

PODCAST 136: "I AM I"

Om Sri Sai Ram.

Prasanthi Sandesh 136th episode welcomes you.

Thank you very much for your support and attention.

One day it so happened in an informal talk that somebody asked Swami, "Bhagavan, are you Ramachandra?" Swami said, "No."

Somebody asked, "Swami, are you Krishna?" Baba said, "No."

Someone else asked, "Swami, are you Christ?"

Swami said, "No. I am not the messenger of God."

"Swami, then how are we to know you? Then who are you, Swami?"

Then Bhagavan said, "I am I. I am I."

Though this statement is just so simple and very brief, it has got a profound meaning. It needs a thorough study and we need to inquire about it. So let me share with you a couple of thoughts on this subject, 'I am I', as declared by Bhagavan.

As you know, a religious mind will always be engaged in enquiring or searching, seeking or asking about the Divine. A religious mind is always very inquisitive to get the knowledge of the Divine. It's the same in every religion, and not particular to any religion. No, all religious people are like that.

Now what I am supposed to understand is that the Divine is the 'knower' and everything else is the 'known'. In other words, I know this and I know that. This 'I' is the 'knower' while all others are 'known' to me. So, the Divine is the 'knower'. I can also put it this way: the Divine is the subjectivity. 'I am the knower' is the subject. All else or what remains or what is known remains as an object or the 'known'.

So I, the Divine, am the subject while everything else that is known is the object. So then subjectivity is spirituality, whereas the study of objects constitutes material science and arts, or all that is related to the world. It is also quite true when we say that our intrinsic nature is subjectivity. Yes, undoubtedly.

Then the question comes, "How do we know ourselves as the subject, as the subjectivity or the knower? How to know yourself as the knower?" Can our eyes know that? No. The eyes are only in the light dimension. Can our ears help us? No. They are only involved in the sound dimension. So, will our senses help us? No, because the senses only gather information about the world.

So what I feel about myself, or this 'I am-ness,' is not at all concerned with my senses. In other words, our senses cannot convey anything about our true self. Impossible! On the other hand, the eyes will lead you to hallucination and sometimes even deception. You see a mirage and you are mistaken. It is all self-deception.

Every sense for that matter can be deceptive. But one thing that is certain is 'my self'. I'm certain and doubtless about my existence, my being-ness. That I cannot doubt. I may doubt the Divine. I can even doubt the world. But I don't doubt myself. Impossible! Then why don't I doubt myself? Okay, even if you want to doubt yourself, your 'you' is needed. Who is going to doubt you? You are needed even to doubt yourself! So, to be a doubter, even you are required here.

Hence, I can say that the 'I' feeling or the 'I am-ness' comes from within you. It's not anything imposed upon you from outside. This 'you' is not tutored in any way. This awareness or knowing comes from within you. Use that information to be convinced of you, and that will make you adequately understand that you are the knower. And in a way, this cannot be said or branded as 'knowledge'. No, because in knowledge there is a division between the knower and the known. 'I have knowledge of this. I have knowledge of that.' 'I am the knower, while that is the known.'

So, knowledge also speaks of these two, the knower and the known. But inside me, the knower and known are one. In me, yes, the knower and the known are one. They are undivided because in me, I see both are in me. I listen to that, so that is in me, I being the knower of all that the senses gather. This 'known' is also known to me. In that way, the knower and the known are one within me, undivided.

Suppose if anyone says, "I have seen God," in one sense that's a wrong statement (unless they mean Baba's physical darshan). How do you see God when He is within yourself? Then it is ridiculous to say, 'I have seen God,' because you are not separate from God, and in fact you **are** God.

So, self-knowledge or *atma vidya* speaks of no division. Instead there is an existential feeling. Here there is less *knowing*, less knowing. Please understand, it is more like *being*. Self-knowledge means or refers to the *being*. It is 'known' by itself. So you can never make this being or being-ness into an object, no, because the being transcends that and is beyond. Let us understand that.

Now you will always be standing 'outside' because when I see anything, the witness or the 'I am' is observing from outside the scene. So whatever is observed is different from me. The knower or witness is always standing outside the scene being observed. Whatever I hear, whatever I see, whatever I think, I as the witness am always standing outside and apart as the knower. So I can never put myself before me. I cannot ask, 'Oh! I, the knower, come on and stand in front of me.' I cannot say that. Why? Because I am the knower. You are it, the being. How do you appear before yourself? Ridiculous!

So, existence and ecstasy both mean the same - to stand out, to stand outside. The being stands outside. It can never be involved in the known. Impossible! When I see that, then I don't get involved in all that I see, no. So this subjectivity is the 'knower'.

It is like a deep existence, a deep ecstasy. It is impossible to reduce this subjectivity to an object. God can never be 'known' because you have God within you. When all objects are dissolved from the mind, if all objects are dissolved in the mind, or when the mind is completely dissolved, then you will be aware of your being (or beingness).

In other words, we are not aware of the being because objects or thoughts still remain in the mind. Only when they get dissolved or leave the mind, then I'll be aware of my being. This being, the knower or the subjectivity, has no limitation. You are the being. It is you. It is not 'yours'. This you, that being or the subject, belongs to the whole universe. Let us be convinced of this.

This being belongs to the whole of the universe. Everyone has to be aware of one's own being, without any object, without any thought. This beingness is the same in all existence. It is the being, as I said, and all are dissolved into it, completely dissolved into it. This is what is called the existential feeling. You are dissolved into your own being. It only means that you no longer claim to be an individual with a name and form. You are dissolved into beingness. Oh! What a lofty thought it is!

To discuss or to describe this knower, the subjectivity, using words is a fallacious and misleading discussion. But you can certainly make use of words so far as objects are concerned or things are concerned. Why? It is because God is not an object. God is your own consciousness, your own consciousness.

Therefore, don't try to understand intellectually. Actually, intellectuality will take you away from the truth. Jump out of that intellectuality and instead get into existential reality. Go from the intellectual to the existential. Jump out and then you will know, you will experience or recognize that you are actually the being. You will become aware of your beingness.

As we are interested in the study of philosophy and some have a philosophical approach, we must remember that this philosophical approach is only to understand intellectually. But that's not the end of it at all. Better you should have a religious approach. The religious approach is to be, to be, and not merely to understand. Seek! Seek to be, and seek to be aware of your own self.

So, if you are deeply in search of God within you, the being can be experienced. It's not merely to know Him, but to be one with Him. It's not just to be a knower, but to live Him, to live in Him, and not simply to know of Him. Now in this case what happens is you are not simply a knower, no. You are God. You live in Him. You are God, not someone simply knowing Him.

On the other hand, when you are only trying to know Him, then it is more of an intellectual exercise. This appeal is to try to live Him, love Him, and **be** Him. That is your totality. When you will be onboard in this way, then you are dissolved in that state which is the ultimate. It cannot be felt. It is to be known. At most, philosophy may help you understand, but you cannot *feel* this because that feeling is always beyond the mind and intellect. That religious feeling, the experiential feeling, the existential feeling is beyond all thoughts.

But the intellect always finds a way to escape. So, go into it as a whole because it is the whole of the universe. Go into it. Try to live in the Divine, not simply know about the divine. Try to be Divine, but don't make the Divine into an object. Only then Divinity is fully known. You cannot do anything for this, no. We can only dissolve ourselves totally. We can only surrender ourselves.

In other words, it is a kind of suicide. A suicide? Yes, it is not a suicide of the body but of the mind. *Samadhi* is a deep suicide of the mind. A deep suicide of the mind is *samadhi*. And this deep suicide of the mind is meditation. In other words, meditation leads to the annihilation of the mind. So the withdrawal of the mind is *samadhi*. That is an existential feeling. That is an experiential experience.

Therefore, during this topic we have discussed Swami's teaching, particularly about the meaning of this statement, 'I am I'. I think I have made myself very clear to you. However, I solicit any doubts or questions if they are still within you. I am ready to answer them to the extent possible.

Thank you for your time.

Sai Ram.