefore, we only run away because we are extroverts, because we are worldly-minded and we think that Swami is not blessing us.

"I don't enjoy benediction anymore!" is a wrong statement. On analysis you'll know that you have gone astray from the Divine. When you enjoy benediction it only means that you are closer and closer to the Divine.

Thank you for your time.

Sai Ram.