

PODCAST 216, DIVINE IS TIMELESS, INDIVISIBLE

Om Sri Sai Ram

Welcome to Prasanthi Sandesh. Episode 216 welcomes you.

Bhagavan often says, "Truth is one, not two." Why should He say that? Is it not enough if He says, "Truth is one"? Is it necessary to say, "Not two"? If I forget translating that 'not two,' He will remind me: "One, not two -- say that!" So, Truth is one, not two. God is one, not two. That is really a very interesting statement which we need to spend more time on in order to understand it further.

The Divine is 'not two'. Throughout the whole world, whoever has known the Divine has said that the Divine is one. It is only in India that the word 'one' has purposefully not been used. In India, it has always been said that the Divine is 'not two,' while in the rest of the world, those who have known the Divine, have said that it is one. But India has never called the Divine 'one'. In India we know perfectly well that it is one, yet Indians have never liked to call it 'one'!

There are reasons for this. No other race anywhere in the world has ever tried to experience and express the Divine with such accuracy and in as many different ways as India has tried to express and experience it. No one else has ever made the effort that we have made, in order to avoid even the slightest error about the Divine. It seems that nothing more can be added to this effort. It has been difficult, and it almost feels that we have taken this Divine definition to its perfection.

The reason why we have felt it to be difficult to call the Divine 'one' in India is because to call the Divine 'one' immediately reminds us of two! Whenever you hear that the Divine is one, immediately the idea of 'two' flashes in your mind. The reason why two comes to mind is that the number one is meaningless by itself if it is not part of a progression of other bigger numbers. One has meaning only if there is also two, three, four and five, etc.

The entire numerical system begins with the number one. This is why when we say **one**, the echo that arises in the mind is **two**. However, India is the least interested in what is said. We in India are more interested in what is being heard inside you. Try to understand this because it is very meaningful. We are less concerned with what is said and more concerned with what will be understood. Ultimately, it is what you have understood that will work for you, not what has been said. Hence we have used a very inverted word -- we have said, it is 'not two', which is *Advaita*.

When we hear that the Divine is 'not two', the image that arises in our mind is the number one. When we hear it is not two, then the image that emerges in the depths of our mind is the image of the number one. But when we hear some say that it is 'one,' then we think of a series of numbers in progression. The image which comes to mind when we hear 'not two' is one. But this one is different from the one that is said directly, as in the phrase, 'the Divine is one.'

When we say 'one,' it is a very different matter. When we say 'not two' then there is also an implication of one. But the implication is indirect. It's only a hint, something

which is not concrete. But, somewhere in your depths, an echo of 'one' happens that you're not even aware of.

It is to evoke this feeling of one in your unconscious that India has always called the Divine, 'not two'. It is a result of a very deep understanding about human communication. After trying to communicate with man again and again, the impression which is created in man and what happens in his consciousness has been understood. And very often, what happens in his consciousness is just the opposite of what has been said.

It is the same as when you stand in front of a mirror and you don't realise that it is your reversed image which is reflected in the mirror. You don't notice it, even though you stand in front of a mirror every day. But if you put the page of a book in front of a mirror, then you will notice it immediately, because all the letters will be reversed. In fact, all reflections are reversed. There can be no reflection which is not reversed. When you stand on the bank of a river and you see your image in the river, the image is reversed.

In the process of reflection, all things are reversed. It's bound to be so. Your right eye will be on the left side and your left eye will be on the right side. So when you are looking at me, the image that will form in your eyes will be reversed. When I look at you, my eyes will function like a mirror and your image will be reversed.

All reflections are reversed and all echoes are also reversed. It's because of this deep experience that India has never called Brahman or the Divine as 'one', because when you use the word 'one' the reflection which forms within you will be the reverse. Hence they have chosen to call it *Advaita*, 'not two'. Then, the reflection will happen indirectly in a subtle way, and it will be of 'one' only. A negative word or phrase was used in order to emphasize this understanding.

The Divine which is one -- only one and not two -- never begins and never ends. We can understand these two statements; but the third one is a little more difficult as you may have never thought about it. The third statement says that the Divine has 'no beginning, no middle, and no end'. The Divine has no beginning, no middle, and no end.

It is easy to understand that the Divine has no beginning and no end; but it is very difficult to understand that it has no middle. The sage in the *Upanishads* also mentions that the Divine 'has no middle'. He says that it has no middle. When we say a thing has neither a beginning nor an end, we imply that it has a middle, and only a middle. Naturally, that is bound to be the meaning -- If something has no beginning and no end, yet the thing exists, then it must mean that it has only a middle. Whenever you find it, it will always be 'the middle'.

If a thing is, and yet you say that it has no beginning or end or middle, then it does not exist! Where will it exist? Where will its existence be? But the sage of the *Upanishads* is more scientific. How can there be a middle to something that has no beginning nor end? The very meaning of 'middle' is something between a beginning and an end. What else can a middle mean?

When something is between two poles and when the two poles are not there in the first place, then how can there be the middle? And yet the Divine is, it exists. Therefore, we have to think about its existence in some other way. We have to drop this language of the beginning, the end and the middle completely. The Divine IS! It simply is!

You can try to understand this in another way. Then perhaps you'll be able to grasp it. We divide time into three parts -- past, present and future. If the Divine exists, then there can be nothing past in it. Also, there cannot be any future in it. The future is something that is still unknown. So if the Divine is, and even if for the Divine there is a future, it will mean there is something which is unknown to it. No!

There can be no future for the Divine and no past either. Be very clear on this point. The Divine has no past and it has no future either. You can understand it in this way. Past, future and present are the outcome of our limited vision. A small part of existence is visible to us, and we call it the present. When the present is no longer visible, it becomes the past, and as long as it is not yet visible, it is called the future.

Suppose a man is sitting under a tree by the wayside and the path stretches clearly in both directions, but nothing can be seen on it. Another man is sitting on the top of a tree and he sees a bullock cart on the path coming towards the tree. He shouts down to the man below that a bullock cart is approaching on the path. The man below will say there's no bullock cart on the path. In the future he may be able to see it, but right now he sees no bullock cart anywhere.

Then the bullock cart becomes visible. So the bullock cart that was present to the man at the top of the tree now also becomes present to the man on the ground. Then the bullock cart passes by and disappears again into the horizon. The man on the ground says, "The bullock cart has moved into the past. Now I cannot see it at all." But the man on the top of the tree says that he can still see it.

Thus what was future, then present and is now past to the man on the ground is present to the man at the top of the tree for the whole time. With your permission, for clarification I repeat: What was future, then present and is now past to the man on the ground is still present to the man at the top of the tree for the whole time. All three aspects of it are present for him.

But if there were a person sitting on an even taller tree, then when the first man on the tree sees the division of present and past, there would still be no division for the man on the tallest tree. If there were another man at the top of an even higher tree, then there would be no division for him even if that division had happened for the second man on the tree.

The Divine means there is nothing above or beyond. This means that no past is past for it and no future is future for it. This gives us a feeling that everything is always the present for the Divine. In other words, this is the middle.

But the sage says that it is not the middle because one who knows no future and no past, how will he know the present? We can use the term 'present' only to describe something that's experienced between the future and the past. When the past and

future are not experienced, how can the present be experienced? So for the Divine, there can be no present, no past, and no future.

Hence, the mystics have said that near the Divine, there's no time. God is timeless. There's no time for the Divine as it is timeless. Also, because there's no time near it, there is no concept of time and no existence of time. Therefore it is beginning-less. The Divine has always been. It will never end. It will always be!

So, what can we say is the middle? The sage says that the Divine has neither a beginning, an end nor a middle. It just IS. The divisions do not apply to it. No divisions apply to it. It is indivisible!

Whatever we are able to think about cannot be without divisions. This is why the Divine is *Achintya*, which means 'beyond thinking'. Whatever you may think about will have divisions in it. There is no other way. You are bound to divide. There will be a child, then a youth and then an old man. There will be birth, there will be death, there will be happiness, and there will be unhappiness. There will be light and there will be darkness. So you are bound to divide!

Do you think that there is anything that's indivisible? No! There's nothing in human experience that's indivisible. Division is bound to be there. In fact, the human mind cannot understand without dividing.

But Existence is indivisible. It is not divided anywhere, in any way. It is not divided anywhere! It is about this indivisible Existence or the Divine that the sage is speaking. No middle, no end and no beginning!

Thank you.