

Podcast 148: YOU ARE REAL

Om Sri Sai Ram

Welcome to Prasanthi Sandesh.

It is a very strange experience for all of us. When we look into the mirror, we are carried away by our reflection there. Sometimes, we identify ourselves with the reflection. That's why many people would like to spend time in front of the mirror, more so women! So, it's the mirror that deludes us. It is the reflection in the mirror that will make us all forget that we are main. It is, after all, a reflection which is not real. This is the common experience of everyone.

Let's also think of another one - dreams. In a dream, there are many people who cry. Yes. And whatever we experience there in a dream, we consider all those experiences as true. We consider them real until we wake up. By the time we wake up and come back to our normal life, only then we realize that the dream is false.

So, the dream experiences appear to be real only while we dream. But they are false and this fact we only recognize once we get up. So, the mirror's reflection is one example, while our dream experience is the second example which I want to draw your attention to in order to think over these two and try to draw some spiritual explanation of our reality.

The reflection is false; you are not the reflection. That is clear. Number two, the one who experiences there in the dream is also false. So, these two are false, but you are real. You are real. Your reflection is false, while you are real. There in the dream you are not there. It is only the mind that goes on projecting. You are simply there in a mind that plays all the drama. So, that is false. There also you are real, you are real.

So, when the mind is allowed to project itself, when the mind is allowed to act, well that transforms into a dream there. But you are real, and not the dream. You are real, but not the mirror reflection.

Now, let us think of the reality which you are. You are real. Let us think of that. Well, one may wonder what's the use if I know that I am real. What's the use? No, no, no. When once you know by experience and enquiry that you are real, then there is no world. There is no suffering. And you'll come to the conclusion that whatever you feel and know is not, is not. In other words, what Adi Sankara said, *Brahmam Satyam, Jagan Mithya*, the whole world is false. *Brahmam Satyam*, you are Brahman, the true self. That is the reality.

So, then what is happening is this: Anything becomes real if you are absent. You are absent in the reflection. Therefore, the reflection appears to be real. See that. You are absent. Yes. In the dream, you are absent there. Therefore, it appears to be real. So, we can conclude that everything becomes real if you are absent. And your absence gives reality to false things. You are absence only because you are not aware, you are not conscious.

Therefore, constant remembrance, as Baba puts it, 'Constant Integrated Awareness' is necessary. Simply we can say, 'self-remembering'. Self-remembering means 'I am, I am'. It means, 'I am not the reflection.' No. It means, 'I am not the dream.' This is what Baba said: "Life is a dream, realize it." Realize that life is a dream. It is not reality.

Therefore, in this process of self-remembering, or constant integrated awareness, let us be conscious and alert of this 'I am.' This 'I am' is not simply a verbal declaration. It should always be kept in view while eating and walking.

Lord Buddha calls this as 'right remembering', '*Samyak Smruti*'. *Smruti* is remembrance. *Samyak* is right. So right remembering is *Samyak Smruti*. That's what He says. In other words, in whatever we do, whatever we say, let us be highly conscious of this 'I am'. Each one of us has this feeling, and feels with conviction, 'I am', 'I am'.

For example, in a dream, you don't remember yourself. You may be a judge here or you may be a professor here. In a dream, you might be a beggar. Or you may be a millionaire here, but there in your dream you may be a pauper.

So, why is all that happening in the dream? It is because you don't remember yourself. Why? If you remember yourself, the dream drops immediately. The moment you wake up, you remember you are this or this, and the dream is gone. So, the dream only appears to be reality because you do not remember yourself. Please understand this.

So, 'I am,' is a feeling. This feeling should go deep, deep. When once this 'I am', this feeling goes deeper and deeper, dreams will stop. Dreams will stop! Therefore, Upanishads say clearly that in this life the world exists because we are not. '*Jagan Mithya*,' as Sankara said. Because we are not, therefore the world appears to be real.

In fact, in this life the world is there because we are not. And everything seems to be real but it is not so. Therefore, when I am missing, everything appears to be true, real. But when I am there, all this falsity will drop immediately. Therefore, when you are not, everything is; but when you are, when you are or when I am, well, everything becomes nothing, nothing!

So, it's necessary to remember yourself. Be centered in yourself. Be conscious, be aware. And it is not just a word like that. No. You have got to be intensely aware. And with this intense awareness, the world drops, the world drops, and it no longer appears to be real, no.

Therefore, intensive awareness is absolutely necessary. If you are real, whatever you experience is a dream, that's all, because you are real, so all the experiences are false. And if you are authentically real, conscious and alert, all experiences are dream experiences only. This is what Sankara philosophy is.

So, these words *Jagan Mithya* mean the world is *mithya*, illusion. World is false because I am not there. It is all in my mind. *Manomoolam idam jagat*: it is the mind that is responsible for the whole world. That's what the *Upanishads* say.

Therefore, this is all the play of the mind and you are not the mind. So, when I am not there, everything appears to be real. Then, if I am not there, what happens? Just let us also know, for instance, for a while if I am not there, what happens? My own reality is projected onto the dreams. My own reality is projected on to the dreams and makes you feel the dream is real. And your reality is transferred to the dreams. Please understand that. Your own existence is transferred to dreams - your experiences, your thoughts, with the result that they all become real. There in the dream I am experiencing for the simple reason that my reality is transferred to the dreams. My own reality is projected there. Therefore, I consider it to be real. That's what it is. But it is all a borrowed reality. It's all a projection. That's all. And hence, better to call it a 'borrowed' reality because your reality has gone into them, but they are not real in fact.

Consider the example I gave of a mirror earlier: your face is there in the mirror and your face appears to be real, but it is not. So, your reflection there in the mirror is a 'borrowed' reality. But you are real. Only the reflection is a borrowed reality. Mirror reflection is just a dream. Just a dream. Therefore, in Dakshinamurthy's *stotra*, it is clearly said, *vishvam darpana drshyamana nagari*. So the world is just a mirror, and you have just forgotten yourself. As a result, the reflection has become real. As I pointed out, that's all a 'borrowed' reality.

Therefore, even if I am in front of the mirror, if I go on remembering 'I am' and stare at my reflection, and stare at the reflected figure, repeatedly stare at it continuously, the reflection disappears. Suddenly the mirror reflection disappears! Come on! Stare at your reflection continuously. Stare at it. It disappears! The mirror is vacant then. Then there's a sudden upsurge of reality in you. Here you will be aware that you are. 'Oh! It's my reflection, I am not.' Then you will come to that. That's what your reality is. And then one becomes a witnessing self: 'I am just witnessing, I am not that. I am only a witness.' So, when one becomes a witnessing self, the whole world disappears. Yes, that's what is *jagan mithya*, says Adi Sankara.

The world becomes vacant. *Brahman sathyam*, 'I' Brahman, the Divine, Only 'I am' remains. This is the ultimate. But that doesn't mean that we will remain there in that state. No. Again the mirror will reflect your face. After this experience, again you stand in front of the mirror and your face will appear. But now you know it is only your reflection, and that reflection is not you. So that reflection is false, and you are real.

So, the next time when you look at it, your perspective is altogether different. Earlier you identified with the reflection, and now after this awareness you will understand that is after all only a reflection. Only you are the reality. Therefore, the world will never be real. As Baba said, "Life is a dream." Understand that. All those are dream figures only. Therefore, you will be free from all this drama going on.

As Shakespeare said, "All the world's a stage." Men and women are actors. All this you will come to know, that it is a drama, a pseudo phenomenon. And you will be

free from that. You will be free from the effects of this drama of life. There will be no clinging, there will be no slavery, and there will be no bondage at all.

Therefore, we have got to know that all the experiences are not your real you. Just like dreams are not true and reflections are not true, the only truth is you 'are'. And this has got to be constantly remembered, *samyak smruti*, which is 'right remembering'.

Thank you.

Sai Ram. Meet again.